

## *Highland Lakes* **Beginning Orchestra Information**

***Now is the time*** - Students will have the opportunity to visit Mrs. Schrade and learn about **Beginning Orchestra**. Beginning Orchestra is for students with zero to one year of experience playing his/her instrument. In Beginning Orchestra, students will focus on instrument fundamentals, ensemble skills, note reading skills, and rehearsal skills. Students may choose to learn the VIOLIN, VIOLA, or CELLO.

***School Lessons*** - Orchestra is a yearlong commitment during which students will meet with Mrs. Schrade for Orchestra class once a week during the school day. Attendance at rehearsals is part of the student's grade as the students learn to play as an ensemble. Success in Orchestra depends on the effort put forth by each student. Therefore, the grading system rewards the following:

- Improvement – as measured through quizzes, individual instruction, observation, and participation in concerts.
- Effort – as measured by preparedness for class/concerts (instrument, music, supplies, concert attire, etc.) and attentiveness during rehearsal/concert.

***Finding an Instrument*** - In Beginning Orchestra, students may choose to learn VIOLIN, VIOLA, or CELLO. You can buy or rent an instrument for your child from one of many stores in our area. I would recommend calling a few to compare prices. Upon request, and on my website, you will find a Stringed Instrument Checklist, which includes:

- A list of recommended brand names
- A list of recommended questions to ask the vendor for collecting information on the instruments and rental plans.

The instrument should possess certain markers of quality, such as: working fine tuners, pegs and fingerboard made of ebony wood, and bow hair made from real horse hair. Additionally, the instrument should be of natural wood color. Painted instruments are novelty instruments.

***Supplies*** - Students participating in Beginning Orchestra are responsible for bringing the following items to EVERY rehearsal/concert:

- A method book (**Sound Innovations for String Orchestra, Bk. 1**).
- Rosin
- A shoulder pad
- A soft cleaning cloth
- A pencil
- A folder or binder for the music

Please also consider the at home practice space. Do you have a music stand? Do you have a space to designate as practice space? Is there a particular time of day that is best for practicing? Taking the time to set-up the practice space at home will really help with the success of your student!

***Additional Suggestions*** - The following items are not required, but would be beneficial.

- Private lessons provide the opportunity for one-on-one instruction. There are many private instructors throughout the valley. I have attached a list of private teachers. Feel free to call them to find out about their background, teaching experience, and rates. You may also find this list on my teacher website.
- A Metronome can be purchased for around \$20 and is a great tool for developing a steady beat. A great metronome website is: [www.metronomeonline.com](http://www.metronomeonline.com)
- A Chromatic Tuner is great for developing a sense of intonation. These can be purchased for around \$20.

**Concerts** – Concerts are postponed until further notice.

Orchestra is a performance-based course. Performances are an essential part of musical development & are graded. Concert dates are listed below as well as on my website. Emails and fliers will be sent home with concert information as concerts approach.

It is essential to write the dates on your calendars immediately so scheduling conflicts will not occur. As mentioned before, concert attendance is included in the grade that the students earn for this class. Please contact Mrs. Schrade about scheduling conflicts. Below are examples of reasons that would be considered for excused absences:

- Medical Emergency
- Death in the family
- Religious Holiday
- Excused school absence
- Family event such as a wedding (Must be approved in advance by the director)

Excused absences are granted at the discretion of the director. All absences require communication between the parent and the director. Verbal excuses from students are not acceptable. Unexcused absences from either rehearsals or concerts will alter a student's grade as well as jeopardize eligibility for orchestra field trips.

**Concert Dress Code** – Concerts are postponed until further notice.

Concert dress code is conservative. Visual distractions on stage distract from the audio performance. All musicians are to wear the following attire: the Highland Lakes Performing Arts polo shirt, black slacks, black socks, & black closed toe shoes. The Highland Lakes Performing Arts polo shirt can be purchased for \$15.00. The shirt order form is available on my teacher website. Walmart and Target have cost effective black shoes and socks options for under \$10.

**I am available** – If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. My phone number and email are listed below. I am looking forward to speaking with you soon!

*Holly Schrade*

Highland Lakes Orchestra/Music Teacher

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[www.dvusd.org/hl-schrade](http://www.dvusd.org/hl-schrade)