

## PERFORMANCES

**Orchestra students are expected to participate in ALL performances.** Performances are an integral part of the orchestra curriculum and part of the commitment to learning to play an instrument.

### **District Orchestra Festival:**

This performance is held every March. It is a program designed to demonstrate the progress of students throughout their 4<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade orchestra experience in the Shorewood Orchestra program. Every year we conclude the concert with a grand finale piece. The Elementary orchestra participates in an orchestra case study to explore a new grand finale piece each year.

### **4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Orchestra Recitals:**

Students follow a strategic plan to prepare a short piece of music to perform either as a solo or an ensemble using a practice rubric, peer critique, and self- reflection. The recital is at the end of May

**6<sup>th</sup> Grade Orchestra Concerts and Community Performance:** 6<sup>th</sup>Grade orchestra students participate in an additional concert in December and May in the SHS auditorium on the same concert as the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade SIS orchestras. This orchestra also participates in a case study in collaboration with one of the 6<sup>th</sup> grade exhibitions and performs in the Milwaukee area as part of this project.

## Welcome to the Shorewood Orchestra Program!

This booklet includes information about the Shorewood Orchestra Program and will answer your questions concerning the beginning string classes.

Your child's decision to learn to play a string instrument will open the doors to many wonderful musical experiences. Experiences in which you and your child may share together!



**Welcome!**

**Mrs. Julie Nolan  
Lake Bluff & Atwater Orchestra Director**

## The String Instruments

The string instruments taught in the Shorewood Schools are the bowed string instruments of the symphonic orchestra. These instruments include the following:

**Violin**

**Viola**

**Cello**

**Bass**

All of the string instruments are made of wood and have four strings. A string player either plucks the strings (*pizzicato*) or draws the bow across the strings (*arco*) in order to set the strings vibrating.

All string instrumental outfits should include the Instrument, bow, rosin, and a case.

### **Who is eligible to play a string instrument?**

Any child in the 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> grade who is interested may sign up for beginning string lessons. The classes are designed for those students who have a sincere desire to learn to play a string instrument. This learning will take place during a student's next seven to nine years of school and will prepare that student for a musical hobby or vocation as an adult.

## Tips for Parents

*Encouragement* is the most important factor for success in the orchestra program. You as a parent are a valuable source of encouragement for your child. Sometimes the desire to practice will be renewed in a student whose parent simply listens attentively and appreciatively to a new tune at home.

Students who discover the benefits of practice often develop a comfortable routine for study. The use of practice as a punishment only increases frustration.

It is worthwhile to discuss practice habits with your child. Also, involving your child in family musical activities such as playing music, listening to recordings, attending concerts, and watching concerts on television will motivate your child to continue his or her efforts.

### ***Positive reinforcement is very important!***

Remember that progress may seem slow at times, and your child may occasionally seem frustrated and ready to give up. Your encouragement will help your child through these difficult times. Steady improvement and continued enthusiasm are the goals for which student, teacher, and parent must strive.

## Recommended Supplies

Along with the string instrument outfit described, every beginning string student should purchase:

### ♫ **Essential Elements for Strings, Book 1** by Allen, Gillespie, and Hayes

*This book comes with a student activation code that can be used with online play along tracks that are helpful for practicing at home.*

A second book is recommended, though not required:

### ♫ **Tunes for Strings** by Margaret Fenske

*This book of familiar tunes is particularly motivating for students.*

### ♫ **Music Stand**

Used for home practice so students can see their music while maintaining proper posture. Folding metal stands are inexpensive and **NEEDED** for many of our performances such as the District String Festival.

String students will need a soft cloth to clean the instrument after practicing. **Violin and Viola players should purchase a shoulder rest at a music store.**

## The Elementary String Program

At the end of September, all students begin attending lessons at school. Small-group lessons are taught by Mrs. Nolan during the school day. The lesson day remains the same for each student, but the time of day changes each week so the student does not always miss the same class. In addition, Elementary students attend large-group orchestra rehearsals at school. These rehearsals will be held during the lunch hour. These rehearsals are important to help students to learn their instrument, and prepare string students for upcoming performances, including the District Orchestra Festival in early spring.

### **LESSONS & ATTENDANCE**

- Students are responsible for completing any work missed while attending their orchestra lesson.
- Students are expected to attend all scheduled orchestra lessons and rehearsals.
- A copy of the schedule is sent home and posted in every classroom. You can also check out [www.ShorewoodOrchestra.org](http://www.ShorewoodOrchestra.org) for updated lesson schedules. The guideline for lesson attendance is:

**Excused absence-** student is absent from school.  
**Unexcused absence-** student forgets his/her instrument OR student is in school, but fails to attend lesson.

If your child accumulates three unexcused absences, you will be contacted. If there are more than five unexcused absences, your child may be withdrawn from the orchestra program. Advanced notification of absences sometimes allows an alternate lesson time to be arranged.

## Care of a String Instrument

1. Store the instrument away from extreme heat and cold (an outside wall, windows, and the heat register, for example). Do not leave the instrument in the car!
2. Wipe the instrument, strings, and bow stick with a soft cloth after every use. This removes excess rosin.
3. Always handle the instrument by the neck.
4. Check with Mrs. Nolan if you have questions about equipment or repairs. All repairs must be done by a string repair specialist!

## Practice

It is recommended that all beginners practice about five to fifteen minutes each day. The amount of time will increase as students gain experience. Most parents find establishing a routine is the most satisfactory way to encourage daily practice. It is better to practice regularly for less time than to practice occasionally for more time. There will be practice assignments to complete before performances.

## Finding an Instrument

Most beginning string families rent an instrument until they are comfortable with the idea of purchasing one and ready for the full size. Music stores have specific rental plans that vary in duration (3 months, 1 year, etc.) and offer various repair coverage plans. Mrs. Nolan provided you with fliers from local music stores describing their rental plans, but you are welcome to explore other music stores as well.

**\*If looking to purchase an instrument, please contact Mrs. Nolan for assistance before you purchase to insure you spend your money wisely and have an instrument your child will be able to play successfully! \*** Avoid purchasing an instrument from amazon.com. The instruments on many popular sights are more akin to toys or decorations rather than real instruments and are not suitable for classroom instruction.

If your family already owns a string instrument, please have your child bring the instrument to school so that Mrs. Nolan may check to make sure that it is the correct size and is in good playing condition.



Your child is about to embark on an exciting musical adventure, and I look forward to being part of that adventure. Please feel free to contact me with any questions, concerns, or observations.

Additional information can be found at our website: [www.ShorewoodOrchestra.org](http://www.ShorewoodOrchestra.org)

Thank you for your continuing support and encouragement!

**Mrs. Julie Nolan**  
Lake Bluff & Atwater Orchestra Director  
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[www.ShorewoodOrchestra.org](http://www.ShorewoodOrchestra.org)  
**WI-ASTA President**  
**Equity, Growth, & Excellence For All**



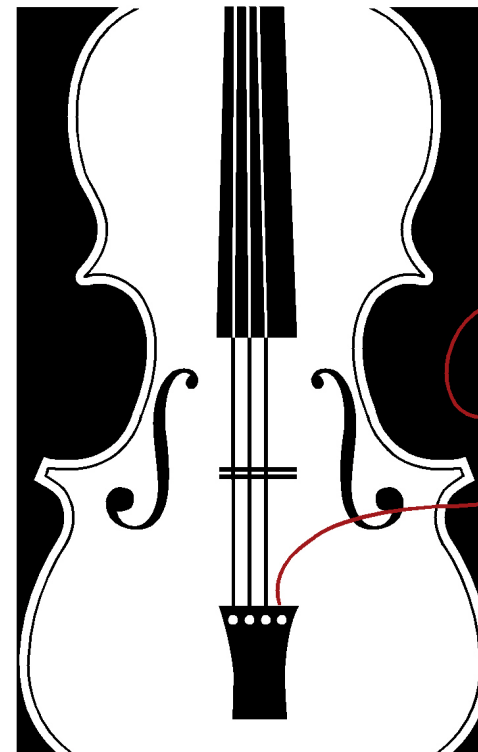
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**Updated 9/12/2023**

# SHOREWOOD STRINGS

## ELEMENTARY ORCHESTRA HANDBOOK

S H O R E W O O D



# STRINGS

## **The Shorewood Orchestra Program**

*In addition to the elementary string program, the Shorewood Orchestra Program has other musical offerings:*

**Summer String Instruction:** All elementary string students have the opportunity to participate in the summer orchestra program through the rec department. A two program, where students gain valuable skills and experience.

**The Mentor Program:** Elementary students can be matched up with intermediate and high school students for an additional lesson each week. For only \$10 or \$15 per lesson, material is reinforced between school lessons. It is highly motivational for elementary students as well as a great learning opportunity for those who mentor.

**Intermediate/High School Orchestra:** At both the intermediate and high schools, string students have the opportunity to participate the school orchestra, which meets as part of the daily schedule. Members of the orchestra perform concerts, attend professional concerts, take trips, work with guest clinicians, and participate in solo and ensemble festivals. Orchestra students continue to work on their own technique while learning about the orchestra and experiencing it for themselves!

**Opportunities for Parents:** Parents are encouraged to participated in the Shorewood Orchestra Program. In addition to attending concerts, parents are invited to join the Shorewood Orchestra Boosters, a parent advocacy group. Please contact Mrs. Nolan to find out how to get involved.