Middle School Orchestra 2025-2026

Contact Information

Welcome to Orchestra! I'm excited to have you in class this year. If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to me via email at lizavaron@assumption.school.

Course Description

In the Middle School Orchestra, students will receive instruction on techniques for producing proper tone, pitch, rhythm, posture, dynamics, and performance. Our focus will be on the mechanics of string instruments—including right and left-hand skills—tone quality, note reading, ear training, sight-reading, intonation, musical expression, and musical literacy within an orchestral context. This class aims to build self-esteem through achievement, foster cooperation through ensemble playing, and develop life skills such as practice, study, and commitment. Classes are held every Wednesday and Friday.

Required Materials

To fully participate in rehearsals, students must bring the following materials:

- A quality, playable instrument with four working strings, purchased or rented from a local music store
- A bow and rosin
- For violin and viola players: a shoulder rest
- A cleaning cloth for regular maintenance of the instrument
- A binder or folder for music
- A pencil for marking music

Since we meet only twice a week, it is essential that students bring these materials to every class. Not bringing an instrument means missing out on crucial ensemble practice, affecting the whole group. If any materials need repair or replacement during the year, students should inform their parents promptly.

Assessments, Participation, and Grading

- **Playing Tests:** These will be administered periodically to assess individual progress. Students will be given advance notice, typically one to two weeks before the test, and they will be conducted in class.
- **Participation:** Daily participation grades reflect students' preparedness and effort in class and will constitute the majority of the grade.
- **Written Assignments:** Occasionally, written assignments will contribute to the overall grade.

Forgotten Instrument Policy

If a student forgets their instrument, it will impact their participation grade for that day. Students should inform Ms. Varon at the start of class if they don't have their instrument.

Music & Binders

Students must bring a binder to store their music. All music distributed in class should be kept in this binder. It is the student's responsibility to track and bring their music to each class. Music should be marked in pencil only. **If music is lost or misplaced, the student must replace it before the next class by asking Ms. Varon for copies before or after class.** Not bringing music will affect participation points.

Practice

Students are responsible for learning their part through consistent at-home practice. This is crucial for both individual and group success. If students encounter difficulties, ongoing practice is the first step. If issues persist despite a regular practice routine, Ms. Varon is available for additional help.

For Parents

Your support is vital to the success of the Assumption Catholic School music program. You can help by:

- Ensuring your child is prepared for rehearsals and punctual for performances
- Notifying Ms. Varon if your child will be absent or late
- Treating practice as a mandatory homework assignment
- Showing interest and support in your child's music education
- Informing Ms. Varon of any factors that may impact your child's participation
- Arranging private lessons when possible or needed

Thank you for your cooperation and support. Let's make this a fantastic year in orchestra!

Please cut at the dotted line and return to Ms. Varon by Wednesday, September 3rd

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I have read and understood the Orchestra syllabus:

Student Name and Signature: _____

I have read the information and reviewed its contents with my child:

Parent Name and Signature:_____