

Downers Grove Grade School District 58 Instrumental Music Program

April 2019

Dear Dist. 58 3rd and 4th Grade Families,

April is an exciting month for our students as they consider selecting an instrument to play. We are thrilled to prepare to welcome you and your child into our outstanding instrumental music program for the 2019-2020 school year.

Downers Grove District 58 has a strong commitment to music education in all of our schools. We are exceedingly proud of our students and the people they become through their involvement in studying music. Participation in beginning band or orchestra is the first step in learning a unique skill that will last a lifetime!

You are invited to an **informational meeting on Thursday, May 16th** in the Herrick Middle School cafeteria to learn about selecting an instrument, registering for band or orchestra, and arranging to rent an instrument for your child. The program will last about an hour. Our beginning orchestra meeting will begin at **6:30pm**, and our beginning band meeting will begin at **7:30pm**.

Later this month, we will be meeting with all 3rd and 4th grade students to demonstrate and talk about the different instruments offered in our program. Students will complete a questionnaire designed to have them think about the instruments they like the most and why they like them. We encourage you to discuss instrument choices with your child and contact us if you have any questions. During this time, students will also be hearing performances from our currently enrolled elementary band members and discussing instruments in their general music classes.

Beginning band or orchestra is the start of an incredible journey, and we cannot wait to meet and start our beginning class for the 2019-2020 School Year!

Please contact one of us if you have any questions about the District 58 Instrumental Music Program. We look forward to seeing you on May 16th!

Sincerely,

The DG58 Instrumental Music Staff

Ms. Lisa Rose, orchestra (HG, WH, HP, KG) - lrose@dg58.org

Ms. Julie Spring, orchestra (FA, HL, IT) - jspring@dg58.org

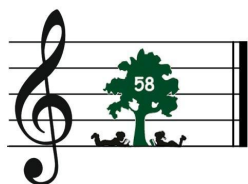
Ms. Madelyn Fiene, orchestra (BA, LE, PD) - mfiene@dg58.org

Mrs. Christine Kaminski, band (ES, FA, IT) - ckaminski@dg58.org

Mrs. Meghan Damore, band (KG) - mdamore@dg58.org

Ms. Rose Cloud, band (HG, WH, LE, HL) - rcloud@dg58.org

Ms. Theresa Steiner, band (PD, BA, HP) - tsteiner@dg58.org



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How to Sign Up for Band and Orchestra 2019-2020 School Year

Step 1 - Student Education

April 30th - May 5th: Students attend in-school instrument demonstrations, hear peers performing on instruments, and learn about band and orchestra in general music classes.

*During the month of April, we encourage students to watch YouTube videos of different instruments and learn more about them. Yamaha (an instrument company) has a great website available: https://www.yamaha.com/en/musical_instrument_guide/

Step 2 - Student Fittings

May 1st - May 15th: Students attend instrument selection appointments during school with their teachers where they will try their three favorite instruments and produce their first sounds. The goals of the appointment are for students to select an instrument whose sound makes them happy and that they will be most successful learning. Students who want to try instruments will need to return their interest form, and there is no cost or pressure to join for students to try the instruments.

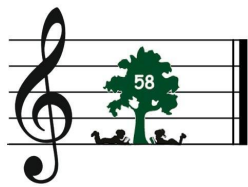
Step 3 - Parent Education and Registration

May 16th: Parents will attend our DG58 Band and Orchestra Meeting in the Herrick Middle School Cafeteria.
Orchestra Meeting (3rd grade families): Herrick Cafeteria at 6:30pm
Band Meeting (4th grade families): Herrick Cafeteria at 7:30pm

May 18th (Southside) or May 20th (Northside): Parents attend beginning band and orchestra registration where they will meet with instrumental rental companies and officially register students for beginning instruction.

Southside: O'Neill Middle School on Saturday morning, May 18th from 9:00am-12:00pm

Northside: Herrick Middle School on Monday evening, May 20th from 5:00pm-8:00pm



Downers Grove Grade School District 58 Instrumental Music Program

Band and Orchestra Side-by-Side Comparison

	<u>Band</u>	<u>Orchestra</u>
Year to Begin Instruction	5th Grade	4th Grade
Instruments Available	Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Saxophone,* Trumpet, French Horn, Baritone, Trombone, Tuba, Percussion*	Violin, Viola, Cello, Bass
Ensemble Experiences at Middle and High School Level	Concert Band, Jazz Band, Pep Band, Marching Band	Orchestra, Chamber Strings
Teachers	Ms. Cloud, Mrs. Kaminski, Mrs. Damore, Ms. Steiner	Ms. Rose, Ms. Spring, Ms. Fiene

We can only accept a limited number of students on the saxophone, and percussion. Students switch to bassoon, tenor and baritone saxophone, and bass clarinet during the summer between 5th and 6th grade for band. If you are interested in playing one of these instruments, let us know during your instrument fitting so we can start you on the appropriate instrument!

Frequently Asked Questions

Does my child have to participate in band or orchestra?

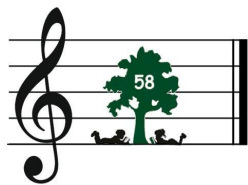
No, but the majority of our students in DG58 do join either band or orchestra. They make exciting progress and have a lot of fun together! Our students experience a great deal of comradery and community in making music together.

Can my child switch from orchestra to band?

We strongly recommend that students continue to study the instrument that they have chosen. They have built proficiency on their instrument and already have a year of success in their original choice! However, we do acknowledge that some students do want to switch instruments, and we assess every switch on an individual basis. Ultimately, students will practice and stick-with the sounds they enjoy, and we want to set up our students for a life-long journey in music making.

Do we have to make a decision about band and orchestra by registration?

In short, yes. Our students have been thinking about the instruments they want to play for many weeks, and they have heard concerts from our middle school ensembles throughout their elementary experiences. Students have also been fitted on specific instruments based upon their own preferences and strengths, so students should have a decision about their instrument choice by registration.



Downers Grove Grade School District 58 Instrumental Music Program

What is the best way to help my musician?

More than anything, students need support from their families. They will need a space to practice, reminders about about concerts, and a working instrument. Most importantly, they need you to be excited for them and encouraging with the process, even when sometimes it gets tough. They will be excited to get ice cream after concerts with you, have you take and send videos of them playing “Hot Cross Buns” to their relatives, and ask questions about the pieces they are playing in class. They will also need you to express that this is something really important and something you value for them to do as they grow up!

Which instrument is the easiest?

Every instrument is easy with consistent practice. We have found that any student can learn to play any instrument if they are regularly practicing. Furthermore, students should have an idea of what instrument will be the best fit for them after their fitting with the band or orchestra teacher.

My family is really busy - is this a huge time commitment?

We do not think so, but it does need to be a consistent commitment. Students have one 30-minute lesson during class once a week and one after-school rehearsal beginning in October. Students should be practicing regularly at home in addition to these rehearsals, and we have found that the majority students are in fact excited to take out their instruments throughout the week. Most students in our DG58 instrumental music program are involved in activities outside the school day and families are able to balance scheduling with sports, religious school, and clubs.

Will this conflict with academics?

No. Research actually demonstrates that participating in instrumental music actually enhances students’ independent thinking and creative reasoning skills. Students from the DG58 Instrumental Music Program have been accepted into top universities, and their participation in the ensembles and program has offered them many outstanding opportunities in college and beyond.

I have more questions. Where can I get more information?

The best way to get more information about individual circumstances is to email the band or orchestra teachers. If you have general questions about the program, then make sure to put the DG58 Instrumental Music Information Meeting on May 16th in your calendar!

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