

OMS/SGMS ORCHESTRA

2020-2021

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to Oslo and Storm Grove Middle Schools! I am very excited about the upcoming year and the many events that await us. Some of you may be returning to orchestra and some may be completely new, but I will do my best to answer any of your questions or concerns, so please feel free to speak to me, email me at Richard.ballinger@indianriverschools.org or call me at 564-3952.

- ❖ **Orchestra Website:** Our Orchestra website is up and running and has forms, private teacher information, and up to date calendar and other information. Please check it often for updates:
www.gotstrings.org
- ❖ **Instruments:** If you decide to purchase your own instrument, please be ***extremely cautious*** about ***buying online*** or from a music shop that is **not** a VIOLIN shop. The nearest **VIOLIN** shop is Atlantic Strings in Melbourne. Go through a reputable string instrument vendor such as
 - Muni Strings (407-951-6256) www.munistrings.com
 - Atlantic Strings (866-284-6546) www.atlanticstrings.com
 - W.H. Lee in Chicago (800-447-4533) www.whlee.com
 - Shar Music (800-248-7427) www.sharmusic.com
 - ***Please email Mr. Ballinger at opusvb@gmail.com if you are considering purchasing your own instrument***
- ❖ **School Instruments:** If you are not able to purchase or rent your own instrument, a limited number of school instruments are available. At this time, the yearly fee is \$100 (violin/viola) or \$150 (cello/bass) to cover annual maintenance costs is requested, payable in small payments or one time online. If you are unable to email, please call 772-564-3952 to get in touch with Mr. Ballinger.
- ❖ **Private Lessons:** Private lessons are highly recommended for all students, though they are not required. If you would like information for lessons, please see the our orchestra webpage at www.gotstrings.org/private-string-lessons

Instruments and Suggested Supplies needed no later than September 1, 2020

1. Adequate Instrument (own, rented, or school assigned)
2. Shoulder Rest (KUN, SUMI, or MACH 1, Everest, FOM) (violin/viola) (\$20-\$35)
3. Rock Stop or chair strap (Cello/Bass) (\$8-20)
4. Rosin marked with students' name in permanent marker (\$2-15)
5. A ½ inch 3-Ring Binder with Plastic Sleeves marked with student's name

Financial Aid is available by contacting Mr. Ballinger at opusvb@gmail.com.

Continued on Reverse

Orientation Information Continued:

Orchestra Parent Meeting:

We will have our Orchestra parent meeting on August 26 and August 29 at 6:30 p.m. You can choose whichever is most convenient for you. We will be completing all the paperwork, financial arrangements, and other important aspects of orchestra at this meeting. Attendance is required (Event Grade).

Orchestra Information Website: www.charmsoffice.com

This is our information portal for the year and will help parents keep in touch with everything orchestra related. Student login information: **School Code – gotstrings**, original **password is student ID**. You will be prompted to change your password. If you are unable to login, contact Mr. Ballinger for assistance.

Smart Music Website: www.smartmusic.com

Smart Music is a very helpful tool for practicing. We will be utilizing it for practice and enrichment. Students will find it useful and have a lot of fun practicing with the various features available. See the website for pricing and ordering information.

Orchestra T-Shirts:

Orchestra T-shirts are black “got strings?” t-shirts and are used for many events as well as students personal pride in their orchestra program. T-shirts are on order now and will be available at the Orchestra in August. T-shirt is included in Lab Fee for beginning orchestra, \$15 for all others.

Interested in Volunteering?:

Please email me at opusvb@gmail.com and let me know what types of assistance you can provide. The orchestra is successful directly as a result of the incredible parents who volunteer to let our students focus on performing their best!

ORCHESTRA HANBOOK is ONLINE at www.gotstrings.org

Please review the handbook and digitally submit the form by August 30, 2020