

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How do I get an instrument for my child?

A: Detailed information on instrument rental is provided during the 4th grade classroom presentations each spring.

Q: Does the district provide rental instruments for every student?

A: Our elementary schools have an inventory of around 750 instruments available for students to rent. These instruments are offered on a first come-first served basis. Alto saxophones are not available for rental though the school system.

Q: How often do classes meet?

A: Students will have two 45-minute classes each week.

Q: How much practice is needed?

A: While practice requirements vary by student, we recommend several sessions equal to 30—60 minutes each week to start.

Q: Is elementary instrumental a prerequisite to playing an instrument in middle school?

A: We strongly recommend that interested students begin instrumental music in the 5th grade. The 6th grade curriculum is based on one year of previous instrumental music instruction.



*research data on music in education can be found at these websites:
www.musicfriends.org/benefits.html
www.childrensmusicworkshop.com/advocacy

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Photo from String Extravaganza 2007

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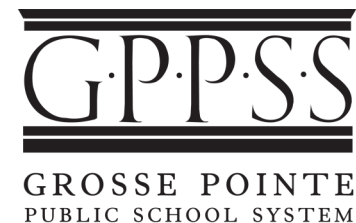
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Elementary Instrumental Music Website

<http://gpschools.schoolwires.net/gpinst>



Elementary Instrumental Music Program



Information for Parents

Music prepares kids for life!

The Journey Begins



The Grosse Pointe Public Schools is pleased to offer your child the opportunity to begin an instrument in the 5th grade Instrumental Music Program. This is the beginning of a musical journey that will provide years of enjoyment and tremendous educational value for your child. As hundreds of students discover each year, the benefits of this program reach far beyond the instrumental classroom. In fact, a growing body of research suggests that music instruction strengthens academic performance!*

Our instrumental music faculty is looking forward to teaching your child as they begin the rewarding experience of playing a musical instrument.

What to Expect

In the next few weeks, enrollment for instrumental music will begin with a teacher presentation in the fourth grade classroom. During the presentation, students will receive further details regarding the enrollment procedure. With parental guidance and teacher recommendation, students may decide to study the **violin, viola, cello, flute, clarinet, alto saxophone, cornet/trumpet, trombone, or baritone**. Parents may choose to rent the instrument through the school system, or from a local dealer. Instrumental instruction begins at the beginning of fifth grade with two 45-minute sessions per week. Students are grouped for instruction according to their instrument. An instrumental class schedule for each school will be provided at the start of the school year.



*alto saxophones are not available for rental through the school system, but are available at most local dealers

Keys to Success

Commitment

Playing an instrument is a skill that is developed over a long period of time. The learning process is filled with peaks and valleys. Students will need encouragement, especially as the excitement of a shiny new instrument wears off. As parents and teachers who understand the value of music in education, we'll need to help them remain committed. The elementary experience is the foundation for many wonderful musical opportunities that lie ahead. The primary key to success in instrumental music is commitment, even when things become difficult.

Practice

Establishing a regular practice routine is another important key to success in instrumental music. As new skills are taught in class, they must be reinforced through consistent practice at home. Children will benefit most from short sessions spread out through the week, as opposed to fewer, longer sessions. Parents will need patience at first, understanding that instrument sounds will become more pleasant over time.



Performance

Performance is an essential part of music education. Therefore, fifth grade instrumental students will present an evening concert in the spring. The date of the concert is posted on each individual school calendar. Your attendance at the concert is one of the strongest ways you can encourage and support your child's participation in the instrumental music program.

Private instruction

While not a requirement, private lessons can greatly enhance your child's musical experience. They can provide more advanced techniques for some, and remedial help for others. If interested, a list of private teachers in this area is available from the instrumental teacher.

Tools for Success

Renting from the School

Instrument quality will directly impact a child's success in instrumental music. An instrument of inferior quality will greatly inhibit your child's chance for success. Parents must take this into careful consideration when determining how they will go about obtaining their child's equipment. For many parents, renting the instrument directly from the school system is a convenient and cost effective alternative. This solution also insures that their child's instrument will meet the necessary quality standards for success. Instruments can be rented for a single semester, or at a discounted rate for the entire school year. Complete information about the school system's instrument rental program will be provided to fourth grade students in the spring. More information can also be found at <http://gpschools.schoolwires.net/gpinst>



Renting from a Dealer

Another option available to parents is to rent an instrument from a local music store. Parents should choose their source carefully, as not all vendors offer the same level of quality. While not intended to be a complete listing of rental sources, the following vendors have consistently provided quality service to the Grosse Pointe Schools: Eastside Music (Roseville), Hewitt's Music (Dearborn), Marshall Music (Troy), and Strings Attached (Grosse Pointe).

Purchasing an Instrument

Purchasing an instrument is yet another option for parents. There are many instruments available today, and unfortunately, not all are of acceptable quality. An instrument of inferior quality will adversely affect your child's progress. Therefore, you may wish to seek professional advice from one of the above sources before making a purchase.

