

*Shivela Middle School
Instrumental Music
Handbook*



Value of Membership

The Shivela Middle School Instrumental Music Program offers students many opportunities for performance and travel. Students will have opportunities to perform in front of thousands of spectators. The training and experiences gained through participation in the music program will be something remembered for years to come.

Being a member of this program means...

- You will have friends on the first day of school.
- You will gain self-confidence through achievement.
- You will have opportunities to develop leadership skills.
- You will develop good study habits and time management skills.
- You will expand your music knowledge and accomplishments.
- You will perform to thousands of audience members.
- You will demonstrate a commitment to a Fine Art performance group. The commitment will assist your future college application process.

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Please return the signed contract on Page 11

Thank you!

Course Descriptions

Beginning/Cadet Band:

This entry/intermediate level, performance based course provides students with a variety of experiences. Music is studied and performed from an entry and intermediate level of middle school repertoire. Sight-reading skills and basic theory are intermixed in the education of music styles. This ensemble performs at concerts and community events.

Intermediate Band:

This intermediate/advanced level, performance based course provides students with a variety of concert band experiences. Music is studied and performed from an intermediate and advanced level of middle school repertoire. Sight-reading skills and basic theory intermixed in the education of music styles and history. This ensemble performs at festivals, clinics, and other concerts and community events. Extracurricular commitment is required.

Symphonic Band:

This advanced level, performance based course provides students with a variety of concert band experiences. Music is studied and performed from an advanced level of middle school repertoire to an entry level of high school repertoire. Sight-reading skills and basic theory are intermixed in the education of music styles and history. This ensemble performs at festivals, clinics, and other concerts and community events. Extracurricular commitment is required.

Jazz Band:

This activity is offered for students who wish to learn to play basic styles of jazz. Emphasis is placed on the swing style and improvisation using the blues scale. Placement is determined by an audition. Jazz band performs at school concerts, for the student body, community, and annual school events. Traditional and a select few expanded big band instruments are used in this course (alto/tenor/bari saxophones, trumpet, trombone, electric guitar, bass guitar, piano, and drum set.)

Strings:

String orchestra will be an opportunity for beginning to advanced string players to develop and refine their individual and ensemble skills. Students will build their knowledge and understanding of the fundamentals of music. This ensemble performs at school concerts and community events. Through rehearsals, performances, and technique study, string orchestra members will become discerning learners and will foster a lifelong appreciation of music. Extracurricular commitment is required.

Parent/Guardian Information

Parent Guidelines:

- Student attendance is important – do not allow students to miss school or rehearsal.
- Students should practice as often as possible. Have your musician play for you occasionally. Encourage excellence from them.
- Avoid overloading your musician with too many extra activities.
- Become involved with your child's music-related activities. Volunteering is a great way to be involved as extra help is always needed.
- Attend events and make positive and encouraging comments about performances. Our attitudes reflect on our kids, which in turn affect their performance.
- Encourage good sportsmanship toward each other.
- Assist your child with scheduling commitments and avoiding conflicts. Careful planning is a must for our busy year.
- Attend Parent Boosters and get involved!

Parent Attire:

You can show school spirit too! You are invited to visit our merch store.

Membership Information

Classroom rules:

- Arrive to class on time. After the bell rings, you have 3 minutes to be seated with your instrument and music ready to go.
- No GUM, FOOD, or DRINKS allowed - water bottles are permitted.
- Be prepared with your instrument, music, and pencil everyday.
- Respect the people, equipment, and furnishings of the classroom.
- Observe all rules in this handbook.

Grading Policy:

Everyday is an audition - students will be evaluated daily on their individual performance and personal contributions to the ensemble. Formal playing assessments will be held periodically either in person or through an online submission via Canvas.

Students are required to attend all performances and rehearsals for each music ensemble upon which they participate, including after school performances and rehearsals. Absences from a concert or other performances will only be excused in case of an emergency. Please see the next page for our full Attendance Policy.

Grading Standards:

- 25% Checking for Understanding: Participation, instrument care evaluation, minor checkpoint grades, etc.
- 35% Relevant Applications: Performance tests, video assignments, skill checks
- 40% Summative Assessments: Performances/concerts

Behavior expectations:

Any and every Shivela Middle School rule applies to all members of the music program at ANY school function, including concerts and field trips.

There will be no talking or playing of instruments unless requested by the instructor. For disruptions, the consequences are as follows:

1. Verbal Warning
2. Loss of rehearsal points
3. Parent Contact
4. Referral to Administration
5. Class change or removal from the program

Membership Information

Concert Dress Code:

Students are responsible for providing their own clothes that are not provided by the Shivela Music Program. If you have any questions or concerns regarding the dress code, please contact Mr. Ramirez.

Performance Attire for ALL ENSEMBLES:

- Shivela Music Polo shirt, tucked in
- ALL BLACK dress pants or long skirt below the knee
 - No jeans. Belts, if worn, need to have a regular sized buckle and no studs
- ALL BLACK dress shoes
 - Wedges/platforms/heels not recommended – may be unsafe on stages
- ALL BLACK LONG socks for students who wear dress pants. For long skirts, socks may be optional. If socks are worn, they must be black.
- Jewelry and painted fingernails are not part of the uniform and must be removed or covered unless directed by the director.

ABOVE AND BEYOND OPPORTUNITIES:

Students who are accomplished in music fundamentals are encouraged to audition and participate in honor groups. Audition requirements may vary for each group and solo literature is available through our school library or Mr. Ramirez.

Opportunities include:

- SCSBOA Middle School Honor Band, Jazz Band, or Orchestra
- CBDA All-State Honor Band, Jazz Band, or Orchestra
- Riverside City College Honor Bands

Participation in these ensembles is an amazing opportunity and experience.

Participation usually means that you will have to miss school to attend rehearsals and performances. It is important to remember that you must fulfill your responsibilities to your primary group at SMS. Attendance policy will apply (conflicts with honor groups will be excused). You will have the opportunity to play high level literature with other serious, devoted students under the guidance of world class conductors and educators. It is an incredible honor to the student, family, and the school to have our members participate in these ensembles. Contact Mr. Ramirez if you have any questions regarding these opportunities.

Attendance Policy

The Shivela instrumental music program relies on the participation of all of its members. Performances and rehearsals are scheduled well in advance, and students are expected to commit to all performances. As described in the course description of our music classes, **“Attendance at all rehearsals and performances is mandatory.”** Any potential conflict should be avoided when planning and organizing. Communicate clearly your obligations at the start of the school year to all groups in which you may be involved in. Your family is expected to set all rehearsals and performances on your family calendar. These dates are to be considered a previous commitment.

*EARLY IS 30 MINUTES EARLY!
ON TIME IS 15 TO 20 MINUTES EARLY!!
YOU ARE LATE IF YOU ARE ON TIME!!!*

Students are graded on attendance and participation at all rehearsals and performances. It is essential that students fulfill the commitment of participation in their performance group. The entire performing group is affected by each of its members. For this reason, unexcused absences from rehearsals and/or performances affect the grade a student receives.

Excused absences may be granted by the director due to the following:

- Family emergency – family emergencies do not include babysitting, work, concert tickets, shopping, etc.
- Religious calendar conflicts, provided prior written notice is given, will be excused.
- Attendance conflicts with another SMS school event. (i.e. sport meet, choir concert, etc.) However, these conflicts may be negotiated between the director and a coach/teacher. If the negotiations result in equitable distribution of excused absences, there will be no grade or participation penalty to the student.

Example of absences that will not be excused:

- Non-school related performance activities
- Vacations
- Study groups/study classes/study for tests

Performance/Attendance policy:

- Students missing rehearsals prior to a performance may be excluded from the performance at the discretion of the director.
- Students missing school the day of a performance may not perform with the group.

Singular excused absences will not affect the student's grade. Multiple excused absences will result in a lowered grade and possible exclusion from the performance (determined by director).

Please review our calendar, take note of any conflicts, and meet with Mr. Ramirez to request an excusal.

Travel Policy

A MEDICAL RELEASE FORM must be filled out, signed, and on file with the school nurse and Mr. Ramirez before any student may travel. Special health problems should also be noted so that adequate care can be provided when away from home. If your student requires specific, important, and frequent medical attention, you may be asked to accompany them on all trips. Please update medical release forms during the year if necessary. The safety of your child is our top priority in all activities.

Adult supervision is provided on all trips. The Murrieta Valley Unified School District is responsible for each student traveling with the group. Students traveling to an event with the music group must return in the same manner, with the following exception: *Students may return with their own parents or guardians if a note has been given to the director, in advance, relieving the District of all responsibility.*

Students may not ride home from a music event with fellow students. Students may ride home with parents of a student only if a request for permission has been received in writing. The Music Boosters organization assumes no responsibility for any personal items. It is suggested that valuables be left at home.

Students are responsible for loading and unloading their own instruments, personal belongings, and equipment before and after all events. Buses are to be clean and free of trash at the end of all trips.

At the conclusion of all events, students should arrange to be picked up at school **promptly at the designated pick-up time**. Pick up times are listed in the itinerary that is sent out prior to the event.

Instrument Guidelines & Policies

Instruments:

If you wish to borrow an instrument from Shivela, we request a \$100 annual donation. All donations are handled by the MVUSD district office and are used to pay for basic maintenance and repair. When checking the instrument back in for the last time, it must be PROFESSIONALLY cleaned & serviced from an approved music store. The cost for this procedure varies by instrument. Students not using school instruments must provide their own by other means.

To keep your instrument safe and in good working condition:

- Put a name tag on the case in a highly visible place. Many instruments look the same, and someone may accidentally play the wrong instrument.
- Store your instrument in your designated spot every time.
- Always take your instrument with you when leaving a rehearsal. Do not leave your instrument on a chair or unattended.
- Take your instrument home to practice everyday.
- Hold your instrument against you when walking around.
- Keep SMS instrument nametags on instruments at all times.
- DO NOT share instruments.
- School instruments may be played only by the student issued the instrument. If a student does not follow this policy, the instrument will be collected.

Storage Room Policy:

The instrument storage rooms are for member use only. It is recommended that you insure your instrument with your homeowner's policy. Neither the school district nor SMS accepts liability for the safety of your personal items or instruments and will not replace stolen or damaged instruments or equipment. There is easy access to the music room – the room should not be considered secure.

Syllabus & Handbook Contract

First and Last Name of Student: _____

Period #: _____

By signing this contract, you have agreed to the following:

- We have read and understand the “Handbook”
- We have read and understand the “Supply Sheet” for my instrument
- We understand that the SMS Bands & Orchestra are a team activity, and if one student is absent or unprepared, the whole group suffers.
- We understand that students are assigned music to practice every school day. To that end, students should practice five days per week.
- We have received performance and rehearsal dates and understand that attendance at all performances and rehearsals is mandatory.
- We have read, understood, and will support the responsibilities, obligations, and policies of the Shivela Middle School Instrumental Music Program as stated in the handbook.

Student: _____

Sign

Date

Parent/Guardian: _____

Sign

Date