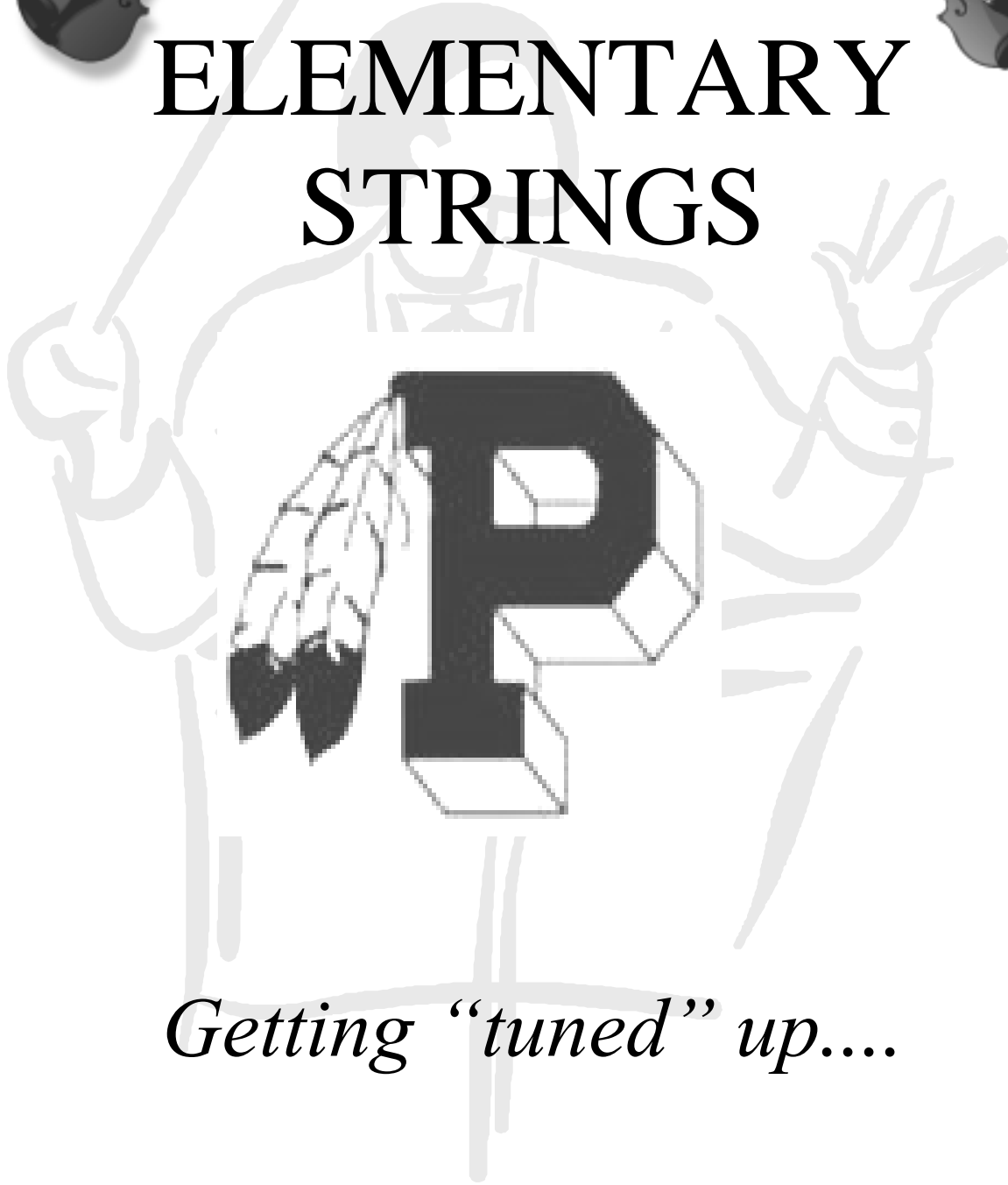




PERU
ELEMENTARY
STRINGS



Getting “tuned” up....



Peru Central School District Elementary Instrumental Music Program

Dear Peru Students and Families,

Welcome to and congratulations on becoming a part of Peru Elementary School's String Program! Learning and playing instruments not only improves coordination, self-discipline, and creativity, but it also increases brain function and development which helps us to become highly-functional and well-rounded human beings. By expressing an interest in a string instrument, you are becoming a part of a long line of talented Peru musicians.

You will begin your training during in-school lessons as a Partenza String member, and then eventually earn your way into our large group, the Maestro Orchestra.

Information about our String Program is included on the following pages. I hope you find this information useful as you prepare for participation in the program.

Good luck, work hard, and I look forward to seeing you in Strings!

Casey Ann Fitzsimmons
Grades 4-12 String Director
Peru Central School
cfitzsimmons@perucsd.org
(518) 643-6499 ext. 5050

Communication

Peru Central School is making a large effort to reduce costs associated with printing and copying. As part of this effort, teachers have been asked to drastically reduce hardcopy notices that are sent home. Most information, including syllabi, handbooks, concert info, etc. will now be communicated by e-mail.

If you are not already receiving String information through e-mail and would like to, please send an e-mail to cfitzsimmmons@perucsd.org indicating what e-mail addresses you would like added to the list or, if you do not have e-mail, send me a note indicating so and I will do my best to keep you informed using alternative methods.

Instrument Rentals and Loans

While it is usually best for students to own the instrument they use, Peru Central has a limited number of string instruments available for student use (at no cost) on a first-come, first served basis. Below is a list of available and unavailable instruments and their relative condition. Please let me know if you are in a position to rent an instrument & I will send home info. I will have all students measured for appropriate sized instruments and pass that information along as well.

INSTRUMENT LOANS (Peru Central School)

Available Instruments:

- Violin – *limited number, good/ fair condition*
- Viola – *limited number, good/fair condition*
- Cello - *limited number, good/ fair condition*
- Bass – *limited number, good condition*

Below are two music companies that can assist you on your quest for instrument rentals. Prices and packages are available - please inquire about instrument age, history, repair services/costs, and quality before renting in order to find the best deal.

INSTRUMENT RENTALS:

Vermont Violins, Burlington, Vermont

(802) 862-0349

www.vermontviolins.com

**Will deliver instruments to Peru saving us a trip!!!

John Keal Music Co., Albany

(518) 482-4405

(800) 544-6631

www.johnkealmusic.com

**Will deliver instruments to Peru saving us a trip!!!

Accessory Equipment

When purchasing or renting an instrument, several accessories are often included. Peru Central does its best to provide these accessories when loaning instruments, but are limited in supplies. Proper use of accessories will be demonstrated in lessons. Here is what you should have with your instrument:

Violin: Rosin, cleaning cloth (non-abrasive), Kun shoulder rest or sponge

Viola: Rosin, cleaning cloth (non-abrasive) Kun shoulder rest or sponge

Cello: Rosin, cleaning cloth (non-abrasive) Cello anchor (for endpin)

String Bass: Rosin, cleaning cloth (non-abrasive) Rock stop (for endpin)

In-School Lessons

Once an instrument is obtained, all students begin their training in lessons. Lessons and individual practice are the keys to student success and the backbone of a strong music program. Lessons occur once per 6-day cycle and rotate meeting times every week so the student doesn't miss the same class frequently. Lesson schedules are normally sent home via e-mail (and hard-copy if needed) at the beginning of each semester.

All instruments will use the method book "String Builder" by Samuel Applebaum as a textbook (*please see "Expectations: Parent Responsibilities" section*). Instrument care and sound production will be taught during the first lesson – it is recommended that students do not try to play the instrument until they are taught the proper method. The bow will **NOT** be introduced until the second or third lesson. (**Therefore, the bow is off-limits until then.**) After several months of lessons, students are asked to participate in the large group, Maestro Orchestra (based on individual practice, development, and effort). In-school instrument lessons continue as long as the student is enrolled in the String Program at Peru Central School (Grades 4-12).

Students enrolled in the String program are not only expected to remember when their assigned lesson time is and attend lessons regularly, but are also required to remember to practice their assigned lesson homework regularly. Parents and Teachers can help by encouraging students to attend lessons and practice regularly.

Individual Practice

The more you practice, the better you get – and the faster it happens! If you aren't seeing any progress, the instrument seems too difficult, or you're not enjoying playing, you probably aren't practicing enough.

Every student will be assigned practice "homework" each lesson. It is recommended that beginners practice their homework almost every day (a day off here and there is ok). 20 minutes to 1/2 hour of practice time per day is acceptable to start. If practicing more than that (great!), it is wise to stagger practice time throughout the day. Practice should be slow and methodical, with attention to what was gone over in lessons – practicing properly creates good playing habits; practicing mistakes makes you good at making mistakes.

It is recommended that students keep track of time spent practicing. Students will be provided with a "practice Journal". The purpose of the practice journal is to help you establish a routine and keep track of how much and how often you practice. I can tell when you have practiced and when you haven't. If you are practicing regularly, you will have very little trouble becoming an excellent young musician.

Before-School Rehearsals

Based on their efforts in lessons and individual practice, students may be asked (after several months of lessons) to begin playing with the **Maestro Orchestra**. In the Orchestra, students learn to play together with other people and other instruments while studying music from many different time periods and styles.

Rehearsals take place once a week before school from 7:30 to 9:05 a.m. Parents must arrange transportation (either through family/friends or via the High School bus run). Rehearsals will be held in the Secondary Orchestra Room on Wednesdays each week. Refer to the schedule in case there are specific changes. Please be aware that rehearsals are a mandatory part of participation in the Maestro Orchestra. If a student misses more than 2 rehearsals, they may be asked not to play in the concert. It is also unacceptable and unfair to other students to forget instruments or music. Every member is valuable to the Orchestra and we need everyone at rehearsals prepared to learn and contribute! Here is a list of what students are expected to bring to each rehearsal (and small group lesson):

- Instrument with all necessary equipment
- Music Folder containing lesson book & Maestro Orchestra music
- Pencil
- A Great Attitude!

Rehearsal & Concert Schedule

The rehearsal and concert schedule will be sent via e-mail and/or hard-copy in late September. If a change is made, students and parents will be notified in as timely a manner as possible.

Looking Ahead

Participation in the Maestro Orchestra qualifies you to join the Middle School Mezzo Orchestra when you enter 7th grade, then the High School Avanti Orchestra when you enter 9th grade. In addition you may decide to participate in the annual NYSSMA Solo Festival, which can help you get into the All-County and All-State music festivals where top students from around the area are selected to perform together in an orchestral setting. There are plenty of optional musical opportunities ahead!

Expectations

Student Responsibilities

- Show Respect to the Teacher and Other Members of the Class
- Observe all Class Rules
- Practice Regularly (*Work Hard!*)
- Attend Lessons Regularly
- Keep a Written Record of Assignments
- Attend Rehearsals Regularly
- Demonstrate Proper Instrument Care and Maintenance
- Remember Your Instrument for Lessons and Rehearsals
- Participate in all Intermediate String Concerts (*1st year also!*)
- Make up any Missed Work (*From Rehearsal or Music Lessons*)
- Have A Positive Attitude!

Parent Responsibilities

- Be encouraging and complimentary, not discouraging – we all go through the initial period of sounding “not-so-good”, but a little praise often goes a long way – in time, you’ll notice the difference!
- Provide a dependable instrument (*see instrument rental & loan section*)
- Provide a lesson book (**String Builder by Samuel Applebaum**) for the student’s instrument (*available online or at any music store*) – *If money is an issue, please let the String Director know...*
- Provide a practice space at home with good lighting, a chair, some sort of music stand, and a CD player so the student can play along with the CD that (sold separately) goes with the book.
- Review all assigned reading material with the student
- Supervise practices, especially at the beginning; have the student explain what he/she is doing
- Communicate with the String Director if the need arises

Teacher Responsibilities

- Teach the fundamentals of instrument performance
- Establish clear goals and expectations for students
- Organize quarterly lesson and rehearsal schedules and distribute to parents, students, and teachers
- Maintain records of lesson and rehearsal attendance and achievement
- Select concert dates and programs

Contract

After you have read all of the information on the previous pages, please take a few moments to fill out and sign the Instrumental contract on the final page of this packet. The contract is an understanding and agreement between the parent, teacher, and student that all expectations and requirements will be followed. When complete, please return the form to me at your earliest convenience. You may keep the rest of the handbook packet for future reference. Thank you!



ELEMENTARY INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC CONTRACT

By signing this form, you are making a commitment to the Peru String Program. You will be obligated and expected to participate by following the expectations outlined in the handbook. If the expectations are not met, you may be asked to discontinue participation in the String program.

Please place a check next to the statements that apply to you.

STUDENT:

_____ I have read, understand, and will follow the expectations and requirements for Elementary Instrumental Music Participation.

Instrument _____

Homeroom Teacher _____

Student's Name _____ Student Signature _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN:

_____ My child will participate in the Intermediate Instrumental Music Program and has read, understands, and will follow the expectations and requirements for Elementary Instrumental Music Participation.

_____ I am interested in participating in the Music Booster Club.

Parent/Guardian's Name _____ Signature _____

E-mail (to be added to distribution list) _____

Check here if you do *not* use e-mail _____

Phone Number _____

Due to the District's large effort to reduce consumption and costs associated with paper, most music-related activities and information will be communicated via e-mail. If you use e-mail, please be sure to list it CLEARLY on this slip (even if I already have you on my distribution list). I will keep this information stored safely in a file in case the internet goes down when I need to contact you.

If you do not use e-mail, please indicate so in the space reserved for e-mail.

THANK YOU!