

Instrumental Music Guidelines for the Fall 2021 Semester

- ***APS provides rentals first to students who qualify for free and reduced lunch***
- *All information is subject to change according to Virginia Department of Education and CDC guidelines*

Fall 2021 Playing Procedures

- All string classes can be played inside, with masks on
- Band instruments can be played inside, if they have bell covers
 - Bell covers will be supplied by Arts Ed, however, due to cost, as well as delays in supplies – they may not be available for everyone (especially those that may be providing their own instruments)
- If one or more of the band students in the class don't have a bell cover, we will have to either play outside, or the students without the bell covers will have to "finger along" and not blow
- In case of rain, or bad weather – band classes with instruments without bell covers will have to be "fingered" and "sizzled," or given instruction to work on at home.

So, my thoughts:

- If your student is vacillating between taking a band or a string instrument, I would choose a string instrument! There is a better chance that those classes will have fewer interruptions, etc.
 - The good news is that we have lots of string instruments available for rental from the school.
- There is still a lot of "air" moving through the open holes of flutes, clarinets and saxophones - in addition to air going through the bells.
- If a student starts on a string instrument, out of safety reasons, and wants to switch once the students can be vaccinated, I will be glad to move them to a different instrument, as long as I have one that they want!

FAQs – Frequently Asked Questions about the Instrumental Music Program

- **Will There be Elementary Instrumental Music in the Fall of 2021?**
 - Yes!!
 - We will continue to meet at least once a week.
 - We will have in person classes in accordance with CDC guidelines.
- **What instruments are available for my student to play?**
 - Instruments available for band (4th & 5th) are Flute, Clarinet, Alto Saxophone, Trumpet, Trombone, Euphonium, Percussion.
 - Instruments available for strings (4th & 5th) are Violin, Viola, Cello and String Bass.

- **Should we rent or purchase an instrument for Fall 2021?**
 - We recommend that first year players rent from a reputable local music store.
 - Second year players may continue on their instrument from fourth grade.
 - [Foxes Music](#), [Music and Arts](#), [Brobst Violin Shop](#), [Potter Violins](#) and [Day Violins](#) are all open.
 - Rentals can also be done through your teacher at your school. APS provides rentals first to students who qualify for free and reduced lunch. Fall distribution process being finalized.

- **How are lessons scheduled?**
 - Lessons may be scheduled for in-person meetings as well as virtually through the use of Canvas, Seesaw, Flipgrid, and Essential Elements Interactive.
 - Lessons may be a blended model.
 - Lessons are usually 30 minutes, once per week.

- **Should my student practice?**
 - Yes!! Please play your instrument for a few minutes everyday!
 - Generally, aim to practice sixty minutes a week.

- **Will there be performances?**
 - We hope so!! We will follow guidelines from the APS Central Office.
 - Performances may be in person, virtual, or recorded.

- **How can parents help their children practice?**
 - It is very important to establish a consistent practice routine from the beginning. Perhaps have your daily practice before or after dinner.
 - Listen to your student practice and ask them to teach you what they are learning.

How to Practice

- Each session should last between 5-25 minutes
 - Practicing more frequently for fewer minutes is more beneficial than long infrequent sessions
 - Try to plan out a consistent practice schedule that is part of your weekly routine
- Start your session by reviewing material you already know
- Next, work on one or two specific things you hope to improve on
 - Make NO MISTAKES - slow down so you can be completely accurate. Otherwise, you're practicing how to play something wrong!
 - Follow these five steps:



1. Count and clap all rhythms
 2. Speak all the note names (not the solfege names!)
 3. Review the fingerings of each note while speaking the note names in the correct rhythm
 4. Play through VERY SLOWLY and make NO MISTAKES.
 5. Gradually increase your playing speed as you become more comfortable
- Finish your session by previewing new material or playing through something fun
 - Remember - **we don't practice so we can get something right, we practice so we can never get it wrong!**
 - Make sure to clean your instrument when you are done!