

DIXIE SCHOOL DISTRICT
MUSIC DEPARTMENT
HANDBOOK



“If I were not a physicist, I would probably be a musician. I often think in music. I live my daydreams in music... I get most joy in life out of music.”

- Albert Einstein, physicist

“Music doesn’t lie. If there is something to be changed in this world, then it can only happen through music.”

- Jimi Hendrix, guitarist

“You’ve got to learn your instrument. Then, you practice, practice, practice. And then, when you finally get up there on the bandstand, forget all that and just wail.”

- Charlie Parker, saxophonist

“The arts are not a way of making a living. They are a very human way of making life more bearable. Practicing an art, no matter how well or badly, is a way to make your soul grow, for heaven's sake. Sing in the shower. Dance to the radio. Tell stories. Write a poem to a friend, even a lousy poem. Do it as well as you possibly can. You will get an enormous reward. You will have created something.”

- Kurt Vonnegut, author

“You are the music while the music lasts.”

- T. S. Eliot, poet

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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You may email or call **Steve Steinberg** if you have any questions regarding the music department. Email is preferable.

Music Staff

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3rd Grade General Music Teacher
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Steve Steinberg
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District Band Teacher
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Instructional Assistants
Marianne Ellenberger - orchestra
Gloria Bland - choir
Tyler Graves - band

Staff Biographies

Christopher Rieder has been a choral music teacher for the past sixteen years, and is currently enjoying his fourth year with the Dixie School District. Mr. Rieder graduated from the University of Miami where he studied choral conducting and classical voice (tenor). He has taught high school chorus in Santee, CA and Hialeah, FL, middle school choral music and musical theater in Beverly Hills Unified, and elementary vocal music in Los Angeles Unified. As a professional musician, Mr. Rieder has conducted community and professional choirs, performed extensively as a tenor, and played piano for critically acclaimed indie rock bands with national album releases. His musical interests are wide-ranging, and include classical music, jazz, rock and experimental music. Mr. Rieder lives in Oakland, and in his free time enjoys bicycling, reading everything he can get his hands on, writing music, exploring the East Bay, and playing punk rock accordion (seriously).

Steve Steinberg has a BA in jazz performance from San Jose State University and an MA in Jazz Studies from SDSU. A professional saxophonist and woodwind player, Steve has performed with many top jazz, R&B, and popular performers, such as Natalie Cole, Rosemary Clooney, Mel Torme, The Temptations, Frank Sinatra Jr., George Shearing, Aretha Franklin, and many others. As a composer, arranger and performer, his work has been featured on many CDs including his own 1999 release, "Minor Excursions." In the San Diego area, Steve could be heard regularly with many bands, including the Ira Liss Big Band Jazz Machine, the Brad Steinwehe Jazz Orchestra, Big Time Operator, The Screamin' Primas, The Anthology House Band, and many more. Check out the new releases featuring Mr. Steinberg from the Ira Liss Big Band Jazz Machine (It's About Time), and the Brad Steinwehe Jazz Orchestra (Wgasa Jam), both available on CD Baby.

Mr. Steinberg has been a music educator since 1984, teaching all levels, including elementary, middle school, high school instrumental music, and university jazz improvisation, jazz history and jazz ensembles. He has served as a judge and clinician at many jazz festivals, including Cal State Hayward, Cal State Stanislaus, the Fullerton College Jazz Festival, and the CMEA/KSDS Jazz Festival. For the past 12 years, Mr. Steinberg has taught band, jazz band, and orchestra at Marshall MS in Scripps Ranch, co-taught the USD Jazz Ensemble, taught jazz saxophone at Palomar College, was on staff for the House of Blues Summer Jazz Workshop. He was the Jazz Rep for CMEA and coordinated the annual CMEA/KSDS Jazz Festival at San Diego City College. Mr. Steinberg was also the founder and Jazz Director of the NYO (New Youth Orchestra) Jazz Program and the founder and Assistant Conductor of the NYO Select Wind Ensemble in Sorrento Valley. Currently, Mr. Steinberg is also teaching music classes at the College of Marin (Jazz Improvisation and the History of Rock, Pop and Jazz)

Shahrazad Vakharia grew up in Ohio and received her degree in Music Education from Bowling Green State University in 1998. Ms. Vakharia has taught band and orchestra at the elementary, middle, and high school level. She has taught in Columbus (OH), Odessa (TX), and most recently in Livermore (CA). Ms. Vakharia began teaching orchestra with the Dixie School District in 2009, and currently is the middle school director as well as the music department coordinator.

MUSIC AT THE ELEMENTARY LEVEL

Third Grade Music

Students in the third grade meet with their music teachers once a week for 40 minutes. The emphasis is on music literacy and singing. Around February, students will begin playing the recorder as well. The curriculum is varied and will include: singing (including basic vocal technique), solfege (do-re-mi), reading music notation (rhythm patterns including sixteenth notes and syncopated rhythms, melodic patterns found within the pentatonic scale), music vocabulary, basic music composition, exploring musical styles from other cultures, and basic woodwind technique. Much of the instruction is based on a modified Kodály system. Students perform twice a year at their school.

Instrumental Music Education

In the fourth grade, all students will have the opportunity to play an instrument. Classes meet twice a week for 40 minutes. Fifth grade students receive music twice a week for forty-five minutes. Fourth graders may choose to play the violin, viola, clarinet, or trumpet. In the fifth grade students may continue with the same instrument, select a different instrument, or join the chorus. Students will receive choice emails in April. Please be sure to complete the online form by the due date.

Fourth Grade Band

The fourth grade band program meets twice a week at the elementary schools. Band students will learn the basics of instrument care and maintenance, how to hold and play the instrument, and basic rehearsal and concert etiquette. Students are offered either clarinet or trumpet. The emphasis is on instrumental technique, music reading, and ensemble skills. By the end of the year students will have learned the first five notes (or more) of the B-flat major scale and be able to read, count and describe the whole note, half note, quarter note, eighth note and equivalent rests, as well as basic music terms and symbols. Students perform twice a year at their school.

Fourth Grade Orchestra

Students in 4th Grade Orchestra learn the basics of instrument care and maintenance, how to hold and play the instrument, and basic rehearsal and concert etiquette. Basic music literacy includes both pitch and rhythm recognition and the ability to play those pitches and rhythms on their instruments. Pitches on all open strings and fingered pitches in first position, as well as eighth notes, quarter notes, and half notes are introduced and practiced. Instruction is based on a modified Suzuki system. Students perform twice a year at their school.

Fifth Grade Band

Music reading skills and instrumental technique exercises are accomplished with daily method book studies from Essential Elements, Book 1. Students will learn the full 8 notes of B flat major scale and add additional rhythm patterns. Students will rehearse and perform a variety of fun band arrangements incorporating bass lines, harmony and counterpoint. Instrument choices expand to include: flute, clarinet, trumpet, alto sax and trombone. Students perform twice a year at their school, and will perform together at the Spring Band Festival in May.

Fifth Grade Orchestra

Students in the 5th Grade Orchestra review the basics of instrument care and maintenance, how to hold and play the instrument, and basic rehearsal and concert etiquette. Fifth Grade Orchestra students further refine basic pitch, rhythm, and other music reading skills. Cello, and bass are offered in addition to the violin and viola. Pitches through one octave in D major and G major are reviewed. Concert repertoire is more advanced than 4th Grade and may include pieces with two or more parts, with a focus on reading and musicality. Students perform twice a year at their school, and will perform together at the Spring Orchestra Festival in May.

Fifth Grade Choir

In the fifth grade students begin to learn basic techniques for choral singing, which includes learning about proper breathing and vocal production. They will perform music in a wide variety of styles, and the repertoire will include songs sung in unison and in harmony. Students are also exposed to literature in different languages highlighting various cultures. Music reading skills, theory and ensemble technique are also taught at this time. Students perform twice a year at their school, and will sing together as the Fifth Grade Festival Chorus at the Spring Choral Festival in May.

Enrichment Ensembles (before/after school):

All-District Elementary Honor Choir (Thursdays)

The Honor Choir is an auditioned, intermediate-advanced group that meets after school on either Tuesdays or Thursdays at Miller Creek from 3:15pm-4:15pm. 4th and 5th grade singers are eligible to try out. Students in the Honor Choir will learn fundamentals of vocal and choral technique, as well as sing fun and challenging unison, two- and three-part choral music. It is important that Honor Choir students are able to commit to weekly rehearsal until the beginning of June. The Honor Choir will have three performances this year: the evening Winter and Spring Concerts at Miller Creek, and a choral festival in Pleasant Hill in April (after which the group will go to Six Flags in Vallejo).

Jazz Band/Jazz Combo and Lab Jazz Band (Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays)

In addition to the core music program at Miller Creek MS, we also offer a Jazz Combo, a Jazz Lab band and a Jazz Ensemble after school. All ensembles explore the elements and styles of music specific to jazz, such as syncopated rhythms, improvisation and stylistic phrasing and interpretation. These are performance ensembles that require enrollment in the instrumental music program for participation. Special thanks to CanDo! for the support of the jazz program at Miller Creek.

MUSIC AT MILLER CREEK MIDDLE SCHOOL

We are fortunate to have a thriving music program at the middle school level. Students may choose music as one of their electives. Music classes meet every day. Band, orchestra, and chorus are offered.

BAND

Intermediate Band (Sixth Grade)

Students enrolled in the intermediate band meet daily for 45-48 minutes. The group rehearses as a full ensemble. In the sixth grade, students learn scales and arpeggios in several keys (Bb, Eb, F concert). Rhythm studies will include counting and syllable systems. Students perform literature that is specifically composed or arranged for this level, typically at the 1 to 2 levels. Characteristic tone, balance, blend, and intonation are heavily stressed.

In addition to the Winter Concert and Spring Band Festival, students will participate in the Forum Festival/Great America trip. Other performances may include performing at school board meetings, basketball games, and the CMEA Solo and Ensemble Festival.

INSTRUMENTATION

Students in the sixth grade may continue to study the instrument started at the elementary school (flute, clarinet, trumpet, or trombone). In addition, the following instruments may be selected: oboe, bassoon, alto saxophone, French horn, tuba, euphonium, or percussion. The ensembles at Miller Creek Middle School are concert bands. A balanced ensemble sound is impossible without balanced instrumentation. **Therefore the middle school director must approve any instrument switch.** Because seventh and eighth grade students rehearse and perform together, the needs of all ensembles will be considered when determining switches at any grade level.

Concert Band/Advanced Band (Seventh and Eighth Grade)

Students enrolled in Concert Band and Advanced band meet daily for 45-48 minutes. Students learn scales and arpeggios in the full range of their instruments in several keys (Bb, Eb, F, C, Ab, G). Counting is reinforced and an emphasis is placed on playing musically. Students perform literature typically at the 2 to 3.5 levels. Characteristic tone (including vibrato when appropriate), balance, blend, musicality and intonation are heavily stressed.

In addition to the Winter Concert and Spring Band Festival, students may have the opportunity to participate in the Forum Festival/Great America trip, the CMEA Large Ensemble Festival, A trip to Disneyland, and the Dixie District elementary tour. Other performances may include performing at school board meetings, basketball games, and the CMEA Solo and Ensemble Festival. Students are encouraged to take private lessons and audition for honor bands.

INSTRUMENTATION

By the time a student reaches the Concert Band level, s/he is expected to perform at a mastery level. Therefore, switching instruments is discouraged unless it is needed to meet the needs of ensemble *and* the student is studying with a private lesson teacher. A balanced ensemble sound is impossible without balanced instrumentation. **The middle school director must approve any instrument switch.**

CHORUS

Intermediate Choir (Sixth Grade)

Middle school choir students rehearse every day during second period. The ensemble will sing quality unison, two- and three-part choral music in several different styles. Students will continue learning about and practicing good vocal technique and rehearsal skills, will develop an ensemble sound that is balanced and has an excellent blend, and will improve their music literacy skills by studying sight-singing and music theory. The Sixth Grade Choir will perform multiple times during the school year: performances currently scheduled include the Winter and Spring Concerts at MCMS and the Forum Festival/Great America trip.

Concert Choir (Seventh and Eighth Grade)

The Concert Choir is open to students in 7th and 8th grade, and rehearses daily during first period. Students in Concert Choir will continue to grow as musicians by performing challenging choral music in different styles and languages, improving their understanding of vocal technique and ensemble singing needs, and continuing to learn music reading and music theory. As in the 6th grade, Concert Choir students will perform several times per year for the school and community: the Winter and Spring Concerts at Miller Creek, the CMEA choral festival at San Jose State in April, and the Forum Festival/Great America trip in May.

ORCHESTRA

Intermediate Orchestra (Sixth Grade)

Students enrolled in the intermediate orchestra meet daily for 45-48 minutes. The group rehearses as a full ensemble. In the sixth grade, students learn scales in two octaves. Shifting is introduced and proper bow technique is practiced. Counting and following the conductor is emphasized. Students perform literature that is specifically composed or arranged for this level typically at the 1 to 2 levels. Characteristic tone, balance, blend, and intonation are heavily stressed.

In addition to the Winter Concert and Spring Orchestra Festival, students participate in the CMEA Solo and Ensemble Festival, the CMEA Large Ensemble Festival, and the Forum Festival/Great America trip. Other performances may include touring the Dixie District Elementary Schools and performing at school board meetings.

Concert Orchestra (Seventh and Eighth Grade)

Students enrolled in Concert Orchestra meet daily for 45-48 minutes. Students learn scales and arpeggios in two to three octaves. Emphasis is placed on playing musically. Students perform literature typically at the 2 to 3.5 levels. Characteristic tone (including vibrato), balance, blend, musicality and intonation are heavily stressed.

In addition to the Winter Concert and Spring Orchestra Festival, students participate in the CMEA Solo and Ensemble Festival, the CMEA Large Ensemble Festival, and the Forum Festival/Great America trip. Students are encouraged to take private lessons and audition for community groups such as the Marin Symphony's youth programs. Students are encouraged to take private lessons.

INSTRUMENT LOAN POLICY

We are quite fortunate to have a thriving, exciting and award-winning music program in the Dixie School District. Every year we teach over 700 students the joys of music making.

The Music Department has a limited selection of inventory and can loan instruments to students with real financial needs. We ask that families be honest in assessing their financial situation before requesting a loan. Although our resources are limited, our goal is to have all music students learning with a quality instrument of their choice.

We welcome donations of any amount to help us maintain our inventory for future music students. Every summer we must repair and perform routine maintenance for our instruments.

Contact Mr. Steinberg by email (preferred) or at Miller Creek (415-492-3760) if you have any questions.

If your family receives a loaned instrument, you will need to pick up the instrument at the music dept. office, complete a loan form and contract, and get a tutorial on proper care of the instrument. The Dixie School District will gladly accept donation of \$60-\$80 per school year (if possible) to help offset costs of repair and maintenance of loaned instruments.

Rental Information

Most families rent their instrument for the school year. We have made arrangements with area vendors to ensure that the best price is offered to our Dixie School District music students.

REQUIRED MATERIALS FOR INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

- A music stand is highly recommended for all students. This is for home practice only. There is no need to bring this to school.

If your child plays the FLUTE

- Every flautist needs a soft, thin cloth to clean their instrument. We suggest a cotton handkerchief. Cloth must be thin to slide through instrument. **DO NOT USE PAPER TOWEL OR TISSUE.**
- Every instrument should have a cleaning rod. This rod should have been included in your rental. If you do not have one, contact your rental store.
- **ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS 2000 BOOK 1**, Hal Leonard, Publisher.
Get the method applicable to your instrument.

If your child plays the CLARINET or SAXOPHONE

- Every clarinetist must have playable reeds. If the reeds are chipped even slightly, it makes it impossible to generate a sound from the clarinet. Be sure to treat the reeds with extra care as they can chip easily.
- The best buy is to purchase a box of 10 *Rico* reeds. Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth Grade clarinetists should be playing 2.5 - 3.0 reeds.
- Keep 3-4 reeds in the case at all times. **THERE IS NO NEED TO BRING THE WHOLE BOX** to school.
- **ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS 2000 BOOK 1**, Hal Leonard, Publisher.
Get the method applicable to your instrument.

If your child plays the TRUMPET, TROMBONE, or BARITONE HORN

- All Brass students need a soft cloth to clean the instrument. We suggest a cotton handkerchief. Do not use tissue or paper towel.
- All Trumpet and Baritone players need valve oil. Contact your rental store if you did not get this accessory.
- Trombonists need liquid slide cream. Do not use slide grease for the trombone. If your trombone came with slide grease, please ask Mr. Steinberg or Mr. Smith how to use it. Please apply your valve oil and slide cream at home during practice time. One small application every two weeks should be enough.
- **ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS 2000 BOOK 1**, Hal Leonard, Publisher.
Get the method applicable to your instrument.

If your child plays the VIOLIN, VIOLA, CELLO, or BASS

- All string players must have rosin and a lint free cloth. The cloth must be small enough to fit into the case. No washcloths please.
- All Violin and Viola players need a shoulder rest.
- Cello and bass players need a rock stop.
- Violin and viola players must have an extra set of strings for their instrument. Cello and bass players must replace any broken string within a reasonable amount of time.
- Orchestra students must have a copy of our string method book, *All for Strings Book*

RESOURCES FOR SUCCESS

Class Rules

Respect for Individuals:

- No negative comments about yourself or others.
- No interrupting a person who is speaking or playing.
- Do not do anything that harms an individual.

Respect for the Ensemble:

- Always bring your music and a pencil to class.
- Always have your own music.
- No food or drink during rehearsal except water in spill-proof containers.
- Do not talk or sing unless asked to do so. We will warm up together.
- Raise your hand and wait to be called on before speaking.
- Do not do anything that disrupts the rehearsal.

Family Involvement

How can I help my student succeed?

Parental encouragement is a vital component of our program

- Establish a place for them to practice
- Encourage a regular practice schedule
- Ask them to play for you and others (relatives/friends)
- Ask them what they are working on
- Ask them how their instrument works
- Attend their performances
- Review online resources and videos provided by your child's music teacher

What can I do to help my student practice?

Just like other classes students will usually have nightly assignments and a student should include practicing in his/her regular homework schedule. Parents can help the student by establishing a regular homework/practice time of the day. Students also need a quiet, uncluttered space where they can practice.

Another way that parents can help add to the success of the music program is by assisting with events, tours, festivals, performances, and as chaperones.

Private Lessons

What about private lessons?

Private lessons are tutoring sessions where a private music instructor works individually with a student. In these lessons the instruction is geared toward the individual student. Teachers generally work on *technique* - how to produce sound, *style* - how to interpret music and also on basic playing skills. For struggling students private lessons can help students feel more comfortable in their music class, for advanced students private lessons can add an extra challenge and help students master their instrument. Students at all levels benefit from private lessons. For lists of local private teachers visit Marin Music at www.marinmusic.com/lessonseducation or the Magic

Flute at http://www.themagicflute.com/lessons_music.htm (These lists are published by the music stores - the teachers are not affiliated with the Dixie School District.)

Music Camps

There are also a number of good summer music camps:

- Cazadero Performing Arts Camp
- Hayward-La Honda Music Camp
- San Francisco Conservatory's Summer Music West
- San Jose State – Music in the City
- Crowden Jazz Camp (Berkeley)

PERFORMANCES

Required Concert Dates

Attendance at all concerts is mandatory - every student is needed for the ensemble to perform at its best. Exceptions will be made for emergencies only and will need to be verified. Please note your grade will be affected.

Elementary

Each elementary school will have a daytime Winter concert during school in December, and a daytime Spring concert in April. Some elementary students will be required to participate in District-wide Music Festivals in the spring at Miller Creek Middle School.

Miller Creek Middle School

The Band, Choir, and Orchestra programs will each have an evening Winter Concert in December held in the gym at Miller Creek. Each program will have an evening district-wide Festival in May. Other events include CMEA Festivals, the Forum Festival/Great America trip, basketball games, local community field trips and assemblies. Your music teacher will distribute information as needed.

Concert Dress for All Middle School Musicians

When concert dress is called for, please make sure your child has the proper outfit.

- ALL musicians must wear Miller Creek Music Uniform Shirt (to be ordered) and black bottoms.
- **Girls** must wear nice black slacks or skirts with black stockings and closed toed shoes. All skirts must be of medium length.
- **Boys** must wear solid black pants and black shoes/socks. Shirts must be tucked in.

Shoes must be dress shoes. NO athletic shoes. NO colored logos or images on shoes. "Dress shoes" equals "black shoe polish can be applied."

(There is a limited supply of black clothes in the orchestra/band room that we can loan out. Please make arrangements with your teacher if this would be helpful.)

Traditional Concert Events

- Aug/Sept Middle school music starts the first day of school.
Middle school students need to bring their instruments to school on the second day of school.
Elementary music classes begin one week after start of school. Students must have their instrument by their second music class.
- December Elementary concerts at Dixie School, Mary E. Silviera, and Vallecito for grades 3-5. Concerts during the day at each school.

Winter concerts for Band, Choir, and Orchestra at Miller Creek Middle School for grades 6-8. Concerts in the evening at Miller Creek.
- Feb-April CMEA Large Ensemble Festival for Miller Creek students (Band and Orchestra)

CMEA Solo and Ensemble for Miller Creek Middle School students

Middle school groups tour elementary schools
- April Elementary concerts at Dixie School, Mary E. Silviera, and Vallecito for grades 3-5. Concerts during the day at each school.

Honor Choir trip to Great America or Six Flags (TBA)
- May Forum Festival/Great America trip (all middle school ensembles)

Dixie District-wide Band, Choir, and Orchestra festivals.
These festivals are a showcase of all our students in the District. Each program concert will be in the evening at Miller Creek Middle School.

Festivals will include the following music students:
- Band grades 5-8
 - Choir grades 5-8 (plus All-District Honor Choir)
 - Orchestra grades 5-8

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT OUR MUSIC PROGRAM

Q - When does elementary music start?

A - The first day of music class is typically the second week of school. You will be notified before the opening of school when music class starts and when you need your instrument.

Q - When is the last day for music classes for grades 3-5 at the elementary schools?

A - The last day of music class for elementary students is the second to the last week of school.

Q - When is the last day for music classes for Miller Creek?

A - Miller Creek music students have music classes until the end of school.

Q - What accessories come with my instrument?

A - Whether you own, rent, or get a loan from DSD, your instrument needs certain accessories to work properly. Some accessories will have to be purchased/rented separately from your instrument. It is very important you maintain your instrument. Please see page 9, and ask your music teacher if you have any questions about accessories or instrument maintenance.

Q - When and where are the concerts for elementary students?

A - Please see the Concert Info pages (pp. 12-13). Concerts are held at each elementary school and Miller Creek Middle School throughout the year.

Q - When and where are the concerts for Miller Creek students?

A - All concerts at Miller Creek are in the gym.

Q - Is concert attendance required for the evening concerts?

A - Yes. (Please refer to page 13 as well as your teacher's handouts/website.)

Q - What concert attire is required for my elementary student?

A - Concerts and performances at the elementary schools during the school day require regular school clothing. We suggest to students they can dress as if it is picture day. Evening concerts at Miller Creek require concert dress: white tops and black bottoms.

Q - What concert attire is required for my Miller Creek student?

A - Concert dress of UNIFORM T-SHIRT and black bottoms are required for Miller Creek music students.

Q - How do I get updated music dept. information?

A - Updated music department information will be distributed through teachers' SchoolLoop pages, email, and the district music website.

Q - Will my student be taking any field trips?

A - MS students-Yes. Trips will be determined as the year progresses. You should expect notification of these trips in advance. You will be required to complete a permission slip. You may also volunteer for these trips.

Q - Who do I contact regarding the music program?

A - You can email Steve Steinberg (ssteinberg@dixieschooldistrict.org) for the fastest response, or call 492-3760

Q - Where can my child take private music lessons?

A - We highly encourage private lessons. Please refer to page 10.

Q - How can I volunteer or help the Dixie School District Music program?

A - Occasionally, we need chaperones and welcome the help. Call or email Mr. Steinberg.