

Mariachi Band and Violin Lessons

at Mason Elementary School 2024 – 2025

Dear Parents / Guardians of 4th and 5th Grade Students,

Each year, your children play classroom instruments, including recorders. This year's 5th graders also had a chance last year to work as a class on learning to play the ukulele, and we will continue playing ukulele as a class. This year, 5th graders are invited to join Mariachi Band, playing ukulele, xylophone, violin, recorder, or percussion instruments. Students from 4th and 5th grades are also invited to study violin!

Violin lessons will be after school on **Wednesdays**, ending at 4:30, starting September 11, 2024.

Mariachi Band will be after school on **Thursdays**, ending at 4:30, starting September 12, 2024.

VIOLIN: Besides learning to play the instrument, participants learn the basic skills of playing in an ensemble, allowing them to continue playing in a string group or to switch more easily to a traditional band instrument when they leave Mason Elementary School. As soon as a 5th grader can play any of the parts in Mariachi Band on the violin, they can use the violin in Mariachi Band, while continuing to study violin playing.

If your child does not already have a violin, you can purchase or rent an instrument. A local Mason resident who helped with violin lessons two years ago, Levi Maxwell (603-400-7149), has instruments available for purchase. The school has also arranged for students to rent violins from Music & Arts in Manchester, NH. The rental instruments are delivered to the school unless you pick up the instrument early. If you would like to take advantage of this service, this is their website: <https://www.musicarts.com/rentals>. The website also lists an optional shoulder rest and music stand.

We will be using the Violin 1 book from Strings Fun and Easy, and the cost of the book is \$15.00. You can order the book online (stringsfunandeasy.com) or make out a check to the school for that amount, and we will place a group order. The CD that is offered at no additional charge is very helpful. We will also use additional resources as soon as students need more challenging music!

***Please note:** The school wants to make sure that the cost of renting an instrument or purchasing the book is not preventing any students from participating. If your family's financial circumstances may prevent your child's participation, please write a note on the bottom/back of this form; we will try to accommodate your need.*

MARIACHI BAND: A Mariachi Band is a group of musicians playing a wide variety of instruments, focusing on music from Mexico and surrounding areas. We take the "surrounding areas" to the limit, and enjoy playing music from the Caribbean, from South America, from...well, maybe from New Orleans, or Ireland, or Bali, or Russia, or...who knows? If we like the music, and we can play it together, then we will!

Participation in any artistic pursuit requires commitment – attending rehearsals, paying attention, and doing one's best. If your child is committed to playing in Mariachi band or in the violin ensemble, your child will learn to play. Such a commitment takes time. Children who sign up for band are expected to remain in band for the full school year. Of course, if you have a concern about your child's participation at any time, please let me know.

If your child plans to take violin lessons or join Mariachi Band, please fill out the following form to indicate your shared commitment to the program, and return it as soon as possible.

Thank you, Mrs. Smith, Music Teacher dprincesmith@sau89.org.

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- I support my 5th grade child's decision to join the Mason Elementary School Mariachi Band for the 2024-2025 school year.
 - I support my 4th or 5th grade child's decision to take violin lessons for the 2024-2025 school year.

Note: 5th graders can sign up for one or both options; 4th graders can sign up for violin lessons only.

Child's Name: _____

Parent / Guardian Signature: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____