SPRINGBORO INTERMEDIATE ORCHESTRA

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**Welcome to Orchestra!** I am looking forward to a great year! To briefly introduce myself, this is my 12th year teaching at Springboro! I am a graduate of the College Conservatory of Music at the University of Cincinnati (Master in Music Performance), and Miami University, Oxford (Music Education). Before teaching in this district, I played cello professionally with the Dayton Philharmonic for 5 years. I have two children- Zachary (8th grade), and Dustin (6th grade). I have taught orchestra and general music in this district for the past 11 years.

Springboro Intermediate has 76 incoming orchestra students this 2017-2018 school year! Springboro Orchestra is offered for grades 6-12. Classes at SI meet every other day-either on “A” day or “B” day, depending on each student’s specials schedule.

**Course Description:** Students will play either violin, viola, or cello. All students will receive instruction for producing proper tone, pitch, rhythm, posture, dynamics, and performance. Students will have the chance to work at his/her individual pace. All students will be expected to perform in 2 concerts (December and May) with the option of an extra performance in November at Christmas in Springboro. Orchestra is a performance class and therefore concert attendance is mandatory according to the Ohio Department of Education Music Standards. Performances are important as we depend on each student to make our concerts successful. Each concert is a culmination of the entire group’s hard work and dedication.

**Grades:** Students will be graded as a reflection of their progress toward meeting the goals and expectations of the orchestra program. Quizzes will be given regularly (but always announced ahead of time). Practice charts will be collected weekly.

Preparation/Practice Charts/Quizzes/written assignments: 60%

Performances: 40%

**Class Expectations:**

Come to class with music folder, instrument, and pencil. (Cellists may borrow school instrument as cellos are too large for bus transportation). Violinists and Violists may sign out an instrument in the “borrow binder,” if an instrument is forgotten. Students are allowed to borrow an instrument up to 3 times each quarter without penalty. After 3 times, points will be deducted from student’s class preparation grade. During the week, students may leave violins and violas overnight. The classroom doors are locked at 3:30 PM. Students may enter the strings room to pick up instruments after attending after school activities (including going to the “K”). For practice reasons, instruments must be taken home over the weekend! I will keep track and communicate with a parent through email if a student leaves an instrument over the weekend.

**Practice Charts:** Practice charts will be handed out weekly with a return date marked on top. Students are required to practice a total of an hour a week. The ideal breakdown is: 20 minutes three times a week. Spreading out practice time throughout the week is better than practicing one time for an hour. Practice logs will be recorded in Progress book weekly. Students will enjoy class and progress faster if skills learned during class are reinforced at home through practice.

**Concerts:** Performances are at Springboro High School in the auditorium. Both performances start at 6:30 PM. Students will arrive to the High School by 5:15 PM to organize seating arrangements and rehearse on stage. Dates are: December 19th and May 15th. Please mark your calendars.

**Concert Attire**: Students will receive a free orchestra polo! (Thanks to our Springboro Orchestra Association) A white polo shirt with black pants or black skirt, is the concert attire for 6th through 8th grade. (As students grow out of their polo, new ones will be available to purchase.)

**Communication:**  I communicate mostly through email. I will send out my first email during the first week of school. If you do not receive an email, please contact me at: Kabrams@springboro.org.

**Springboro Orchestra Association: (SOA)** The SOA is a large part of why our strings program is thriving and growing in Springboro Community Schools! The SOA is made up of parents. We are now looking for new parents to help seeing our core group of parents have graduating seniors this year and next. **SOA meetings are on early release Wednesdays from 7:00 PM to 8:00 PM at the JH.** We ask that parents attend regularly or even just occasionally, if possible. The SOA raises funds to purchase and maintain school-owned instruments. The SOA also helps fund and organize: Master Classes and workshops, annual fall festival, annual field trip to a professional symphony, high school senior recognition banquet and awards ceremony, a spring post concert celebration for 6th grade, polo concert attire for 6th grade and much more…. I will send out email reminders for these parent meetings. Please plan to attend.

I look forward to meeting and working with your child! I am excited to see (and hear) the progress throughout the year! Please contact me as questions occur.

Thank you!

Kirsten Abrams