

Dear Hillcrest 1st Year Orchestra Families,

We are so pleased with our Hillcrest Orchestra! It's going to be a wonderful orchestra year.

Some of you may be aware that, as of this week, the Logan Elementary Orchestras are now part of the Mountain West Strings Academy. You will see some changes as we adapt to their policies and procedures. Many good things will come out of this merger. MWSA requires that each class must have two instructors in the class at all times, a teacher and an assistant. We are lucky to have Mary Sharp, as our Hillcrest assistant. She has been volunteering her time to help us since classes began this year.

Your student will be bringing home a practice card today. At-home practice is essential if we are going to be successful. Every student should have a goal of practicing at least twenty minutes each school day. The *MWSA-Logan 24 - Day All - Star Program* is a way to reward students for their efforts. *Please read the back of the pink practice record for the details.*

Because October is almost half gone this first card will be a 12 - day program, helping us get into the routine of daily practice and writing it down. Beginning in November we will start our 24 - Day program. Students who successfully complete those 24 practice days will receive a nice reward. Please encourage them to participate and help them keep track of their "quality" practice minutes.

What to practice?

- Students need to know the open strings on the staff and how to read quarter notes, half notes, and whole notes along with quarter rests, half rests and whole rests.
- Bow hold exercises ("Up like a rocket ship, down like the rain. Back and forth like a choo-choo train", Up like a rocket ship, down like the rain. Round and round like a wagon train." Rocket ship, stir the pot, etc.)
- **String Basics** - pg. 6-8
- *Tuning Piece and Hoedown* in handout booklet
- *Pre-Twinkle Warm Up* page in handout booklet
- **Strings Extraordinaire!** - *Harvest Reel* - B part (It's almost like *Hoedown*!)

We are working towards our Ninja belts achievements. To get the first belt all students need to have their books in class. The list of pass off songs/requirements for the belts is in the printed orchestra book.

Most of our communication with parents will occur through email. It is important that we have a working email address for everyone. If you have no email we will try to update you by telephone. Each student will receive a hard copy of today's message to bring home plus an email copy. Please let us know if you do not receive the email. We are missing contact information for some people. It would be so helpful if we could receive that information now.

A big secret to MWSA's success has been their very active parent board. As part of the MWSA organization we need to have a Logan Elementary Strings Parent Board to represent our Logan program. If you would like to part of this group please let us know!

Thanks to each of you for your support. Classes are *so very early*. It is not easy to get your students to school in the dark! Parents are always welcome in our class. We are so grateful for our parents who are able to come and help.

Now...let's get our All -Star Practicing underway and earn our Ninja Belts! We are excited to be your teachers.

Janice McAllister

Mary Sharp