September 6, 2012

Dear 5th Grade Strings Families:

Welcome to our Fifth Grade Strings Class! I am so thankful for each student who signed up to learn to play an orchestral string instrument. They are already catching on to things quickly, so I am expecting good things from this group of students.

You certainly must have some questions about how this class is set up. In this letter I will try to give you the basics. You should feel free to contact me throughout the year as questions and needs arise, and I will do my best to help you and your child have the very best experience in my class that I can!

**Folders and music.** Each student will be issued his/her own music folder with a set of sheet music\*. Occasionally the folder may include a CD for the student to listen to. This folder and its contents remain the property of Xenia Christian Middle School and must be treated with respect, just as would be the case with textbooks and library books. It must be returned to Mr. Colaner in good condition at the conclusion of the school year. If not, the student must pay to replace both folder and music. The folders cost 50 cents each. Sheet music is additional and the cost is usually $2 to $3 per title. Lesson books cost from $5.00 to $7.00.

\*The lesson books that we use will last the entire year, and will probably need to be purchased by individual students for $5.00. However, we are trying to get them free this year. I will keep you posted if and when you need to send in your money, and I will be happy to order them for everyone. But in case you want to go ahead and get one yourself, the book is *All for Strings, Volume 1.* If you are searching online, you will need to specify whether you want the violin or the cello edition.

**Concert Schedule.** We perform twice at Christmas and twice in the spring. There is a Christmas Chapel concert (during the school day) and then we perform again on the same night that we perform our Christmas cantata. Band and strings classes come early to the cantata at 5:30pm to tune and warm up, and then the concert starts at 6:15. (The cantata is at 7:00pm.)

We repeat that schedule in the spring. You will find all of the dates at the end of this letter.

**Concert Attire.** Strings students – both boys and girls - wear white shirts and black or navy pants. (Do not wear shorts or skirts, as pants are the simplest way to avoid modesty issues created by the way instrumentalists have to sit when they perform onstage.) We would prefer black pants if you already have them, but we realize that navy is kind of nice because you can also wear those pants as part of your daily school uniform.

The white shirts – for both boys and girls -- may be either the dress code polo or the dress code oxford. Boys do not need to wear neckties in fifth grade.
**Grades.** Students receive grades based upon the criteria below. All students have an “A” in each category unless deductions must be made.

1. **Bringing to school** instruments, music, and completed Practice Charts *including parent initials where applicable* = **one test grade for all rehearsal days combined.** This year strings is on Wednesdays and Fridays.

2. **In-school concerts (Chapel Concerts) =** **two test grades**. Deductions may be made for tardiness to the warm-up room or failure to abide by the concert dress code. Deductions will be made for students who arrive without instruments or music. Students who fail to attend will receive “F’s” for their concert grade unless they are absent from school

3. **After-school concerts (Evening Concerts) = three test grades**. Grades determined as in #2 above.

4. **Quarterly Playing Tests** = **one test grade.**Despite the cautionary tone of this letter, nearly all students will be able to earn an “A” for the year. They will also have a growing experience as they reach out in Jesus’ name to many in our community. You should also take note that all of my written communication is available on my website. You can even download the Response Sheets. (Checking all of the teacher websites once or twice per week is a really good habit.)

My email address is rcolaner@xeniachristian.com.

My website is <http://MusicBySpecialArrangement.com/>.

Let’s rejoice in the Lord together this year, and praise Him before all those who will be hearing us!

Because of Calvary,

Robert L. Colaner, Director

5th Grade Strings

**In-school rehearsal days for 5th Grade Strings and Band:**Wednesdays and Fridays

**Concert Dates for 5th Grade Strings and Band:**

Christmas Chapel Band & Strings Concert (8:30am): Tue Dec 11, 2012
Christmas Cantata and Evening Band & Strings Concert: Tue Dec 18, 2012\*
Spring Chapel Band & Strings Concert (8:30am): Tue May 14, 2013
Spring Cantata and Evening Band & Strings Concert: Thu May 23, 2013\*

\*Strings students must arrive at **5:30pm** to tune and warm-up. **We know this is early for you, but please, please do not be late.** It is not possible to over-emphasize how vital this tuning process is with orchestral string instruments – much more so than with, say, guitars and saxophones. We tune and retune a lot before we are ready to play! Lack of proper tuning could spoil all of the work the students have done all semester.

**RESPONSE SHEET
for 9/06/12 letter**

**This Response Sheet must be returned to Mr. Colaner during our strings period
on Wednesday, September 12, 2012.**

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Print student’s name

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Parent’s signature

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Student’s signature

Parent’s phone number[s] & email \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Best times to reach you \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE CHECK THE STATEMENTS THAT ARE TRUE FOR YOUR FAMILY.**

**\_\_\_\_\_** We have seen the **letter** and the **schedule**.

We will abide by the dress code as described under “Concert Attire.”

We will put all of the concert dates on our calendar and will protect them, explaining to coaches and club leaders of our ***prior commitment*** to these required school events for which our student receives a grade. (Exceptions will be made for personal illness or family emergency. Lack of transportation does not constitute an emergency unless your vehicle breaks down ***on the way*** to a concert.)

We understand that students must have their instruments, method books & sheet music, and a completed Practice Chart at each rehearsal and concert to receive credit toward their String Ensemble grade.

**\_\_\_\_\_\_** We have seen the **letter** and the **schedule**.

We will abide by the dress code as described under “Concert Attire.”

We will put all of the concert dates on our calendar and will protect them -- *except those noted below for which our family cannot make a commitment* -- explaining to coaches and club leaders of our ***prior commitment*** to these required school events for which our student receives a grade. (Exceptions will be made for personal illness or family emergency. Lack of transportation does not constitute an emergency unless your vehicle breaks down ***on the way*** to a concert.)

We understand that students must have their instruments, method books & sheet music, and a completed Practice Chart at each rehearsal and concert to receive credit toward their String Ensemble grade.

 **(Write problem dates here.)** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**\_\_\_\_\_** I have a question. Please contact me using the information above.