

Carmel Valley Middle School

3800 Mykonos Lane
San Diego, CA 92130
T: 858-481-8221
www.sduhsd.net/cv



2018 National Blue Ribbon School

Adam Bishop, Principal

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Carmel Valley Middle School 2026-2027 Instrumental Music Audition/Placement Guide

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Dear Parents and future Bobcats,

The primary purpose of this letter is to introduce myself as the Music Director of Carmel Valley Middle School. Additionally, I want to make you aware of the marvelous opportunities that will be available to your child upon entering an instrumental music ensemble (Band and Orchestra) at CVMS. Our school is committed to making music available to students at all levels. CVMS has a rich tradition of excellence in its music programs and your student has the opportunity to take part in that tradition by participating in or continuing his or her music studies at the middle school level.

While the goal of the Middle School Music Program is to build upon the skills obtained at the elementary level, we also emphasize the importance of commitment, responsibility, self-discipline, and teamwork—qualities essential for being a positively contributing member of a musical organization. Simply put, I am dedicated to teaching life through music.

Below, you will find information regarding music elective offerings, audition and placement details to ensure that your child is placed in the appropriate music ensemble, and how to obtain a musical instrument if needed. I encourage both students and parents to review this material together. As always, please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions, comments, or concerns.

Best regards,

Musically Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alex Patterson", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Alex Patterson
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String Orchestras at CVMS

Bobcat Orchestra (Beginning/Intermediate String Orchestra)

- The Bobcat Orchestra is a welcoming and dynamic ensemble open to students who are new to string instruments or have up to one year of prior experience. This class provides an excellent opportunity for students to develop foundational skills on the violin, viola, cello, or bass. Professional instrumental coaches support students in their musical growth, ensuring they build strong technique and confidence on their instrument. **No audition is required to join this ensemble.**
- Participation in the Bobcat Orchestra prepares students for success in advanced ensembles at CVMS and beyond, whether in upper-level orchestra classes in 8th grade or at the high school level. Information on obtaining an instrument can be found on page 6.

Chamber Orchestra (Advanced String Orchestra)

- The Chamber Orchestra is the most advanced string ensemble at CVMS, designed for students with strong technical and expressive abilities. Members of this ensemble perform a varied and challenging repertoire while refining their skills in an advanced ensemble setting. Performance opportunities include school concerts, festivals, and competitions throughout the year.
- Students in this class often receive private instruction outside of school and frequently earn placements in prestigious ensembles such as the California All-State Honor Orchestra, Southern California School Band & Orchestra Association Honor Orchestra, Mainly Mozart Youth Symphony, and San Diego Youth Symphony. Professional instrumental coaches provide additional support in their musical development.
- **This is an auditioned ensemble.** Students interested in joining the Chamber Orchestra must demonstrate proficiency in technique, sight-reading, and musical interpretation through an audition process.

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Bands at CVMS

Bobcat Band (Beginning Band)

The Bobcat Band is open to students who are new to band instruments or wish to learn a wind or percussion instrument. This ensemble provides an excellent foundation for young musicians to develop fundamental skills while playing in a collaborative environment. **No audition is required to join.**

The instruments offered in Bobcat Band include: Flute, Clarinet, Bass Clarinet, Saxophone, Trumpet, French Horn, Trombone, Tuba, and Percussion. Professional instrumental coaches provide guidance and support to help students progress on their instruments.

Participation in Bobcat Band prepares students for success in upper-level band classes in their 8th-grade year at CVMS and at the high school level. Performance opportunities include school concerts and festivals throughout the year. Information on obtaining an instrument can be found below.

Symphonic Band (Intermediate Band)

The Symphonic Band is designed for students seeking a more in-depth study of band repertoire at the intermediate level. This ensemble strengthens technical skills and provides valuable experience in ensemble playing and performance preparation.

Students in Symphonic Band have either completed one year in Beginning Band or have prior experience on a band instrument. Additionally, students may have the opportunity to transition to instruments not typically offered in Beginning Band, including larger or more specialized instruments such as Oboe, Bassoon, Bass Clarinet, French Horn, Euphonium, and Tuba. Many of these instruments are provided by the school.

Performance opportunities include school concerts and festivals throughout the year. **This is an auditioned ensemble.**

Wind Ensemble (Advanced Band)

The Wind Ensemble is the premier band at CVMS, designed for advanced musicians ready to perform at a high level. Students in this ensemble perform a varied and challenging repertoire, focusing on advanced technical and expressive skills in an ensemble-focused setting.

Many students in Wind Ensemble receive private instruction outside of school and often gain acceptance into prestigious ensembles such as the California All-State Honor Band, Southern California School Band & Orchestra Association Honor Band, Mainly Mozart Youth Symphony, and San Diego Youth Symphony.

Performance opportunities include school concerts and festivals throughout the year. **This is an auditioned ensemble.**

Jazz Club

The Jazz Club is an extracurricular ensemble that meets one to two times per week during the lunch period. Instruments in this group include Flute, Clarinet, Alto Sax, Tenor Sax, Bari Sax, Trumpet, Trombone, Guitar, Bass, Piano, and Drum Kit.

Unlike other ensembles, Jazz Club is not a credited course; rather, it is a dedicated group of students who rehearse regularly and perform throughout the year. Because this is a club and not an elective class, selection and audition details will be announced during CVMS' Club Day in early September. **Placement in the Jazz Club is determined by audition or the discretion of the director.**

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Opportunities for Piano Players?

At CVMS, we understand that students with a piano background often seek opportunities to participate in instrumental ensembles. Since traditional school bands primarily consist of woodwind, brass, and percussion instruments, and orchestras are composed of string instruments, there are limited opportunities for pianists to perform in their primary role. However, there are several exciting ways for piano players to engage in the CVMS instrumental music program and broaden their musical experience.

1. **Become a multi-instrumentalist**

Many students with a background in piano have successfully transitioned into other instruments by joining a beginning band or orchestra ensemble. Since pianists already have experience reading notation and coordinating both hands, they often find it easier to pick up a new instrument. Learning an additional instrument enhances musicianship, strengthens ensemble skills, and provides a valuable opportunity to perform in a group setting.

2. **Consider Percussion**

Percussion is an excellent option for pianists, as it includes both rhythmic and pitched instruments. In addition to traditional drums, percussionists study mallet percussion, which consists of instruments such as marimba, xylophone, vibraphone, and glockenspiel (bells). These instruments have layouts similar to a piano keyboard, making the transition from piano to mallet percussion relatively smooth. By choosing percussion, students can continue developing their keyboard skills while gaining new rhythmic and ensemble experiences.

3. **Jazz Ensemble**

Pianists with a strong foundation in jazz, advanced literature, and sight-reading may be eligible to audition for the CVMS Jazz Ensemble. This group is highly selective and meets during the students' lunch period. Since there is only one piano position available, competition is high, and preference is given to students who demonstrate advanced jazz improvisation, chord voicing, and ensemble collaboration skills.

Preparing for the Jazz Ensemble Audition:

- Develop proficiency in chord symbols, voicings, and comping techniques.
- Gain experience with improvisation over common jazz progressions.
- Sight-read lead sheets and recognize common jazz rhythms.
- Listen to and study jazz artists to build stylistic awareness.

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Obtaining an Instrument

I often receive questions regarding instrument acquisition, particularly from families of students participating in a beginning ensemble. To help guide you through this process, I want to provide an overview of the available options.

- 1. Renting/Rent to own.** For most families, renting an instrument from a music store is the best option for students just beginning their musical journey. Renting ensures that students have access to a high-quality instrument while also offering flexibility should they decide to switch instruments. Most rental programs are affordable and include maintenance - meaning if accidental damage occurs, the retailer will often repair or replace the instrument at no additional cost. Additionally, some retailers, such as Bertrand's Music, offer free beginning music lessons with rentals. Below is a list of recommended music stores that provide excellent rental options. I highly recommend working with these trusted retailers.

<u>Bertrand's Music & Lessons</u>	<u>San Diego Violins (String Instruments Only)</u>	<u>The Violin Shop (String Instruments Only)</u>	<u>Jade J Schulz Violins (String Instruments Only)</u>	<u>Carmel Valley Strings (String Instruments Only)</u>
9906 Carmel Mountain Rd, San Diego, CA 92129 858 -780-1812	6255 Ferris Square E, San Diego, CA 92121 858 623-0036	681 Encinitas Blvd #311 Encinitas, CA 92024 858-909-0319	7748 Herschel Ave Ste B, La Jolla, CA 92037 858-583-1284	carmelvalleystrings.com/

- 2. School Instruments.** Carmel Valley Middle School has a **limited** number of school instruments available for students to use at no cost for the academic year. While this is a budget-friendly option, I recommend it only when renting is not feasible. School instruments have been used by multiple students over the years and may not always be in ideal condition.

Students who borrow a school instrument are responsible for its care. If an instrument is damaged, lost, or stolen, the parent/guardian is responsible for repair or replacement costs. Additionally, because availability is limited, we cannot guarantee that every student will receive their preferred instrument.

Specialty Instrument Availability

- For **band** students, CVMS provides access to less common woodwind and brass instruments, including Oboe, Bassoon, Bass Clarinet, Tenor Saxophone, Baritone Saxophone, French Horn, Euphonium, and Tuba.
- For **string orchestra** students, Cello and Bass are available for student use. Violin and Viola players are strongly encouraged to rent or purchase their own instrument through a recommended music retailer.

Please DO NOT Purchase an Instrument on Amazon!

I strongly advise against purchasing instruments from Amazon or other online marketplaces. Many instruments sold online are of poor quality and often require costly repairs, ultimately costing more than a rental or a properly selected purchase. If a price seems too good to be true, it likely is. Instead, I highly recommend working with trusted local music retailers who can provide quality instruments and ongoing support.

Please take some time to discuss this wonderful musical opportunity with your child. Instrument selection will take place in the early weeks of the 2026-2027 academic year. If you have any questions regarding the Carmel Valley Middle School Music Program, please do not hesitate to contact me. I look forward to having your student in my class!

Musically Yours,

Alex Patterson
Instrumental Music Director – Carmel Valley Middle School
(858) 481-8221 Ext. 3055
Alexander.patterson@sduhsd.net

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CVMS Instrumental Music Performance Attire

Concerts are an opportunity for students to showcase their musicianship and present the results of their hard work and dedication. Proper concert attire is an essential part of the performance experience because:

- Dressing appropriately enhances performance readiness. Formal attire helps students feel prepared and confident when performing.
- Concert attire promotes a professional mindset. Proper dress creates an atmosphere of focus and respect for both musicians and the audience.
- It reinforces life skills. Learning to dress appropriately for significant events and occasions will benefit students in future professional and formal settings.

Option 1:

- **Top:** CVMS Music polo shirt with a white undershirt ([available for purchase here](http://cvmsmb.org/shop)) (cvmsmb.org/shop)
- **Bottom:** Plain black slacks or dress pants (jeans, sweatpants, and athletic wear are not permitted)
- **Socks:** Plain black socks
- **Shoes:** Formal black shoes (No Converse, sneakers, or Vans)

Option 2

- **Top:** CVMS Music polo shirt with a white undershirt ([available for purchase here](http://cvmsmb.org/shop)) (cvmsmb.org/shop)
- **Bottom:** Plain black dress pants (no jeans) or a skirt that covers the knees
- **Socks:** Plain black socks OR plain black nylons/tights/leggings (if wearing a skirt)
- **Shoes:** Formal black shoes (No Converse, sneakers, or Vans)

Where to Purchase Attire:

Affordable options can be found at Target, Amazon, and other retailers.

Need Assistance?

If purchasing the required attire presents a financial challenge, the Music Boosters are happy to assist. Please inform Mr. Patterson as soon as possible, preferably a few weeks before the performance.

Thank you for supporting the CVMS Instrumental Music Program and ensuring that our students look and feel their best for every performance!

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Independent Study Physical Education (ISPE)

What is ISPE?

"Independent Study Physical Education." Students admitted to the ISPE program are given the opportunity to participate in physical education outside of school, creating an available period during the school day. Often, students use this available period to take an additional elective. A common scenario would be a student participating in ISPE (outside of school), while taking two elective classes such as a language *and* instrumental music.

From our district: "ISPE is a voluntary alternative instructional strategy for providing regular education. Students work independently, according to a written agreement, and under the general supervision of a credentialed teacher. Attendance in IS is based on the time value of the student's work product, as determined by the student's supervising teacher. Because ISPE is an alternative instructional strategy, not an alternative curriculum, students follow the same course of study and meet the same academic standards as classroom-based students. IS students must adhere to EC sections 51222, 51225.3, 51241, and 60800, the latter requiring all students in grades five, seven, and nine to be tested in the state's physical performance test (FITNESSGRAM®). Note: IS is offered at the option of the district, and not all districts offer this alternative instructional strategy. (CA Department of Education, Physical Education Frequently Asked Questions)"

Resources:

- [SDUHSD ISPE Website](#) - All information regarding the ISPE program, including **due dates and deadlines, applications, and frequently asked questions**, can be found here.
- Jennifer McPherson - Assistant Principal and ISPE Coordinator at CVMS. jennifer.mcpherson@sduhsd.net
- [Middle School ISPE Frequently Asked Questions](#)

Orchestra Placements/Auditions for the 2026-2027 Academic Year

- Auditions are only required for students wishing to perform in Chamber Orchestra (Advanced String Orchestra). They are **NOT** required for Bobcat Orchestra (Beginning/Intermediate).
- Students may choose to audition in person or by video submission. If you decide to audition in person, auditions will be held in the Carmel Valley Middle School Music Room (Room 501) from April 6th-9th from 3:00-5:30 PM. If you would like to submit your auditions via video, you may do so by completing the "Orchestra Form" (below).
- Students will perform the following scales/arpeggios and "playing excerpt". Additionally, students will have the opportunity to perform a personal selection. The personal selection is optional - **not required**. This should be something that the student enjoys playing and accurately demonstrates his or her skill level. Please keep this between 1-3 minutes.

Chamber Orchestra (Advanced Orchestra)

- **Violin**
 - **Scale and arpeggio 1:** C major scale and arpeggio (one octave, measures 1-4), Quarter Note = 92 bpm [Click here](#)
 - **Scale and arpeggio 2:** G major scale arpeggio (two octaves, measures 16-22). Quarter Note = 92 bpm [Click here](#)
 - **Playing excerpt:** [Click here](#) (Quarter Note = 120-144 bpm)
- **Viola**
 - **Scale and arpeggio 1:** C major scale and arpeggio (two octaves, measures 5-11), Quarter Note = 92 bpm [Click here](#)
 - **Scale and arpeggio 2:** G major scale and arpeggio (one octave, measures 12-15). Quarter Note = 92 bpm [Click here](#)
 - **Playing excerpt:** [Click here](#) (Quarter Note = 120-144 bpm)
- **Cello**
 - **Scale and arpeggio 1:** C major scale and arpeggio (two octaves, measures 5-11), Quarter Note = 92 bpm [Click here](#)
 - **Scale and arpeggio 2:** G major scale and arpeggio (one octave, measures 12-15). Quarter Note = 92 bpm [Click here](#)
 - **Playing Excerpt:** [Click here](#) (Quarter Note = 120-144 bpm)
- **Double Bass**
 - **Scale and arpeggio 1:** G major scale and arpeggio (one octave, measures 12-15) Quarter Note = 92 bpm [Click here](#)
 - **Scale and arpeggio 2:** D major scale and arpeggio (one octave, measures 23-26). Quarter Note = 92 bpm [Click here](#)
 - **Playing Excerpt:** [Click here](#) (Quarter Note = 120-144 bpm)

Submit Form and Sign-Up for audition time:

- After you have viewed and prepared the audition material, please complete the following [Orchestra form](#) where you can upload your videos (if auditioning by video submission). If auditioning in person, please complete questions 1-10, submit the form, and sign-up for your audition time through [Mr. Patterson's Google Calendar](#). ***PLEASE NOTE*** - Students/Parents **MUST** have a Google Account to complete the form. Please email Mr. Patterson if you are experiencing difficulties

Band Placements/Auditions for the 2026-2027 Academic Year

- Auditions are only required for students wishing to perform in Symphonic Band (Intermediate) or Wind Ensemble (Advanced). They are NOT required for Bobcat Band (Beginning).
- Students may choose to audition in person or submit a video recording. If you decide to audition in person, auditions will be held in the Carmel Valley Middle School Music Room (Room 501) from April 6th-9th from 3:00-5:30 PM. If you would like to submit your auditions via video, you may do so in the "Band form" (below).
- Students will perform the following scales/arpeggios and "playing excerpt". Additionally, students will have the opportunity to perform a "personal selection." The personal selection is optional - not required. This should be something that the student enjoys playing and accurately demonstrates his or her skill level. Please keep this between 1-3 minutes.
- ***Percussionists*** - 1 scale/arpeggio of the student's choosing (mallet percussion), playing excerpt (mallet percussion), snare excerpt, and "personal selection."

Symphonic Band (Intermediate)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flute - Quarter Note = 92 for all <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Scale and arpeggio 1 ◦ Scale and arpeggio 2 ◦ Playing excerpt • Oboe - Quarter Note = 92 for all <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Scale and arpeggio 1 ◦ Scale and arpeggio 2 ◦ Playing excerpt • Bassoon - Quarter Note = 92 for all <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Scale and arpeggio 1 ◦ Scale and arpeggio 2 ◦ Playing excerpt • Clarinet - Quarter Note = 92 for all <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Scale and arpeggio 1 (upper OR lower) ◦ Scale and arpeggio 2 (upper OR lower) ◦ Playing excerpt • Bass Clarinet - Quarter Note = 92 for all <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Scale and arpeggio 1 (upper OR lower) ◦ Scale and arpeggio 2 (upper OR lower) ◦ Playing excerpt • Alto Saxophone - Quarter Note = 92 for all <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Scale and arpeggio 1 (upper OR lower) ◦ Scale and arpeggio 2 ◦ Playing excerpt • Tenor Saxophone - Quarter Note = 92 for all <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Scale and arpeggio 1 ◦ Scale and arpeggio 2 ◦ Playing excerpt | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bari Saxophone: - Quarter Note = 92 for all <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Scale and arpeggio 1 (upper OR lower) ◦ Scale and arpeggio 2 ◦ Playing excerpt • Trumpet - Quarter Note = 92 for all <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Scale and arpeggio 1 ◦ Scale and arpeggio 2 ◦ Playing excerpt • French Horn - Quarter Note = 92 for all <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Scale and arpeggio 1 ◦ Scale and arpeggio 2 ◦ Playing excerpt • Trombone - Quarter Note = 92 for all <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Scale and arpeggio 1 ◦ Scale and arpeggio 2 ◦ Playing excerpt • Baritone BC - Quarter Note = 92 for all <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Scale and arpeggio 1 ◦ Scale and arpeggio 2 ◦ Playing excerpt • Tuba - Quarter Note = 92 for all <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Scale and arpeggio 1 ◦ Scale and arpeggio 2 ◦ Playing excerpt • Percussion - Quarter Note = 92 for all <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Scale and arpeggio 1 ◦ Scale and arpeggio 2 ◦ Playing excerpt ◦ Snare |
|---|--|

Submit Form and Sign-Up for audition time:

- After you have viewed and prepared the audition material, please complete the following [Band form](#) where you can upload your videos (if auditioning by video submission). If auditioning in person, please complete questions 1-12, submit the form, and sign-up for your audition time through [Mr. Patterson's Google Calendar](#). ***PLEASE NOTE*** - Students/Parents MUST have a Google Account to complete the form. Please email Mr. Patterson if you are experiencing difficulty.

Wind Ensemble (Advanced)

- **Flute**
 - [Scale 1](#) (Upper voice. Dotted Quarter Note = 64)
 - [Scale and arpeggio 2](#) (Upper voice. Quarter Note = 92)
 - [Playing excerpt](#) (Second Ending, Quarter Note = 92)
- **Oboe**
 - [Scale 1](#) (Dotted Quarter Note = 64)
 - [Scale and arpeggio 2](#) Quarter Note = 92)
 - [Playing excerpt](#) (Second Ending, Quarter Note = 92)
- **Bassoon**
 - [Scale 1](#) (Upper OR Lower voice. Dotted Quarter Note = 64)
 - [Scale and arpeggio 2](#) (Upper OR Lower voice. Quarter Note = 92)
 - [Playing excerpt](#) (Second Ending, Quarter Note = 92)
- **Clarinet**
 - [Scale 1](#) (Upper voice. Dotted Quarter Note = 64)
 - [Scale and arpeggio 2](#) (Upper OR Lower voice. Quarter Note = 92)
 - [Playing excerpt](#) (Second Ending, Quarter Note = 92)
- **Bass Clarinet**
 - [Scale 1](#) (Upper OR Lower voice. Dotted Quarter Note = 64)
 - [Scale and arpeggio 2](#) (Upper OR Lower voice. Quarter Note = 92)
 - [Playing excerpt](#) (Second Ending, Quarter Note = 92)
- **Alto Saxophone**
 - [Scale 1](#) (Upper voice. Dotted Quarter Note = 64)
 - [Scale and arpeggio 2](#) (Upper voice. Quarter Note = 92)
 - [Playing excerpt](#)
- **Tenor Saxophone**
 - [Scale 1](#) (Upper voice. Dotted Quarter Note = 64)
 - [Scale and arpeggio 2](#) (Quarter Note = 92)
 - [Playing excerpt](#) (Second Ending, Quarter Note = 92)
- **Baritone Saxophone**
 - [Scale 1](#) (Upper OR Lower voice. Dotted Quarter Note = 64)
 - [Scale and arpeggio 2](#) (Upper OR Lower voice. Quarter Note = 92)
 - [Playing excerpt](#) (Second Ending, Quarter Note = 92)
- **Trumpet**
 - [Scale 1](#) (Dotted Quarter Note = 64)
 - [Scale and arpeggio 2](#) (Upper voice. Quarter Note = 92)
 - [Playing excerpt](#) (Second Ending, Quarter Note = 92)
- **French Horn**
 - [Scale 1](#) (Upper OR Lower voice. Dotted Quarter Note = 64)
 - [Scale and arpeggio 2](#) (Quarter Note = 92)
 - [Playing excerpt](#) (Second Ending, Quarter Note = 92)
- **Trombone**
 - [Scale 1](#) (Dotted Quarter Note = 64)
 - [Scale and arpeggio 2](#) (Upper OR Lower voice. Quarter Note = 92)
 - [Playing excerpt](#) (Second Ending, Quarter Note = 92)
- **Baritone BC**
 - [Scale 1](#) (Dotted Quarter Note = 64)
 - [Scale and arpeggio 2](#) (Upper OR Lower voice. Quarter Note = 92)
 - [Playing excerpt](#) (Second Ending, Quarter Note = 92)
- **Tuba**
 - [Scale 1](#) (Upper OR Lower voice. Dotted Quarter Note = 64)
 - [Scale and arpeggio 2](#) (Quarter Note = 92)
 - [Playing excerpt](#) (Second Ending, Quarter Note = 92)
- **Percussion**
 - [Scale 1](#) (Upper voice. Dotted Quarter Note = 64)
 - [Scale and arpeggio 2](#) (Quarter Note = 92)
 - [Playing excerpt](#) (Second Ending, Quarter Note = 92 BPM)
 - [Snare](#) (Quarter Note = 92)

Submit Form and Sign-Up for audition time:

- **After you have viewed and prepared the audition material, please complete the following [Band form](#) where you can upload your videos (if auditioning by video submission). If auditioning in person, please complete questions 1-12, submit the form, and sign-up for your audition time through [Mr. Patterson's Google Calendar](#). *PLEASE NOTE* - Students/Parents MUST have a Google Account to complete the form. Please email Mr. Patterson if you are experiencing difficulty.**