

Puente de Hozho Guitar Club Handbook

2017-18

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Director**



Welcome to Guitar Club! Our goal is to teach students everything we can about music and help them to become the finest and most musical guitarists possible. We also want to prepare students to be successful in any middle school music program if they should choose that path. If students make their best effort, they will experience success. The study of music can be very rewarding and a lot of fun.

Everything in this handbook is important, so read it carefully with one or both of your parents. Sign the included Guitar Club Contract and return it to me.

If you have further questions after reading this handbook please contact Mr. Schroeder by email at jschroeder@fUSD1.org

Questions and answers for Puente de Hozho Guitar Club

What is it?

Guitar Club is a guitar ensemble offered to 4th and 5th grade students at PdH.

When does it meet?

PdH Guitar Club will meet after school on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2:30 to 3:30pm.

When does it start?

PdH Guitar Club will start on Tuesday, September 5th.

Is Guitar Club for 5th and 4th grade students?

If your child has expressed interest in guitar club, their name was put on a list for 4th and 5th grade. Once we know the number of 5th grade students that are participating, we will let 4th grade students know if there are available spaces. My hope is that all students that want to participate will be able to. Because of the limited number of spaces in the club, students will be asked to commit to an attendance policy.

What kind of guitar is used for Guitar Club?

Students will be learning to play guitar in a classical style; therefore a nylon string guitar will be used for the club. We ask that students with other kinds of guitars such as steel string or electric use them at home and not bring them to guitar club.

What is my child responsible for?

Each student will be expected to bring his or her guitar and method book/sheet music for each rehearsal.

How can guitars be obtained for guitar club?

A nylon string guitar will be available with the \$100 participation fee. Payments of \$50 in September and \$50 in January may also be made. General “wear and tear” of PdH guitars will be repaired by PdH. In the case of abuse or neglect of a guitar, parents will be asked to pay for repairs or replacement costs.

What is the level of commitment required?

Students are expected to be present with their guitars and books at every rehearsal and concert (at least one in December, and one in May).

Is there a practice requirement?

Students are expected to practice on their instrument for a minimum of 10 to 15 minutes a day. I tell students to create a habit with practice so it seems as natural as brushing teeth daily! A focused 10 to 15-minute practice session is better than “goofing around” for 30 minutes or longer.

Will attendance be taken?

Attendance will be taken, and an attendance policy will be adhered to.

What is the attendance policy?

Students will be expected to attend 80% of rehearsals before winter break or approximately 20 of 25, and 80% of rehearsals from January until band ends in mid May or approximately 24 of 30. Forgetting a guitar twice equals one absence.

Attendance incentive: As an added incentive, students that attend at least 80% of rehearsals, and attend all concerts, will be invited to attend a pizza party at the end of the school year. If students attend less than 80% of the rehearsals they may “make-up” for missed rehearsals by the following: Attend a concert in the community, bring a program or note as documentation, and write a short paragraph describing the event and music. This can be any kind of performance such as middle or high school, Flagstaff Symphony, Grand Canyon Guitar Society, bluegrass, rock, or any other kind of musical event.

What happens if I miss more than the allowed amount of rehearsals?

If a student, for whatever reason, misses next to the allowed amount, a note will be sent home to notify parents and the student. A second note will be sent when the student has missed the maximum number of rehearsals. After this notice, any more missed rehearsals will indicate that the student has forfeit or given up his or her participation in Guitar Club and will be asked to turn in any school owned equipment at that time.

What is the concert attendance policy?

All concerts are mandatory. It is impossible to operate a successful performance group when all members are not present at performances. All performance dates are given at the beginning of the school year. Please mark your family calendar and plan accordingly. If there is family emergency or severe student illness, these are the only excused absences. Absences due to forgetfulness, lack of transportation (with proper communication, I can usually help with this), birthdays, babysitting jobs, sports practices and games, or other similar activities cannot be excused. A successful musical ensemble depends on responsibility from every member, and their parents.

What are the expectations for rehearsals?

The primary responsibility in guitar club is to learn about music. Any behavior that distracts from or interferes with this learning process will be met with the same procedures as music class. There will be a reminder, time to think, and then communication with parents. Even though this is a “club” the rehearsals will be treated as a class.

No gum, candy, food, or drink, except water, is allowed in rehearsals.

Students will have about 10 minutes to eat snacks, get drinks, and use the restroom before guitar starts at 2:30.

By 2:30, students should be ready to start the rehearsal.

Students may touch and play only their own instrument.

Students will take care of their guitar and music/book.

Give attention to the teacher so you and your fellow musicians can learn.

Remain seated during rehearsals.

Commentary:

After directing Band and Guitar Club for the past 6 years, I have discovered that an attendance policy is needed. When some of the excitement wears off, usually around January, the pace of learning quickens and some students “hit the wall.” This is especially the case if students have fallen behind and have become frustrated. I tell students that there are usually two “progressions” that students may fall into.

The first progression is: 1. Students attend nearly all rehearsals with their instruments → 2. Students make progress on their instruments → 3. Students become more confident and proficient on their instruments → 4. Students have fun and continue strongly to the end of the year ☺.

The second progression is: 1. Students begin to miss rehearsals and “forget” their instruments. → 2. Students lose interest and become frustrated → 3. Students fall further behind as the pace quickens. → 4. Students quit guitar ☹.

Parents and students might consider that beyond the excitement of learning a new instrument, playing an instrument teaches students much more.

1. How to be responsible for valuable equipment.
2. How to be responsible to bring instruments on the appropriate day.
3. How to work hard through practice.
4. How to persevere through challenges that may not always be fun.
5. How to work as part of a team. (playing in any music ensemble is very much a team effort)

Parents, please have a discussion with your child to find out the commitment level of your child for Guitar Club. Although music may be social, social shouldn't be the only reason for joining. Other interests such as sports or other after school activities may come up later in the year, and a student's interest for guitar may wane or become divided. Guitar isn't for everyone. I will not be offended if students do not choose to participate in Guitar Club, but I do become frustrated when students do not commit to participating **fully** for the entire school year. Instruments and positions are limited. Taking a “position” could mean that other students may not be able to have it. That is okay as long as the students that take a position keep it through the school year.

I look forward to a new year of PdH Guitar Club, and having a successful year with students.

please sign and return this page

Guitar Club Contract Agreement

I have read, understood, and agree to the attendance policy and rehearsal expectations for PdH Guitar Club.

_____ student signature

_____ parent signature

PLEASE RETURN BY SEPTEMBER 7TH.

Parent's email address: _____