



Fast Facts about Instrumental Music Instruction in RCSD*

Impact: Delivers instrumental music education including music theory to 5th through 8th graders

Cost: \$315,000

RCEF funding: In progress

Serves: 1,000 students, or 25% of students in grades 5 through 8

Highlights:

- Instrumental music is a key step in a sequentially structured program that starts in the lower grades and continues through high school:
 - The RCEF-supported Music for Learning program prepares children in grades 2 through 4 for instrumental music in 5th grade.
 - Our six local high schools rely heavily on our incoming students for their music programs.
- Instruction is delivered by four full-time teachers. Kennedy Middle School, the largest school in the district, has a dedicated teacher; the other three teachers serve the district's remaining 16 schools.
- Instruction schedule varies from school to school, ranging from one weekly half-hour class for all instruments, to twice weekly half-hour classes divided between individual instruments and group play, to 55-minute classes two to three times a week (at Kennedy).
- Students learn to play band instruments, such as flute, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, trombone, and percussion, or instruments for orchestra such as violin, viola, and cello.
- Students showcase what they have learned at concerts throughout the year and at the District Music Festival at the end of the year.
- Travel to music festivals, tutoring, and other costs are funded at some schools through strong support from parents, students, professional musicians, and the community.
- Because of low family income, more than half of students use district-owned instruments and could not afford to buy or rent their own.
 - For many low-income students, this is their only opportunity to learn to play an instrument.
 - 62% of students in the district receive free and reduced-price lunches, a federal measure of poverty.
- Students who struggle in other classes, including many students with disabilities, often thrive and succeed in our music classes, giving them a reason to stay engaged with school.
 - At Kennedy, 25% of students studying music have disabilities.
- By gaining musical skills in school programs, students add richness to our community, whether playing in a local parade or delighting friends and family with music at home.
- The current program has more students this year than ever before, although it has taken more than a decade to recover from being cut in the 1993/94 school year after the failure of a parcel tax measure.

* Redwood City School District, 2009/10

What Students & Teachers Say About Instrumental Music Instruction

Students learn to respect each other because they depend on each other to learn their music quickly and sound good together. Students are proud when they succeed because they realize that playing an instrument and reading music are difficult skills. – Vivian Euzent, Music Teacher

My best days at school are the days we have music. – 6th grade clarinet player

Music is really fun. It is a great learning experience because I get to learn to play a musical instrument. It is something you will always regret if you don't do it now.

– 6th grade trumpet player

We learn to work together as a group; we have to learn to balance tones and play in tune and play notes at the right time so we don't mess everyone up. It's really fun. It improves hand-eye coordination because you have to read the music and learn the fingerings at the same time. It takes a lot of skill. – 7th grade tenor sax player

Music lets me go with the flow. When I'm mad, I calm down. I like classical music. In fifth grade I couldn't get the B note at first. But my teacher told me I'd get the hang of it. I want to keep going with music until college. – 8th grade violin player

I practice after school. It keeps me out of trouble. I couldn't read the notes at all when I started in 7th grade. Music makes me feel smarter; I know I can do stuff I couldn't do before. – 8th grade bass player

Music's awesome. It puts a smile on my face. I have a lot of friends I've met because of band. I tutor the other baritone sax players after school. My grades have gone up. I'm on the honor roll now. – 8th grade baritone saxophone player