



# 2023 4th and 5th Grade Strings Club Handbook & Student Code of Conduct



SSA teaches the UP's next generation of string players, connects musicians from all over the UP and beyond, and grows young musicians' artistry by fostering a community built on curiosity and kindness.

Founded in 1984, the Superior String Alliance is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that supports the art of learning and performing music on the violin, viola, cello, and bass throughout Michigan's Upper Peninsula.

SSA Strings Club is a program open to current 4th and 5th graders in the Upper Peninsula who are interested in learning violin, viola, or cello. The course is geared towards beginners, but students of all experience levels are welcome!

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Website: [superiorstringalliance.org](https://superiorstringalliance.org)

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# LETTER TO PARENTS

We hope you're looking forward to 2023 Strings Club as much as we are!

Over the past 36 years, one key to SSA's success has been the significant investment we make in earning and maintaining the trust of parents and students alike. Facilitating a fun and musical experience in a physically and emotionally safe environment is our priority. We ensure quality programs through:

- Competitive hiring practices that result in a dedicated, responsible, and caring staff.
- Thorough background checks on all staff.
- Extensive staff training on child development, behavior management, emergency response, bullying prevention, and more.

SSA teachers are committed to partnering with you to maintain open lines of communication and engage your child as an individual with unique needs and goals.

This handbook includes information that will help us build that partnership and ensure Strings Club classes are full of fun and wonderful memories. Please read it carefully and let us know if you have questions or need any additional information.

We can't wait to see all of those smiling faces and work with enthusiastic and creative musicians!

Sincerely,



**Adam Hall**  
**Strings Club Director, Superior String Alliance**  
(he/him/his)  
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**Danielle Simandl**  
**Executive Director, Superior String Alliance**  
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[Facebook](#) / [Instagram](#) / [Youtube](#)

# TEACHER CONTACT INFO



**Adam Hall, SSA Strings Club Director**

**Email:** [adamdhall0@gmail.com](mailto:adamdhall0@gmail.com)

**Phone:** 715-903-6477

Please contact Adam with any questions or concerns relating to Strings Club programming, scheduling, attendance, instrument questions, or anything relating to the content of the course. If you cannot get in contact with Adam, please email Dani at the address below.

Royal Conservatoire of Scotland

- Bachelor of Music in Cello Performance
- Master of Music in Cello Performance



**Danielle Simandl, SSA Executive Director**

**Email:** [admin@superiorstringalliance.org](mailto:admin@superiorstringalliance.org)

**Phone:** 225-244-9059

Please contact Dani with any questions or concerns relating to registration, tuition payment, financial aid, etc!

Lawrence University

- Bachelor of Music in Violin Performance
- Bachelor of Arts in Gender Studies

DePaul University

- Master of Music in Violin Performance
- Post-Master's Certificate in Violin Performance

**SSA Main Office Location**

112 W. Washington, Suite H  
Marquette, MI 49855

**Phone:** 225-244-9059

**Website:** [superiorstringalliance.org](http://superiorstringalliance.org)

# STRINGS CLUB CALENDAR

## **Strings Club Classes**

Dates: Tuesdays, April 11 - May 30, 2023

Time: 6pm - 7:30pm

Where: Bothwell Middle School Orchestra Classroom

## **Final Concert**

Tuesday, May 30, 7:00pm

Families and friends are encouraged to attend!

Location will be at Bothwell Middle School, specific room TBA.

**Registration Due:** April 11, 2023

**Tuition Due:** April 11, 2023

The BMS orchestra room can be found through the left main entrance. We will have a sign posted and help direct. Please bring your instrument!

## THINGS YOUR CHILD WILL NEED FOR STRINGS CLUB

- A violin, viola, or cello with case, bow and rosin (more info on instruments below)
- Paper
- Pencils
- Music folder that will be passed out on the first day of class

# INSTRUMENTAL RENTAL INFO

SSA 4th and 5th Strings Club will be teaching violin, viola, and cello.

Students will need instruments by the first class on April 11, 2023.

We recommend renting an instrument from a local shop. String instruments come in full size,  $\frac{3}{4}$  size,  $\frac{1}{2}$  size, and  $\frac{1}{4}$  size. The size of instrument you will need to rent depends on your child's height and arm length. Measuring for instrument size is generally a service instrument shops will provide.

Monthly rentals are most common, and price varies considerably depending on the instrument and shop, so it is worth looking into early to get an idea of overall cost and to compare options. We recommend renting an instrument long enough for your child to get a feel for practicing and playing on their own after classes are over!

An instrument "package" should include:

- a violin, viola, or cello
- a bow
- an instrument case
- bow rosin
- violin/viola shoulder sponge
- cello rockstop

Local music shops that provide string instrument rentals:

- [Yooptone Music](#)
- [Jim's Music & Teaching Center](#)

In exceptional circumstances we may be able to procure an instrument for a student in need, but this supply is extremely limited. Please let us know of your need in the Strings Club registration form.

# SSA STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Hello Students!

By reading this Code of Conduct with your parent/guardian and by your parent/guardian signing the Code of Conduct authorization in your registration form, you are agreeing to abide by SSA rules and understand that you may be removed as a participant if you violate any of these rules.

## **PHONE POLICY:**

Students should only have phones for emergency purposes - if students have cell phones they will be required to put them away for the duration of class.

## **STUDENT SAFETY POLICY:**

We expect students to be focused, respectful, and mindful of their own and others' safety. We will go over our safety procedures on the first day of class, and students will be expected to follow the instructions.

## **BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY**

Harassment is prohibited between members of the SSA community, including communication of any form between students, parents, faculty and/or staff, and any third parties directly or indirectly. We are committed to maintaining a working and learning environment in which participants can develop intellectually, professionally, personally and socially. Bullying and harassment will not be tolerated and shall be just cause for disciplinary action.

Below are examples of poor behaviors that are prohibited, but are not limited to this list. These behaviors will result in disciplinary action.

- Abusive language towards a staff member or another participant.
- Verbal, physical or visual harassment of another participant or staff member.
- Actual or threatened violence toward any individual or group.
- Conduct endangering the life, safety, health or well-being of others.
- Bullying or taking unfair advantage of any participant.

## **PHOTO AND VIDEO POLICY**

It is really important to remember that only SSA is allowed to photograph or record students during class activities. This rule is for the safety of everyone. So please understand that:

- Only designated SSA staff are allowed to record and photograph any SSA activities.
- Only designated SSA staff are allowed to transmit any recording or photograph of any classes.
- Students are prohibited from recording or photographing staff or fellow students.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

*At Superior String Alliance we understand that the internet and social media platforms are continually changing, but there are certain principles that remain constant. To ensure that Superior String Alliance remains an emotionally safe and supportive environment for all participants the following policies are in place. Failure to comply with the policies listed below may result in disciplinary action.*

- Students under 18 years of age and/or who have not graduated from high school will refrain from friending or following staff members' private social media accounts.
- Staff will refrain from friending or following the private social media accounts of students under 18 years of age and/or who have not graduated from high school.
- No communication between staff and students will occur in private messages on social media.
- All pictures and recordings of Strings Club activities with students can only be posted through SSA social media pages. You are more than welcome to share SSA's social media posts on your own social media accounts.

# **BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT AND DISCIPLINE POLICY**

Our primary goal is to maintain a physically, emotionally, and intellectually safe environment for all participants. Our role in any behavior management situation is to



promote the student's safety, comfort, and growth. We strive to prevent problematic behaviors and we avoid punishment as it removes a growth opportunity. Being proactive and preventative, using proximity and positive messages, and giving specific feedback are constant themes throughout staff training and are easily seen in our daily interactions with students. We also try to identify what may be driving the behaviors. Is the student hungry? Angry? Lonely? Tired?

Disrespectful behavior is often a precursor to unsafe behavior. To keep children safe, we strive to identify and redirect disrespectful behavior as it occurs. When redirection is unsuccessful or when instances of unsafe conduct occur, we will follow these general steps and inform you, the parent/guardian what behavior management steps we took with your child:

1. Reconnect with the student - stop talking and listen, communicate calmly, validate their feelings, reflect what we hear. We will reiterate or clarify expectations, making sure they understand, and let them know the next steps.
2. Give the student a clear verbal warning.
3. Remove the student from the group to have a longer conversation. From there, staff will engage the student with leading questions that get them to think about what's going on (e.g. "Tell me what happened?" "What do you think should happen now?"). Throughout, we will maintain connection with the student in whatever way is comfortable and appropriate for that particular student.
4. If the unacceptable behavior continues, or if the student threatens the emotional or physical safety of themselves or anyone else, our staff will contact you (the parent/guardian) to build an agreed-upon action plan.

Any instance of direct physical, emotional, or sexual harm will result in the immediate removal of the student from the group class and a call home. Such instances could result in expulsion from Strings Club. No refund will be given in such cases.

# CANCELLATION POLICY

SSA 4th and 5th Grade Strings Club offers these refund options upon written request and in accordance with the following timeline:

- Before April 11, 2023 = Full refund, minus a \$10 non-refundable deposit.
- Between April 11 - May 2, 2023 = Partial refund based on classes attended and a \$10 non-refundable deposit.
- May 2 - May 30, 2023 = No refund. Instead, your tuition will be converted into a tax-deductible donation to the SSA Scholarship Fund.

Exceptions can be made at the discretion of SSA.

## TUITION AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

**SSA Strings Club Tuition:** \$195\*

\*this does not include instrument rental

Need-based scholarships are available as funding allows. We will do everything we can to help. To apply for financial aid, please fill out the scholarship portion of the registration form. All scholarship applicants will be notified of scholarship awards within a few days after they turn in their registration form.

## HOW TO MAKE A TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATION TO THE SSA SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Every child deserves the opportunity to attend Strings Club, no matter what their financial circumstances may be. SSA 4th and 5th Grade Strings Club provides opportunities to break down all sorts of barriers and build bridges of understanding. Generous donors to SSA's

Scholarship Fund allow kids to participate in our programs when they might not otherwise have the opportunity. With donor and grant support, we can help students from all walks of life:

- Make new friends.
- Have fun and create.
- Learn about music and make connections with the world around them.
- Try and succeed at doing new things outside their comfort zone.
- Become more kind, curious, and confident.

Let's work together to make SSA an equal opportunity life-changer for any child who wants to participate! If you are able to donate to SSA, please know that all amounts are deeply appreciated.

You can make a one-time or recurring monthly donation on our secure website: <https://superiorstringalliance.org/donate/>

Or you can send a check to: PO Box 52, Marquette, MI 49855

Superior String Alliance is an IRS designated 501(c)3 non-profit corporation. Our Federal Tax ID number is 38-2938444.