

St. Robert Catholic School Strings Program

Registration form is on the last page

Is your child enrolled in 5K through 4th grade? Then he/she is eligible to enroll in Beginning Strings! In this packet you will find a description of the St. Robert String groups, meeting dates, lesson and ensemble expectations, tuition, and materials list. If you are interested in enrolling your child, then make sure to fill out the *enrollment form* found on the last page and turn it in at the school office as soon as possible.

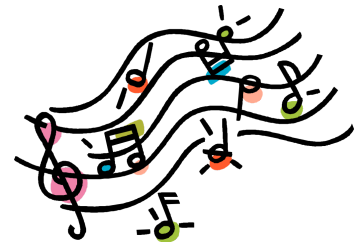
- * **Weekly instrumental lessons:** will be arranged and scheduled within the first two weeks of school. Elementary lessons and after-school masterclasses will start on September 14th, 2026.
- * **Beginning Violin Masterclass A (5K & 1st Grade):** Wednesday - 3:00 to 3:30pm
- * **Beginning Violin Masterclass B (2nd through 4th Grades):** Monday - 3:15 to 3:45pm
- * **Beginning Cello Masterclass (5K through 4th Grades):** Thursday -- 3:15 to 3:45pm
- * **Junior String Ensemble:** Tuesday -- 3:15 to 3:55pm
- * **Concert:** elementary students will perform in our Elementary *Spring Concert (May of 2027)*

Along with an exciting group masterclass each week, each participant will receive a 30-minute lesson during the school day, scheduled on an individual basis. Learning in a group, individually, and in duo/trio settings allows for addressing student-specific musical challenges, creating a sense of respect for peers, and building individual confidence.

There is no experience required to participate in the Beginning Strings program! If there are concerns or further questions, feel free to contact me at any time. I look forward to meeting and working with you and your child this academic year!

Warmly,

Fidel (Tony) Perez
tperez@strobert.school



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About Me

I graduated from Brigham Young University (BYU) in 2009 with a degree in Music Education - K12 Instrumental Strings. While in my native Venezuela, I studied violin at the Academia Latinoamericana de Violin with Maestros Jose Francisco del Castillo and Sergio Celis. My orchestral experience includes the Caracas Municipal Orchestra, Gran Mariscal de Ayacucho Symphony Orchestra, and Jóvenes Arcos de Venezuela Chamber Orchestra, as well as the Symphony and Chamber Orchestras at Brigham Young University and the Symphony Orchestra at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. I served as a violin teacher and orchestra instructor for the highly successful and renowned 'Venezuelan System of Youth Symphony Orchestras' (also known as *El Sistema*) in several of its Caracas branches. I also worked for Carroll University's '*El Sistema*'- inspired orchestral program for elementary school children at Hadfield Elementary (Waukesha School District), from 2011 to 2013. In May of 2012, I earned a Master's Degree in Chamber Music Performance (Violin) from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, studying with Dr. Bernard Zinck. I'm the founder and concertmaster of the *Camerata Milwaukee* Baroque Ensemble (www.CamerataMilwaukee.com). I also regularly perform with the Wisconsin Philharmonic and the Festival City Symphony. I have a passion for music and for teaching and look forward to sharing the joy of music with your child!

Program Opportunities

By learning music through performance and practice, students develop self-discipline, respect, creative thinking, teamwork, self-confidence, and a sense of community. The valuable skills acquired through musical instruction allow our students to develop into aspiring musicians and more importantly, unique individuals. The String Program currently consists of the following opportunities:

Instrumental Lessons:

These lessons allow the student and teacher to focus on a more personal and individual basis. During this half-hour lesson, the student and teacher will review group material as needed, study precise technique, develop a beautiful tone, and hone musical ideas through a series of solos, duets, and exercises. Each week the student aims to meet the goals set in the lesson, and keeps a journal log of material to practice, how to practice, and a checklist to record daily practice. The total lesson-count goal for the academic year is 30 individual lessons and 30 masterclasses. *Bear in mind that, a few times throughout the year, there will be some lessons held in small groups (2 or 3 kids) especially when the concert date is approaching; I do this to teach skills that would be otherwise impossible to address with the students playing by themselves or during the much more numerous group masterclass.*

- If your child is in the 5K to 5th grade range and is currently (or has been) enrolled with another private teacher or strings program, please contact Mr. Perez before enrolling to make a proper transition.
- If you enroll at the St. Robert strings program as a beginner, please know that you ***should not*** enroll with an outside teacher simultaneously. This guideline applies during the school year ***and*** during the summertime. (Reasons being that different pedagogies of different teachers would interfere with the students' quality of progress, only creating confusion for the student at this young age.)

Group Masterclass:

Violins and Cellos will hold a separate weekly masterclass right after school. During this weekly meeting, students learn the fundamentals of ensemble playing in an edifying learning environment. Principles of written and aural theory, music history, basic technique, and musical genres are taught through group activities and exercises. Students will have the opportunity to perform during masterclass at least once per month, demanding a respectful audience and allowing for unique opportunities to perform in front of their peers.

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Junior String Ensemble:

This group is open to students in 4th & 5th grade (sometimes 3rd grade), who have demonstrated an exceptionally high level of commitment and mastery. They will meet with Mr. Perez once per week on Tuesdays from 3:15 to 3:55pm, for a separate masterclass/ensemble rehearsal. Each “Junior” student will still receive a weekly private lesson. They participate at the *Christmas Concert* and the elementary *Spring Concert* at the end of the year.

Middle School String Ensembles:

The St. Robert Middle School String Ensembles are open to students in grades 6 through 8 who have been playing for at least three years; however, younger students who meet the screening standards for the ensemble may participate (contact Mr. Perez). These ensembles are designed for the intermediate/advanced student; the ensembles present challenging repertoire, dive further into the study of music history and theory, and continue to refine the student’s ensemble skills. Playing and performing in a string ensemble provides a creative and stimulating experience that will nurture musical gifts while developing a sense of discipline, teamwork, and self-confidence. These groups study a wide variety of genres throughout the year. Our middle school string ensembles meet two times each week during the school day, and perform in several concerts, Masses, and some other special events each year. Participation in the St. Robert Strings Ensemble fulfills the music curriculum requirements (Wisconsin standards for music education) for grades 6th through 8th.

Tuition

Payment for participation in the strings program will be billed through your school tuition plan. The tuition rates for the St. Robert String Program for the 2026-2027 school year, are as follows:

Beginning/Junior Strings: \$1,700 per academic year

This includes weekly lessons, masterclasses, and school concerts *for the entire academic year*. The total lesson count goal for the academic year is 30 individual lessons and approximately 30 masterclasses.

Middle School String Ensembles: \$1,500 per academic year

This includes twice-weekly ensemble classes, school concerts, and possible extra activities. Individual lessons can also be arranged for the whole academic year for an additional fee, depending on schedule availability.



Obtaining an Instrument

Renting: Renting an instrument from a local music store is very common. The store will measure the student and will fit him/her to the appropriate size instrument. This is typically a monthly rental agreement. My recommendations are as follows:

For violin and viola: Korinithian Violins - 2900 S. Delaware Ave.; (414) 744-1350; www.korinithianviolins.com

For cello: Brass Bell Music Store (210 W. Silver Spring Dr.; (414) 963-1000; www.brassbellmusic.com) or White House of Music (Various Locations: (414) 607-3900; www.whitehouseofmusic.com)

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Borrowing: your child may have the opportunity to borrow from a relative or family friend. This is definitely acceptable, as long as the size of the instrument is appropriate for the student and the instrument is in playable condition. Please, talk to me personally if this is your situation.

Purchasing: buying an instrument is a great investment if the student has reached a full-size instrument and plans to continue learning music. There are many great student instrument deals out there, but please seek advice from me before purchasing any instrument outfit to make sure you are receiving the best possible instrument for your money.

Things you need: I will provide necessary extra music, and pencils for use in group and individual lessons. Each student is required to have the following materials *by the first lesson*. Bring each item to class unless specified otherwise.

- 1) Instrument and bow. If you rent a violin, then you should also get a “blue contoured sponge shoulder rest”, preferably from the *Korinthian Violins* store.
- 2) Suzuki Book 1, for violin or cello and a 1-inch three-hole ring binder (this one is important!)
- 3) Music Stand (for home practicing, so you may purchase it on your own time)
- 4) Rosin and a rock stop for cello
- 5) Cleaning Cloth: a soft dish towel works well; there is no need to buy a special cloth
- 6) **Make sure you keep your child’s left hand fingernails well trimmed. Always!**



Frequently Asked Questions

What will be expected of my child?

Dedication, good spirit, and a strong effort to contribute and improve are three expectations of both individual lessons and the ensemble. Consistent attendance and dedication will prove a strong learning curve throughout the semester. Music is an invaluable curriculum, and with a positive attitude, patience, and practice, the student will receive a stronger sense of reward in return.

How long is my child expected to practice?

In our group and individual lessons, I will emphasize the quality of practice, not a time quantity. By using a notebook that the student brings to every lesson, the student will not only be writing down what to practice, but also *how* to practice. I expect students, however, to practice *a minimum* of four days a week, for about 15min each time, record what they practiced in their notebook, and return to their lesson with a parent signature. Practicing is a skill developed over time, and with a collaborative and positive effort, your child will learn how to balance and be responsible for their own work.

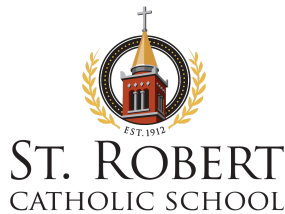
What instruments are offered?

The St Robert Strings Program offers violin, viola, and cello. If beginner students are interested in viola, I recommend starting on violin and making an easy transition to viola when foundational technique is in place after about two years (ideally around 4th or 5th grade).

*“The aim and final end of all music should be none other than
the glory of God and the refreshment of the soul”*

~ Johann Sebastian Bach ~

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St. Robert Catholic School Beginning & Junior Strings Enrollment Form 2026 - 2027



Please return this form, hard copy or email to Natalya Summers, nsummers@strobert.school, as soon as possible.

I, _____ (parent), would like to enroll _____ (student) in the St. Robert School Strings Program for the 2026 - 2027 academic year.

This program includes one group lesson (master class) and one individual lesson per week, both thirty minutes in length. Group lessons will be held right after school: Intermediate violins on Mondays, Junior Ensemble on Tuesdays, beginner violins (4K, 5K, 1st Grade) on Wednesday, and all beginner cellos on Thursdays. Individual lessons will be held during the school day and scheduled on an individual basis, according to the student's availability, usually during recess/lunch periods. *The total lesson-count goal for the academic year is 30 individual lessons and approximately 30 masterclasses ("group classes").* Participation for a full academic year in the program includes a **\$1,700** (4K-5th) or **\$1,500** (6th-8th) fee per student, payable through your tuition account. Elementary lessons & masterclasses will start on Monday, September 14th, 2026.

As you know, the program has grown significantly since it began twelve years ago. Given the current numbers, availability is limited so we recommend that you return this form as soon as possible!

Students in the **5K to 2nd grade range** will be given priority and are **strongly encouraged** to join; however, everyone is welcome to enroll!

Feel free to contact Mr. Perez (tperez@strobert.school) for more information about the program.

1) Instrument of choice (circle one): VIOLIN --- CELLO

2) My child will be in: _____ GRADE

3) This is a (circle one): NEW or RETURNING strings student

Parent Signature

Student Signature

Parent's Email address and phone number: _____

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