

# String Sprouts Parent Handbook



Welcome! I am so happy your child is signed up for String Sprouts through NKU Music Prep. Please carefully read the following handbook and talk through the procedures with your children, so they know what is expected when they come to class. If you have questions, please email me at [williamse13@nku.edu](mailto:williamse13@nku.edu). I can't wait for classes to begin! - Miss Betsy

## Important Dates for String Sprouts

### Wednesday Section Dates:

September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2019: First day of class!

October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2019: No Class (Fall Break)

November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2019: Parent Participation Week (1 parent per child)

November 27<sup>th</sup>, 2019: Thanksgiving Break (no classes)

December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2019: Last day of fall classes

### Saturday Section Dates:

September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2019: First day of class!

October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2019: No Class (University is closed this weekend for Fall Break)

November 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2019: Parent Participation Week (1 parent per child)

November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2019: Thanksgiving Break (no classes)

December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2019: Last day of fall classes

### Parking on Campus

You will need to purchase a Music Prep parking permit to park on campus. Follow this link to read about the various options and to purchase a permit: <https://www.nku.edu/academics/sota/musicprep/resources.html>

While String Project students can be dropped off and picked up in the circle in front of the Fine Arts building, **String Sprouts students must be walked to the door of their classroom by the adult bringing them to campus.** You will see students being dropped off and picked up in the circle, and a long line of cars - but these are for the String Project

Prelude class, which happens at the same time as String Sprouts. Please, walk your child to the door of the classroom, and pick them up promptly at the end of class.

### Wellness Policy

When deciding if your child is well enough to attend class, please keep in mind that some students may have health conditions that weaken their immune system; the common cold could send them to the hospital. For the sake of these families, please take the following health guidelines very seriously:

- Miss class if your child has had a fever in the past 24 hours, if they have a sore throat, or if they are coughing/blowing their nose.
- Cleanse hands with soap or hand sanitizer before class.
- Talk with your students about the importance of covering their face when coughing or sneezing.

### What to Do Before Class

Arrive on campus 15-20 minutes before class begins so you can accomplish the following things:

- Find a parking spot and walk your student into the Fine Arts building and to their classroom. Wednesday students will meet in **FA 116**, and Saturday students will meet in **FA 118**.
- Take your child to the restroom *before* class begins; bathroom breaks in the middle of class are distracting for everyone and cause the student to miss important instructional time.
- When it is time for class to begin, Miss Betsy will meet students at the classroom door and have them apply hand sanitizer before entering the classroom. She uses the "babyganics" foam hand sanitizer. If you do not want your child to use hand sanitizer, inform the teacher ahead of time,

and be sure to thoroughly wash their hands directly before class.

### What to Do During/After Class

- String Sprouts is an independent student class, but parents are asked to remain on campus due to the young age of students. You are welcome to find a spot to wait in any of the lobby areas in the Fine Arts building, visit Steely Library next door, or you can cross the plaza and check out the restaurants and tables (including a Starbucks) in the Student Union.
- Please return promptly at the end of class to pick up your child – the Wednesday class ends at 5:15 pm, and the Saturday class ends at 10:45 am. Miss Betsy does have other students to teach when class is over, so it is important all String Sprouts students are picked up on time.

### Late Policy

Life with kids can be hectic, and sometimes things come up that cause students to be late to class! However, students who enter late often feel anxious/hesitant to join class, and their entrance can be very disruptive to the rest of the class. If something happens and you are late, please take these steps:

- Wash their hands before taking them to class, as the teacher will not be able to stop instruction to help the student apply hand sanitizer.
- Explain to your child that class has already started, so they must be very quiet and listen carefully when they enter the classroom.

If your child is more than 5 minutes late, please enter the classroom with them to help them join the activity. Once they have joined the activity, please exit the classroom quietly.

### What to Expect in String Sprouts

Children are constantly growing and changing in the early elementary years, and every child learns at their own pace. Here are some things you may notice in String Sprouts that are crucial to musical learning at this age:

- **Development of the singing voice.** The voice is the first “instrument” any person learns to use – being able to match pitch and sing in a high, light/child-appropriate vocal range is something that can be taught to and developed in any child. Singing is foundational to musical activity in children and developing a sensitivity to pitch is crucial for playing the violin.
- **Music Games.** Your child may talk about various games they play in class; these music games help reinforce concepts such as beat, rhythm, singing, etc. – studies have shown that when children learn something through play, they build neural connections much faster and with less repetition!
- **Instruments.** While violin is a part of every class in String Sprouts, we will play many other instruments too, especially hand drums and mallet instruments (xylophones, etc.) This helps students understand that musical concepts such as beat, rhythm, and pitch can be transferred across many instruments.
- **Foam violins.** While students will eventually play real violins in class (provided by the university), they will start off playing foam violins, or “foamalins” to learn how to properly hold and handle the instrument.
- **Movement.** Movement activities, games, and dances will be woven through many Strings Sprouts classes. Sometimes students will be asked to respond to music (recordings or live music played by the teacher) with their own movement, and other times they will be given specific directions and steps to do. Movement activities can be used to teach musical form, steady beat, and many other musical concepts.
- **Fostering Intrinsic vs. Extrinsic Motivation.** You may notice we don’t hand out stickers or provide other external rewards in String Sprouts. Rather, we seek to foster intrinsic motivation in students – the desire to do something because the accomplishment of doing something well is the reward itself.
- **Nurturing Gratitude.** At the end of each class, students give the teacher a high five and say “thank you.” It is a wonderful way to continue building the student-teacher relationship of trust, caring, and respect.