

## **Hello Eighth Grade Orchestra Students and Families!**

My name is Kate Sellers and I am the band and orchestra director at La Plata High School. Entering high school can be confusing and a bit intimidating for students but participating in an instrumental ensemble is a great way for ninth graders to make friends and adjust to school. Below is the list of different options as well as helpful information about those ensembles.

**String Orchestra-** (curricular) we have one orchestra that meets as a whole class, however there are two course options for orchestra: **Honors Orchestra** and **Concert Orchestra**. If you are not interested in Honors Orchestra, please select **Concert Orchestra** on your course selection sheet

**Honors Orchestra-** (curricular) for high-level orchestra students, this class includes playing with the string orchestra as well as the full orchestra (which rehearses after-school once a week from December-February). Honors orchestra students are required to prepare an All-County Orchestra audition as well as a Solo and Ensemble piece. Admittance to honors orchestra is through teacher recommendation and/or audition.

**Marching Band-** (extra-curricular) marching band is a huge time commitment but is very rewarding. Many students reference the band being a “family” and that is certainly true for the La Plata Marching Warriors. We rehearse at band camp in August, Tuesdays/Thursdays during the school year and play at football games and competitions most weekends. Even if you don’t already play a band instrument, we will teach you something (likely percussion or guard) if you would like to participate. Additional information regarding marching band will be sent out, and there will be a virtual interest meeting, date/time TBD.

**Jazz Band-** (extra-curricular, auditions in November) the LPHS Jazz Band is a traditional big band that plays a variety of music genres (swing, rock, funk, Latin, etc). Saxophone, trombone, trumpet, guitar, bass, piano and percussion players will audition in November at the conclusion of marching band season. We perform at our concerts as well as local community events.

**Full Orchestra-** (extra-curricular) started this year, the full orchestra plays high-level literature featuring strings, winds and percussion. The full group will rehearse five or six times together before the performance. All honors orchestra students are required to participate, it is optional for concert orchestra students.

**Pit Orchestra-** (extra-curricular, auditions, if needed, in January) the pit orchestra plays the music for the musical. This is professional level music, and can be tricky at times, but playing in the pit is a fun experience. Instrumentation will vary from year to year.

Please feel free to reach out to me with any questions via email at [ksellers@ccboe.com](mailto:ksellers@ccboe.com). It is my sincere hope that every eighth-grade student involved in instrumental music continue with music in some way, shape or form in high school. Whether a student plans to be involved all four years or is just looking to get their arts credit, sticking with an instrument is something that many adults wish they had done.