



SFDR-CISD MARIACHI PROGRAM
HANDBOOK
2026 - 2027

Welcome!

Monday, August 10, 2026

Dear Mariachi Students/Parents/Guardians,

Thank you for your decision to be a part of the Mariachi Program. You are beginning a part of your life that is rewarding for both the student and family.

The Mariachi program has always been a source of culture, growth, fulfillment, and fun. Students make new friends, have unique and exciting experiences, and may have opportunities to travel. Student families have an opportunity to become involved in their child's education like never before. Studies show a strong correlation between student participation in music and academic success because of music's contribution to cognitive development.

My goal is that the experiences Mariachi students achieve will outweigh any investments you make. I encourage our students and families to consider the contributions the Mariachi program makes for the community, culture, and what I can do for everyone in the program. Please contact me if you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions!

Sincerely,
Jorge Luis Martinez, MBA

Mission Statement

I believe Mariachi students should have their hearts captured while they are learning. I believe in all Mariachi stakeholders: students, parents, staff, and community being "Present and Engaged" every day, striving for perfect attendance. With explicit planning, students in Mariachi deserve to learn in a safe, orderly, and disciplined environment. I will provide high expectations through student learning objectives and differentiate instruction as needed for all students.

Calendar of Events 2026-2027

Monday, Aug 10, 2026	FIRST DAY OF CLASSESS! (No instruments yet)
Friday, Aug 14, 2026	All Forms due for test grade
Friday, Aug 21, 2026	Projected first day of using instruments in class. \$50 fee for using school instruments is due before Instrument is checked out to the students
September 2026	Ram Card fundraiser. Students will sell Ram cards which have discounts to local businesses
September 2026	Afterschool sectionals to begin. Exact dates and times to be determined. Sectionals are one day a week after school for 1 hour. Dates and times will be available as we get closer to September.
Monday, December 7, 2026	Projected Christmas concert for all students
Friday, December 11, 2026	Alternate Assignment due for students who missed concert
April/May	Mariachi Contest TBA
Monday, May 10, 2026	Projected Spring concert for all students
Friday, May 14, 2026	Alternate assignment due for students who missed concert

Contact Information

Mariachi Director: jorge.martinez@sfdr-cisd.org
DRMS Principal: maytte.soliz@sfdr-cisd.org
GMS Principal: jorge.jurado@sfdr-cisd.org
SFMMS Principal: cheryl.pond@sfdr-cisd.org
DRFS Principal: jesusr.soto@sfdr-cisd.org
DRHS Principal: cynthia.salas@sfdr-cisd.org
Fine Arts Coordinator: vanessa.martinez@sfdr-cisd.org

Communication

Students are expected to communicate with the director before concerns become issues. They should do this at an appropriate time, one-on-one. Again, clarification and solid communication will keep everything running smoothly throughout the entire year.

Throughout the year, I will be sending quite a bit of information home in the form of letters and Remind messages. Please make every effort to read this information carefully, check calendars often, and keep me informed of any conflicts. The sooner I know of a situation, the more options I have for solving problems. **I will be using the app called “Remind” this year to help in the communication process. Please register for a remind account and join me at:**

www.remind.com/join/mariachigf for GMS students

www.remind.com/join/mariachdr for DRMS students

www.remind.com/join/sfmmsma for SMMS students

www.remind.com/join/4ddf2f3 for JV students

www.remind.com/join/gff99db for Varsity students

Please understand that my communication to you, the parents and guardians, is a very high priority for me. I want to take care of concerns. And make every situation the best for each student. Please contact me for clarification on any concerns before they become major issues. Due to sectionals and student help sessions, it is difficult to reach me before or after school. If I am working with students, please understand that they are my highest priority and deserve my complete attention.

Mariachi Expectations

Behavior

Mariachi members will observe all procedures set forth by SFDRCSISD, in addition to the following, as they pertain to the instrumental musical setting:

- Any behavior which is not representative of good citizenship, as perceived by myself or band staff may result in the student's dismissal from the activity at hand; and if continued, could result in dismissal from the Mariachi program.
- Students will follow director's instructions
- Students will be in their assigned area in the mariachi room with all necessary equipment at the beginning of class/rehearsal time.
- Students will keep their hands and feet to themselves
- Students will not use or play on equipment they do not own without permission from myself or a band director
- Students will not touch, handle, borrow, or use anyone else's instrument, uniform, or personal belongings
- Students would request permission to speak by raising their hand and waiting to be acknowledged
- All rehearsals are expected to be extremely quiet so that time will be utilized as wisely and efficiently as possible
- When allowed in the band hall, students will not disturb any rehearsal in progress
- Students will respect the property of others and return their equipment to its proper storage place when not in use
- Students should keep their equipment in the designated storage area and keep said storage area clean and neat in appearance. Students who have difficulty with this may lose the privilege of having a storage area in the Mariachi room
- Students will not deface or mark on music stands, chairs, walls, etc
- Students will not write on the dry-erase boards without permission from myself or a band director
- Students will not play their instrument unless they are instructed to do so
- Students will use tuners at the beginning of class

IMPORTANT

All students are to remain in their assigned place at all times. Students may move from their area with permission. Any student that leaves the immediate band area without permission will automatically receive a discipline referral.

Any instances such as theft or any action which causes harm to other students and/or their belongings will result in immediate removal from the Mariachi program. This includes but is not limited to taking accessories such as rosin, valve oil, straps, picks, strings, shoulder rests, instruments, etc. This includes hiding another student's instrument. If it is not yours, do not touch it unless instructed to do so!

Digital Citizenship

Maintaining a high standard of conduct also includes ensuring that Mariachi members' online media is appropriate. The Internet is a worldwide publicly accessible form of communication. Any communication appearing on the Internet is public domain, even if it is marked as private. Members are responsible for their personal websites and posting (including social media!), as well as posting from or on other students' accounts.

The areas of appropriateness will include but are not limited to profane, foul, or disrespectful language (abbreviated or alluding to), pictures, suggestive poses, clothing, references to alcohol, drugs, and/or tobacco, and postings (either verbal or photos) that could be interpreted as being negative or threatening towards to other SFDRCISD members, or that demonstrated poor sportsmanship or a disrespectful attitude towards other performing groups. Any such incident will result in review by the principal (or designee) and may lead to probation or dismissal from Mariachi class.

Care of Facilities

- **NO** gum, food, or drinks are allowed in the Mariachi room except when authorized by me or other band directors
- All trash must be deposited in the wastebaskets provided
- Acts of vandalism or the willful misuse of school property will be dealt severity and appropriately. Every Mariachi member is responsible to help all directors monitor the facility and control vandalism, which includes but is not limited to writing or carving on stands and walls, destroying music or instruments, or breaking school property.
- Practice and ensemble rooms are designed for practicing, not social gatherings
- Please knock on office doors; and, if you are united in, you may enter. Otherwise, band offices are off-limits to students. Students may not use band hall office phones without permission
- The telephone in the band halls may not be used by non-band members. This phone is not to be used for personal calls, but may be used to call presents for rides, etc.
- Students must ask permission to use the band office phone. All calls will be limited to 2 minutes

Discipline Procedures

My goal as a teacher is to ensure that all students are treated fairly. All incidents will follow due process and will be resolved case-by case. In rare cases, alternate discipline procedures will occur. The safety and well-being of ALL students is my top priority.

In the event a student does not adhere to conduct expectations, the following discipline procedure will ensue:

- 1st infraction: verbal warning from director
- 2nd infraction: conference between director and student, phone call to parent

- 3rd infraction: phone call to parent, office discipline referral, possibly assigned alternate assignments to make up missed public performance
- 4th infraction: phone call to parent, conference, office discipline referral, possible removal from the Mariachi program, removal from ALL public performances (automatically assigned alternate assignments to make up missed public performances)
- 5th infraction: phone call to parent, conference, office referral, removal from Mariachi program, schedule change (final decision will be made by Administration)

Please feel free to contact me if you have any concerns. I will work with you to resolve problems. I am here to provide a quality music education for all my students.

Attendance

In order to have and maintain a high-quality mariachi program, each member's attendance is essential. While the SFDRICISD Mariachi programs follow all school and district policies and procedures, the following additional guidelines outline the attendance procedures and policies for each Mariachi band.

Excused Absence

Absences during the school day will be excused according to the district guidelines. Absences from activities held outside the school day will be excused at the discretion of the director. Appointments, tutorials, etc., are not excuses for absence. Absences due to personal illness requiring medical attention, death in the family, or other extenuating circumstances (approved by director) may be considered for excused status. Students who are continually ill may be required to provide a doctor's note releasing them from participation. Absences should be discussed with me to determine whether or not they will be excused.

Unexcused Absence

Students with an unexcused absence from any required activity will receive a zero in the gradebook. Rehearsals, concerts, contests, and competitions cannot be made up. Students with an unexcused absence to a sectional, are required to schedule make-up time with me within one week. Multiple unexcused absences may result in removal from Christmas or Spring Concerts and assigned alternate exams.

Concerts and performances are an integral component of the curriculum. Students should consult their calendars for dates and times. Each of the middle school ensembles will perform at various times throughout the school year which are mandatory. Periodically, the schedule may change, and updates will be communicated. Punctuality is essential. A concert concludes after the last group has performed and all students have moved chairs and stands back to the Mariachi room, then the director will give students permission to be dismissed. A general report time will be given for all students. If a performance causes a student to miss another class, the student is responsible to make up all missed work.

Performances of the ensembles will include but are not limited to:

- Winter Concert
- Spring Contest
- Spring Concert
- Elementary recruitment tour

Attendance to performances, sectionals, and rehearsal is REQUIRED!!. Failure to attend these events will result in a zero test grade for that performance or rehearsal unless documentation of emergency is presented to me. Those who do not practice or attend sectionals may be asked to complete an alternate assignment instead of participating in the Christmas or Spring concerts. Parents will be notified prior to the concerts.

Mariachi Uniform

For performances, all students are expected to arrive on time, have all equipment and be dressed in the Mariachi uniform. The Mariachi uniform will consist of a black long sleeved shirt, black slacks, and black shoes or boots. No open toe shoes will be allowed. Boys and girls will need to buy the shirt and pants, a neck moño, and girls will also need to buy a hair bow in the same color as the neck moñol. The prices of the moño and hair bows will be sent at a later time. **Sometimes the Mariachi band is asked to perform for special performances or pep rallies not scheduled in the yearly planner. These performances will have information sent out as soon as I am made aware.**

Grading Policy

Students will be expected to meet the responsibilities for each Mariachi class as determined by the director. Since Mariachi is an academic music class with some extra-curricular activities attached, the student's grade will reflect achievement in both curricular and extra-curricular areas.

General Grading Guidelines - Students will be graded on the following scale:

Daily/Participation. 60%

- Having their instrument, music supplies, classwork
- ACTIVELY participation in class activities (singing, dancing, etc.) and other homework assignments

Playing/Written Tests and/or sectionals/concerts. 40%

- Evaluation of music performance
- Concert attendance
- Sectional attendance, and
- Accuracy/completion of written and musical playing tests

Additionally, the Mariachi ensemble is a performing group. Therefore, **ALL MUSIC WILL HAVE BE MEMORIZED FOR PERFORMANCES**. Music stands **WILL NOT** be allowed to be used during any performance. This is non-negotiable. Failure to learn one's part will result in the inability to perform and will lose the grade that was assigned for that particular performance.

Rehearsals

Mariachi students need to rehearse the same way they perform in order to prepare for their presentations. Mariachi performances require the musicians to perform standing up. Therefore, students will **NOT BE** allowed to rehearse sitting down during class. This practice will allow Mariachi students to get used to actual performing conditions and demands.

Contest Mariachi

The students who excel the most will be rewarded for their hard work. These students might travel to elementary school and participate in a contest out of town in the spring. Middle school students will be selected for an all-city Mariachi group that will play along other ensembles.

Contest Mariachi selections is based on the following criteria:

- Instrumentation needs and limitations
- Pass ALL classes with a 70% or higher
- Overall music performance and consistent progress
- Attitude and behavior

Travel Guidelines

The Mariachi band may travel for the spring contest and elementary performances. Students are expected to conduct themselves at the highest level on any trip.

Students must travel to events and return from events on the bus. Any student wishing to arrive or leave with their parent/guardian must notify me and complete a form with a parent signature 24 hours prior to the event. Permission will be granted or denied based on the circumstance of the occasion.

Students must have all necessary forms (Medical/Travel Release) completed in Rank 1 to travel on any trip.

While on the bus students will:

- Remain seated at all times
- Keep the bus clear of food, drinks, and debris
- Keep all body parts inside the bus

- No audible speakers are allowed
- Remain silent when addressed by an adult on the bus
- Refrain from loud, boisterous talking, singing, screaming, whistling, inappropriate jokes, etc.

SPECIAL NOTE

As a member of the mariachi band, you are a representative of your school. Always be on your best behaviour. If you are in doubt about an action, do not do it!. Your conduct at all times should be considered a good reflection on the school, your bank, your home, and the community.

Chaperones

Adult chaperones must be SFDR Approved Volunteers and are a great asset to the Mariachi program. Students will treat them as an extension of the band staff. Proper respect will be shown to all adults at all times. Any parent interested in helping out the band with any parties or trips will need to fill out the "2026-2027 Volunteer background" form provided on the following link:

<https://www.sfdr-cisd.org/human-resources/human-resources-home/>

Safety

Due to heavy student traffic in and out of the band and Mariachi areas, as well as the possibility of theft of instruments, students not enrolled in the Mariachi or Band programs are not allowed in the Mariachi or Band hall at any time. Friends of Mariachi members may wait outside the area to accompany their friend to another location.

Mariachi Hours

Normal Band Hall operating hours are from 7:30 AM to 4:00 PM with the exception of sectional rehearsal times. Additional sectionals and rehearsals may be added as events and performances get closer. Students are to drop off their instruments in the Mariachi before school and take them home each day after school to practice.

Financial Obligations

Instrument Maintenance Fee (Students using School instruments): \$50

It is highly encouraged that students purchase or rent their own instruments. This is for violin, trumpet, guitar, and vihuela. Doing so will allow them to keep the same instrument throughout their Mariachi career and give them more familiarity with that instrument. Guitarron is supplied 1 per campus and will

need to pay the \$50 dollar fee. All trumpets, guitars, and vihuelas must be supplied by the student. The campus does not have any so please look into renting or buying through a music store whether local or in San Antonio.

The violin store Terra Nova has violin rental options. It is located in San Antonio, but they will be coming one night to Del Rio to talk to parents about buying and renting violins. If for some reason you cannot afford to rent or buy a violin please see me. The school has some violins in inventory and the \$30 dollar rental/maintenance fee will have to be paid which:

- Helps cover the repair and maintenance costs of school owned instruments
- Covers any instance of severe damage to instruments which occur and the student is not at fault for. The following will not be covered:
 - Carelessly mishandling or dropping instruments
 - Not informing director immediately when instrument is damage

Varsity Mariachi

Proper membership to the Varsity Mariachi will have to be maintained throughout the semester. The Varsity Mariachi's level of music is much greater and more difficult than the rest. Therefore, every member is expected to demonstrate consistent musical preparation, technical proficiency, and commitment to ensemble excellence. This includes regular practice, accurate performance of assigned parts, strong rhythmic and tonal awareness, memorization of required repertoire, punctual attendance at rehearsals and performances, and the ability to follow musical direction and group standards.

Failure to maintain acceptable musicianship standards may result in corrective action. This can include verbal or written warnings, additional rehearsal requirements, temporary removal from featured parts or performances, reassignment to a lower musical role, or formal demotion within the organization (JV group reassignment). Repeated lack of preparation, poor performance quality, excessive absences, or unwillingness to improve may lead to further disciplinary measures, including suspension or removal from the group.

Mariachi Fundraisers

Fundraisers assist in covering the expenses of student activities and materials:

- Elementary school trips and out of town performances
- Pizza parties
- New Music
- Travel and competition expenses
- Mariachi T-shirts

We will have 1, possibly 2, fundraisers this year. In the fall we will be selling Ram Discount cards to local businesses here in Del Rio. Our Fall fundraiser will kick off in September. It is very important that each student sells 10 cards to help pay for things we need in the Mariachi program as well as to pay for school Mariachi t-shirts. Each card lasts for 1 year time period and can be used every day for that year. They are \$10 dollars each. If we do a second fundraiser it will be sometime in January or February 2027.

Required Materials

- A 1" 3-ring binder
- Sheet protectors for worksheets and music
- A pencil (**ABSOLUTELY NO PENS**)
- Instrument
- Violins need rosin, bow, and strings
- Trumpets need valve oil and slide grease
- Guitars need extra strings, strap, and rounder triangle picks
- Vihuela needs a strap, strings, and a finger pick
- Guitarron needs a strap and strings

Instruments: What Do I Need to Know?

The quality of the instrument a student plays on is vital to his/her success in the Mariachi program. With that in mind, I would like to make the following suggestions:

- You get what you pay for. If you see an instrument that is low price and brand new, it is probably a foreign made instrument that no repair parts are available to fix. If something goes wrong you will need to buy a new instrument. If you have questions about good quality instruments that will last over time please ask.
- YOU HAVE THE OPTION TO RENT. Despite the cost of many instruments, music companies often have the option of renting an instrument at a cost that is cheaper than purchasing. **Do not drop Mariachi due to financial reasons. I can help with this information and solutions.**
- INSTRUMENTS GET DAMAGED EASILY. If you purchase an instrument before we start playing in class, wait until I show the student how to properly handle the instrument BEFORE attempting to assemble it at home. Most instrumental damage takes place at home because students often do not understand how to properly handle and assemble the instrument. If you have already purchased an instrument, I recommend that you bring it to school so I can inspect it.
- INSTRUMENTS REQUIRE MAINTENANCE. Daily maintenance is the best way to ensure an instrument remains in playable condition which saves money in repairs and overhauls. All students will learn how to clean and care for their instruments during class.
- DO NOT ATTEMPT INSTRUMENT REPAIRS BY YOURSELF. Instrument repair is just as specialized as auto repair. One wrong move can cost you money. **If there is an issue with the instrument, the first step is to ALWAYS consult the director.** There is a qualified repair service which takes care of instrument repairs for our school district.

HIGH SCHOOL MUSIC is a music store from San Antonio. If you have any questions about the price for buying or renting, you may contact them. Here is the link they provided me to help you

<https://www.hsmusicservice.com/>

Two other music stores that are local are:

- Buddy's Music
 - (830) 778-5232
 - 1400 N Bedell Ave. Del Rio, TX 78840

- JE's Music
 - (830) 774-3634
 - Located in the Plaza del Sol Mall
 - Hours are 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM weekdays and 2:00 PM - 4:00 on weekends

For buying or renting violins:

- Terra Nova Violins
- (210) 349-4700
- 6983 Blanco R. San Antonio, TX 78216