



Mrs. Rachel Plumer (Myers), Director

mrmyers@fcps.edu

703-690-5563

ENSEMBLES:

Beginning Level – Mustang Orchestra

NEW for the 2022-2023 school year! Geared toward students with minimal or no strings experience. Students will develop their skills on a string instrument (violin, viola, cello, or bass) as a member of an ensemble. Everyone is welcome, as there are many opportunities and positive experiences to be gained through playing an instrument and working in a team-concept environment! Students will have the opportunity to showcase their accomplishments at several performances throughout the year as well as participate in the Spring Trip.

Intermediate Levels – Concert Green Orchestra & Intermezzo Orchestra

Geared toward students with 1-3 years of strings experience. Students will refine and extend their individual playing skills as well as serve as a team member of an ensemble. Students will have the opportunity to showcase their accomplishments at several performances throughout the year as well as participate in the Spring Trip.

Advanced MS Level – Symphonic Orchestra

Geared toward students with at least one year of middle school orchestra experience. Students will continue to refine and extend their individual playing skills as well as serve as a team member of an ensemble. Students will have the opportunity to showcase their accomplishments at several performances throughout the year as well as participate in the Spring Trip.

ORCHESTRA EVENTS:

- **Masquerade Concert** (pyramid concert with elementary schools and South County High School) – October
- **Winter Concert** (all SCMS Orchestras perform) – December
- **District X Honor Orchestra** (auditioned ensemble made up of advanced string players from the middle/high schools in VBODA District X. Auditions take place in November. Students selected participate in a weekend event in January)
- **Pre-Assessment Concert** (performance for community in preparation for District X Orchestra Assessment – see below) – March
- **District X Orchestra Assessment** (orchestras perform for a panel of judges and receive a rating) – March
- **Solo and Ensemble Festival** (open to all orchestra students. Students prepare a solo piece or an ensemble piece to perform for a judge and will receive comments and an overall rating) – April
- **Spring Trip** (we will travel to a local amusement park and will compete in an orchestra festival as well as enjoy some time in the park. Participation is optional) – May
- **Spring Concert** (all SCMS orchestras perform) – June

Why Orchestra?

Music has always been an important part of education and life. Because of its unique nature, music communicates in ways language cannot. We encourage you to experience this special part of life as a member of the SCMS Orchestra!

SCMS ORCHESTRA FAQs

What is Orchestra like in middle school?

Orchestra is usually a very positive experience for students. You will get to play your instrument every other day, participate in some great performance opportunities, and form new friendships!

What class should I sign up for? How does the audition process work?

- Students with no previous strings experience should sign up for “Beginning Orchestra”
- Students with 1-3 years of strings experience should sign up for “Intermediate Orchestra”
- Students with at least 1 year of middle school orchestra experience should sign up for “Advanced Orchestra”

Rising 7th graders with previous strings experience should complete a Placement Audition to help determine appropriate class placement. Audition information and music is available in the Google Folder located at <https://rb.gy/hgtnkg>

I'm not very good at my instrument. Do you still want me to be in Orchestra?

YES!! Players of ALL levels are encouraged to sign up! In middle school, you will have orchestra every other day, so you will receive more frequent instruction on your instrument. I strive to ensure you are placed in a class that is appropriate for your current skill level so that you will be successful and have an enjoyable experience.

Do we take field trips?

YES!! In addition to performing at a local high school for Orchestra Assessment (mandatory) in March, we go on a spring trip to an amusement park at the beginning of May (this is optional).

Are there after-school commitments?

Some. All students will be required to perform in several concerts throughout the year with their ensemble.

I play cello or bass. Do I have to bring my instrument to/from school each class?

NO!! Cellists and bassists may rent a cello/bass to use during class (instrument stays at school) so they do not have to transport theirs to and from school. They must, however, have an instrument at home to use for practicing.

Can I rent my instrument from the school?

Students are encouraged to rent/purchase their instrument from a music store so that they begin to invest in a quality instrument. Internet vendors such as EBay, Amazon, etc. are not recommended as you cannot check the quality of the instrument prior to purchase. Students who participate in the FCPS Free/Reduced lunch program are eligible to rent an instrument through FCPS' Instruments for All Program. More details about this program will be given at the beginning of the school year. Finances should NEVER prohibit a student from joining orchestra. If there is a financial concern (even if you do not qualify for Free/Reduced Lunch), please contact me.