



Riverside Intermediate School Orchestra

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Dear Families,

I am very excited that your child has chosen to join orchestra in sixth grade! I want to make sure that they are prepared to start learning next year with a quality instrument. As we were unable to provide instrument try-ons and a Registration Night this year, this letter serves to provide you as much information as possible regarding instrument selection. In this letter you will find tips on how to acquire a quality instrument for next year. I recommend that students who are in need of an instrument visit Paige's Music (5282-A East 65th St, Indianapolis or www.paigesmusic.com). They have excellent instruments with a repair plan included in the rental cost. Paige's Music is the preferred instrument rental store of HSE Schools. We do not receive any commission or reward from Paige's. We simply feel they provide the best experience.

If you want to secure an instrument in another way, please be wary. I do not recommend buying an instrument from Amazon or other 'Big Box Stores'. Many times, these non-school music stores will offer what seems like very inexpensive instruments. With these instruments, there is no after-sale support, no repair service; additionally, the instruments are typically of low quality. Because they are so inexpensive, they are considered expendable. The results when purchasing from a non-school music store are often frustrated students, and higher long-term repair & replacement costs for the parents. When you are ready to rent or purchase an instrument, here are a few tips to help you choose a good quality instrument.

- Musical instruments are NOT toys! A usable instrument is a well-constructed work of art, combining both the latest technology and time-tested old-world craftsmanship. All string instruments should be wood-toned (please, NO colored instruments!)
- Most young orchestra students are not ready for a full-size instrument. If you purchase a fractional-size instrument, you will be stuck with it when your child grows, rendering it useless. Purchasing a too-large instrument will hamper their ability to learn and can cause physical pain. Rental companies like Paige's will "size-up" your student for free!
- In the string world, most instruments of even basic quality are hand-carved. This is not just to make it fancy or expensive, it truly has an effect on the instrument's function and sound production. In turn, the detailed nature of a string instrument reflects the price. String instruments are not cheap, I know. But nearly all of these inexpensive, machine-cut instruments on stores such as Amazon, eBay, even 'Big Box' music centers, are of very poor quality, and will break easily.
- Consider the value of service after you have purchased. Repair is an inevitable fact. Alternative sources often do not offer maintenance programs. Most school music stores offer maintenance programs as part of their rental/purchase plans. Usually, the cost is nominal, if anything, and is well worth the small expense. Remember, it is a matter of "WHEN" not "IF" an instrument breaks, in regard to repair and service. If you purchase a questionable instrument, you may spend more on repair just to make it usable. Your child will become discouraged when they consistently lose class time as a result of a broken instrument.

If you have any questions or concerns or would like my input on which instruments are proper and suitable, please do not hesitate to contact me by email or phone. I look forward to working with your child next year!

Respectfully,

Mrs. Johanna Kitchell

Orchestra Director

Riverside Intermediate & Junior High

It is suggested that ALL instruments purchase a
"STARTER PACK" from Paige's Music.

The following is needed for ALL instruments*

Essential Elements for Strings Book 1 (instrument specific)

Rosin (instrument specific)

Instrument Cleaning Rag

Shoulder Rest (violin/viola) or Rock Stop (cello/bass)

Music Stand (for home practice)

*All items listed are included in a Starter Pack purchase, with or without instrument rental

Instrument Requirements and Accessories

Violin and Viola:

- Instrument will go back and forth from home to school; locker is provided
- All instruments must be wood-toned (NO colored instruments permitted)
- Instruments should be partially or fully hand-carved, with real wood pegs and fingerboard
- Instrument bridge should be carved, adjusted and fitted – no assembly should be required!
- Tailpiece should have four functioning fine tuners
- Bow should be fiberglass or carbon fiber; wood is NOT recommended at this level
- Starter Pack should provide all additional needed accessories (see box above)

Cello and Bass:

- One instrument is to be secured by the family, for home use
- Riverside will provide an instrument for school use
- See the above violin/viola criteria for additional quality requirements

Reputable Brands:

- Eastman, Yamaha, Scherl & Roth, Snow, Shar, Knilling, Mueller, Hoffman, William Harris Lee, Schneider, Lamberti

Brands to Avoid:

- Cecilio, Cremona, Mendini, Lark, DiPalo, Cervini, Carlo Robelli, ADM, Windsor, Bunnel, Teekland, Vif, Artall, Eastar, DZ Strad, Glarry, Lico, Sonart, YMC, Benjamin Adams, anything with no name

Please limit your new or used instrument search to the Reputable Brands. These brands are well-respected and reliable. The Brands to Avoid list has been developed with reason and professional judgement, and is also based on experience. Please contact me if you have any questions about specific models.