

# River Trail Middle School

## Welcome to Orchestra!

### Violin and Viola

I would like to welcome the families of students to the River Trail MS Orchestra program! This information sheet is a list of daily class items students will need, and information about renting/purchasing instruments.

## Getting an Instrument

### School Violin/Viola Instruments

There are a limited number of violin and viola instruments available from the school for students to rent. Priority of the school violin and viola instruments are given first to beginning 6<sup>th</sup> Grade students, followed by 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Concert Orchestra students, and then 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Concert Orchestra students. Ideally, students will be notified by the end of the first week of school if a school instrument is available to rent. A yearly \$50 usage fee is required for student rental of a school instrument.

### Music Store Instrument Rental

Students are strongly encouraged to rent an instrument from a "luthier" (bowed-string specialist). Many stores offer different insurance policies for damages (often called *Liability and Damage Waiver-LDW*). Most stores allow students to exchange their current instrument for a larger size as part of the rental agreement. In addition, some stores will even apply some portion of the rental fee towards the purchase of a new instrument!

### Instrument Purchase

Buying an instrument is not the same as buying a computer or television. A person will need to know what to look for and be able to play the instrument to determine the quality. Online purchase of instruments is incredibly tricky as some instruments sold online are misleading regarding to the quality and price of an instrument. Students may end up with an instrument that makes it harder to play, stay in tune, or develop an adequate quality of sound regardless of the student's or even a professional musician's skill level. Parents planning to purchase an instrument either in person or online should purchase through a vendor that allows for the return and full refund of the instrument if the instrument is assessed to have problems or the quality will make it difficult for the student to use.

## Instrument Materials and Equipment

In addition of getting a violin or viola for use, students will also need to get the following items and materials for Digital Online Learning in Orchestra. These items may be found at the local area music stores or may be ordered online.

- **Method Book:** Essential Elements for Strings
  - 6<sup>th</sup> Grade: Book 1 and 2 for Violin or Viola
  - 7<sup>th</sup> Grade: Book 2 for Violin or Viola
- **Shoulder Rest** (not shoulder pad or sponge): I strongly suggest that students **avoid shoulder rests** where adjustments are made with a slider.
  - How Shoulder Rest Sizes Work:** *Violin and Viola instruments use the same type of shoulder rest*
  - >If you play a ½ Violin or 12-inch Viola, then you will need a Violin Shoulder rest adjustable from ½ size to ¾ size
  - >If you play a ¾ Violin or 13-inch Viola, then you will need a Violin Shoulder rest adjustable from ¾ size to 4/4 size
  - >If you play a 4/4 Violin or 14-inch Viola, then you will need a Violin Shoulder rest adjustable from ¾ size to 4/4 size
- **Soft Cleaning Cloth**-any piece of soft cloth about 5x7 inches or larger (old T-shirt material)
- **Rosin** (avoid purchasing rosin that comes in a metal tin as they are difficult to open)
- **Mechanical Pencil**
- **Folding music stand**

## Music Stores

>List of **Local Area Music Stores** and Stores that specialize in Violins (viola/cello/bass): <http://rtmsorchestra.com/music-stores/>

>**Online Stores** that Specialize in String Instruments: <http://rtmsorchestra.com/online-orchestra-stores/>