

# Pike Middle School Orchestra

## *Director, Emily Quin*



Welcome! We are so delighted that you are considering Orchestra as one of your Fine Arts Classes! We call our Orchestra home away from home, a place where you can belong, make friends, and play great music together!

### **Here are some reasons why you should join Orchestra:**

- Strings are Fun!
- Make lasting friendships!
- Excel at competitions and performances!
- Make great music together!



What instruments are in Orchestra?



The violin is the "small" of the orchestra family. Because its strings are the shortest, it produces the highest sound making beautiful melodies. Violinists always play the violin on the left shoulder.

The viola is the "medium" of the orchestra and a very important instrument. Because it's bigger than the violin with longer strings, it makes a rich warm sound that is lower in pitch. It's also played on the violist's left shoulder.

The cello is the "large" of the orchestra and plays even lower than the viola. To support its longer strings, it's more than twice as big as the viola - so cellists must sit down, resting the instrument against their bodies.

The bass is the "super size" of the orchestra and acts as the foundation. These deep instruments add the lower notes to the orchestra sound. The instrument is often taller than the person that plays it!

## **FAQ about Orchestra**

**Do students need any prior experience to be in Orchestra?** No, students may join Orchestra with zero experience. We start from the very beginning and go from there!

### **What is this going to cost me?**

Instrument rentals start at about \$25 a month, and are usually set up on a month to month type of plan. The one time supply cost is about \$50 Orchestra start up supply cost. We don't want lack of financial resources to be a roadblock for a child's participation in orchestra. Please talk to a director if that applies to your child.

### **Should I buy my child an instrument?**

I recommend renting an instrument instead of purchasing, especially for the first year. Most students will need a smaller size instrument and will later grow into a full size. Also, music stores rent out quality instruments that are easier for your student to learn to play on. However, if you would like to purchase, I would be happy to guide you in purchasing an instrument.

**Will my child need to take their instrument to and from school every day?** Violin and viola students are expected to rent one instrument to take to and from school every day. Since cellos and basses are larger instruments and harder to transport, students rent one instrument from a music store for at home practice and one school-owned instrument to keep at school.

**What type of time commitments are required of Beginning Orchestra students?** Students in all Orchestras are required to practice every day. Students are held accountable for individual practice time with weekly playing tests called ribbon tests. Although not required, most students come to school early to practice and are able to progress much faster through their technique ribbons. Many beginning students

complete all of their ribbons early and are able to move up into a higher skill level/competing Orchestra. Beginning orchestra students will perform a fall concert, winter concert, and a spring concert that are after school. Students are required to stay for the duration of the concert. Beginning Orchestra students also have the opportunity to participate in additional events such as All-Star Orchestra and various social activities.

### **My student wants to be in Orchestra. Now what?**

You will need to attend one of our instrument drives. At this time, your child will choose the instrument they want to play and will be sized for that instrument. Remember, string instruments come in different sizes; therefore it is extremely important that they are sized for their instrument to be successful.

#### **Instrument Drives**

**(\*Mrs. Quin will be in attendance.)**

April 3rd, 2018 @ Wilson MS 6-8pm

April 5th, 2018 @ Pike MS 6-8pm

April 10th 2018 @ Chisholm Trail MS 6-8pm

Parents are welcome to rent from any music company, but Bell's Music Shop will be at every instrument drive so parents can set up their rental right there (instead of making a special trip out to the store!). They will deliver your child's instrument to Pike MS right before school starts so that it will be ready and waiting for your child on the first day of school. Please see the Pike Orchestra webpage located on the Pike Homepage for the supplies list (address below).

Please contact me with any questions and I look forward to meeting you!

**Mrs. Emily Quin**

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**Pike Middle School Orchestra Page:**

[http://pike.nisdtx.org/our\\_school/extra\\_\\_co\\_\\_curricular/orchestra](http://pike.nisdtx.org/our_school/extra__co__curricular/orchestra)