

D303 ELEMENTARY ORCHESTRA PROGRAM

Wasco Elementary School



A Guide for Parents

Welcome to the St. Charles Elementary Orchestra Program! The study of music is much more than simply learning to play an instrument. Learning to play an instrument and participating in an ensemble are valuable experiences for all students. District 303 orchestra directors are committed to providing students with meaningful learning opportunities and positive musical experiences. We look forward to sharing our love and enthusiasm for music with your child!

START OF INSTRUCTION

Summer Beginning Orchestra Camp is the best time for students to begin orchestra. Camp is held at Bell-Graham Elementary School (we combine students from Corron, Wasco and Bell-Graham), the week before school starts, August 3-7. Each lesson time is 45 minutes in length. Camp cost is \$75.00 for the week. Even if your musician will miss a day or two, it is highly recommended that all beginners register for camp. If camp attendance is not possible, new orchestra members may also begin in the fall at school.

SMALL GROUP LESSONS

Students have a 40 minute small group lesson each week during the school day. The lesson schedule rotates throughout the school day so that students don't miss the same thing every week. Lessons give directors time to work more closely with each student to improve fundamentals such as tone, rhythm, basic music theory, instrument technique, and reading music. In school small group lessons will begin the last week of August.

LARGE GROUP REHEARSALS

Students in orchestra participate in weekly ensemble rehearsals which take place once a week before school. Rehearsals start at 8:15 AM. Students are encouraged to arrive between 8:00AM - 8:10 AM so that we are ready to make music right at 8:15 AM. Before School rehearsals are a required part of the D303 Elementary Strings Program, and IN ADDITION to the weekly small group in-school lessons. If students are attending school that day, they should be at the rehearsal, too. Parents are responsible for transportation to rehearsals. All rehearsals are held at Wasco Elementary School beginning in late September. Parents are responsible for transportation to Wasco.

CONCERTS

There are two required evening concerts a year. Concert dates are sent home during the first few weeks of school. Concerts are an extension of the classroom, and attendance is required.

ATTENDANCE & COMMITMENT

Participation in Orchestra requires good attendance and a strong commitment to personal improvement and group contribution. Because rehearsals and performances cannot be made up, students are required to attend all

orchestra lessons, group rehearsals, and performances (except for illness or family emergencies). Excessive absences may result in the loss of participation. If the student is well enough to attend school, he/she is expected to attend orchestra. Group rehearsals and lessons will take place each day that school is in session. Enrollment in orchestra is a full school year commitment.

PRACTICING

Practice is an essential aspect of playing a musical instrument. Students simply will not make as much progress without practice at home. Parental encouragement and monitoring of practice time can make a big difference in students' success. It is recommended to begin with 5 - 10 minute practices, 4 - 5 days each week. However, quality of practice should be emphasized over quantity of practice.

INSTRUMENT

Your child has the opportunity to play the violin, viola, cello, or bass.

Students need an instrument in good playing condition with proper set up. *Renting* an instrument (rather than *purchasing* one) is recommended for string instruments because they require maintenance and regular service. Size upgrades are also needed as students grow. All students will start on a ¼ size instrument (except Bass students, who will start on an ⅜ size instrument). Please rent with one of the District 303 preferred vendors to ensure a quality instrument for your child. Your rental period does not begin until instruction starts, so go ahead and rent now - you won't have to worry about it over the summer, then!

OTHER MATERIALS NEEDED

Students need the method book, *Essential Elements For Strings Book 1 (specific to your instrument)* and a music stand for home practice. If you rent from one of the D303 approved vendors, all supplies will be delivered to school and will be taken home after the first lesson.

Orchestra Enrollment Checklist

- ☐ Go online and register for Orchestra (<https://sites.google.com/d303.org/d303elementaryorchestra/home>)
- ☐ Go online and register Summer Beginning Orchestra Camp August 3-7
(<https://district.d303.org/summer-school-and-camps>)
(cost is \$75.00 for camp and is NOT the same as the instrumental music registration fee)
- ☐ RENT, do not purchase an instrument (Please see Vendor Fact Sheet for information).
(all beginning violin, viola and cello students rent a ¼ size instrument. Basses rent a ⅜ size instrument)
- ☐ Purchase *Essential Elements Book 1* for your child's instrument.
- ☐ Purchase or obtain a music stand for home practice.
- ☐ Purchase a hard sided, 1" 3-ring binder for exclusive use in orchestra.

As a reminder, after you register for orchestra, there will be a \$40 fee as a PushCoin Fee after the school year begins.

Thank you for your attention to these details and please contact me with any questions!
I look forward to helping you and your child on your musical journey!
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