

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE MAINE SOUTH ORCHESTRA PROGRAM

Please check out our website at: www.mainesouthorchestra.org

Is orchestra a class? Yes. Orchestra is not before school. All freshmen enroll in String Orchestra, which meets last period of the school day. Orchestra fulfills a graduation requirement and if you work to your full potential it will help your grade point average tremendously.

Does the orchestra go on a trip? Yes. The orchestra has previously been to Disney World, Montreal and Boston and New York City. We worked with several clinicians from Oberlin Conservatory and the director of the Broadway productions of Dracula and Les Misarables.

What Orchestras are at Maine South? There are five offered:

Beginning Orchestra: An ensemble made up of freshman, sophomores, juniors and seniors who are interested in learning a new instrument.

String Orchestra: An ensemble primarily made up of freshman.

Symphony B Orchestra: An ensemble made up of sophomores, juniors, and seniors

Symphony A Orchestra: An ensemble made up of sophomores, juniors, and seniors

Chamber Orchestra: An audition-based ensemble (not a class) made up of advanced players. This ensemble travels often for gigs throughout the Chicagoland area.

What kinds of music do we play? EVERYTHING. We play a variety of genres: Jazz, Pop, Fiddle, The Blues, Film Scores, Full Symphonic Works and Chamber Music

I am overwhelmed with my academics, I think I need a study hall instead of orchestra...

I am aware that enrollment in orchestra can make for a full schedule. Many of the members of orchestra are involved in extracurricular activities (athletics, student council, cheerleading, etc.) and take both honors and Advanced Placement (AP) courses while consistently making the honor roll. Major studies of music achievement consistently indicate that music students score significantly higher than non-music students on standardized tests (SAT, ACT, etc.).

Are private lessons available at school? Yes. It is strongly encouraged that every student take private lessons. You may take private lessons during the day on a weekly basis. Scholarship applications for private lessons will be available in the fall. For contact information on in school private teachers please contact Rebecca Pascal Oppenheim (see contact information below) for more details.

How many performances are there?

There are typically four performances for String Orchestra throughout the year.

When do I audition? You will receive music over the summer for orchestra & IMEA auditions that will take place once school is in session.

What extracurricular opportunities are there for me beyond my assigned ensemble?

- Pit Orchestra - an ensemble that rehearses/plays only in the spring for the musical (This year it is Les Misérables)
- Orchestra Board - an elected board that meets on a monthly basis to plan events and activities for the ensemble
- IMEA- A select group of students audition to play in a district orchestra and if their placement is sufficient they go to Peoria for four days in January for All State Festival.

Can I rent an instrument at Maine South? Yes. At the start of the school year I will assign instruments (rental fee: \$35) for the year. If you would like to rent an instrument over the summer (rental fee: \$17.50) please contact me at (847) 692-8259 before May 1st.

Is orchestra fun?

Absolutely! Here is a list of activities we have participated in as an ensemble:

- Attended Wicked and met members of the cast and pit on a personalized panel
- We went to the Macy's Day Parade in New York City
- Decorated and played on a float for the Homecoming Parade
- Raised \$1000 for Juvenile Diabetes & did the walk for a member of our orchestra
- Raised \$800 for the Make A Wish Foundation and the recipient came to the concert
- Attended Wicked and met members of the cast and pit on a personalized panel
- Attended the Joffrey Ballet's "The Nutcracker" with a behind the scenes tour
- Attending the Chicago Symphony & playing with members in a master class setting
- Orchestra Hoodies (Got Strings?, The Best Players in Town, etc.)
- Orchestra Board sponsors Secret Holiday Gift Givers
- Disney World, Boston Tour, Toronto Tour, New York Tour
- IMEA Convention
- Played with members of the performance group "Barrage" at Midwest Band and Orchestra Convention
- Worked with The Turtle Island String Quartet, The Avalon String Quartet, The Julstrom String Quartet
- Played with Midori in Concert
- Yo-Yo Ma and the Silk Road Ensemble did a workshop for us and four other high schools

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