



# PROGRAM HANDBOOK

**2023-2024**

***Marci Swift***

Orchestra Director

Please visit our website <http://www.schsorchestra.org> for additional information.

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## Welcome to the Stallion Orchestra Family!

Dear Orchestra Families,

Welcome to the 2023-2024 school year at South County High School! Whether you are new to the South County Orchestra family, or returning, I am excited to welcome everyone back into the building and look forward to working with you all this year! I trust that you all had a great summer and got plenty of rest, relaxation, and spent LOTS of time practicing! This is going to be a great year to be a part of the South County Orchestras!

Participating in Orchestra requires a significant amount of responsibility from the student and parents/guardians. My expectations are high in order to ensure high quality music learning. I hope to provide a safe and nurturing environment for quality musical instruction. In return, I ask that every student put forth maximum effort in and out of the classroom. Our teamwork, commitment, and positive attitude will help to ensure that South County continues to be one of the best orchestra programs in District 10! Please do not hesitate to approach me with any questions or concerns regarding your progress in Orchestra.

Please **take the time** to read the handbook and review the calendar so you are familiar. Please complete the Course Link by Thursday, August 31. The Course Fee is due by Friday, October 6. Fees associated with this course can be paid via My School Bucks or check payable to SCHS. See Payment Form for details.

In addition to reviewing this important information, please take time to make sure your instrument/bow is in good working order prior to the first day of school. Bows with thin hairs need to be rehired and strings more than one year old should also be replaced (see stores/catalogs below). This is crucial to class participation and as a result, your Orchestra grade.

I look forward to working with you all this year. Feel free to contact me with your questions or concerns.

Musically yours,



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# Orchestra Course Information

The primary goal of the orchestra is to work together to produce a superior performing ensemble. As your director, my goal is to provide each student with a comprehensive instrumental music education by modeling the skills and expectations necessary to succeed as a musician and young adult. These skills include building a strong work ethic, discipline, cooperation, and a commitment to excellence.

## All SCHS Orchestra students are expected to:

- **Be kind.** Think before you speak, make good choices.
- **Know your part.** Understand the need for practice and try to establish a regimen.
- **Be prompt.** Please be punctual for class, rehearsals, and concerts as well as turning in assignments, money, and paperwork.
- **Be committed.** Give 100% during rehearsals, both in your actions and attitude. Exhibit proper posture, good attitude, and respect. Avoid texting, eating, or talking during rehearsals. There are appropriate times for these things.... active rehearsal is not one of them.
- **Show respect.** Be kind to your classmates, booster parents, and faculty. Treat equipment with respect.
- **Make every minute count.** Bad habits in rehearsal lead to bad habits on stage. Treat every class and every rehearsal as if it's our last—excellent rehearsals lead to excellent concerts.
- **Be Prepared. Bring the following materials to class each day.**
  - Instrument (New strings, rosin, fresh bow hair, shoulder rest/rock stop or strap)
  - Short fingernails
  - Pencil (NO PEN)
  - Cleaning Cloth
  - Method book and Binder/folder dedicated to Orchestra to safely transport all your music

## Daily Rehearsal Procedures

1. All non-orchestra items are to be placed under chairs during rehearsal. This includes food, other class work, and cell phones (with the exception of use for tuning).
2. Be seated, warmed up, and be ready to tune 3 minutes after the tardy bell. Rehearsal begins promptly when the director steps onto the podium. There should be NO talking during tuning.
3. Announcements and rehearsal order will be posted on the board prior to rehearsal. Be sure your music is out and in the order listed before tuning.

4. All students must have their instruments, music, a pencil, and any other material (i.e., rosin, shoulder rest, short nails, etc.) needed to perform in order to receive full credit for the weekly participation grade.
5. All students will remain focused and on task during all rehearsals to allow for optimal use of rehearsal time.

### **Rehearsal Etiquette**

In order to maintain a high quality of performance and mastery of the subject, students are expected to have their materials in class each day as a part of the weekly rehearsal etiquette grade. It's an easy way to make a 100, but also an easy way to lower your grade quickly. Points will be deducted according to the following:

- **-10 points:** Missing music or other required materials
- **-50 points:** Missing instrument
- **-10 points:** Long nails
- **-10 points:** Repeated gum chewing
- **-20 points:** Failure to remain on task

### **Chairs/Seating**

Placement within each string section will be at the discretion of the director and may be decided through individual assessments (IPA's) on concert repertoire, seating rotations, blind placements, or placements deemed in the best interest of the ensemble.

Concert, Symphonic and Philharmonic Orchestras may rotate seating when possible in order to give students different viewpoints/sound perspectives. Violinists may play both first and second violin parts when appropriate with the goal of experiencing melodic and harmonic parts. However, students who cannot fulfill their duties as section leaders (i.e., run effective sectionals, share bowings, perform solos as marked, etc.) will be relieved of their duties and replaced with qualified candidates.

If a student is away from school for an extended length of time or unable to play due to injury or illness, the student may have to forfeit prior seating. The student will be placed within the section by the director.

### **Private Lessons**

Private instructors teach one-on-one at the student's pace and can help develop technical and musical skills. Lessons are great for students needing an extra push (i.e., for some difficult music, preparing for auditions, etc.) or extra one-on-one help outside of the large orchestra rehearsal. A list of private teachers will be available on the Orchestra website and in Schoology.

## Instruments

Each student **MUST** have an instrument for class and home use. Instruments can be rented or purchased from local music stores or from a reputable online dealer. Please do not purchase an instrument before first consulting a professional. Your private teacher and/or I are happy to assist you with your purchase.

### Fairfax County Instruments

Students on the **Fairfax County Free-Reduced Lunch Program** (with official documentation) may rent a violin or viola for a fee of **\$20.00** per year. Instrument rental forms/fees can be found on the orchestra website or Schoology and must be turned in by **Friday, October 6, 2023**.

### South County Instruments

Cellos and basses are available to rent from the school for use during the school day. These instruments will be shared with students in other class periods. Cellists/bassists will need two instruments: one for home practice and one for school. It is recommended that an instrument be rented/purchased from a local store for home use.

**Fees:** **\$55** per year for classroom instruments (shared) due 10/6/2023

**\$110** per year for home instruments (not shared) due 10/6/2023. Limited number. First paid, first served.

**Note: \$165 total if you are renting an instrument for home. This covers the fee for home and for the instrument you use at school.**

### Responsibility and Care of School Owned Rental Instruments

Students using school-owned and county-owned instruments are responsible for keeping the instruments in good shape. The Instrument Rental contract outlines the student and parent responsibility associated with caring for the instrument. Basic string repairs will be paid for by Fairfax County. The cost of repairs due to student neglect or abuse will be the responsibility of the family (you will be billed through FCPS. Do NOT attempt to fix the instrument yourself).

It is a student's responsibility to inform the teacher as soon as there is a problem (i.e. - case won't latch, bow needs hair, fine tuner won't turn, etc.). Please communicate with me as soon as you are aware of an issue.

## Instrument Locker Rules

1. All instruments stored in the locker room must be clearly labeled with the student's name and phone number. This information should be displayed on a tag or taped to the outside of the case.
2. All students are responsible for keeping the instrument locker area clean and neat.
3. Do not store drinks, food or candy in your orchestra locker.
4. Locks are optional and will be provided by the school. No outside locks will be permitted.
5. Keep track of your own locker combination and **LOCK IT!** Locks should remain on lockers and locked at all times to prevent tampering. The orchestra or SCHS will not be held responsible for loss, theft, or damage to any items left in an unlocked locker or in the classroom!
6. Absolutely no instruments may be left on the floor of the storage room or the orchestra classroom.

## Instrument Accessories

Students will need additional items and accessories for their instruments such as rosin, extra strings, shoulder rests (violin/viola), rock stop (cello/bass), tuners, metronomes, etc. You may visit a local music store or order through one of these suggested online dealers.

- **Southwest Strings** 1-800-528-3430 [www.swstrings.com](http://www.swstrings.com)
- **Shar Music** 1-800-248-SHAR (7427) [www.sharmusic.com](http://www.sharmusic.com)
- **Amazon** [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)

## Local String Shops

- **Brobst Violin Shop** 703-256-0566 [www.brobstviolins.com](http://www.brobstviolins.com)
- **Potter's Violins** 1-800-317-9452 <http://store.pottersviolins.com>
- **Potomac Music** 703-600-9590 <https://www.potomacmusic.com/>
- **Music & Arts** 703-451-0875 <https://www.musicarts.com/>
- **Day Violins LLC** 703-391-9444 <https://dayviolins.com/>
- **Foxes Music Co.** 703-533-7393 <https://www.foxesmusic.com/>
- **Donald Cohen** (bow rehairs) <http://www.cohenbows.com>

## Attendance

An orchestra performs at its best when all members are present. We are a team, and everyone is important! Therefore, students are required to participate in all rehearsals and performances unless excused by the director (see "Absence Policy"). Out of respect for your time, a minimal number of rehearsals have been scheduled outside of the school day. **Mark your calendar now to avoid conflicts.** Conflicts with club or sport activities can be settled between the teachers/coaches, *but only when we have plenty of advanced notice.* The orchestra calendar is available on Schoology and on the orchestra website ([www.schsorchestra.org](http://www.schsorchestra.org)) as well as the South County school website.

### Tardies – Rehearsals and Performances

Students are expected to be on time to all orchestra activities. "ON TIME" means ready to tune with all necessary items. Ms. Swift should be made aware of any tardiness due to club meetings well in advance and not the day of the rehearsal. Plan ahead!

### Absence Policy

**As per FCPS Regulation 3866, all rehearsals and concerts are considered part of the course requirements for orchestra.** Orchestra is a co-curricular course and not extra-curricular. We are a performing group, so it is essential that students participate in performances. There are few excuses for missing an event. All other reasons will not be excused and a ZERO will be entered in the gradebook.

1. **Written** requests *from parents* are required for all **rehearsal** absences (e-mail is sufficient). Verbal or written excuses from students are not accepted and will be considered unexcused. *Approval at director's discretion.*
2. Concert absences **will not be excused**, with the exception of personal illness (with an official doctor's note) or documented family emergency. Extenuating Circumstances: Excused concert absences (upon director's approval) may be given a written or recorded assignment for partial credit.

*\*Conflicts with South County sports, clubs, and academics will be settled between the faculty members. Absences must be pre-arranged in order to be excused and to avoid receiving a grade for non-participation. Notify both the director and the other faculty member as soon as you know of a conflict. Notification on the "day of an event" is unacceptable.*

3. In the event of personal illness and/or family emergency, parents should email/phone me as soon as they are aware that such a situation exists. If this is an emergency situation (something that happens 30 minutes before a rehearsal/concert), leave a voicemail in the orchestra office at 703-446-1985.



4. All attempts have been made to avoid conflicts with Religious holidays. In the event a day was overlooked, please provide advanced notification to the director and the absence will be excused.
5. **Lack of transportation or “I have to work” is not an excused absence. Arrange transportation, plan accordingly with your boss or contact me if you need help organizing a carpool.**

Please speak with Mrs. Swift directly if there are unusual circumstances that arise. Unexcused absences affect both the morale and the success of the entire orchestra. We depend upon each other.

After-school rehearsals and performances are considered extensions of the classroom and are therefore laboratory and/or practical applications of the orchestra curriculum. Students are responsible and accountable for their attendance and quality of participation as related to all laboratory and/or practical applications. Seating may be adjusted based on rehearsal/concert attendance.

## Grading Policy

Each quarter will account for 22% of the final grade for the year. The Final Exam\* will account for the remaining 12% of the student's final Orchestra grade.

The student's quarter grade will be determined as follows:

### **20%: CLASSWORK**

- Rehearsal Etiquette
  - short nails and good posture
  - effort in performance/classwork
  - bringing and maintaining equipment, supplies, and music binder/folder
  - proper tuning conduct (no talking)
  - being prepared to play on time – lack of preparedness and readiness during rehearsals will affect rehearsal etiquette grade
- All students may be required to complete written assignments during class time. These assignments include, but are not limited to music theory, listening, and critical music analysis.
- Any work not completed during class time may be completed by the next class period for full credit.

### **25%: FORMATIVE ASSESSMENTS**

- After School Rehearsals
  - There will be minimal after school rehearsals and students will be notified of dates at least 2 weeks in advance.

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- As per FCPS Regulation 3866, all rehearsals and concerts are considered part of the course requirements for orchestra.
- Scale Performance Assessments
  - Students will submit video recordings via Schoology.
  - Students may be asked to play in person scale assessments in some cases.
- Sight-Reading Factory IPAs
  - Students will be assigned several SRF IPAs throughout the year.

#### **45%: SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENTS**

- Individual Performance Assessments (IPAs)
  - Students will submit video recordings via Schoology.
  - Late submissions will result in a deduction of points as per the SCHS late penalty schedule.
  - No late submissions will be accepted after the end of each concert cycle.
- Ensemble Performance Assessments (EPAs)
  - As per FCPS Regulation 3866, all rehearsals and concerts are considered part of the course requirements for orchestra.
  - On time arrival and adherence to all directions is expected.
  - Proper concert attire required as described in this handbook.

#### **10%: HOMEWORK**

- Any permission forms, or letters requiring parental signature will be returned on time and count as a homework grade. Late points will be deducted as outlined in the SCHS late work plan.
- Students are expected to practice at home in order to be prepared for each rehearsal. This is on the honor system as it is implied that high school students have learned to practice effectively and are invested in a quality final product. For the orchestra to perform at its best each individual must practice skills and music at home. Students have individual strengths and weaknesses which are best addressed in home practice and/or private lessons. Like math, reading, or social studies, some concepts in orchestra will come easily while others will be more difficult to grasp. Because playing a stringed instrument is a physical activity, it is important to practice at home—slowly and carefully—for the muscles to master these skills. If conditions make it impossible to practice at home, students should be prepared to use the flex period or make arrangements to come before or stay after school.

*The purposes of self-guided practice:*

- Set Goals
- Develop personal endurance and facility

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- Developing characteristic tone, solid intonation and rhythm
- Reflection on goals and reevaluate

### **\*FINAL EXAM**

- **CONCERT & SYMPHONIC ORCHESTRAS**
  - Students with an A for the year will be exempt from taking the final exam.
  - Students with a B+ or lower will be required to take the final exam on the scheduled date. The exam will consist of a culminating scale performance.
- **PHILHARMONIC & CHAMBER ORCHESTRAS**
  - Students will be required to perform at the SCHS Graduation Ceremony in June. This performance will count as the Final Exam for the course.
- **GRADUATING SENIORS**
  - All 12th grade students will perform a Senior Song at the Spring Concert that will count as the Final Exam for the course.
  - In addition, all seniors will perform 2 songs at the graduation ceremony.

## **Advanced Course Requirements**

Students enrolled in an Advanced level ensemble (indicated with HN) will earn a .5 gpa bump. As a result, these courses have additional requirements. Students will choose 3 from the following to meet the honors level requirements:

- Assist with the Instrument Petting Zoo on Thursday, August 31, 2023 from 6-8PM. A link to sign up will be posted on Schoology.
- Assist with the TWO Elementary Masquerade Clinics at the MIDDLE SCHOOL on Tuesday, 10/10 AND Tuesday, 10/17 from 4:15-5:30PM. A link to sign up will be posted on Schoology.
- Assist with the Elementary Masquerade Workshop at the HIGH SCHOOL on Saturday, 10/21 from 8AM-12PM. A link to sign up will be posted on Schoology.
- Audition for Senior Regional Orchestra on Monday, 10/2 at Justice HS. Audition material is posted on the SCHS Orchestra website.
- Audition for District Honors Orchestra on Tuesday, 11/14 at Justice HS. Audition material is posted on the SCHS Orchestra website. *REQUIRED for ALL Chamber Orchestra Members.*
- Accompany the orchestra on piano at one of our concerts (each piece you play will meet one requirement).
- Participate in the Solo and Ensemble Festival in April. April 12 if NOT going on NYC trip OR April 19 if GOING on trip.

## **Performances**

The South County Orchestras will have a variety of performance opportunities both in and outside school. While many of these events are required graded portions of this course, some are optional and are indicated accordingly below.

### **REQUIRED PERFORMANCES:**

- **Fall Masquerade Concert** – ALL SCHS orchestras perform at this pyramid concert. We will share the stage with the Advanced Middle School orchestra as well as our elementary feeder programs.
- **Winter Concert** – ALL SCHS orchestras perform in December.
- **Pre-Assessment Concert** – ALL SCHS orchestras perform their concert selections for the community in late February/early March in preparation for the adjudicated State Orchestra Assessment that takes place in March.
- **Virginia State Orchestra Assessment** – Assessment is the Standards of Learning (SOL) for music and it takes place in March. It is considered the most important performance of the year. Groups are required to prepare a warm-up selection and two pieces that challenge the performers, and some groups may choose to sight-read an unfamiliar piece as part of the adjudication. The judges will grade the ensemble performance on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being a superior) and all scores are posted statewide in April. Students rehearse intensely on these pieces during the winter months. **All rehearsals, workshops, concerts and assessment performances are mandatory. Reserve both Friday and Saturday dates.**
- **Spring Concert** – ALL SCHS orchestras will perform in May.
- **Graduation** – ALL non-graduating Philharmonic and Chamber Orchestra students are required to provide the music annually for SCHS graduation ceremony at Eagle Bank Arena. Please keep the graduation date in mind when planning your summer vacation; sometimes graduation day is after the last day of school.

**OPTIONAL PERFORMANCES:** *(please note that some of these performances are still required for Chamber Orchestra members).*

- **SRO-Senior Regional Orchestra of Northern Virginia** – Select students perform by auditioned invitation only in November. Students who are in grades 9-12, and are members of their school orchestra are eligible to audition for the Northern Virginia Senior Regional Orchestra in September/October of each year.. The cost of the audition is \$6-\$8 and the event cost ranges \$20-\$30 will be paid by SCHS Orchestra Boosters..
- **VBODA All-State** – Senior Regional participants are eligible to audition for the All-State Orchestra. This ensemble is a full symphonic orchestra composed of students throughout the state. Auditions are held in late February at James Madison University and the event takes place in April. Fee will be paid by SCHS Orchestra Boosters.
- **District Orchestra** – This honors orchestra is an auditioned group made up of the finest string players from the 14 middle and high schools in District 10.

Students receive the audition materials in June, and auditions are held in November. Audition requirements consist of prepared excerpts and scales with specific bowings. The event takes place in early January (Friday–Saturday). Eligible students are strongly encouraged to audition for this event. All students receive academic letter points for auditioning, participating, and observing. The audition fee is \$5. There is a non-refundable participation fee of \$25-\$30 if a student is selected for the Honors Orchestra that will be paid by the school/boosters.

**\*\* Chamber orchestra members are required to audition for DHO or SRO. As a result, their audition/participation fee is paid for by the school/boosters.**

- **Solo and Ensemble** – This event takes place in April. Students are strongly encouraged to perform a solo or an ensemble piece. The students will be graded by a judge and given a rating of superior, excellent, good, fair, or poor. Students receiving a superior or excellent rating will receive an achievement medal at the end of the year. Participating in the festival involves the following:
  - Buy an appropriate solo which must be a Classical piece written for your instrument—no pop songs or show tunes, and no orchestra parts. You will need an original copy of the piece for the judge. No photocopies are allowed due to copyright laws. If your piece has an essential piano part, it is your responsibility to arrange for an accompanist. Please check with Ms. Swift or your private teacher if you are unsure whether you need an accompanist.
  - Students will need to register and pay a fee for the festival. The fee is non-refundable. Information is generally available in early March.
- **Orchestra Trip** - Participation is not required but strongly encouraged and is contingent upon the behavior and grades of the students throughout the year.
  - Students must maintain a “B” average or better in their music class and have no disciplinary referrals or concert absences during the second semester; final attendance is at the discretion of the director. FCPS approval required.
  - All students are encouraged to attend this trip for the musical, educational, and social value. The directors put a great deal of time and preparation into trip planning and are committed to making it fun and safe for everyone. Students will have the opportunity to participate in Orchestra fundraising activities throughout the year to help offset the total group cost of the trip.

## Performance Attire

A professional looking ensemble adds to the overall aesthetics of the performance, leaves a positive impression on the audience, and boosts the confidence and morale of the players. It is for these reasons that the SCHS Orchestras require standard concert

black attire for all performances. Students who do not abide by the attire criteria listed below for all concerts may not perform and will be graded accordingly. Students who cannot perform due to injury are required to attend the concert in concert black attire.

*Approved Attire Options:* **Concert Black** (purchase all items on our own).

- Floor-length black dress, or dress below the knees with BLACK tights.
- Black dress pants (no denim) and long sleeve or 3/4 sleeve black blouse/dress shirt.
- Black close-toed dress shoes (no Converse, Keds or any other all black sneaker). Open-toed sandals are acceptable with dark tights or pantyhose. Only back socks should be worn.
- No bare shoulders, no plunging necklines, and no midriffs should be visible.

*\*Students needing assistance in obtaining uniform attire should contact a Booster Board Member ASAP. Photos of acceptable attire examples are available on the Orchestra Website.*

#### **Other considerations:**

- Uniform parts should be cleaned, ironed, and altered appropriately.
- Any hair accessories should be brown or black. Long hair should be tied/pulled back so you can see the conductor and so the audience can see YOU!
- Jewelry should be minimal and silent. If you wear a necklace or earrings, be sure that it doesn't vibrate on your instrument. **Bracelets are not permitted.**
- Please do not wear perfume or cologne for concerts. Some of our musicians and audience members have allergies.

## Leadership Opportunities

There are several leadership opportunities within the Orchestra. Students who are interested in applying for a position should complete the application located on Schoology. Leadership positions will be for the entire school year.

#### **Historian(s)** will:

- Be responsible for documenting all orchestra events (photos and videos).
- Send all pictures to the orchestra webmaster to post.
- Upload pictures to a shared folder to be posted on social media.

#### **Promotions Manager(s)** will:

- Create flyers for all concerts/performance to be posted around the school.
- Write up announcements for concerts to be sent to PTA and SCHS media outlets (morning announcements, etc.).

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- Communicate directly with Ms. Smith regarding SCHS news features throughout the year.

**Program Creator** will:

- Create all concert programs for the year.
- Should have a keen eye for design and strong skills with online media software.

**Recruitment/Outreach Coordinator(s)** will:

- Assist in coordinating the strings portion of the mentorship program at the middle school/elementary schools with Tri-M officers.
- Help to coordinate HS help with elementary orchestra concerts throughout the year.
- Communicate with the elementary directors throughout the year.
- Coordinate with Mrs. Swift and other officers about any other recruitment ideas
  - Buddy system with middle schoolers (letter writing to encourage continued participation in high school, etc.)
  - Inviting elementary and middle school students to our concerts.
  - Coordinate Middle school small ensembles with coaching.

**Librarian(s)** will:

- Keep music library organized throughout the year

## Student Recognition

The growth and success of the orchestra depends on the contribution and positive attitudes of its members. Students who contribute by rehearsing effectively, helping others, and by being consistently prepared may be acknowledged and rewarded at the end of the year. Most acknowledgments are presented based on year-long progress, participation both in school and beyond, and service to the ensemble.

- **Notable Achievement** – recognizes students who have worked diligently throughout the year and made great strides in technical facility on the instrument, overall understanding of musical terms, techniques and musicianship.
- **Outstanding Musicianship Award** – Recognizes students who display outstanding rehearsal and performance etiquette and leadership skills and serve as a model to their fellow classmates.
- **Director's Award** – Awarded to a student who goes above and beyond for the orchestra program. This student is a Junior or Senior, has earned an "A" each quarter, attends all performances, regularly volunteers to assist with orchestra events, displays consistent outstanding rehearsal and performance etiquette along with good leadership within the section or ensemble.



- **Krista Thompson Esprit de Corps Award** – Awarded to a high school student with enthusiasm, generosity, teamwork, and perseverance among other outstanding qualities.
- **National Orchestra Award** – Awarded (by director's selection) to an SCHS Senior who displays the characteristics of a professional musician.
- **Academic Letter** – High school students may earn an Academic Letter in Orchestra and subsequent pins for following years of completion. Letters/pins are earned by accumulating 100 or more service points throughout the school year. Students should print out the Points Sheet (on schoology and the orchestra website) and record service information throughout the year. **It is the responsibility of the student to complete the form, accurately documenting orchestra activities, and submit it to the Orchestra Director on or before the deadline. Be sure to attach programs and signatures where applicable.** Once a letter is received, a pin will be given to the student each subsequent year that letter status is achieved (100 points or more).

## Support is KEY!

### How can adults support student musicians?

You have already provided encouragement for your child by allowing them to participate in our orchestra program. Now that they have been studying a stringed instrument for several years, there are many ways you can continue to provide support for our students:

- Remind your child to bring his or her instrument and music to school on orchestra days.
- Assist your child promptly when he or she needs supplies. A week with a broken string means a week that they're not learning and practicing.
- Be sure your child has short fingernails (this helps students play in tune and with correct posture).
- Encourage your child to practice and perform for family and friends.
- Give compliments and encouraging words when you notice improvement or you like what your child is playing.
- Talk with your child about school and what they're learning in their classes.
- Assist with our concerts, fundraisers, and chaperone our field trips.
- Transport your child to public concerts, recitals, and other schools' concerts. Many of these events can be found in the local newspapers, as well as on the SCHS Orchestra website and bulletin board, and many of them are free!
- Encourage your child to study private lessons.

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- **Attend your child's school concerts.** Children perform at a much higher level of quality when they know that an important person in their life took the time to come hear them play. Listening to your child perform is perhaps the strongest way you can encourage them to continue studying their instrument.
- Support the goals, policies and procedures of your orchestra director. Your child benefits when the orchestra is successful.

### How can adults support the Orchestra Program?

All Parents are automatically a member of the Orchestra Boosters when you have a student in the orchestra. In addition to supporting our fundraisers, we ask that each family helps with ONE orchestra event during the year. There are often tasks that would require just 30 minutes of your time! Volunteer positions include helping with Tag Day, pie distributions, chaperoning concerts or field trips, serving refreshments, transporting kids or instruments, or assisting with paperwork and administrative tasks. You will have the opportunity to sign up for volunteer job(s) at Stallion Stampede and Back-to-School night. Please share your talents with us to help make the orchestra program successful. Thank you!

### 2023-2024 Orchestra Course Fees

FCPS and the South County High School Orchestra Program will not charge students a fee for any mandatory aspect of the Orchestra program except for musical instrument and course material fees which are permitted by the Virginia Department of Education regulations. Schools or Booster organizations cannot require a student to pay fees for course materials in excess of the amount approved by the FCPS School Board in Notice 5922.

Student fees will be Invoiced directly through Myschoolbucks and are to be paid through the Myschoolbucks system. Payments can be made via credit card or check. Invoices are expected to be uploaded mid-September.

FCPS Required Fees			
FEE	Amount	DUE	This pays for...

<b>Orchestra Course Fee</b>	\$50	<b>DUE 10/6/23</b>	This fee covers <u>consumable</u> items/expenses for the 2023-2024 school year. This includes a one year Sight-Reading Factory subscription, method book, music for the school year and covers the cost of guest artists and clinicians.
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## Optional Activity Fees

These are fees that students are expected to pay if they choose to participate in any optional activities/trips associated with the South County Orchestra Program. These fees are determined and assessed based on the estimated cost of the trip/activity – including such costs as transportation, accommodation, registration, food, instruction, and other miscellaneous expenses.

Students who do not pay the fees associated with a trip/activity will be ineligible to perform/participate in the trip/activity.

Optional Activity	Amount	Due Date
Senior Regional Audition	\$10	Sept 2023
District Audition	\$10	Oct 2023
District Orchestra	\$25 - 30	Dec 2023
Orchestra Trip (April 2024)	TBD (~\$500-\$600)	Payments begin in January

## FCPS Instrument Rental Fee

**This required fee only applies to students who play school-owned instruments** and covers maintenance costs of those school-owned instruments. *Students who are verified to be on free/reduced meal plans are to pay \$20.* Fees are listed per instrument.

<b>Instrument Rental Fee</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
Violin, Viola, Cello & Bass for home	\$110 year (\$55 per semester)	10/6/2023
Share Instrument for class use only (Cello/bass)	\$55 per year	10/6/2023

## Individual Performance Opportunities

There are opportunities throughout the school year for individual students to choose to audition and/or participate in individually prepared events such as Solo and Ensemble Festival. Participation fees are often assessed for these opportunities by the sponsoring organization. The South County High School Orchestra does not establish such fees but will assist in the collection of these fees from individuals who elect to participate and the submission of one group payment to the respective sponsoring organization. These fees are communicated at the time other information about these opportunities is communicated.

## Payment Options

- **Cash or Check payable to SCHS**
- **My School Bucks**
  1. Download the app or visit the MySchoolBucks homepage and click on “Sign Up Today” (free account)
  2. Create a user profile with your email address, establish a password, and set up your security questions.

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3. Add a Student to your account using the student's name, date of birth, and/or student ID number.
- **Refunds**: Typically, fees paid are non-refundable once commitments and purchases have been made. These refund policies will be communicated separately as they relate to individual activities.
  - **Financial Assistance**: Assistance is available for those in need of such assistance. Requests for financial assistance should be made directly to the Orchestra Director prior to the due date for the related fee.

### Mrs. Swift's Availability

- *Monday – Friday*                      Planning periods (see sign on classroom door)
- *Monday – Friday*                      Before school beginning at 7:30am
- *Tuesday – Thursday*                  After school by appointment only

Please check email, Schoology, and the orchestra website for announcements, upcoming events and rehearsal information. The SCHS Booster website [www.schsorchestra.org](http://www.schsorchestra.org) will contain information regarding the calendar and fundraisers and general need-to-know orchestra information. Feel free to call and schedule a conference with me during a planning period or after school.