

# **WKSA String Orchestra Program**

WKSA's String Orchestra Program promotes continued development of individual instrumental skills, while introducing the student to the skills and joys of ensemble playing. The program consists of three main components:

1. Weekly String Ensemble rehearsals, typically one and one-half hours long on Saturday mornings
2. Weekly private lessons—one-half to one hour long depending on ensemble level. and
3. Weekly elective classes and special ensemble rehearsals, depending on student interest.

## **String Ensembles**

WKSA offers three levels of string orchestras: Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced. Ensemble placement is determined by auditions at the beginning of the fall or spring semester, with students placed according to ability, not age.

**Beginner String Orchestra** provides a student with their first, mixed-ensemble orchestra experience. Students must demonstrate a solid foundation of instrument skills with basic note-reading skills in place during their audition. They will be working on how to follow a conductor and play in an ensemble including listening and watching skills. Repertoire will include several pieces of varying styles. The Beginner String Orchestra performs at least three times a year (2 community performances, 1 formal performance).

Audition pieces and scales for Beginner String Orchestra are as follows:

Violins—Minuet #1, from Suzuki Book I; 2-octave G major scale  
Violas—Minuet #1, from Suzuki Book I, 2-octave C major scale  
Cellos—Minuet in C, from Suzuki Book I, 2 octave C major scale

Ideally, students should be able to play all Suzuki pieces prior to this audition piece, as they will be used as warm up pieces for the ensemble.

**Intermediate String Orchestra** provides students with more complex and technically challenging music, including the use of shifting, difficult key signatures, mixed meters, sophisticated articulations, vibrato, fast tempi and broad dynamic range. Ensemble repertoire will include a wide range of composers and styles. Students will learn to sight read better, and begin to play with more musical expression. Instruction focuses more on ensemble work than on individual mastery of the instrument. Students are expected to practice orchestra music outside of rehearsal time. The Intermediate String Orchestra performs three to five times a year (2-4 community performances; 1 formal performance).

Audition pieces and scales for Intermediate String Orchestra are as follows:

Violin—Boccherini Minuet #12, 2 octave D major scale  
Viola—Boccherini Minuet #12; 2 octave G major scale  
Cello—Gavotte by Gossec; 2 octave G-major scale

**Advanced Chamber Ensemble** is designed for the student who is well advanced in the literature of their own instrument, and is serious about continued progress on their instrument through challenging ensemble literature. It is offered on demand, depending on the skill and numbers of enrolled students during any given year. Students are required to practice their ensemble music outside of rehearsal time. Guest musicians (eg. winds or piano) may join the group depending on selected repertoire. The Intermediate String Orchestra performs three to five times a year (2-4 community performances; 1 formal performance).

### **Private lessons**

All WKSA students are required to take private lessons on their performance group instrument to ensure continued individual progress. Students who do not have their own private teacher, enroll as “full-time” WKSA students and will be assigned a private instructor. Students who already have an independently-arranged private teacher should enroll as “Saturday only” WKSA students. Students receive 10 private lessons each semester in the following lengths: ½ hour for Beginner Orchestra students; ¾ hour for Intermediate Orchestra students; 1 hour for Advanced Orchestra students. Private lesson repertoire will continue through the Suzuki Method books, adding outside literature as the student advances. Lesson times are arranged with assigned instructors at mutually convenient times, with priority for Saturday lesson time slots given to out-of-town students. Parents are welcome to sit in on their students’ lessons.

### **Electives**

WKSA offers a variety of music appreciation classes and special ensemble electives each Saturday. Students are strongly encouraged to sign up for at least one elective, which run from one-half to a full hour long each week. Electives allow students to broaden and deepen their musical horizons, as well as interact with fellow students from other ensembles. Past electives have included: Fiddling group; String Rock Band, Drumming, Computer Composing, World Music, Listening to Jazz, and more. New electives are offered each semester. Students sign up for electives on a first-come, first-serve basis during Registration Day.

### **Requirements of String Orchestra Program Students**

(See Policies section for additional details)

1. Students participating in a WKSA string orchestra must also participate in their school’s orchestra program, if available and age appropriate
2. Students are expected to attend all rehearsals and private lessons regularly. Excessive absences may result in dismissal from String Academy.
3. Students are expected to participate in year-end juries, unless excused by the director

### **Costs**

Cost for WKSA’s String Orchestra Program is \$300 per year (or \$165/semester), and includes the following:

- 20 private lessons (10 per semester)\*
- 20-24 weeks of ensemble rehearsals (10 to 12 per semester)
- Participation in weekly elective classes (10 weeks per semester)
- 2 to 4 community performances, depending on ensemble
- Year-end group performance concert in Beach/Schmidt Performing Arts Center
- Year-end educational juries for critique and advancement
- Musical field trips/Social Activities
- WKSA t-shirt
- D’Addario Care Package (set of strings, rosin, polish cloth)

\*If students provide their own private teacher, fees are \$150 per year (or \$80/semester).

Fees may be paid in installments. Family discounts for multiple students, and financial assistance for eligible families is also available. Please contact WKSA staff for details.