

BALTIMORE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Darryl L. Williams, Ed.D. † Superintendent † 6901 North Charles Street † Towson, MD † 21204

August 2022

Dear Grade 4 Student Parent(s) and/or Guardian(s):

Congratulations! Your child is now prepared to begin the exciting process of learning to play an instrument. The Baltimore County Public Schools offer class/group instruction for band and orchestra instruments as part of the county curriculum. In Grade 3 Exploratory Music, your child learned about the instruments of the Orchestra and how they worked, what they sounded like, etc... Based on this experience, they are now ready to make an educated decision on what instrument they would best be suited to play.

The following information is provided to help answer parents' most frequently asked questions:

• **What equipment will my child need?**

- An instrument in good playing condition.
- A method book (SOUND INNOVATIONS BOOK 1) ○ Accessories (i.e., reeds, cork grease, valve oil, slide oil, rosin, etc.).

• **How do I secure an instrument?**

- Music dealers offer rental purchase plans with reasonable monthly payments (attached). This is the preferred method for most of our Pinewood families. Most families choose to use Menchey Music.
- Friends, relatives, and neighbors are a source. Please allow the instrumental music teacher to check the instrument for playing condition **prior to** the first lesson. Email to schedule an appointment.
- Purchase a used instrument. It is recommended that a knowledgeable person (music teacher) test play the instrument before purchasing. There are many various qualities of instruments and getting a quality instrument is very important to your child's success.

- **What if I can't afford to rent/buy an instrument at this time?** ○ A few school-owned instruments may be available for those students who can demonstrate financial need. Please contact your child's instrumental music teacher should the need arise.

Please complete the **online ENROLLMENT by September 12, 2022** (Link in your email)

Should you require further information you may contact your child's instrumental music teacher at kseward2@bcps.org

Sincerely,

Karen Seward
Instrumental Music
Pinewood ES

SECURING A QUALITY INSTRUMENT

Using our School Music Dealer – Menchey Music

Menchey Music is our school music dealer. They have been selected by a committee of teachers/parents for their reasonable costs, timely repairs, and outstanding service.

Purchasing an instrument is a lot like purchasing a car. You want to purchase from a reputable dealer that offers affordable repairs and service. Menchey has proven themselves as a reputable dealer which is why we have chosen them for our school.

Please note that you may use any music dealer to purchase your instrument, our school music dealer is there for ease and reliability.

RENT TO OWN -

Please do not be confused by the term "RENT." The plan is a RENT TO OWN plan, meaning you are making smaller monthly payments to pay off the cost of the instrument. You will eventually own the instrument, should you choose to continue the contract. If you cancel the contract at any time, it is THEN considered a "rent." You will not have any further obligation, however, you will not recover the payments processed.

98% of our families use this to obtain an instrument.

During your contracted "RENT TO OWN" term - all repairs are free and covered. Usually the store also offers loaner instruments while repairs are being completed. This may be impacted by Covid restrictions at this time, however, is certainly beneficial when it can be offered.

Menchey also allows students to exchange instruments during the contract, with all money paid still going toward the instrument switch. This year, that may prove to be especially helpful since I was unable to actually play-test students in person, and students may need to switch instruments if we find that their first choice is not a good fit for them. **The initial payment also covers the first THREE MONTHS. One small payment (for most instruments it is one payment of \$19.99!) to get your child the instrument they need until December! After the first three months, the monthly payments begin. No plans are more than 36 months.**

You are also GUARANTEED a quality instrument that: plays in tune, produces a consistent tone, is "hardy" enough for beginner use, etc...

This year, Menchey has decided to offer school specific "landing pages" on their website. Our page is:

<https://www.mencheymusic.com/recruitment/pinwoodelementary-school-instrumental-program/>

On this page is ALL the information to get you started and get an instrument delivered to PES. The videos on top are from last year, so, please disregard the virtual information or any dates. I am working to get those up to date.

When completing the online "rental," (Remember it is RENT TO OWN), please choose to have the instrument and Sound Innovations Book DELIVERED TO PINWOOD ES.

PARENT/STUDENT Information Google Meet

Thursday, September 8, 2022

6:30 PM

Google Meet Join Code: PESInstrumental

Please plan to join to hear about the Instrumental Program at PES. Information will be provided about how lessons work, performances, acquiring a quality instrument, other supplies needed, etc...

You will also have the opportunity to ask questions at this time!

You will need to be logged in to your child's BCPS google account to get onto the Google Meet!

Securing an Instrument for Beginning Band/Orchestra Students

This information is provided to help parents/guardians of prospective instrumental music students. The school is not recommending that parents/guardians deal with a particular music dealer. Parents have the right to secure an instrument from any dealer of their choice. It is against Board of Education regulations for either the school or any of its agents, including music teachers, to receive commissions or gifts from music dealers.

Quality of Instruments

It is important for students to begin instrumental music instruction on a good quality instrument which is maintained in proper playing condition. The instruments that appear on the attached "Recommended Brands" sheet have been evaluated by committees of music teachers, appear on Board of Education bid lists, and are recommended for student use. Music dealers have an opportunity each year to submit additional brands and models for evaluation.

Instrument Prices

When shopping for an instrument, parents/guardians may want to ask for the following price information:

- Manufacturer's latest published list price.
- Rental price of instrument from dealer.
- Price of instrument, if purchased within ninety days.
- Price of instrument, if purchased through a rent-to-own plan.

Also, be sure to determine if prices quoted are for new instruments or for used instruments. Good buys may be available in high quality used instruments, but be certain of warranty and service arrangements.

Rent-to-own plans

Many dealers offer plans whereby instruments can be rented for fees ranging from \$20 - \$60 per month and the rental may apply to later purchase. This provides a period of time for evaluating the student's interest and progress in instrumental music and relieves the parent from a large single payment for an instrument.

When evaluating rent-to-own plans, determine:

- How much of the monthly payment can be applied to eventual purchase.
- The amount of the finance charge.
- Whether or not the dealer maintains the instrument during the rental period.

- If the rental period can be continuous until the instrument is paid off or if a decision to buy must be made after a specific number of months.
- What arrangements are made to insure the instrument against theft, loss, or damage.

Service

Whether an instrument is rented or purchased, it is very important that the student have access to quick and reliable service. Inquire about warranty coverage of new or used instruments and whether the dealer can assure that efficient repair service will be available. The student is disadvantaged if the instrument is not properly maintained or if the instrument is in the repair shop for long periods of time. Some dealers will lend students an instrument while their own is being repaired.

ALL 4th Grade Parents Must Complete the Online Enrollment Form by September 12, 2022.

Even if your child is not enrolling (there is a selection for that on the form), please complete the form.

You have the direct link in your email (I sent it to the email address listed in BCPS Focus), the link is below, as well as a QR code to take you to the form.

Complete the ONLINE **ENROLLMENT FORM** as soon as possible! They are due BY **September 12, 2022** at the latest.

<https://forms.gle/GBvcxfrh2aYcsHWN9>

Scan the QR code to be taken directly to the ENROLLMENT form!



Be sure to visit the Pinewood ES Menchey Music Landing Page! There, you will find:

Two video messages from Miss Seward about Band/Orchestra and obtaining an instrument

Links to purchase an instrument (Rent to Own) from Menchey

Videos about each instrument

And MUCH MORE!

<https://www.mencheymusic.com/recruitment/pinewood-elementary-school-instrumental-program/>



Click on the QR Code to be taken directly to the Menchey Music Pinewood Landing Page!