

## All-State: Orchestra Violin Sectional

presented by Peter McGuire

Peter McGuire is a violinist in the Minnesota Orchestra and a native of Mankato. He was also a former member of the Minnesota All-State Orchestra.

As a part of the sectional he invited the other string sections to join in a discussion on, among other things, how to become a professional string player. McGuire is adamant that there is not a direct path to get into the professional orchestra profession. No school or specific training is necessary, although there is a lifestyle needed to improve musical skill. The only thing that truly matters is the quality of your performance. The only ingredients he could list are the individual, their instrument, and a practice room.

McGuire spoke about the audition process, professional orchestras seating practices, advice on how to develop good sound, and addressed questions on how to prevent injury.

For those students who wanted to know how to get into the performance career, McGuire recommends subbing for major orchestras. He recommended that you have to practice to the n<sup>th</sup> degree and then when you perform your nerves get to you so you naturally back off a bit. This way you have practiced so overdramatically that your performance is great!

He also emphasized visualizing before you begin playing. He worked with the violin section to start their vibrato before coming in. Their sound dramatically improved with this tiny suggestion. McGuire stated that our music is our script, just like an actor. We have to show our music through how we play it for the audience—”You need to tell a story (a script) through your playing.” He also recommended to the students to listen to singers. Singers sustain sound and that should be our goal as string players. ‡