



Simle Middle School Orchestra Handbook

The purpose of this handbook is to provide all the information needed for you to have an awesome and successful year in our orchestra program. GO SPARTANS!

Mrs. Tafelmeyer
8/22/2016

Attendance Policy

Students will be in their seats immediately after the bell rings. This does **not** include the instrument storage area. Tuning will occur directly following the ringing of the bell, so do your best to be in your seat when it rings.

Students must attend school the day of a performance or activity in order to be eligible for participation. If a student is absent from school on a concert day for any reason, it is the student's responsibility to make arrangements with Mrs. Tafelmeyer for a make-up assignment.

Concert Information

Attire

Formal concert attire is required for all performances unless otherwise indicated by Mrs. Tafelmeyer. Please note that modest dress is encouraged.

Young Ladies

- Black dress pants (NO JEANS)...OR.....
- Black skirt (at or below the knee)
- Black nylons (no visible bare legs)
- Black, closed-toe dress shoe
- Maroon-colored scarf or accessories (optional)

Young Men

- Black dress pants (NO JEANS)
- Black dress shirt
- Black, calf length, dress socks
- Black dress shoes (NO TENNIS SHOES)
- Maroon tie or bow tie (optional)

Schedule Conflict Resolution

If there is a conflict with a concert date, advance notice must be given to Mrs. Tafelmeyer at least **2 weeks** prior to the concert date. This courtesy provides an opportunity to work through the conflict and come to a satisfactory conclusion.

Because many students are involved in multiple activities which occasionally conflict with one another, academic and extra-curricular leaders should make every effort to work with students for a positive solution that allows them to attend part of both activities, if possible.

- Concert vs. practice: student attends the concert
 - One of three curricular concerts vs. game: student attends the concert since this is an academic class; he/she is earning a grade for the concert
 - Concert dress rehearsal vs. practice: student's decision
 - Concert dress rehearsal vs. game: student goes to the game
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Ensembles

6th Grade Orchestra

Class Description

6th Grade Orchestra meets every day for one full class period. Enrolled students should have two previous years of classes or lessons to enroll in the 6th Grade Orchestra. Any student who plans to enroll in this ensemble without two years of playing should seek supplementary teaching to accelerate his/her progress.

Class Focus

Students will continue their focus on foundational technique (which includes scales, rhythm exercises, theory, expressive playing styles) and ensemble skills (starting/stopping together, working with a conductor).

7th Grade Orchestra

Class Descriptions

7th Grade Orchestra and 8th Grade Orchestra are separate classes that meet every day for one full class period. 7th Grade students should have the equivalent of 3 years of study or playing experience. 8th Grade students should have the equivalent of 4 years of study or playing experience. Any student who plans to enroll in these ensembles without study or playing equivalency should seek supplementary teaching to accelerate his/her progress.

Class Focus

Students will continue their focus on foundational technique (which includes scales, solos, rhythm exercises, theory, expressive playing styles) and ensemble skills (ensemble communication, small group performances, working with a conductor).

8th Grade Orchestra

Class Descriptions

8th Grade Orchestra meets every day for one full class period. 8th Grade students should have the equivalent of 4 years of study or playing experience. Any student who plans to enroll in this ensemble without study or playing equivalency should seek supplementary teaching to accelerate his/her progress.

Class Focus

Students will continue their focus on foundational technique (which includes scales, solos, rhythm exercises, theory, expressive playing styles) and ensemble skills (ensemble communication, small group performances, working with a conductor).

Grading Concerts

The rubric below, combined with a self-evaluation, will produce a final concert grade.

Concert Rubric 3 = Always 2 = Usually 1 = Seldom		
Criteria	Explanation	Points and Comments
Timeliness	Student is in school to tune and rehearse at the scheduled time. The student will stay for the entire concert. If this is not possible, a note is given to the teacher prior to the performance day explaining the reason	3 2 1
Concert Dress	Student is dressed appropriately according to the teacher's expectation found in the orchestra handbook.	3 2 1
Materials Needed for Concert	Student has instrument, music, and all other supplies needed for the concert.	3 2 1
Attentiveness Prior to Concert	Student is quiet when asked by the teacher so that instructions or announcements can be given in a quiet environment.	3 2 1
Behavior on Stage During the Performance	Student enters and exits stage quickly and quietly. While on stage, the student has a quiet stage presence. If there is a problem to solve, it is done discreetly.	3 2 1
Attentiveness During the Performance	Student watches the conductor for tempos, tempo changes, holds and cut offs and is prepared to start pieces immediately when the conductor's baton is raised. Student plays to the best of his/her ability.	3 2 1
Behavior While Others are Performing	Student is quiet, attentive, and respectful of other performers.	3 2 1
Assistance With Clearing the Stage After the Concert	If needed, all students contribute to clearing the stage and setting chairs and stands back in the room based on the teacher's instructions.	3 2 1

Make-up Policy

An excused absence from a concert can be made up for points toward your concert grade. Please see Mrs. Tafelmeyer for details.

Daily Grade

Citizenship

Citizenship points will be earned each day using the following rubric:			
Criteria	Level 3	Level 2	Level 1
Timeliness	Student is always seated and ready to tune when the bell rings	Student is usually seated and ready to tune when the bell rings	Student needs to be reminded to be seated and ready to tune when the bell rings.
Preparedness	Student always has his/her instrument, a pencil, and other materials needed for class.	Student usually has his/her instrument, a pencil, and other materials needed for class.	Student takes class time to get his/her instrument, a pencil, and other materials needed, or leaves them at home.
Posture	Student always has proper playing posture.	Student occasionally needs reminding to use proper playing posture.	Student needs multiple reminders to use proper playing posture.
Rehearsal Focus	Student is respectful of the teacher's instruction by listening, not interrupting class, and restricting conversation to musical and rehearsal matters.	Student is usually respectful of the teacher's instruction by listening, not interrupting class, and restricting conversation to musical and rehearsal matters.	Student needs to be reminded to be respectful of the teacher's instruction by listening, not interrupting class, and restricting conversation to musical and rehearsal matters.
Active Involvement	Student demonstrates the desire to work on specific musical aspects to improve not only self but also the performing group.	Student usually demonstrates the desire to work on specific musical aspects to improve not only self but also the performing group.	Student needs encouragement to work on specific musical aspects to improve not only self but also the performing group.
Respect for Equipment and Others	Student demonstrates respect for equipment and others in the group.	Student usually demonstrates respect for equipment and others in the group.	Student needs to be reminded to demonstrate respect for equipment and others in the group.

Grading Criteria

40% is citizenship, playing assessments, quizzes, and written work

30% is concert performances and evaluation

20% is comprised of practice records

10% is listening credit

Classroom grades can be accessed through PowerSchool on the school website.

Simle Middle School Grading Scale

We follow the same grading scale as Simle Middle School.

Listening Credit

Students are expected to listen to one performing group featuring a soloing string player or symphony orchestra a semester. This performer or performing group must be the same or of higher caliber than the student's current orchestra ensemble. To receive the Listening Credit, students will fill out and turn in a listening form.

Practice Records

Every musician makes time for practice; that is the only way to truly advance and improve the sound quality of an ensemble. Students earn points toward their grade through individual practice time. They are required to practice a minimum of 105 minutes (1 1/2 hours or 15-20 minutes a day) per week outside of class. A parent signature will be required on the record.

Instrument Storage

Violins, Violas, and Cellos

Students should bring their instruments to school. Instrument storage will be onstage in our classroom. At the end of the day, instruments should be brought home. It is the students' responsibility to retrieve instruments and music in a timely manner.

Basses

Bass players will continue to rent a bass through the school (under contract). Mrs. Tafelmeyer will arrange the details for rental and storage.

Necessary Materials

Sixth Grade Method Books

- *Sound Innovations, Book 3* (specific to instrument)
- I will check an additional book out to you to use during class.

Seventh Grade Method Books

- I will check a book out to you to use during class.

Eighth Grade Method Books

- I will check a book out to you to use during class.

Supplies

Violins/Violas

- Case tag
- Music stand (for home use)
- Mute (eighth grade)
- Pencil
- Rosin
- Shoulder rest
- Soft cloth
- Strings (should all be changed every 2 years)

Cellos/Basses

- Case tag
- Music stand (for home use)
- Mute (eighth grade)
- Pencil
- Rock stop
- Rosin
- Soft cloth
- Strings (should all be changed every 3 years)

Honor Bar Award

Students in 6th, 7th, and 8th grade have the opportunity to earn an Honor Bar Award in Orchestra. The Honor Bar is a special achievement award given to students who go above and beyond required orchestra classroom expectations.

Students interested in receiving an Honor Bar Award must complete the following tasks:

1. Participate in the spring BPS Elementary/Middle School Music Festival
2. Audition for and/or participate in the February Middle Level Honors Orchestra (7th/8th graders)
3. Attend 1 professional/community level orchestra concert and 1 orchestra concert at the student level. Bring a program and write a page of reflection on each concert.
4. Must be a member in good standing of the ensemble based on the following:
 - Eligibility
 - Maintain a 3.5 grade point average in orchestra
 - Display appropriate behavior in the ensemble at all times
 - Classroom effort/cooperation
 - No unexcused absences from concerts or classes

