

## **Welcome to the 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Orchestra Program!**

The goal of the 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade orchestra experience is to build on the skills and techniques already acquired in the first three years of playing in orchestra. This will include refining our ability to play with good posture, intonation (playing in tune), rhythm (sense of pulse, tempo, and meter), ensemble (ability to listen to one's self, others in one's section, and each section of the orchestra for better balance and blend), bowings (articulation, uniformity, control), tone (quality of our sound, warmth), and musical expression (dynamics, phrasing, style, emotion). We will also continue working on shifting to and from upper positions, various bowing techniques, knowledge of theory, and more extensive scale study. In addition to musical benefits, playing in the orchestra each day will help each student develop life-long skills in teamwork, cooperation, concentration, responsibility, self-confidence, and music appreciation.

### **Necessary Materials**

- Instrument (be sure your instrument is still the correct size and that it is in good condition)
- Name tag for case
- Lesson book: **7<sup>th</sup> grade** - String Basics Book 2 by Kjos; **8<sup>th</sup> grade** – String Basics Book 3 by Kjos (also bring Book 2)
- Short fingernails (in order to play with proper posture and good intonation)
- Shoulder rest or sponge (required for all violin and viola students)
- Endpin stops (required for all cello and bass students)
- Music stand (for practicing with good posture at home)
- Rosin; soft cloth for wiping rosin dust off instrument
- 3-Ring binder or folder (for music and other handouts)
- Pencil with good eraser for every class period and lesson
- Humidification device (dampit; something you can place in your case when the heating season begins to prevent cracking of instruments)
- Mute (to be used in various pieces for sound effects)

If you would like to have mutes, shoulder rests, and endpin stops labeled with your initials, please bring them in and we can label them so they are not easily lost.

### **Classroom Expectations**

If we work as a team all together, the time we have in class will be productive, fun, and rewarding. The following are important expectations for when we are making music together:

- 1) Show respect for one another. (positive comments; help one another; do not distract someone from learning)
- 2) Respect property. (only use your personal instrument; be careful when instruments are out)
- 3) Be ready to learn: instrument, music, lesson book, pencil, iPad, ready to go when bell rings (if not ready, takes extra time away from everyone else; affects your own progress as well)

### **7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Orchestra Schedule**

The 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Orchestra (White Orchestra) will meet on White Days at the Middle School. 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Band/Orchestra students come to Orchestra for 45 minutes either Monday or Tuesday, whichever is a White Day that week. Band/Orchestra students will alternate Fridays between Band and Orchestra. 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Choir/Orchestra students will go to Choir for the full hour on White Mondays and come to Orchestra the full hour on White Wednesdays. Every other White Day of the week will be split between Choir and Orchestra. Orchestra only members will come to Orchestra for the full 45 minutes every White Day. The 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Orchestra (Red Orchestra) will meet on Red Days. The schedule is the same as above with the exception of 8<sup>th</sup> graders rehearsing on Red Days. \* Always check Schoology for the schedule each week.

## Lessons

Each student will have a 22-minute small group lesson at least twice per quarter. 7<sup>th</sup> Graders will alternate having lessons during 6<sup>th</sup> hour on Red Days and 7<sup>th</sup> hour on White Days; 8<sup>th</sup> Graders will alternate having lessons during 6<sup>th</sup> hour on Red Days and 7<sup>th</sup> hour on White Days. To avoid missing the same class, 7<sup>th</sup> graders will have a lesson one week and 8<sup>th</sup> graders will have a lesson the next; we will keep alternating between 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade and rotate the lessons during both 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> hours. This scheduling will make it so students will only miss a part of 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> hours once per month. Each new lesson schedule will be posted on Schoology for students to view; students are required to check this each week.

## Make-up Lessons

If a lesson is missed due to an absence from school or an activity in class that cannot be missed, the lesson will need to be made up. A make-up day will be designated in advance on the lesson schedule. If that day does not work, students will need to make up their lesson using the iPad. On their own time, students will record the specified lines in the String Basics Book and/or excerpts in their orchestra music. Students will be shown how to use the camera app on the iPad and how to turn it on using Schoology. The recordings for make-up lessons need to be turned in within two weeks of the missed lesson unless approval is given by the director.

**Grading Policy** - Students will be graded in the following areas:

### **Summative Grading Category (Weighted 50%)**

1. Concert Participation - Concert participation is worth a very significant portion of the final grade each quarter. All students are required to participate in all concerts. It is important for the entire group to have each member present to contribute his/her special part. This is the opportunity to share what we have been working on and to demonstrate our progress to family members and friends. **Below are the ONLY excused exceptions for missing a concert; however, the director must be notified beforehand as soon as possible.**

1. A family emergency/death in the family
2. Student illness or injury resulting in an absence from school the day of, or the day after the concert
3. Family trip that was planned prior to learning concert dates

#### **Below are some examples of scenarios that will not be excused:**

1. Student/family did not make a plan for getting student to concert
2. Sports practice/game - Please see the school policy about games and concerts.
3. Extracurricular activity/event

- Please write all concert dates on home calendars to avoid an unexcused absence.

2. Summative Playing Assessments - Each term there will be at least two playing assessments on relevant course material, at the discretion of the teacher.

### **Formative Grading Category (Weighted 30%)**

1. Lesson Grades – Showing proficiency on the assignment (lesson book assignment, scales and/or concert songs).
2. Participation - Students can ensure that they receive full participation points for large group rehearsals by being punctual, bringing all materials (instrument, lesson book and concert songs), coming to each rehearsal prepared, and by being on task and actively participating in each rehearsal.
3. Quizzes and/or worksheets in class

## **Practice Grading Category (Weighted 20%)**

1. Weekly Lesson Grades – Includes being on time, having appropriate materials (instrument, book and music)
2. For students who play one instrument, 100 minutes of practice are expected each week. For students who play two or more instruments, a minimum of 60 minutes of practice are expected each week.
3. The Practice Card must be filled out and handed in at each lesson. (If the assignment is easy, try to reach the next level by adding vibrato, dynamics, or 3rd position.)

## **Home Practice**

Regular practice at home is necessary to properly prepare the concert pieces and assignments each quarter. The muscles and brain require quite a bit of repetition to really learn and remember all the techniques we work on together in class. The more time one puts into playing his/her instrument, the better he/she will be, and the more rewarding it will be for that person. Students should practice at least 100 minutes each week; however, more is always best. Students will turn in an assignment at each lesson showing their practice log.

### **Practice Tips:**

- Practice carefully for high quality results, not just time. Isolate the more difficult parts.
- Have a scheduled time of day and place for practicing.
- Plan ahead of time when you will practice each week.
- Practice for smaller amounts of time more often.
- Set goals for yourself and the orchestra.
- Seek help from Mrs. Suter or a classmate immediately when needed.
- Have fun! 🎵

## **Concert Dress Code**

From 7<sup>th</sup> grade through high school, we have a more formal dress code in order to have a uniform look throughout the ensemble. The following will be the dress code for each concert unless a change is made ahead of time by the director:

- Ladies: black dress pants (preferred) or a long black skirt (at least to the knee when sitting); if the skirt is not that long, black opaque tights or leggings must be worn underneath; black dress shoes; solid black top (long sleeved is preferred, ¾ length sleeves are okay, no patterns allowed)
- Men: black dress pants; black dress shirt; black socks; black dress shoes

## **7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Orchestra Concert Dates, 2022-23**

**Thursday, November 17, 2022** 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade Fall Concert - (6:15) 7:00 pm WEAC  
(Rehearsal will be in the Middle School Band Room during 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> hours; date TBA)

**TBA** 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade Large Group Festival - all day out of town  
(Rehearsal will be in the Middle School Band Room at 7:00 am on the day of contest)

**Thursday, February 23, 2022** 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade Winter Concert - (6:15) 7:00 pm WEAC  
(Rehearsal will be in the Middle School Band Room during 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> hours; date TBA)

**Monday, May 15, 2022** 4<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade All-District String Festival - (6:15) 7:00 pm Senior High Gym  
(Rehearsal will be in the Middle School Band Room during 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> hours; date TBA)

- All students must bring their own instrument to school for dress rehearsals unless otherwise specified in advance.

# Orchestra Contract

**Please return this form by Friday, September 23, 2022 with your signature after you have:**

- Read the handbook together.
- Added the 2022-23 required orchestra concert dates to your family calendar.
- Acquired the materials listed under “Necessary Materials”.

Student’s Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_ Student’s Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian 1 Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Guardian 1 Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian 2 Printed name \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Guardian 2 Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian 1 Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian 2 Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

- Please inform me if your email address changes during the year; this is the best way to receive important information and reminders.

## Instrument Identification Information

Type of Instrument \_\_\_\_\_

Instrument Brand \_\_\_\_\_

Instrument Serial Number \_\_\_\_\_

Is this a school owned instrument? \_\_\_Yes \_\_\_No