



7th/8th HLS ORCHESTRA HANDBOOK 2023-2024

Teacher: Holly Schrade

Room: 404

Website: <https://www.dvusd.org/Domain/3028>

E-mail: holly.schrade@dvusd.org

Phone: 623-376-4345

Course Description

7th/8th Grade Orchestra is an advanced instrumental performance ensemble/class that focuses on proper technique, music reading skills, musicality, ensemble skills, rehearsal skills, & performing a variety of musical styles. This is an academic & performance based class that meets every day. This ensemble depends on the successful effort & achievement of each individual to do their part to flourish. Orchestra is a yearlong course. Students enrolling in this course should be prepared to commit to participation for the entire school year. Communication about any issues that may arise is encouraged. Schedule changes should be considered as a last resort, and will only be honored at the end of the semester after discussion has taken place between parent, student, & director. Orchestra is co-curricular & has graded events before, during, & after school. Music State Standards on which this class is based can be found at: <https://www.azed.gov/>

Course Objectives

The students will:

- Perform music from a variety of genres (classical, folk, pop, etc.).
- Perform music using proper technique & posture.
- Perform a high level of music reading including: correct rhythm, appropriate tempo, dynamics, & musicality.
- Perform in a variety of on & off-campus concert throughout the year.
- Demonstrate individual & group rehearsal techniques.
- Demonstrate self-discipline, reliability & responsibility.
- Demonstrate ability to work cooperatively with others toward a performance in large & small ensembles.

Materials Required

Students participating in Orchestra are responsible for bringing the following supplies to every rehearsal/performance:

- An instrument (violin, viola, cello, bass)
- A method book - **Essential Technique 2000 for Strings (Bk. 3)**.
- A Tuner
- Rosin & cleaning cloth
- Rock Stop (CO & DB)
- A pencil (no pens)
- A 3-ring binder w/page protectors for sheet music (*recommended*) or a folder for holding music
- A music stand for home practice

Highland Lakes will be hosting a Rental Night on **Tuesday, August 8th, at 4:30-6:00**. This will be a great opportunity for parents & students to talk with a music store representative about acquiring all your instrument & accessory needs!

Finding an Instrument

You will need to buy or rent an instrument for your student. There are many stores in our area. I would recommend calling a few to compare prices. Attached & on my teacher website, you will find a “Stringed Instrument Checklist,” which includes:

- A recommended brand name list (and brands to avoid)
- A list of recommended questions to ask the vendor for collecting information on the instruments and rental plans.

The instrument should possess certain markers of quality, such as: working fine tuners, pegs & fingerboard made of ebony wood, & bow hair made from real horsehair. Additionally, the instrument should be of natural wood color. Painted instruments are novelty instruments & generally do not sound good.

Instrument Repair

All instruments, regardless of quality, will need routine maintenance. Parts of instruments can break & accidents may happen. It is important that students first take the instrument to Mrs. Schrade if an instrument needs attention. **NEVER try to repair an instrument at home.** A student who does not have an instrument in class due to inaction on a repair may experience a loss in daily points for attending class unprepared.

Grading Scale

A = 90-100% - Proficient work on all content objectives & advanced work on some objectives.

B = 80-89% - Proficient work on all content objectives.

C = 70-79% - Proficient work on most content objectives, although not on all.

D = 60-69% - Proficient work on at least half of the content objectives but missing objectives & is at significant risk of failing.

F = 50-59% - Proficient work on fewer than half of the content objectives & is failing.

F = 49-0% - No attempt made, missing work.

Orchestra Achievement Grade

Students earn points towards their Orchestra Achievement Grade by doing the following each day:

1. Student demonstrates the ability to tune the instrument w/little or no assistance.
2. Student demonstrates skill development through performance of scales & etudes.
3. Student demonstrates ensemble skills through rehearsal of concert pieces. Skills graded will include: tone quality, intonation, technique, balance, rhythm, dynamics, articulation, expression, preparedness, & reliability.
4. Student completes written activities (worksheets, composition, quizzes, etc.)

Pride (Citizenship) Grade

Students can earn points towards their Citizenship Grade by doing the following each day:

1. Be prepared at the start of class, with proper materials.
2. Fully participate - avoid off-task behavior during instruction.
3. Stay in assigned seat or area at all times.
4. Be respectful to the teacher, other students, and classroom materials.
5. Follow music room rules & expectations. These expectations will be posted in the room.

Rule of thumb: “To be early is to be on time; to be on time is to be late; to be late is unacceptable.”

Written work/material checks

From time to time, written assignments will be given to students to either work on in class or to take home as homework. Most written assignments will happen during class time. Points for these assignments may vary based on the assignment. Students will be checked to ensure that these assignments are completed. Must-haves for completing these assignments are: instrument, binder with sheet music, a pencil, & the assignment.

Technique/Part Assessments

Otherwise known as “playing tests” - will occur periodically throughout the year. These assessments are based on state standards aiming to help assess achievement in instrumental techniques & music reading. Specific, standards-based rubrics will be used to score students when these checks occur. Points may vary. Students are expected to achieve 100% on these assessments. Students may retake these assessments as many times as needed to achieve 100%. Retakes will occur before or after school. Students should contact Mrs. Schrade to schedule a retake.

Performances:

Orchestra is a performance-based course. Performances are an essential part of musical development. All school & district performances are REQUIRED & are for a grade. Students who miss a performance must have a parent or guardian contact Mrs. Schrade prior to the performance in order to be excused. An unexcused absence from a performance will alter a student’s grade.

Concert Dates:

- Fall Assessment – 11/16/23, TBD, @ MRHS
- Winter Concert - 12/5/23, 6pm, @ HLS
- Mountain Ridge HS Feeder Concert – 12/9/23, @ MRHS
- Deer Valley HS Feeder Concert – 2/21/24, 7 pm, @ DVHS
- Spring Assessment - 3/27/24, TBD, @ MRHS
- Spring Concert – 5/2/24, 6 pm, @ HLS

The 7th/8th Grade Orchestra has the privilege of representing Highland Lakes in community performances as well. Such opportunities might include performances at: coffee shops or marketplaces, nursing homes, board meetings, & school special events. These performances are not graded, but are strongly encouraged!

Performance Dress:

All students are encouraged to purchase a Black Highland Lakes Performing Arts Polo.

(Information about ordering music shirts will be available in August). Dress for all performances includes:

- Black Highland Lakes Performing Arts Polo. If a student is unable to purchase a polo, then they must wear either a solid black polo or t-shirt (no logos or designs...plain black only).
- Black pants (no leggings)
- Black socks
- Black closed-toe shoes (no high-heels or sandals)
- Long hair must be combed & tied or pinned back.

Students who choose to be “out of uniform” for performances risk one of the following: losing points, being asked to not perform, or having to call their parents/guardians for appropriate attire to be brought. **Uniform is part of the district instrumental ensemble curriculum.**

Classroom Behavior Expectations and Consequences

Students will:

1. Stay in room in his/her assigned seat.
2. Raise his/her hand to ask a question.
3. Respect teacher, classmates, and property.
4. Give their best effort at all times.
5. Have appropriate materials each day.
6. Enter and exit the room quietly.

Students will **NOT**:

1. Talk during instruction time.
2. Put down other students.
3. Bring gum, candy or food.
4. Use electronic devices w/out permission

ISS Referrals

Referrals are only written in the event of defiance, inappropriate language, unsafe/threatening behavior, or chronic misbehavior.

Restroom/Nurse Usage

During instruction, students will be allowed to use the restroom at the teacher's discretion. All students leaving the classroom will need to create an E-Hall Pass & get it approved by the teacher. Nurse usage is limited to the following: personal emergencies, profuse bleeding, broken bones, vomiting/nausea, & blood sugar issues.

Tax Credit

It is highly encouraged for parents to participate in the Arizona State Tax Credit Program through the Deer Valley Unified School District. This tax credit money can be donated to the orchestra program, and parents receive 100% of the money back through taxes returns dollar for dollar. We have a limited budget to purchase instruments, music & supplies. Tax credit donations make it possible to purchase these items & more.

Private Lesson Information

Private music lessons are encouraged for all students playing a musical instrument. In order to understand how private music lessons can benefit your child, let's take a look at what you can expect.

During a private lesson, a skilled musician shares his or her knowledge and expertise with a student who plays the same instrument. Since lessons are one-on-one, the teacher tailors instruction to your child's unique & specific strengths & weaknesses. During the weekly lesson, the private teacher will assist the student, introduce new skills & concepts, & assign exercises for practice during the week. Although the material is taught during the lesson, your child is responsible for mastering the skills & exercises at home through daily practice. When the student does his or her part at home, the private teacher can build upon that foundation at the next lesson. In order to get your money's worth, it's important that your child understands that daily practice is part of the agreement.

Most middle school students will benefit from a 30-minute lesson once per week. You can expect to pay around \$20 - \$30 per lesson. Should you decide that lessons are right for your child, I am happy to help you find one.

Communication

It is crucial that teachers, parents, & students maintain open lines of communication. Contact information is provided at the top of the first page for questions or concerns.

Students with a positive attitude, personal responsibility, & self-discipline will have a quality learning experience. Each student will feel the satisfaction of accomplishment through regular attendance, good conduct, care of school property, & preparation of music/assignments during class. Most students are able to achieve these expectations without difficulty.

- **Asking for help** – It is important to be prepared & not wait until the last minute for help. You may not know how to perform something the first time, or even after many times during practice. It is fantastic when you ask Mrs. Schrade for help in a timely manner, as this shows a true ownership of your education & performance skills. This also shows true care for your teammates. Mrs. Schrade is available most days, before school at 8:00am (after school by appointment) to help answer any questions & to retake tests for a higher score.
- **Loss of Materials** – If you lose any materials passed out in class, you or your parents may always ask again for the information, as it is important that we are all on the same page. Many times, the information is already available to you either through Canvas or on my teacher website.
- **Music** – The first copy of music is provided free of charge. It is the student's responsibility to keep up with & take care of music. Students must have their own music in class each day. If the 3 ring binder containing music is lost please inform Mrs. Schrade.
- **Fundraising** – The Highland Lakes Performing Arts may participate in fundraisers throughout the year to purchase music, equipment, & cover other necessary expenses. Special fundraisers may be offered for Orchestra members participating in the Disney trip.