Instructional Plan for Orchestra

Course Overview

Orchestra is an engaging, performance-based music course focused on the continued development of string instrument technique, ensemble skills, music literacy, and musical expression. Students will deepen their understanding of music theory, history, and performance practices while building teamwork, discipline, and creativity. Instruction aligns with the **Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)** for fine arts and includes both individual and group learning experiences. Students will participate in rehearsals, performances, and assessments to demonstrate progress and mastery.

Throughout the year, students will engage in:

- **Daily Instrument Practice**: Emphasis on tone production, intonation, and technique
- **Sight-Reading**: Regular practice in reading new music fluently
- **Music Theory and Literacy**: Understanding notation, rhythm, key signatures, and terms
- **Ensemble Skills**: Blending, listening, tuning, and group performance etiquette
- **Concerts and Performances**: Required participation in scheduled events
- **Listening and Analysis**: Exposure to various genres, styles, and musical forms

Contact Information

Teacher Name: Robert Sherwood
Email: robert.sherwood@midlandisd.net
Phone: 432.240.2701

Classroom Expectations

Our orchestra classroom is a safe, respectful, and focused space where students are encouraged to grow as musicians and collaborators. We aim to create a positive learning environment that promotes effort, patience, and musical excellence.

Expectation 1: Be Prepared

- Bring your instrument, music, and supplies daily
- Be seated and ready when class begins
- Start Do Now after being seated

Expectation 2: Be Responsible

- Practice regularly at home
- Take care of your instrument and music folder
- Complete written assignments and playing tests on time

Expectation 3: Be Respectful and Safe

- Listen during instruction and rehearsal
- Use instruments and equipment appropriately
- Respect and be kind to your instruments
- Keep hands, bows, and belongings to yourself
- No gum or sugary drinks
- No running
- Do not touch the director's desk or belongings

Note: Students who do not meet expectations will receive reminders and redirection. If issues persist, parents will be contacted, and if necessary, an office referral may follow.

Attendance Policy & Its Importance

Orchestra is a performance-based course where daily participation is essential for individual and ensemble success. Students who are present and actively engaged will develop strong musical skills and be prepared for concerts. **Please notify the school and the orchestra director of any absences.**

Concerts and performances are considered major grades. If a student misses a performance due to an emergency or illness, a makeup assignment will be provided.

Learning Objectives – For the year

By the end of the first semester, students will:

- Demonstrate proper posture and playing position
- Play scales and exercises in keys such as D, G, C, and A Major
- Perform concert music with accurate pitch, rhythm, and dynamics
- Sight-read music at grade level
- Identify musical terms and symbols
- Understand and demonstrate ensemble responsibilities such as tuning, following a conductor, and group balance

Course Resources

- **Instrument & Bow** (school-owned or personal)

- **Shoulder Rest or Rock Stop** (as needed)
- **Music Folder**
- **Page Protectors**
- **Tuner and Rosin**
- **Practice Log or Journal**
- **SmartMusic or Other Digital Tools** (as assigned)

Grading Policy

In accordance with Midland ISD Grading Policy:

- **Major Assignments – 60%**
  (Includes concerts, playing tests, projects, and performance assessments)
- **Minor Assignments – 40%**
  (Includes daily participation, practice logs, written work, and rehearsal behavior)

Grades are based on both effort and achievement. Feedback will be provided regularly to support student growth. Communication with families will occur at least every ten school days regarding assignments, reminders, and upcoming performances.

Please feel free to reach out with any questions or concerns.

We are excited to help students grow musically and have a successful year in orchestra!

Acknowledgment Form

Please fill out and return the portion below to the orchestra director.

We acknowledge that we have read and understand the expectations in Orchestra and have also read the Handbook online and agree to all terms and conditions therein. We agree to contact the teacher with any questions or concerns regarding this instructional plan.

Parent Name: _____
Student Name: _____
Cell Phone Number: _____
E-Mail: _____
Parent Signature: _____
Student Signature: _____
Date: _____