

Eckstein Orchestra Handbook

2025-26

Welcome to Eckstein's Orchestra program!

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Classroom Expectations

Before any music making happens it is absolutely important that our classroom, the orchestra room is a safe space for every single student. This is only possibly when every student is actively participating in the classroom culture of mutual respect, support of one another, and doing their best. "Do your best and I will do the rest." Once we have this established the limits are endless on all the fun and excitement that comes with making music together!

Orchestra Fees

To keep the orchestra program running we are constantly fundraising for instrument repairs, strings, bows, classroom materials, sheet music purchases, and field trips just to name a few. The Orchestra fee is a suggested donation of \$100 for the year. (two payments of \$50 per semester)

Renting/Purchasing an Instrument

****Cheaper is not always better!!**

When purchasing an instrument look for these things: - Pegs that fit correctly, turn smoothly, and stay in place. – The nut at the end of the finger board provides a proper placement for the strings to rest at an appropriate height above the fingerboard. – The bridge fits the instrument so that each string can be played at an angle that won't hinder other strings.

Eckstein Instrument Rentals

All instrumental students have the opportunity to rent an Eckstein instrument free of charge for the entire school year and through summer as long as they are participating in ensemble classes at Eckstein. Orchestra students will have to turn in an Instrument Safety Contract.

For students looking to rent or purchase instruments at a local shop, here are a few options in the area.

Music Instrument Shops
* = rentals
- *Music and Arts (\$) - *Ted Brown (\$) - *Kennelly Keys (\$) - *Bischofberger Violins (\$\$) - *Olsen Violins (\$\$) - *Metropolitan Music (\$) - *Hammond Ashely (\$\$) - Applebaum (\$\$) - Ricardo Perez (private shop) (\$\$)

- Raffael Carrabba (\$\$)

Private Lessons

No matter your experience with your instrument, private lessons will always benefit your playing. I highly recommend students take private lessons if possible. There is only so much we can cover during class times. Taking private lessons allows students to meet with a teacher one on one and get more attention tailored to the student. Through lessons, students will grow technical skill, musicianship, and musical knowledge that will also benefit not just the student but the orchestra as well. There are many excellent teachers in the area. Some will meet you at your house and also allow for you to sit in on a lesson or trail a lesson before committing.

Strings Workshop

If lessons are not a possibility we have our Strings Workshop program afterschool. At Strings Workshop volunteer students from Roosevelt high school come to Eckstein to lead sectionals, coach, mentor, and support students in their musical journeys. Strings Workshop is every Monday after school from 4-5 pm.

Practice

Practice makes PROGRESS!! Homework for orchestra class is practicing at home. Students are expected to spend anywhere from 15 minutes to 1 hour of practice everyday on class if possible. Whether reviewing major/minor scales, in class technique book practice, or rehearsal music there is always something to work on. In class rehearsal time will be most productive for all when students come prepared. Students will get an in depth explanation on not just 'what' to practice but *how* to practice.

Youth Symphonies and Music Camp

One of the most enjoyable parts of playing music is playing with your peers. Playing with youth symphonies and joining music camps are a great way to build community with like minded students, challenge yourself, and grow your repertoire. These are experiences where students can often work with varying professionals and expand their musical knowledge and experiences. Youth symphonies usually require members to be a part of school orchestra programs as well.

Orchestra Class Grading

Orchestra Class grades will be based off this system.

<u>Description</u>	<u>Weight</u>
Daily Preparation and performance preparation	40%
In Class Participation	30%

Playing quiz	20%
Written work/ Music Theory Assignments	20%

Attendance at ALL concert performance and rehearsals are required unless already directly contacted and discussed with Ms.Kong. Concert dates are sent out in advance. Prior planning and prioritization of final rehearsals and concert attendance is highly recommended. Attending each rehearsal and concert is essential to the success of the ensemble. As this is a performance based class, the concerts are treated like a final celebration of students' growth, putting the entire quarter's worth of work together. If students are not able to make it, there will be alternative assessments assigned.

LIVE Stream link for Orchestra Concerts and Orchestra Meetings:

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Concert Dress

How the orchestra appears to the audience is an important part of presentation. We ask that each student come to concerts dressed appropriately and be uniformed with the rest of the orchestra.

All Orchestras:

Bottom – SOLID long black pants/trousers/slacks (full length, must come down to ankles, no leggings or yoga pants) or skirt (must come below knees, with black tights). SOLID black socks (no logos) or tights. Belts must also be solid black.

Shoes – SOLID black dress shoes or low heels/flats, must be close toed (no sneakers)

Tops – SOLID WHITE ¾ or long sleeve dress shirts or collared shirts (No tank tops or short sleeves/t shirts)

*We will also accept donations of concert dress wear that students are no longer wearing. These items will be washed, stored, and given to students who may need it. Please let me know if you would like to donate or will need concert attire.

Materials for Orchestra:

- *Instrument and bow
- *Black 1/2 inch binder with front cover pocket (Every student in Orchestra must have one)
- *Rosin
- *Pencil
- Soft cleaning cloth (microfiber or soft suede)
- Shoulder rest
- Extra set of strings for your instrument (synthetic-core strings recommended, they sound better).
- Chromatic tuner (can use a phone app as well)

- Practice mute for your home practice (if needed)

Technique Books

Every orchestra class will be using a string method/technique book. This is to ensure that all necessary skills are covered sequentially. We will be using the *Essential Elements 2000 for Strings* method books as well as *String Basics* throughout the year. I recommend that students purchase their own books so they can put their own markings and personalize them. However, books are available to borrow from school.

Intro/ Premier Orchestra – *String Basics* Book 1 (Red)

Intermediate Orchestra – *String Basics* Book 2 (Blue)

Concert Orchestra – Intermediate Technique Studies [green] (moving onto Technique and Style studies later in the year [brown])

Other warm ups and music theory sheets will be provided in class.

For any questions or concerts please feel free to reach out to Ms.Kong.

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