

East Chapel Hill High School
String Orchestra Class Syllabus
2025-2026

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Required Text:

String Orchestra (9th-12th Grade): Habits of a Successful String Musician

Required Technology:

Ms. Konopka's Orchestra Website: <https://sites.google.com/chccs.k12.nc.us/pmsorchestra>

ECHHS Band and Orchestra Website: <https://sites.google.com/a/chccs.k12.nc.us/east-chapel-hill-hs-band-and-orchestra/home>

Required Materials—Please put your name on EVERYTHING!

- Instrument (Violin, Viola, Cello, Bass) and Case
- Method Book (listed above)
- Violin/Viola: Everest Shoulder Rest
- Cello/Bass: Endpin Anchor
- Cleaning cloth
- Rosin
- Tuner
- **1" 3-ring binder**
- **2-3 Pencils in music binder**

Important Dates (Underlined Dates are Required Events). Please add to your family calendar

Occasional after-school rehearsals will be required for concert performances. Dates and times will be sent out in advance.

- **Fall Concert:**
 - ECHHS String Orchestra: October 22nd
- **Winter Concert:**
 - 8th Grade Combined concert with ECHHS: December 9, 2025 7:30pm
- Eastern Regional Orchestra Auditions January Saturday 2026 TBA
- ECHHS Chamber Music Society Concert
 - January 8th
- **Quarter 3 Concert:**
 - ECHHS String Orchestra: March 17, 2026
- **MPA Performance**
 - March 19 & 20 2026
- ECHHS Chamber Music Society Concert
 - April 30th @East 7:00pm
- Eastern Regional Orchestra Clinic: February 2026 TBA, @Greenville, NC
- **Spring Concert**
 - ECHHS String Orchestra: May 27th

Grading Policies

The grading scale is as follows:

- Performance Tests and Weekly Goals 50%
(For Honors Students, an extra 10% of this is the Honors Requirement)
- Dress Rehearsal Attendance: 20%
- Concert Performance/Assessment: 30%
- **Performance Tests:** The class is primarily a performance-based class and the requisite skills for successful playing of the instrument will be regularly tested. AT LEAST once per quarter, you will be evaluated on your musical preparation. Practice checks are out of 5 or 10 points each, and can be made up at any time until the week of the next concert – NOT the week OF the concert. **Please be proactive in your preparation. Your success equals our success.**

- **Dress Rehearsal and Concert Attendance:** These grades are based on the following criteria:
 1. Your attendance (Do not miss the 2 Dress Rehearsals)
 2. Timeliness
 3. You have all of your materials.
 4. Performance etiquette, both on and off stage

Practice Expectations:

The success of your musical experience depends on home practicing. Regularly scheduled practice on your instrument outside of rehearsal is the best way to effectively prepare yourself for the playing tests. Relying solely on your performance in class will not adequately prepare you for the material nor will it adequately address your unique needs. Set aside 30 minutes at the same time every day for dedicated practice time.

Care of Instruments and Music

Students are responsible for their own instruments and supplies. Take time to make sure that your instrument is in good working condition:

Check condition of strings. Replace any worn or false strings. Check condition of bow and bow hair. Check placement of bridge and soundpost. Check for cracks or split seams. Clean rosin build-up with a lint-free cloth and rubbing alcohol. Make sure you have rosin (and use it).

Please DO NOT use any household cleaners or bleach products on your instrument. This will cause serious damage.

Fingernail Policy

It is impossible to play a string instrument properly with long fingernails. Orchestra students are required to keep their nails trimmed during the school year.

Classroom Expectations:

- **Cell Phone Policy:** All cell phones should be stored in lockers during the school day.
 - *1st Offense* - Reminder, *2nd Offense* - I take during class
 - *ALL* Subsequent Offences - Admin Takes Phone, Parent Contact
- Students will engage in music and orchestral activities in class; no other homework or school work in class.
- Lunch Periods
 - Practice Rooms and the Main Rehearsal Rooms are available for lunch-time rehearsals. If you have a group that wants to meet on a regular basis, talk with Mr. Ellefsen to reserve a practice room. If you play in a garage/rock band, you must find an alternative location/time to practice. Food and drink is not allowed in the practice rooms at any time. If you wish to eat lunch in the band room, you are encouraged to do so! You must clean up after yourself, however, or this privilege will be taken away.

Concert Attire:

All students will order a concert uniform: either Black Dress or Black Suit; more details coming during class.

Full ECHHS Band and Orchestra Handbook

https://docs.google.com/document/d/10oqzuCGhtxUrOK0gcczjsPetXF7E9V9XX_uH84M4-8Y/view

Honors Credit

The Honors Program is available to all students who are enrolled in a band or orchestra class that earns, and will earn one credit over the course of a year. The State Department of Instruction has established two levels of band and orchestra credit which award a higher GPA. Students who enroll in the program agree to follow an independent course of study, which includes, but is not limited to, the following requirements:

- One formal written concert review each quarter
- Write Program Notes for One Concert Per Year
- Taking private lessons AND/OR be involved in an outside performance group such as Duke String School, Triangle Youth Symphony, MYCO, NCCMI, church band, etc.
- Involvement in a small ensemble and participation in a community event.

Further details for the Honors Program will be handed out during the second week of school.

