



Helena Middle School Orchestra

2025-2026 Syllabus



2025-2026 CONCERT SCHEDULE

- **Thursday, September 25** – 6th Grade “Great Beginnings” at 6:00 PM
 - HMS Auditorium
- **Thursday, November 13** – 6th, 7th, 8th Grade at 6:00 PM
 - HMS Auditorium
- **Thursday, March 5** – 8th/9th Grade Music Festival at 6:00 PM
 - HMS Auditorium
- **TBA March/April** – 8th Grade Day Trip to Missoula
- **Friday, April 24**– 6th/7th Grade Solo/Ensemble Festival at 7:30 AM
 - Our Redeemer’s Lutheran Church
- **Thursday, May 28** – 6th, 7th, 8th Grade at 6:00 PM
 - HMS Auditorium

Welcome to a new school year of excitement, learning, and fun in the orchestra program! This syllabus has been assembled to explain to students and their adults the details of our program and its expectations. Please review it, discuss the information it contains, and ask questions if any arise. Please sign the contract sent home with your student and return to Ms. Kale by **Thursday, September 4, 2025**. An additional copy can be found at the bottom of this document if necessary.

Goals

1. To learn and develop the basic skills necessary to play a string instrument.
2. To read and understand written music.
3. To have the opportunity to play in an ensemble.
4. To have an enjoyable experience while becoming a musician.

Basic Classroom Rules

1. Respect Yourself and Others at All Times
 - Yourself, students, teachers, instruments, room, and equipment, using the Montana Behavioral Institute Guidelines.
2. Be Prepared!
 - Musicians must show up for class with instrument, music, and pencil every day. Students are to be ready five minutes after the scheduled starting time.
3. Be Responsible

- No gum, food or drink (except bottled water) is permitted in the classroom.
- 4. Like in every class, the teacher should receive students' complete, undivided attention during class.

Specific Responsibilities of an Orchestra Member

1. Follow all school rules in the orchestra room.
2. Be to class on time with your instrument, music, and pencil.
3. Enter the room quietly and calmly, take your instrument to your seat, and put your music in order for the day's class in accordance with the posted agenda.
4. Only touch or play your instrument, not anyone else's.
5. Stop talking when class begins.
6. Raise your hand if you have a question or a problem.
7. Do not bring food, gum, or drinks into the orchestra room.
8. Instrument cases, folders, and books should all be clearly labeled with student's name and grade.
9. Keep feet on floor and off of chairs and other equipment.

Consequences

1. Verbal reminder and warning
2. Conference with student
3. Call home to parent.
4. Conference with student and parent.
5. Conference with student, parent, and principal. Possible removal from group.

All Negative Consequences Result in Loss of Daily Points

Disciplinary Action

One of the most unpleasant tasks of any teacher is enforcing disciplinary action towards a student. The HMS Orchestra Program operates on a long-standing tradition of musical excellence and pride in our personal achievements. Consequently, there are very few rules, as we trust every student to respect themselves and each other at all times and always bring their best. When working with a large number of students, however, it is necessary to have certain responsibilities and rules to which all students are held to ensure everybody's safety and success. Each member of the HMS Orchestra program is expected to uphold and follow the responsibilities and rules listed above. It is the director's responsibility to ensure fairness in the classroom and to enforce disciplinary action if the criteria for proper class behavior are not followed.

Grading Policy

1. Classroom Participation/Preparation

- 5 points are awarded each day to students who:
 - Arrive in the classroom before the tardy bell rings
 - Are attentive during class and not disruptive
 - Have their music, instrument, and pencil out and ready to use within five minutes of the class starting time
 - Participate in class (play, listen, or wait quietly whenever requested)

2. Performance Skills

- Performance assessment throughout the semester
- Total = Point value will depend on number of playing quizzes
- Post-concert evaluations

3. Concerts

- Total = 100 points per concert

4. Other Assignments

- Will vary depending on daily activities
- Total = Point value will depend on assignments.

5. Extra Credit

- Will be available throughout the year for participation in selected voluntary activities and certain classroom activities.

6. Final Grade

- Earned Points / Total Points = Final Grade

100-90	A
89-80	B
79-70	C
69-60	D
59-Below	F

Concert Information

1. Concert Attire

- Students are asked to wear “Sunday Best” semi-formal clothing. This includes dress shirts, slacks, blouses, skirts, dresses, belts, and dress shoes. Please bring any questions to Ms. Kale. Remember, when you feel well, you play well!

2. Performance Guidelines

- Always be 30 minutes early.
- Come prepared physically and mentally.
- Have your equipment ready.
- Dress in appropriate concert dress.

3. Concert Absences

- It is each student’s responsibility to plan for concerts during the year, but it is also understood that conflicts sometimes arise. To make up a missed concert for full credit, you must turn in a note (signed by a parent or guardian) to Ms. Kale two weeks prior to the concert and consult with her about your make-up assignment. Missing a concert because of illness will be similarly excused, but the parent-signed note will be turned in following the concert. Deviations from this policy may result in complete or partial loss of credit for the concert.

Materials and Supplies

Every student needs the materials described in the supply list specific to their instrument. Purchasing those supplies is recommended, but the school owns a limited quantity of supplies that can be rented or borrowed depending on individual circumstances. The following guidelines are intended to protect school and student possessions, but they are subject to change when necessary.

1. Student owned materials

- Instrument cases, spare strings, and books should be clearly labeled with a student's full name whenever they are brought to school. Smaller items (mutes, rosin, and rock stops) are less likely to get lost with a label, but the labeling process may be more difficult and is not required.

2. School owned materials

- Anything a student rents or borrows from the school must be returned in reasonable condition. Pencil marks should be erased from books, instruments should be wiped clean, and bows should be loosened. Damage to school materials, or failure to return school materials, may lead to a fine at the end of the school year.

Please contact Ms. Kale with any questions or concerns. If needed, a copy of the Syllabus Contract is on the final page of this document.

HMS Orchestra Contract and Concert Schedule

2025-2026

Please detach, sign, and return this contract page by **Thursday, September 4**.
The syllabus and an additional concert schedule can be found on my staff page (search "Marian Kale" on helenaschools.org) and should be kept for your records.

I have read and understand all of the policies stated within the syllabus and agree to uphold them as a contributing member of the HMS Orchestra Program, which includes all concerts listed in the syllabus that apply to your respective class.

Print Student's Name

Period _____

Student's Signature

Date _____

Print Parent/Guardian's Name

Parent/Guardian's Signature

Date _____

*If you have questions or concerns, please contact Ms. Kale.

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