

Mendenhall Middle School
Music Department
Mr. Parker
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Orchestra Syllabus

Dear Mendenhall Orchestra Parents and Students:

My name is Charles Parker, and I am the orchestra director at Mendenhall Middle School and Page High School. First let me extend a warm welcome to all of our new students, as well as a welcome back to all of our returning members. The orchestra program at Mendenhall has developed a reputation for excellence, a tradition that I look forward to continuing with your help.

As you are no doubt aware, music presents a special opportunity for students to learn, grow and express themselves in a way not possible through any other medium. I appreciate your interest in music, and hope that this year we can continue improving as performance ensembles and growing as musicians.

This syllabus provides information on procedures, grading criteria and rubrics, contact information and performance opportunities for the upcoming year. This is to ensure that everyone is aware of the expectations of the orchestra program, and to hopefully avoid any future miscommunication. A physical copy of the handbook will be shared later this week.

The Orchestra Boosters is a wonderful organization for getting involved with your student's musical interests at school. For further information about joining the boosters, please contact any Mr. Parker at your convenience. Please feel free to call or email any questions you may have using the contact information below. I look forward to seeing and hearing from all of you throughout the year.

Booster Form:

Instrument Request:

Musically Yours,
Charles Parker

Materials

- Instrument, Bow and Case
- Rosin
- Cotton cloth to wipe strings
- 1-inch 3-ring binder
- Sheet dividers
- Composition Notebook



Textbooks

6th Grade Orchestra: Essential Elements Book 1

7th Grade Orchestra: Essential Elements Book 2

8th Grade Orchestra: Essential Technique Book 3; Habits of a Successful Middle Level String Musician

Attendance and Participation

Because Orchestra is a performance-based class, attendance and participation are very important in ensuring successful grades throughout the year. Students must come to class on time, prepared, and ready to work. Participation points will be given as a daily grade throughout the school year, so 100% participation is an expectation of all students during class and rehearsals. Students will not lose points for excused absences, or for days that are not feeling their best, since it may limit the student's ability to perform their music properly. However, when that happens, students are still expected to stay focused on the lesson/rehearsal, so that they don't miss out on any important instruction or changes that may occur.

Rehearsals and Performances

Due to the nature of how a Orchestra operates, rehearsals and performances are an extension of the classroom and will be graded as such. The same attendance and participation requirements apply, as mentioned above, so please be aware of any scheduled rehearsals and performances. Exceptions are made for valid reasons, but students will need to communicate any scheduling issues as soon as they are given any rehearsal or performance dates throughout the year.

Required Performance Dates (as of August 2023)

- Winter Concert: December 14th, 2023; 7pm
- Music Performance Adjudication: March 2023
- Spring Concert: TBD

Assignments, Homework, and Assessments

- Assignments will mostly be in the form of sheet music, but may sometimes be in other forms, such as a short essay or group work. Any personal or group practice time given during class will also count as participation and/or assignment grades, to ensure that everyone stays on task.
- Homework will mostly be given in the form of practicing music at home, but it will sometimes be other assignments as well. Homework assignments, including practicing music, must be completed/submitted by the due date. Late assignments will have a lower grade (-10 pts a day), and the loss of points will vary on the total amount of points given for the assignment.
- Assessments (formative and/or summative) are generally given after completion of a lesson or section of music that the Orchestra is working on for a performance. Students will mostly be assessed on their knowledge of the assigned sections of their sheet music, but will sometimes also be given written assessments to assess their knowledge of music theory throughout the year. Students who miss an assessment are to request a make-up time, either after school or during their personalization period (if possible) as soon as possible.

Financial Requirements & Responsibilities

- Instrument rental (from school): Students who receive an instrument from Mendenhall Middle School through GCS can rent the instrument for free. However, the student and parent/guardian are responsible for damages to the instrument, and there is no insurance policy through the school (you must pay for the damages of the instrument). This includes, but is not limited to, the use of the instrument, replacement strings, rosin, or bows will be an additional expense, so please take care of your equipment and music.

Grades

Grades are based on the Guilford County grading scale and will be based primarily, but not exclusively, on points earned for participation, rehearsal/performance attendance, oral/aural comprehension, homework, quizzes, tests, etc. There are NO extra credit assignments. Make-up work is allowed for full credit and grade for excused absences. Make-up work is allowed for unexcused absences however, teacher may record a 10% reduction in the grade for Homework (see above) and record the lowest passing grade (e.g., "D" or "60") for tests and major projects that meet standards of proficiency. All make-up work must be submitted (hardcopy or performance-based) within two days, not including the day of return, for each day of an absence.

Restroom Policy

Restrooms should be used in between classes and during lunch and are not to be used 10 minutes before or after the bell. However, because the restrooms may become crowded during the change of classes, students may use the restrooms outside of the music room during the first 5-10 mins of class, so that they are not late for any tuning processes or warm-ups.

Cell phones and Other Electronic Devices

Cell phones and other electronics are for appropriate classroom use only. Because students may need to use their electronics for personal/group practice time, students will be told when it is allowed to use them. However, if students are caught off task during these allowed electronics usage times, students may be asked to put their electronics away or result in a lowered participation grade. Unless otherwise specified, cell phones and other electronics must be silent/turned off and put away (no phone charging). If a student chooses not to comply, they will be asked to put the phone away. Should the student continue to not do so, the phone will be confiscated and turned into the front office. Repeated violations will be handled by administration.

Classroom Expectations

- Students are expected to be responsible and respectful at all times.
- Students are expected to always have all of their materials for class.
- Students may not have any food drinks in the classroom, with the exception of water.
- Students are required to participate in class daily in order to receive the full grade(s) for participation.
- Students are expected to arrive to class on time daily. Unexcused tardies to class and unexcused absences from class will result in consequences such as detentions, no make-up work, an automatic zero for daily participation grade, or exclusion from other activities. Make-up work will only be given to students with excused absences. Many of our assignments are not paper-based, so it is the student's responsibility to inquire about assignments that have been missed due to an absence.
- Students must work hard inside and outside of class, in order to be successful in this course. Most assignments and tasks given to the student will require additional practice at home. Do your best on everything assigned because you will have a great outcome from it.
- Cheating or pretending to be participating will not be tolerated whatsoever.

SIGN AND RETURN THIS PAGE

August 2023
(Orchestra Syllabus)

Student's Name _____

Period _____

(please print)

Student's Cell Number

Student's email

Student's Signature

Parent/Guardian's Name (please print)

Parent's/Guardian Home & Cell Number

Parent's/Guardian E-mail

Is there a working computer (and Internet access) in the home? yes _____ no _____

Does your child have permission to use his/ her cell phone or other electronic devices for
in-class assignments? yes _____ no _____

Does your child have permission to download free apps for class assignments?
yes _____ no _____

I have read and discussed the course syllabus for Orchestra with my child and we both
understand what is expected and required.

Parent/Guardian's Signature

Student's Signature
