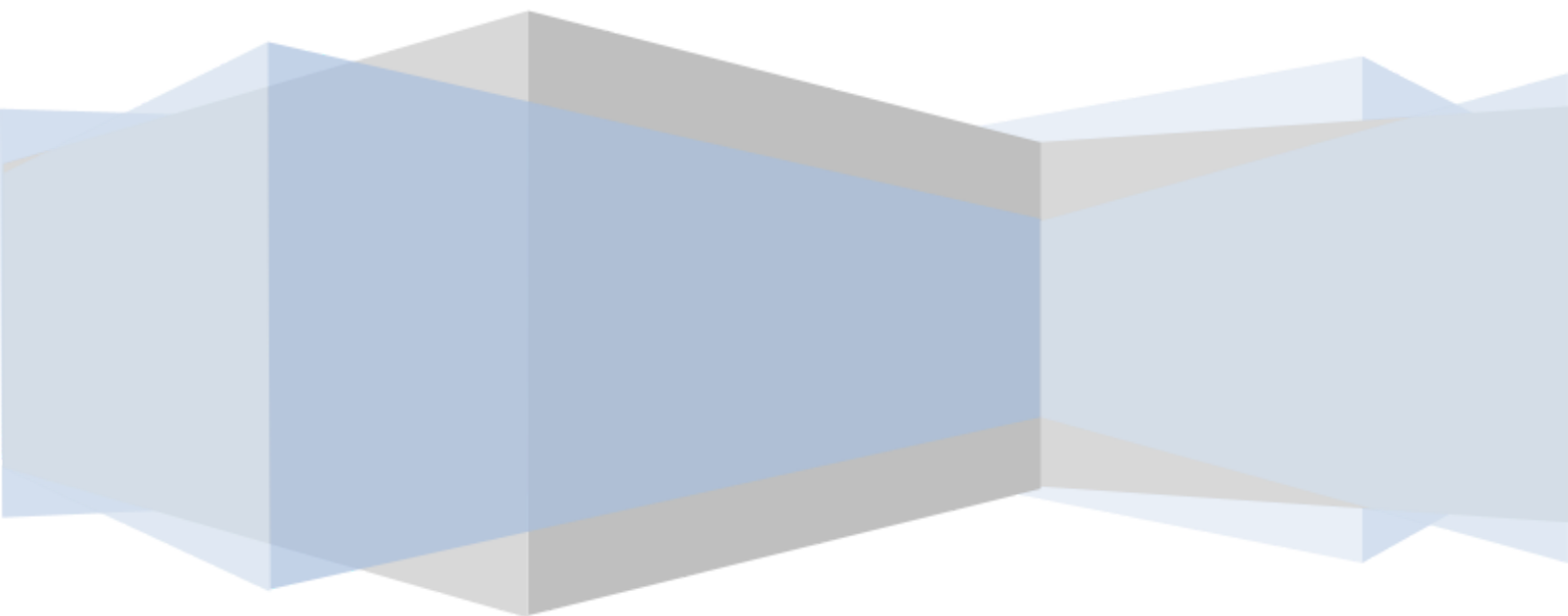


Millard West High School

Orchestra handbook

S. Justin Zeleski M.Ed director



The Orchestras

Philharmonic Orchestra

The purpose of the freshman orchestra is to provide a place where students can transition from the middle school way of doing things into the West High School way of doing things. This class, while still a performance-based class, will focus more on developing and perfecting basic to advanced skills needed to enter the performing environment of the Symphony Orchestra. It will also focus on developing good practice habits in the high school environment where personal and extracurricular life can create difficulties with musical practice. Students who successfully pass this class will be admitted to the Symphony Orchestra and should be able to hold their own as a soloist as well as being able to play well within a section.

Symphony Orchestra

The symphony orchestra is the primary performing group at Millard West High School. The function of this orchestra is to provide students with opportunities to grow into the type of musician they want to be. Members of this class are expected to push themselves in their own avenues of musical growth as well as meet performance goals for the group. For those students who wish to pursue more musical experiences opportunities will include auditioning for chamber orchestra, honors groups, forming string quartets, electric groups, and a concerto competition for those with exceptional soloing experience.

Chamber Orchestra

This orchestra is an extracurricular group designed to provide ambitious students a way to further develop their musical skills. All students who wish to be part of this group must first audition to participate. They should be comfortable as soloists, independent practitioners, and the kind of student who takes enjoyment from pushing themselves. Music will be focused on selections that can be played without a conductor and can be prepared with little or no direction from the director.

Rules for the Class.

1. Be Prepared,

- a. Each Musician should be ready to perform any selection from the concert and should be able to do this on command. They should also have all necessary equipment ready before class begins.

2. Be on time,

- a. Being punctual is vital to having a successful rehearsal because when you show up late it means others have to wait for you and you lose valuable, irreplaceable, rehearsal time.

3. Be respectful.

- a. Everyone appreciates being treated kindly. Manners and courtesy will be expected at all times in the orchestra.

Communication

There are several ways to keep in contact with things going on in the Millard West High School Orchestra. Here is a list of resources that will be available and useful for communication this year.

1. Google Classroom: This is the primary online source for anything regarding the Orchestra. Events, Challenges and even tests may be posted and submitted through here.
2. Remind App: This app is free to download and parents/students should sign up for this as Mr. Zeleski uses this app for quick messages and reminders.
3. School Website: The website is located at mworchestra.com and will have a lot of useful information for the public and students alike.
4. Email: This is the best form of communication for Mr. Zeleski. His email is szeleski@mpsomaha.org.
5. Phone: (402)715-6000. Call for questions that are more complicated than what an email can do. However, you should allow 24 hours for a reply on this as Mr. Zeleski is not always in the building and with scheduling issues might not be able to return your call as quickly as an email.

I would like to encourage everyone to communicate with me openly. The only truly bad question, is the one not asked.

Grades

All students who attend school deserve feedback on how they are performing so that they will know where they stand within the expectations of the class. Everything we do in this class will have a purpose with an end goal of making each student stronger as a musician and/or a person. It should be noted that by the nature of this being a performance based academic class that tests (or performances) have a high degree of visibility. Everything that the students will be asked to do will be things necessary for active, working musicians. The following are the types of tasks students will be asked to undertake and complete in order to provide the necessary proof that learning is occurring.

Performances (Summative): A performance could be a concert or a recital in or out of class and serve the purpose of giving students the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of a particular technique or overall musical skill(s). This grade will be determined by performance skill and evidence of improvement on ensemble literature and assignments (etudes, scales, supplementary material). There will be *one or two* scheduled playing tests per quarter. When the Performance Assessment IS the concert, students will also be graded on proper concert attire and professionalism. These will be known well in advance so students may prepare and each student should prepare them well as possible as the ultimate expectation is that all aspects of the technique, or piece, be performed as close to perfectly as is possible.

Playing Challenges (formative): These are usually videotaped and submitted through Google Classroom and may be whole class or given to a specific student. The purpose of a playing challenge is to get an idea of where a student is on their path toward mastery of a particular skill. Mastery is not expected at this level, but each student should demonstrate their best at the graded skill so that a plan may be made to further their studies toward mastery.

Other tasks: Usually completed either in class, at home, or via Google Classroom they serve the purpose of assisting the student in learning a new or developing musical concept or skill.

One of the following “grades” will be given to each student. Below is a chart describing the grade and more importantly what it means about their performance.

Grade	What it means
1 93-100%	Student is proficient on this subject. Students may show higher and lower levels of mastery, but any student in this category shows competency.
2 85-92%	
3 77-84%	Students are approaching proficiency but have not achieved those skills yet. Students who perform in this level will be expected to either redo assessments or to come in for extra help. Students in this category are in danger of falling behind and failing.
4 69-76%	
5 0-68%	Student has either not submitted performance for assessment or has performed in a way that is far below where it should be. Students in this category will have to work with the teacher to bring up their grade.

Any Performance, Playing Challenge, or other task will be sorted into the following weighted categories.

1. **Developmental Coursework 50%:** How well the students completes their day-to-day work. (Google Classroom Discussion topics, Homework, formative assessments, etc.).
2. **Performance Mastery 30%:** How well a student performs on their instrument (technique, musicality, concerts, etc.).
3. **Performances 20%:** Simply Concerts and Recitals. Graded with a Rubric.

Concert Attendance Policy

The Millard West Orchestra is a performance-based class. It is important that each member make a commitment to concerts. Our Orchestra students rely on one another to succeed at performances. Orchestra is not a spectator sport, there isn't a bench, everyone plays a vital part always. No one person is replaceable and so no additional assignment replaces or compensates for a concert.

Students may be excused for religious, health, or family emergencies if Mr. Zeleski is notified in writing prior to the event. **Family trips are not excused absences.**

Orchestra Attire

Orchestra students have formal attire consisting of:

Girls- long black full skirts and belts, which are school owned, and **long sleeved, dressy white blouses and black dress shoes, which are student owned. Blouses need to be wrinkle free for concerts.**

Boys- tux pants, jackets, bow ties and cummerbunds, which are school owned, and **long sleeved, pleated, white tux shirts and dress black shoes and socks, which are student owned. Shirts can be purchased at local tux shops.**

School owned apparel will be distributed during the fall. The formal attire should only be worn for Millard West Orchestra performances. Jackets and pants will be dry cleaned in May, and returned before the end of school. Skirts may be machine-washed on a delicate, cool cycle, and drip-dried. We are very fortunate to have such great looking, professional attire.

Parents Make the Difference!

Consider becoming an active member in our wonderful Orchestra Parents Association! Emails will keep you posted on events for the year. There are many ways to help our music students, including chaperoning, helping with receptions, and organizing events.

If you would like to be the Orchestra Parent Guardian Angel (or President), please indicate your interest and we will talk. (Thank you!!!) **See attachment** Your loving support every day makes these wonderful Orchestra students excel.

Friends of the Fine Arts

If you are interested in making a financial contribution to any of the Fine Arts disciplines at Millard West, we have a "Wall of Recognition" in our Auditorium Lobby, which lists generous contributors. Together, we can help ensure a bright future for West Fine Arts. Watch for cards at our concerts or contact me. Thank you all for your ongoing support.

Current List of Scheduled Events

All performances are considered mandatory.

Day	Date	Event	Time	Location
TU	October 9 th	Fall Concert	7:00PM	MWHS
TU	December 11 th	Winter Concert	7:00PM	MWHS
M	January 28 th	All Millard Orchestra Festival	7:00PM	Baxter Arena
TU	April 9 th	Spring Concert	7:00PM	MWHS
W-SA	April 17-20 th Exact date TBA	District Music Contest	TBA	TBA
SA	May 4 th	Philharmonic Orchestra Festival	8:00am-12:00pm	TBA
T	May 7 th	Music Awards Night	7:00PM	MWHS
F	May 10 th	Swing Night	7:00PM	MWHS
SA	May 25 th	Graduation	1:00PM	Baxter Arena

LETTER POINT SYSTEM

Students will have the opportunity to accrue letter Points throughout the year and which are tallied in the spring. This "letter" can be sewn to a Millard West letter jacket and worn with pride. We have a wonderful evening every spring for our Music Department where we recognize achievement and where "letters" will be presented. Below are the requirements for a letter and some common ways to earn points.

Letter Requirements

- Letters are awarded to **Full time** Orchestra members only.
- 1000 points are needed to earn a letter.
- Points are awarded all year long and tallied in the Spring.

Event	Points Awarded	Event	Points Awarded
Full Year Freshman	50	Full Year Sophomore	100
Full Year Junior	150	Full Year Senior	200
2 Consecutive Years	50	3 Consecutive Years	100
4 Consecutive Years	150	Each Orchestra Concert	100 per concert
Orchestra Member Only	100	Leadership Team	100
Chamber Orchestra Member	120	District Music Contest	100
Solo Concerto Performance	100	Honors Recital	50
Honor Group Tryout	50	Audition for Pit Musical	50
Audition for Chamber	50	Pit Musician (secondary Inst.)	75
Pit Musician (Primary Inst.)	100	Teach Private Lessons (1 year)	50 per student
Take Private Lessons	50	Take Private Lessons (1 year)	100
Community Performance	50 each	Play in Community Ensemble	50
Learn a 2nd String Instrument	50	Perform for School Function	30-70 each
Swing Night Helper	20-50	Swing Night Performer	50
Section Leader	100 per quarter	Help Middle/Elem Concerts	30 each
Saturday String Studio	25/hir	OAYO All year	100
All State Orchestra	100	M.S. Recruiting Concert	75
Switched instrument for good of the ensemble	100	Formed and performed with your own musical group.	100
Musical Valentines	30	Tri M	50
Orchestra Outings	30 each		

ACTIVITIES AND TRIPS

Depending on the success of the orchestra, opportunities may arise for us to participate in special off-campus activities and/or trips. Participation in such activities must be earned and should be viewed as a privilege. If a student has worked hard (attended all required rehearsals and performances) and exhibited a pattern of trustworthy behavior throughout the year, they will be invited to participate. I will take into consideration the student's academic and discipline record in my class as well as all other classes before a decision is made. If a student has had disciplinary action taken against them then it will be up to school policy and the director to decide if they are able to participate. Should we decide to travel, all details about the trip will be sent home well in advance and students will have an opportunity to raise funds to help cover the cost of the trip.

Handbook Acknowledgment

By signing this I acknowledge that I have read and understand and accept the contents herein.

Student Name

Class Period

Student Signature

Parent Signature