

ORCHESTRA HANDBOOK

LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL ORCHESTRA
DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC
THIEF RIVER FALLS

I. ORCHESTRA POLICIES

A. AUDITIONS

There will be one general audition per year, held during the first few weeks of school, for purpose of chair placement. This audition will determine the **initial** placement of the orchestra. Seating will be assigned by the director until such time as auditions have taken place. Seating may be rotated during the year at the discretion of the orchestra director. Leadership, dependability, and the ability to work with others is more positive for a section leader than pure talent, and will be factored in any audition. Upperclassmen are not guaranteed first chair of any section. If you feel that you can be a better leader than the person seated ahead of you, you may wish to challenge that student. At that time, a challenge audition would be scheduled for both involved, and you may move up or down at the discretion of the orchestra director. Violinists will be 'sectioned' where they can make the best contribution to the ensemble as a whole. Senior violinists will be given preference whenever possible as to playing first or second violin. The conductor will decide what arrangement will help the orchestra sound the best - please be a team player!

B. CLASSROOM PROCEDURES

Students will be expected to be in the room at the beginning of class. You will have 3 minutes to get your instrument out and be ready to tune. When class begins, an 'A' will be given by the concertmaster or concertmistress and the low strings will tune. An 'A' will then be given for the high strings. Phones should be put away in the caddies after tuning. We will then rehearse the music for the day. At the end of class, you will be expected to put your instrument and music away. Cellos and Bases will be kept in the band room, and violins and violas in the orchestra storage room. Music needs to be put in slots or in your locker. Cello and bass cases may not be left on the floor, put them in a violin locker.

You will need your instrument, a pencil, and your music every day unless otherwise instructed.

C. RULES

No cell phone use, computer use or use of other electronic devices (iPad, etc.) during class after tuning.

No talking during rehearsal.

Students will need permission to leave the room after class has started.

Leave your attitude at the door.

Students must keep their instruments and music in the designated areas before and after class.

Students must check in with one of the music staff before using practice rooms.

Students may not loiter in the instrument storage room before and after school.

Students may not use the office computer without permission.

Consequences of consistent disruptive behavior are:

Confiscation of cellphone/iPad or other items

Verbal warning

Call or note home to parents

Notification of office (detention)

Kicked out of class

D. GRADING

My grading criteria will include the following: participation in class, written work, lessons, and concerts.

1. Participation in class - You will receive a weekly grade based on your rehearsal contribution and behavior.

A - Student is very attentive to director and is focused on the music. Strong leadership is shown, and student makes the most of his/her ability.

B - Student is attentive to director and focuses well. Some leadership is shown. Student contributes to the group but not at full potential, is occasionally distracted.

C - Student is participating in the group, but shows no effort to work to potential. Student is musically adequate. May often lose focus on class and may distract others.

D - Student doesn't focus on work and distracts others. Student makes little difference musically to the group.

F - Student shows no interest in trying to improve themselves or the group.

Absence and Tardy Policy

Orchestra is a participation class first and foremost, so if you are absent you are not meeting the requirements of the class. You are allowed four excused absences a quarter. Absences for school activities are exempted. After that, you need to make up your time in here to keep an 'A'. Every absence after four will drop your letter grade one degree (ex. A to A-, A- to B+, etc.) unless the time is made up. Two tardies will count as one absence. Forgetting your instrument also counts as an absence. Being physically injured will require a note from a licensed physician.

In the case of unexcused absences, the student will receive an 'F' for the quarter unless the time is made up. In any case, making up an unexcused absence will drop your grade one degree regardless of whether you make it up or not.

Homework

As stated earlier, participation in orchestra class is very important. You get your grade by your level of participation. While I do not mind you doing something constructive while I am rehearsing a different section of the orchestra, you should plan to get your work done ahead of time rather than asking me if you can miss orchestra to finish that 'big report' unless you need to make up something that I caused you to miss (example: taking you out of English to perform at Challenger) or other extenuating circumstances.

2. Written Work / Homework - During the year you will be given concert review forms, surveys, quizzes and other small tasks to do that may take a few minutes of your time outside of class. Most of these will be sent by email and you can complete them either during a time in class given for that purpose or on your own time. Regardless of the type of correspondence you are required to complete, your response will be recorded and I will dock you one letter grade for each one you don't complete. Tests or quizzes will be graded on the district grading scale.

3. Lessons/Sectionals - Lessons are the backbone of musical improvement. I believe their importance to be such that I encourage (as well as require) that you take some sort of lessons on your instrument. To be eligible to receive an 'A' for the grading period, you must take three lessons/sectionals during the quarter.

For those taking lessons from someone else approved by me outside of class, you will still need to see me once a quarter. You will also need to attend one dress rehearsal per quarter to be eligible for an 'A'. If you fail to schedule a lesson or sectional, the highest grade you can get is a 'C'. You can sign up for lessons during flex, lunch, or possibly after school.

4. Concerts - Concerts are like an evaluation of the orchestra. All students are required to attend all formal concerts:

Formal concerts:

We have 4 concerts scheduled: Monday, November 3x; Monday, December 15; Monday March 2; and Monday May 18th.

LHS Graduation at 6 PM on May 22nd.

Other Activities:

Homecoming Parade Sept. 26

NDSTA Festival in Jamestown, ND - October 4 & 5

MSHSL Large Group Contest - April 8th in Crookston

MSHSL Solo & Ensemble Contest - April 22nd place TBD.

Other performances may be scheduled at the discretion of the orchestra director.

In those cases, performance will not be required if director fails to give two weeks notice (fair warning) to students. Unexcused concert absences will result in receiving an 'F' for the quarter. Following is the agreed upon policy for the Music Department of School District #564:

The concerts at Franklin and Lincoln are a direct extension of the classroom and require the attendance of all students enrolled in that class. Each of these concerts is the student's final for the quarter.

If a student is unable to perform in these concerts, for EMERGENCY REASONS ONLY, he or she must:

A. Borrow the official video or audio tape and write a full critique on the entire concert. The critique must be two pages, typewritten, double spaced, and with correct spelling. The student will also have a program from the concert to refer back to when discussing specific literature titles and composers. Use as many musical terms as possible - when appropriate!

B. Select one composer from the program and type a two page paper (double spaced, correct spelling) on the composer's life in music. Do not copy word for word from the encyclopedia, but write it in your own words (think I can tell the difference?) Sources must also be listed.

The reports must be completed within one to two weeks after the concert. If a student chooses not to do the above critique & report he or she will receive an 'F' for the quarter.

Unexcused absences from the concert do not apply to the above information. If the student has an unexcused absence, has been suspended from school, or simply did not let the teacher know ahead of time that he or she would not be attending the concert, it is automatically an 'F' for the quarter.

Some emergency situations may include student illness, family health emergency, family trip with prior notification to the director.

4a. Concert Dress – The LHS Orchestra has a dress code. Boys will need to get a long sleeve button-down white dress shirt with a regular collar, black dress slacks (not Dockers or cotton twill), black socks, and black dress shoes (not black tennis shoes), and a black tie, not a bowtie.

Girls will need to order a specific dress that you will be given more information on later. Girls will need to acquire flat black dress shoes. You will need this by October.

E. CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

The LHS Chamber Orchestra is an audition only group that meets outside of school time that practices for performances around the community. Some of these performances are fundraising opportunities, and others are service opportunities. The Chamber Orchestra also performs at Solo/Ensemble concerts in the chamber orchestra category along with chamber orchestras from Crookston, Fergus Falls, Moorhead, Bemidji, Alexandria, and Brainerd.

F. LETTERING

To receive a letter in Orchestra, you must accumulate 6 1/2 points over your high school career. At the end of the year, I will hand you a form to complete which I will keep for the duration of your stay here. You will then tally up the points you earned over the year. These things will get you points:

- Each year in Orchestra = 1 point
- Select Orchestra = 1 point
- District Solo/Ensemble performance = 1 point each
- Superior Solo/Small group at District = 2 points each
- Superior Large Ensemble = 1 point each
- Excellent at District = 1 point each
- All-State Audition = 1 point
- All-State Member = 2 points
- Orchestra Festivals = 1 point each
- Year of weekly lessons = 1 point
- Non-scheduled performance/solo = 1/2 point (documentation required!)
- Participation in school musical = 1 point
- Orchestra Librarian = 1 point
- Attendance at Symphony / approved orchestra concert = 1/2 point apiece - program required.