

JASPER HIGH SCHOOL ORCHESTRA HANDBOOK

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Online consent must be completed by student and parent before FIRST FRIDAY OF SCHOOL YEAR.

ABOUT THE JASPER HIGH SCHOOL ORCHESTRAS

The award winning Jasper High School Orchestra program is about to begin another wonderful year! It is our goal to continue the tradition of excellence and quality in musical performance which the students and the community will be proud of year after year. Competing with 4-year high schools in the state of Texas, Jasper's Legacy orchestra is consistently ranked as one of the top string orchestras in the state of Texas! **This is an amazing honor for a freshman and sophomore orchestra program!** Jasper orchestra students feed into the Plano West Senior High School orchestra program which has consistently been named Texas Honor String Orchestra: The best string orchestra in the state of Texas. The West cluster orchestra directors work together to provide students with one of the best string programs in the country.

The success of the Jasper orchestra program centers around pride, commitment to task and the willingness to achieve a common goal. As a member of the JHS orchestras you will make long-lasting friendships and develop a sense of camaraderie that is unique to our organization. While every orchestra student is not expected to become a virtuoso musician, we do expect every student to establish both short and long range goals for improvement on his/her instrument. We expect mature, focused and responsible attitudes and actions, and lots of hard work from everyone. This commitment to excellence and hard work is the foundation of successful leaders no matter what their intended profession or career.

Students are expected to be orchestra members for the full two years they are enrolled at Jasper High School. This level of commitment to the arts is one of the main reasons the Jasper orchestra has an outstanding reputation. This consistent level of commitment is also the "differentiator" that colleges look for in their applicants.

Every year is a new challenge; new combinations of personalities and talent, new audiences, new music and and new leadership from section leaders and orchestra officers. By accepting membership in the JHS orchestra, you agree to perform to the best of your abilities and work together with the staff to make this year's orchestra the finest musical organization that our combined efforts can produce.

This handbook is designed to help students and parents understand the concepts and policies of this unique group. This handbook answers common questions and will prove to be an excellent reference resource for defining the boundaries that are important in keeping the JHS orchestra a quality ensemble.

GOALS

- ❖ Student will develop an understanding and appreciation for the symphony orchestra repertoire.
- ❖ Students will participate in the performance of excellent musical works and will be able to appreciate music after graduation from high school.
- ❖ Through the consistent use of goal setting and practice, student's will develop the tools necessary to become responsible and successful members of society as individuals and team members.
- ❖ Students will develop the essential characteristics of integrity, dependability and loyalty.



EXPECTATIONS

Orchestra at Jasper High School is both a class and an activity. Instruction on a stringed instrument is available to anyone who wishes to enroll, but membership in the orchestras is reserved for those who pass the entrance audition, maintain proper standards of conduct and fulfill their financial obligations.

Students who have not met the academic and behavior requirements for membership may enroll in orchestra class but will not attend after school rehearsals, perform publicly, participate in fundraising projects or social activities or travel with the group. Students who are members of the JHS orchestra will be expected to participate in **ALL** activities of the organization including extra rehearsals, performances and non-overnight trips. Entrance auditions will be extended to all new students who enter the district after the first official day of school.

Placement auditions for incoming freshmen and future sophomores are held in the spring semester every year.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance is required at all rehearsals, sectionals, chamber music rehearsals and performances.

DRESS REHEARSAL AND CONCERT CONFLICTS

All requests for an excused absence from rehearsals, performances or orchestral responsibilities must be **REQUESTED IN WRITING BY A PARENT TWO WEEKS PRIOR TO THE SCHEDULED EVENT**. If a last minute emergency situation arises, the orchestra directors must be contacted by phone. Phone numbers are on the front of this handbook and on the school website.

An absence will be considered **EXCUSED** in the following cases:

- Death in the family
- Medical emergency or illness
- Religious holiday

An absence will be **UNEXCUSED** in the following cases:

- Family trip/vacation
- College visitations
- Personal business or entertainment

If an orchestra activity conflicts with another school sponsored activity such as an athletic contest, academic field trip or any other type of PISD function in which the student is an active performing participant, the orchestra director and the other teacher involved should be notified in writing as far in advance as possible. The orchestra director and the other teacher will confer and work out the best solution to the conflict. Under no circumstances is the student to do as he/she pleases and then use the conflict as an excuse.

GRADING POLICY

MUSICAL UNDERSTANDING AND GROWTH

This area is a gauge of student mastery of the musical skills that are taught in class. These skills will be assessed through written work (quizzes and tests), performance proficiency (playing tests, auditions and performances), and oral participation in class.

EFFECTIVENESS AND PARTICIPATION AS AN ORCHESTRA MEMBER

This area evaluates a student's contribution as a team member in musical and non-musical areas. Regardless of how well students understand the material present in class or the level of technical ability, effectiveness to the ensemble suffers if each student is not present, does not have proper materials in class each day or chooses not to actively participate. Orchestra differs from other classes in this area. Learning to operate positively and cooperate in a group setting is an important component of orchestra class. Simply put, attitude and effort are an important part of the orchestra grade.

Participation/daily work	25%
Major/Minor evaluations	75%

Attitude + Effort = Success!

PLANO SUPPLEMENTAL MUSIC LESSON PROGRAM

The Plano Fine Arts Department offers a private study program which is approved and monitored by the PISD Director of Fine Arts. Private teachers who are selected to provide lessons in the schools are well-qualified. While private study is not a requirement, most students take advantage of this excellent and affordable opportunity. The advantages of one-on-one direction are invaluable and students who participate find they progress faster and find practice more enjoyable.

Lessons are \$22.00 per 24 minute lesson and **payments are made out directly to the individual private instructor**. Several teachers teach exclusively at Jasper and have a very high level of dedication and loyalty to the Plano orchestra programs.

ORCHESTRA REHEARSAL EXPECTATIONS

Proper rehearsal procedure is the only way any musical group can improve and reach its potential. We attempt to emulate the best example possible in this area - the professional orchestra. At the beginning of each rehearsal, students must be seated in their proper chairs with their instrument, music notebook and pencil. All books from other classes must be placed at the back of the orchestra room. Students are not allowed to read or study material from other classes while in an orchestra rehearsal. Unnecessary talking, distractive behavior or disrespect for the teacher or other students will not be tolerated. **Eating, drinking or chewing gum or candy is NOT permitted in the orchestra classroom. Cell phones are not to be active during class rehearsal time. Cell phones should never be heard in the classroom at any time.**

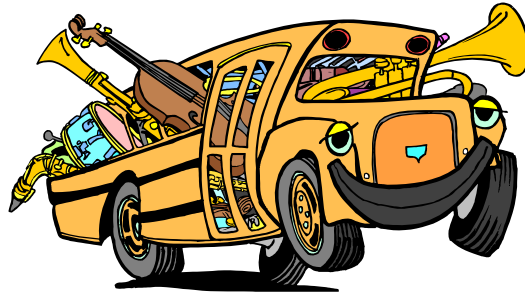
Correct playing posture is required at all times. Each student will receive one copy of assigned music and other paper materials which they must maintain in a **black 1" binder**. The binder becomes the responsibility of the student and must be in class everyday without exception. Binder and pencil checks will occur occasionally for a grade.

If a student loses, misplaces or damages this notebook, **it is the student's responsibility to replace all required materials that are needed to complete the notebook.**

Extra rehearsals may occasionally be necessary as performances dictate. Every effort will be made to keep these to an absolute minimum. They will be scheduled as conveniently as possible and students are expected to make every effort to change schedules as necessary to accommodate. Unavoidable conflicts must be discussed and resolved with the orchestra director **prior** to the rehearsal. In the event a performance group demands extra rehearsal time to master the music, rehearsals may be scheduled that are **NOT ON THE ORIGINAL SCHEDULE**. ALL rehearsals are marked on the classroom calendar.

ORCHESTRA BOOSTERS

The Jasper Orchestra Booster Club greatly benefits the entire orchestra program at Jasper High School. The Jasper Orchestra Boosters purchase some equipment, help pay for performance materials, provide refreshments, help with orchestra award parties, help pay for clinicians and help raise money for major orchestra trips. They are a vital part of our orchestra program. They also provide us with outstanding volunteers so we are able to provide students with the best experience possible. Many booster projects require the help of students as well. Membership in the booster club is open annually to all interested parties.



OPTIONAL FEES

Additional fees may be incurred during the year if a student desires to participate in extra events such as All Region, All State or the Solo and Ensemble Festival which requires registration fees and may involve piano accompanist fees. All Region and All State participation is not a requirement at Jasper HS.

SPRING TRIP

Every year, the orchestra alternates an Out of Town Trip and an In Town Trip. Participation in the trip does not affect a student's grade in orchestra. More information to come soon!

UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

UNIFORMS- all students will be measured in class

Formal concert attire will consist of the following:

- Ladies: school provided black concert gown
Natural colored hose (*student provided*)
Black dress shoes (*student provided-closed toe preferred*)
- Gentlemen: school provided tuxedo, bow tie and cummerbund
Black dress shoes (*student provided*)
White tuxedo shirt (*student provided-long-sleeved and must have formal knife pleats on front of shirt*)

Casual attire will consist of the following:

- Ladies: school provided orchestra t-shirt
blue jeans (*student provided*)
tennis shoes (*student provided*)
- Gentlemen: school provided orchestra t-shirt
blue jeans (*student provided*)
tennis shoes (*student provided*)

UNIFORM AND EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE

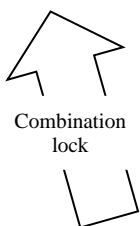
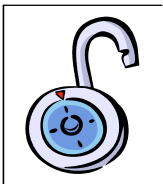
Our equipment and uniforms represent a large investment on the part of PISD. It is every student's responsibility to see that his or her equipment receives proper care. School instruments (lower strings only), equipment and uniforms will be issued to individual students and students are expected to care for them as if they were their own. All normal upkeep, maintenance and alterations are the responsibility of the student. If a student must alter a uniform, the alterations must be removed before the garment is turned in at the end of the year. **HEMS MUST NOT BE CUT.**

LOWER STRINGED INSTRUMENTS

Cellos and basses will be issued for use during school and must be kept in good playing condition. A student who damages equipment through carelessness or neglect will be required to pay for its repair. Lower string students are required by the school district to pay an \$85.00 Instrument Usage and Maintenance Fee for the year. Forms will be distributed within the first couple of weeks of school.

INSTRUMENT STORAGE

Lockers are provided for instrument storage during the school day. Violin and viola students are required to purchase their own **combination lock** for the locker. Students are encouraged to secure their instruments in the orchestra room prior to their first class period. **Students must pick up their instruments at the end of each day by 4:30 p.m.** Please pick up instruments BEFORE going to club meetings or tutorials since the orchestra may be locked when you return later.



PERFORMANCE AND TRAVEL

In addition to local performances, the Jasper High School orchestra makes several off campus appearances each year. There is one out of town trip on alternate years (see page 6). All members of the orchestra are expected to travel with the group for these performances. Requirements for these performances:

- Students must meet all local and state eligibility requirements to participate in travel or competitions
- Students must satisfactorily perform the assigned materials for the performance as determined by the orchestra director
- Students must have attended scheduled rehearsals necessary for the preparation of the performance
- Students must fulfill their financial obligations to the organization

INSURANCE

INSTRUMENT INSURANCE

Parents are encouraged to insure their child's personal and school-owned instrument to guard against fire, theft and accident. Instruments may already be covered through homeowners insurance or parents may have signed up for instrument insurance with a music insurance company. For those parents and students who desire insurance coverage and are not presently covered by any policy, we encourage you to search online for musical instrument insurance to find a company that meets your needs.

VOLUNTARY PERSONAL ACCIDENT INSURANCE

Orchestra is considered a physical activity and some events are outside of school property. Each student must have written acknowledgement on file that states parents are aware of the voluntary accident insurance policy that is available.

<http://markel.sevencorners.com>

1-877-444-5014

The information is also available to all parents, staff and students by visiting

<http://www.pisd.edu/parents>.

ORCHESTRA SUPPLY CHECKLIST

- Home instrument
 - Violins/violas will use their own instruments everyday in class
 - Cellos/basses must have an instrument at home for practice
- Shoulder rest for violins/violas (labeled with student's name)
- 1 inch black binder
- Rock stop for cellos/basses (labeled with student's name)
- Rosin (labeled with student's name)
- Extra set of strings
- Rosin removal cloth
- Pencils (#1 preferred for music writing)
- Luggage tag for instrument case (labeled with student's name and address)
- Combination lock (for violins and violas only) **KEYED LOCKS ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE**

