

## WELCOME TO THE ORHS ORCHESTRA

This year will prove to be an exciting one for the ORHS Orchestra. We will have 3 periods of orchestra at ORHS. The 10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade orchestra will meet in two sections, and will play much of the same music and work towards the same goals. You are assigned to 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> period depending on how orchestra best fits into your schedule, and also to have 2 classes of the same size. The 9<sup>th</sup> grade orchestra meets 3<sup>rd</sup> period. The enrollment now stands at 163 High School Orchestra players.

We have a very active Orchestra Booster Club at ORHS and would like to invite all parents of orchestra students to join. We meet several times a year, and parents help out with concerts, refreshments, and fundraising for the trip. We will have our first organizational meeting of the year on Monday, September 8 at 6:30 pm in the Orchestra Room. We also have a web site: [www.orhsorchestra.org](http://www.orhsorchestra.org). There you can find important announcements and information about the orchestra.

Please note the following dates for this year. Some are required for completion of this class. These are marked with an \*. There may be other opportunities arise as the year progresses. I will discuss these with you and your commitment to play will be optional. The following gives you an overview of our schedule for the coming year.

September 3	Fundraiser to raise money for spring trip.
* Tuesday, October 7	Concert: ORHS Auditorium 7:00 pm
* Tuesday, December 16	Concert: ORHS Auditorium 7:00 pm
Saturday, January 10	Tryouts for All East (Required for Honors Credit)
February 5, 6, 7	All East Orchestra Clinic, Park Vista Hotel, Gatlinburg
Tuesday, February 24	Possible concert together with ORHS Chorus
* Tuesday, March 10	Concert: ORHS Auditorium 7:00 pm
April 1 – 5	Trip to a competition
April 15 – 18	All State Orchestra in Nashville
* Thursday, April 23	Solo Concert ORHS Auditorium 7:30 pm
* Monday, May 18	Honors Program, ORHS 6:45 pm
* Sunday, May 31	Convocation (Counts as final exam)

**Grades:** Your grade in orchestra depends on the following 4 criteria.

1. Class participation: this includes attitude, amount of unnecessary talking, and not using the class as a study hall!

2. Posture: You must sit and hold your instrument and bow correctly in order to play well. I will discuss with you if I feel your posture is poor and keeping you from playing your best, and we will discuss how to fix the problem. If no progress is made to improve, this will lower your grade.

3. Folder and Book check: you must show your folder full of music and an Advanced Techniques Book at the end of each 9 weeks. Not keeping your own folder and your own copy of the music we are rehearsing will result in a lower grade. You will receive a folder from me with your name on it. If you lose it, please come to me and ask for a new one. It is up to you to take a copy of music when it is handed out and store it in your folder.

4. Concert Participation: The goal of our rehearsals is to perform. You must attend the concerts indicated with an \* or your grade will be lowered.

**Make-up Policy:** If you miss a concert for an excused reason (a sporting event or illness) you must do a make up assignment. You may choose from one of the following options:

1. Write a 2 page report on a composer.
2. Perform for me a portion of the music concert music.
3. Attend a classical music concert and discuss pieces performed.

If your absence from the concert was unexcused, you may not make it up, and your grade will be cut. Please note that I must be informed before the concert that you will be absent, unless you have a sudden illness, for which I will need a parent note.

### **Advanced Techniques Book**

Each person must purchase a copy of the Advanced Techniques Book, Book 4 in the Essential Elements series. The techniques presented in this book are difficult and need to be practiced at home. Please buy one at the String Workshop, or bring me \$6 and I will pick up a copy for you.

**Honors Credit:** In order to receive honors credit for orchestra, you must meet the following 5 criteria that mean you have gone beyond the requirements for regular orchestra credit.:

1. You must keep a practice log showing that you practice 3 hours each week. You can practice ahead on weeks you aren't busy and you can practice during breaks to make up for missed practice. Also, the log will only cover 8 of the 9 weeks to give you one week to use for make up practice. I will give you a log, and it needs to be turned in with a parent signature at the end of each 9 weeks. Private lessons can count as practice time, but not other rehearsals (such as KYSO).
2. You must try out for All East on January 10. I will hand out the prepared music soon, and you have many months to prepare.
3. You must perform a solo with the orchestra. These will take place during the year, but most will be performed on the Solo Concert on April 23. I will assign your solo to you. Many of them will be group solos with 3 – 4 players.
4. You must write a 3 page research paper on a topic of your choice relating to music. This paper must include a bibliography of at least 3 sources. It is due by March 14 – the day before spring break.
5. You may choose one of the following options for your 5<sup>th</sup> criteria:
  1. You may participate in the Knoxville Youth Orchestra program, or the Oak Ridge Community Orchestra.
  2. You may tutor another student on your instrument.

3. Violin players can try out Viola (and vice versa) for one concert period Bass and Cello are fingered differently, and it is not possible to switch easily from one to the other.
4. You may take private lessons on your orchestra instrument or another instrument.

You must decide this week if you are taking honors or regular orchestra. I will ask each one of you to sign up for one or the other. It will not be possible to switch at a later date. If you sign up for Honors Orchestra and do not complete the requirements, your grade will be lowered.

**Viola:** If you play violin, and would like a chance to become proficient on the viola, I can lend you a school viola and give you material to help you learn the notation. Otherwise, the viola is played just like the violin. You would be assigned to the viola section for one concert period.

**Attendance:** Ms. Susan Shor will be the assistant orchestra teacher at the High School this year for 1<sup>st</sup> period. Ms. Katherine English will be assisting 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> periods. She will also be teaching the 4<sup>th</sup> grade at Woodland and Willowbrook. Ms. Shor and Ms. English will be in charge of attendance. You will have an assigned seat, and you must be in this seat while attendance is taken. If you need forms signed, please bring these up front during the first 5 minutes of class.

**Expected Classroom Behavior:**

1. Be in the room with instrument, pencil and music on time.
2. Please help set up at the beginning of class if this is necessary.
3. Do not try to do other homework during rehearsals. This means you are not concentrating on the rehearsal, and if done repeatedly, will result in lowering your orchestra grade.
4. Do not talk unnecessarily during rehearsal.

**Violin and Viola Cubbies:**

Each violin and viola player will be assigned a cubby in the hallway. I have purchased combination locks to put on each one. You will have a combination to open the lock. Please make sure the lock is always replaced on the proper cubby. If your lock is lost, there will be a replacement fee of \$10. School violins and violas are also locked up. If you need to use a school instrument for the year, please see me and I will assign you an instrument and give you the combination to the lock. If your instrument is broken and you need to borrow a school instrument for a day, please see one of the teachers. We have keys that will open the locks. Do not take a school instrument to play without first checking with a teacher.

**School Instruments:** If you need to use a school instrument this year, I will give you a contract to be signed by you and your parents. There will be a fee of \$30 for the school year to cover normal maintenance on the instrument. This fee is due back with the signed contract by Monday, August 25.

If you have any questions, please call me at 690 4937. I am looking forward to a great year!

Jenifer van Tol