

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 9th grade Orchestra meets first period. Orchestra for 10th, 11th and 12th grade students meets second and third period. Honors and Regular Orchestra meet at the same time. It is easily possible to switch between the second and third period orchestras, as they will be doing much of the same music, and working towards the same goals. The enrollment now stands at 160 High School Orchestra players.

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 2	Fundraiser to raise money for spring trip.
* Tuesday, October 13	Concert: ORHS Auditorium 7:00 pm
* Tuesday, December 15	Concert: ORHS Auditorium 7:00 pm
Saturday, January 9	Tryouts for All East (Required for Honors Credit)
February 4, 5, 6	All East Orchestra Clinic, Park Vista Hotel, Gatlinburg
*Tuesday, February 25	Concert together with ORHS Chorus ORHS Aud. 7 pm
* Tuesday, March 9	Concert: ORHS Auditorium 7:00 pm
March 24 – 28	Trip to competition
April 14 - 17	All State Orchestra in Nashville, Tn.
* Thursday, April 29	Solo Concert ORHS Auditorium 7:30 pm
* Monday, May 17	Honors Program, ORHS 6:45 pm
*Tuesday, May 18	Final Concert – Grades 7 – 9
* Sunday, May 30	Convocation (Counts as final exam for grades 10 - 12)

Honors Credit for Orchestra

You may sign up to receive Honors Credit for Orchestra. This means you will have 4.5 averaged into your GPA for an A in the class, 3.5 for a B, etc. We will have a sign up at the end of the 1st week of school, on Aug. 21 in which you need to indicate your choice between Honors and Regular Orchestra. After this date you will not be able to change from Honors to regular orchestra. In order to receive Honors Credit you need to fulfill 5 areas in which you go beyond the requirements for regular orchestra credit. These include:

1. Extended Practice Requirements: Each student will keep a log of practice times which needs to include 3 hours a week of practice. These logs will be signed by parents and turned in at the end of each grading period. This log counts as 10% of your quarterly grade in orchestra.
2. Students are required to try out for Senior Orchestra Clinic on January 9. This counts as 10% of your grade for the 3rd nine weeks.
3. Students are required to perform a solo with the orchestra. These will be on our regular quarterly concerts, or on the solo concert in April. I will assign the solos, which are often group solos, with 2 – 4 players in a group. This solo will be 10% of your grade in the 4th 9 weeks, no matter when the solo is played.
4. Each student is required to write a paper on some aspect of music history. This can include a study of a certain historical era of music, or a study on a specific composer or musician. This paper is due at the end of the 1st grading period on Friday, October. This paper will count as 10% of your 1st nine weeks grade.
5. Students can choose one of the following options for the 5th component: I will need a parent note, stating which option you have chosen by the end of the 2nd nine weeks. This will count as 10% of your 2nd nine weeks grade.
 1. Students can explore learning to play a second string instrument: violin players
Can learn to play viola and vice versa: Cellists can learn bass and vice versa. This will take place for one concert period of the school year and must be approved by me.
 2. Students can help tutor other students who are learning a second instrument or who need help on their primary instrument. This can also be a younger sibling or a neighbor or friend.
 3. You can participate in an additional, out of school orchestral experience, including the KYSO, the ORYSO or the Oak Ridge Community Orchestra.
 4. You can receive private lessons on an instrument.

Grades:

If you are in Honors Orchestra, your 9 weeks grade consists of the following

10% Practice Log

10% Folder and Book check

10% Concert Participation

10% One component from the list above

60% Class Participation

If you are registered for Regular Orchestra, your 9 weeks grade consists of the following:

10% Folder and Book check

10% Concert Participation

80% Class Participation

Class Participation grades are assigned with the following criteria in mind:

1. The student should fully participate in each orchestra rehearsal. This means minimal talking and no reading or doing homework from other subject areas during rehearsal.
2. Students should play with good posture. If you have a problem with your playing posture, I will make you aware of it and offer help and suggestions to improve. If there is no improvement, you will receive a lower grade.
3. Effort should be made to master the techniques set forth in the Essential Techniques book. We will spend part of each class working in the book. This book teaches shifting and using positions other than 1st on your instrument and this is essential to playing your instrument. I need to be able to see that you are following the correct fingerings and able to play in position. We will offer help to those students who are struggling with these concepts, but you need to practice these techniques at home until they are mastered.
4. We do not ask students to perform passages alone in front of the group. However, we can see on your fingering while you are playing with others, whether or not you can play the music. We will have small group sectionals, and offer individual help to those who need it. You need to be able to play the music well by the time it is performed!

Concert Attendance: 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 a portion of the concert music individually for one of the teachers.
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 you will receive a 0 for concert attendance.

Folder and Book check

At the end of each 9 weeks we will have a folder and book check. We will give you a folder and you are to keep music in it that is handed out in class. You must have a copy of all the concert music in your folder to receive full credit for the folder. You may not share a folder with your stand partner. You must show us your copy of the Advanced Techniques book at the end of each grading period. You are expected to own this book and to practice these at home!

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. Erin Martin will be the assistant orchestra teacher at the High School this year. She just graduated from UT with a Masters in Music Education, and her primary instrument is viola. She is also teaching 4th grade at Woodland and Willowbrook. She 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 to her during the first 5 minutes of class.

Expected Classroom Behavior:

1. Be in the room and in your assigned seat 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 rehearsals.

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 24.

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

Jenifer van Tol