

# Orchestra Syllabus - 2008/2009

**Course Description:** This course is designed to develop musical understanding through ensemble participation and individual skill development (home practice), and to develop certain skills on a particular instrument in the String Instrument Family (violin, viola, cello and double bass). The class will rehearse daily during school hours. The Lassiter Chamber Orchestra will rehearse on Mondays from 4-6pm (see calendar for dates). Classes will perform publicly several times during the school year. Chamber and Symphony have additional performances (see calendar).

**Objectives:** The purpose of the orchestra program is to introduce students to higher levels of orchestral music and to develop skills on an instrument in the String Instrument Family. Strong emphasis is put on developing music reading skills and musicianship skills. Areas covered in all grades at differing levels will include, but are not limited to:

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Correct position, hold and posture of instrument and bow.</li> </ul>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Musical notation and vocabulary.</li> </ul>           |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical skills</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tone production.</li> </ul>                           |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ear training as it applies to tuning and playing the instrument.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theory (scales, keys, musical form, etc.).</li> </ul> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance practices and styles.</li> </ul>                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Orchestral Literature.</li> </ul>                     |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• History of the Orchestra and String Instrument Family.</li> </ul>           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Periods of Music &amp; Composers</li> </ul>           |

**Grading:** Grades will be based on these components:

|  |      |
|--|------|
| WRITTEN TESTS/ QUIZES<br>This includes all paperwork or forms sent home with a return deadline | 30%  |
| PLAYING TESTS  | 40%  |
| DAILY PREPARATION  | 20%  |
| FINAL EXAM   | 10%  |
| TOTAL  | 100% |

## **PRACTICE**

**Once a student has been introduced to a specific skill, individual practice at home is required** and expected in order to master the skill. Students are expected to practice a minimum of 30 minutes per day, 5 days a week or the equivalent of 150 minutes per week. Practice Charts will be checked weekly and must be signed by the parent. Remember that being a member of a group like the orchestra involves making a commitment to **DAILY PRACTICE** at home. Good practice habits and a positive attitude have a great effect on the success you will achieve in class.

## Daily Preparation

Daily Preparation is determined by your ability to be prepared and have all necessary materials (instrument, music, pencil, etc.) and to take part in all in-class activities. See Class Expectation Sheet

**Conduct:** The conduct of an orchestra student affects not only himself, but also the other orchestra students. Each student is required to follow these rules:

1. Display common courtesy and appropriate conduct.
2. Respect fellow orchestra members.
3. Follow rules as outlined by the orchestra director (***Class Expectations***).
4. Follow school rules as outlined in the school handbook.

The following procedure will be used to aid in correcting inappropriate behavior:

|                   |                                    |
|-------------------|------------------------------------|
| After 2 incidents | Student/Teacher Conference         |
| After 3 incidents | Detention issued - Call to Parents |
| After 5 incidents | Issue A.R.                         |

After **each** incident the student will be **verbally corrected**. Certain serious conduct may require circumventing this procedure.

Conduct for a substitute should be exemplary. It is difficult to find qualified substitutes. A substitute is to be considered a special guest in our room and will be treated accordingly. Misconduct while a substitute is present will be considered a serious violation and will be dealt with accordingly.

***This syllabus is subject to change.***

## Equipment List

This is a list of important items needed for orchestra class. It is necessary that you have all these by Thursday, **August 19**. Most music stores in the area will have these items in stock, but call before you make the trip.

1. **Instrument.** Please take the time to have your instrument checked for adjustment and size where it was rented/purchased. A new set of strings may also be in order (should be replaced at least yearly). Please replace *Super Sensitive* strings with the *Dominant* strings or better. Save old strings in case yours break. A poorly functioning instrument will slow progress. Bow hair should be clean and full. Please have your bow rehaired, if it's not. Proper maintenance is **REQUIRED**.
2. **A small tuner with bridge hook-up.** The Korg CA-30 chromatic tuner is recommended. You can purchase this and the bridge hook-up at an area music store, or you may go online to purchase one. We will be using these regularly in class.
3. **A pencil.** Brought to class every day!
4. **A shoulder pad** for viola and violin players. This is an absolute necessity for proper technique and posture. Recommended models are Kun, Wolf or similar styles.
5. **A rock stop** for cello and bass players.
6. **Rosin** (for your instrument). Bass and cello players bring your own to class.
7. An **extra set of strings** for your instrument. **STRINGS BREAK!**
8. A **metal folding stand** for home practice and trips. This also is important for good posture.
10. A **soft cloth** to keep the instrument clean - old T-shirts work fine (never put water or soap on any instrument). **WIPE OFF STRINGS.** Rosin builds up and sounds terrible and harms the finish on your instrument.

These are all important items that the school system does not supply. Except for the folding stand, these items must be brought to class every day. Please replace these items immediately as necessary. Having these materials in class will impact the participation portion of your grade (see Class Expectation Sheet).

# Class Expectations

The following class expectations will allow us to make the most of valuable class time.

## Before School

1. Bring your instrument and music to the orchestra room and place it in the appropriate storage area as soon as you arrive to school, not by the door!
2. You are welcome to practice or rehearse until the first bell.
3. While in the Orchestra Room, be respectful of those rehearsing. **THROW OUT YOUR GARBAGE** before leaving. **Do not move chairs or stands!**

## During Class

1. Arrive to class on time. Leave book-bag along wall upon entering.
2. Do not stop to visit with classmates.
3. Take your seat and get your instrument out.
4. Place your instrument case closed next to the right side of your chair.
5. Have all necessary materials (instrument, music, tuner, book, pencil, shoulder rest, rosin, etc.).
6. Once class starts (director steps on podium), **do not talk or play unless directed to do so.**
7. Raise your hand and be recognized by the teacher prior to speaking out.
8. While tuning, remain silent (silently study the previous day's assignment or some other piece of music currently being prepared, or silently practice shifting and vibrato exercises).
9. Have the previous day's assignment prepared to performance level.
10. Be attentive during class and follow directions the first time they are given.
11. Participate in all class activities.
12. Understand and write down passages needing practice. When you neglect practice, you hold up the class.
13. Pack up your instrument and music and return it to its appropriate space. **Cello and Bass players must loosen bows and return their instrument to its numbered spot.**
14. Make sure your area is neat and free of trash.
15. Do not leave the orchestra room until the teacher or bell has dismissed you.
16. Follow school rules.

## After Class

1. Return to the orchestra room at the end of each day to pick up your instrument and music. **The school is not liable for instruments left overnight!**
2. Practice each evening on the assigned music, or music currently being prepared.

Failure to meet these expectations may result in action taken as outlined under "Conduct". Students will begin each grading period with 100% of their participation grade. The conference/detention/referral process will be cumulative over each grading period.

## Attendance

Students are expected to participate in all rehearsals and performances unless excused by the director. This includes any extra before or after school rehearsals. Advance notice is to be given to the director if a prior commitment causes a student to miss a rehearsal or performance.

**A prior commitment is a date already committed to another event when the orchestra rehearsal/performance is announced (not something more attractive that comes up a week before the rehearsal/performance).** Students must fill out an "Excuse Form" for prior commitments and return to Mrs. Doemel the ***next day after a rehearsal or concert date is announced.*** Religious holidays or conflicts with individual religious beliefs are considered excused if the director is notified in writing by a parent.

ξ ***Excellence takes commitment. We should not allow ourselves to strive for anything less. It is expected that each orchestra member try and care at all times.***

# Private Study

Many of the Lassiter Orchestra students study privately to supplement their class time. A list of private teachers is available in the Orchestra Handbook, which you will receive shortly. Private instruction offers students the opportunity to explore the extensive wealth of solo literature available for their instrument and can provide special performing opportunities, which bring recognition for you through solo recitals.

# Parent Guide

## Enhancing Your Son/Daughter's Musical Experience

Numerous studies indicate that parental attitude, support and involvement are important factors in a child's ability to successfully learn to play and enjoy music.

These guidelines are designed to assist you in giving your son/daughter the best support possible for his or her musical endeavors. Like any skill, interest counts far more than talent. With strong support from you, playing music will become a natural part of your child's life.

### BENEFITS

**For Your Child** - Music participation enhances:

- Problem-solving
- Goal-setting
- Physical Coordination
- Self-confidence and esteem
- Poise
- Teamwork
- Self-expression
- Memory skills
- Concentration
- And much, much more!

**For Your Family** - A child's music study also offers opportunities for shared family experiences, including:

- A sense of accomplishment and pride for the entire family.
- Family music-making
- Learning about the lives of composers and the cultural heritage of many civilizations
- Musical event attendance
- Performing for, and with, family and friends
- Can you think of more?

### HOW YOU FIT IN

Always keep in mind that **your support** may be the most essential element in your son/daughter's success with music study.

### Schedule Practice Times

Musical achievement requires effort over a period of time. The time in orchestra rehearsal is limited. New concepts learned at school need **daily personal practice** time by your student at home in order for these new skills to be developed. You can help your student by:

- Providing a quiet place in which to practice.
- Remaining nearby during practice times as often as possible.
- Scheduling a consistent daily time for practice.
- Praising their efforts and achievements.

### What You Can Do

To give your son/daughter the best possible support, you should:

- Remind them to bring their instrument and music to orchestra class.
- Encourage them to play for family and friends.
- Offer compliments and encouragement regularly.
- Expose them to a wide variety of music, including concerts and recitals.
- Encourage them to talk with you about classes.
- Make sure their instrument is always maintained well.

- Listen to them practice, and acknowledge improvement.
- Help them build a personal music library.
- Encourage them to make a commitment to his or her music studies.
- Get to know their teacher.

**What to Avoid**

- Using practice as a punishment.
- Insisting that they play for others when he/she doesn't want to.
- Ridiculing or making fun of mistakes of less-than-perfect playing.
- Apologizing to others for their weak performance.

**How to Maintain Your Student's Interest**

- Notice the improvements in their playing, no matter how small,
- Talk with them, if their interest begins to decline.
- Discuss with the orchestra teacher ways to maintain their enthusiasm for playing.
- Increase **your** enthusiasm and involvement in their playing.
- Show an interest in orchestral music.

When possible, listen to or attend orchestral performances.

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Return Bottom Portion of Form by August 19th.  
(remember, returning this is part of your grade!)

I have read and understand the "Orchestra Syllabus".

\_\_\_\_\_ (Student Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Parent Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Date)

Comments \_\_\_\_\_

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