

**Olathe East High School Orchestras  
Syllabus and Handbook 2024-2025**

Orchestra Families:

We look forward to meeting each of you as we come together to learn, rehearse, perform, and create musical memories this year!

This digital packet will serve as our Orchestra Handbook / Syllabus. Any forms that are referenced in this packet will be printed for students at school and are also available on our website, [www.oorchestras.com](http://www.oorchestras.com).

**It is the responsibility of each student to read and abide by all information contained in this handbook to better understand their role as responsible members of the orchestra.**

As we move into this new school year together, we understand that some of you may have questions or concerns. Please feel free to contact us at any time. It is a personal priority for us to build strong relationships with students, families, and the community. This can only be accomplished through open communication and teamwork.

Sincerely,

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**ORCHESTRA**

# Guidelines

## I. Expectations

An orchestra requires the participation and cooperation of all students. To make orchestra beneficial for all students, the following components must be in place:

- **COOPERATION.** Follow directions. Work together with the director and members of the orchestra.
- **COMMITMENT.** Maintain a dedication to individual improvement and progress of musical ability. Practice!
- **CONDUCT.** Attitude is often more important than ability.

## II. Rehearsal Procedures

Class time must be used well to benefit everyone. To make the most of rehearsal time and receive full rehearsal credit, please remember the following:

1. BE PROMPT AND PREPARED.
  - a. Always have your equipment ready when class begins.
  - b. Be both physically and mentally ready for the upcoming rehearsal.
2. SHOW RESPECT AND SELF-DISCIPLINE
  - a. *The Director.* Be quiet as soon as the director steps onto the podium. Rehearsal time is only beneficial when everyone is attentive.
  - b. *Others.* An ensemble must work together. Remember the Golden Rule.
  - c. *The equipment.* Orchestral equipment is expensive and should be treated with care. Future students should be able to use this equipment long after you've left Olathe East.
  - d. *Distractions.* **No electronic devices or homework is to be with you during rehearsal.** These and other distractions should be left in your locker or, in your case, during rehearsal.
    - See student handbook for consequences.
  - e. *The facilities.* **No food or drinks are allowed in rehearsals and concerts** (with the exception of bottled water).
    - See student handbook for behavior consequences.
  - f. *The process.* An orchestra can only improve through rehearsal. Treat every rehearsal as an important part of the progress of the orchestra.
3. PUT YOUR THINGS AWAY. Return your instrument, music, stand, and chair to their proper places. Throw away all trash.

## III. Attendance

An orchestra cannot perform at its best with its members missing. **Attendance at all rehearsals and concerts is required**, as outlined in the course description book published by Olathe Public Schools. A calendar is provided with this packet. All concerts and extra rehearsals are an absolute priority. There may be additions or changes to the calendar throughout the year. If this should occur, I will inform you of the change as far in advance as possible. Any conflicts or problems should be brought to the director's attention immediately. *Absences are excused only if approved in advance by the director.* Please refer to the unexcused tardy and absence policy in the Olathe East Student Handbook for details.

## IV. Home Practice:

**Practicing your instrument is your homework for orchestra.** Practicing regularly is essential to personal growth and improvement. Daily school rehearsal time is **NOT** individual practice. Instruments should be taken home for practice, especially over the weekend. Get in the habit of taking your instrument home every day, and never leave your instrument at school over a vacation break.

## V. Supplies and Equipment

The following items will enable you to be successful throughout the year:

- **Folder** – We will provide every student with a music folder to store and organize their sheet music.
- **Music Stand** – A folding music stand will be used at least two times at school this year. This is also essential for proper posture when practicing at home.
- **Instrument** – Violins and Violas must bring their instrument to/from school every day. Cellos and Basses will be able to use a school instrument, but must have one at home for practicing and concerts.
  - Please let us know if you do not have an instrument at home.
- **Bow** – Cellos and basses will each have their own bow to use at school.
- **Rosin** – This is essential for good tone production. Everyone should have their own rosin.
- **Rock Stop / Chair Strap / Shoulder Rest** – Please provide your own. This is essential for proper posture at all times.
- **Pencil** – Have more than one in your case at all times.

## VI. Instrument Care:

All equipment is to be treated with respect. All instruments should be kept in good playing condition. Strings should be wiped for rosin with a soft cloth after playing. Strings should be replaced as needed. Bows should be loosened before storage. Endpins must be stored properly. Students using school instruments are responsible for damage that occurs while the instrument is in their possession.

### *Fingernails:*

Fingernails must be kept trimmed. The director may ask a student to cut their nails if deemed too long. No fake nails will be allowed. It is IMPOSSIBLE to play with proper technique with nails that are too long.

### *Lockers:*

Hallway Instrument Lockers will be available for storage of violins and violas. Personal cellos can be locked up as needed, but most students will borrow a school cello at school. Basses will use school basses for rehearsal. Lockers will be assigned during the first full week of school.

## VII. Seating

Performance seating of the orchestra will be determined by daily performance and leadership skills. Ultimately, seating is at the discretion of the director, and decisions are final. Seating plans are made to enhance the sound of the orchestra and will never be based on a top-down ranking order.

If you are given the responsibility of Section Leader, you will be responsible for...

- Rehearsal and performance activities in the absence of the director.
- Tuning at rehearsals and performances
- Bow markings, fingerings, and other markings in parts for the section.
- Running sectionals.
- Keeping the section on-task and focused during section and class rehearsals.

## VII. Orchestra Letters

Letters will be awarded to those students who have earned 1,000 points throughout the current school year. Points may be earned through participation in various activities throughout the year. See attached point worksheet which we will fill out in April before the Awards Concert in May.

## IX. Communication

- [www.OEorchestras.com](http://www.OEorchestras.com) – Links to audition material, orchestra calendar, private teacher lists, and practice resources.
- [www.remind.com](http://www.remind.com) – Used for each orchestra to communicate with director quickly and efficiently.
- **Synergy/StudentVUE/ParentVUE** – Login to see grades and communicate with the teacher.
- [www.seesaw.com](http://www.seesaw.com) – Create an account with student email. Used to submit playing videos and complete assignments.
- [www.signupgenius.com](http://www.signupgenius.com) – Parent and student volunteer opportunities and RSVP for activities.
- **Facebook** – Follow us @oeorchestras
- **Instagram** – Follow us @oeorchestras
- **Twitter** – Follow us @oeorchestras

## X. Grading Policy

Student grades will be determined by the following criteria:

### I. Assessments—60% of total grade

- a. This grade is entirely based on a student's ability to demonstrate curricular standards (scales, exercises, performance literature).
- b. Students will submit playing tests throughout the quarter. The literature performed will be representative of the concept being checked and will consist of material that is being prepared daily.
- c. Playing tests may be live or recorded. They may also be performed in front of the class, in sectionals or in Mr. Hanf's office. [www.flipgrid.com](http://www.flipgrid.com) will be our primary recording platform.
- d. Students will receive information regarding contents of the playing tests at least one week in advance.
- e. Students **may retake tests as needed** to show growth and improvement after having practiced and applied the comments and feedback I provided from the previous test performance.
- f. **10% will be deducted from any late work.**

### II. Class Participation/Concerts/Extra Rehearsals/Materials—40% of total grade

- a. Daily and Extra Rehearsal Attendance – Unexcused absences will result in a zero and cannot be made up.
- b. Conduct – Active and positive participation throughout rehearsal, without behavior issues.
- c. Materials – Points may be deducted any time a student forgets their instrument, music, or other required materials.
- d. Concert Attendance – Conflicting school activities, sickness, or a death in the family are the only excuses that can be made up for full credit.
- e. **Missing a concert for any other reason will result in a 10% reduction in credit.**

### ORCHESTRA GRADING SCALE

(Percentages will be rounded to the nearest whole percent)

98-100% = A+	78-79% = C+
93-97% = A	73-77% = C
90-92% = A-	70-72% = C-
88-89% = B+	68-69% = D+
83-87% = B	63-67% = D
80-82% = B-	60-62% = D-
	0-59% = F

## **XI. Calendar**

A link to our website is available on our orchestra website. An example of our current calendar is at the end of this handbook. Attached is the calendar of all required and optional performances/events for this school year. **Put all orchestra-required events in your personal and family calendars today!**

*Any additional dates will be communicated as far in advance as possible.*

**For points from June 2024-May 2025:**

<b>Participation</b> in 2024-2025 Orchestra	100	or	none
Participation in <u>all required orchestra performances</u> this year (200 Points): *If you missed even one concert, you do not qualify for these points.	200	or	none
<b>Member</b> of the <u>Orchestra Leadership Team</u> (200 Points):	200	or	none
<b>Tri-M Music Honors Society Member</b> (200 Points):	200	or	none
<b>ECKMEA District Orchestra <u>Audition</u></b> (200 Points):	200	or	none
<b>ECKMEA District Orchestra <u>Participation</u></b> (200 Points):	200	or	none
<b>KMEA All-State Orchestra <u>Audition</u></b> (200 Points):	200	or	none
<b>KMEA All-State Orchestra <u>Participation</u></b> (200 Points):	200	or	none
Any <b>National High School Honor Orchestra <u>Audition</u></b> (200 Points):	200	or	none
Any <b>National High School Honor Orchestra <u>Participation</u></b> (200 Points):	200	or	none
Participation in <b>Pit Orchestra</b> <i>this year</i> (200 Points):	200	or	none
<u>Instrumental</u> Events only:			
<b>KSHSAA <u>Regional Solo &amp; Ensemble Participation</u></b> (200 Points <u>per event</u> ):	200 x _____ = _____	or	none
	events		
<b>KSHSAA <u>State Solo &amp; Ensemble Participation</u></b> (200 Points <u>per event</u> ):	200 x _____ = _____	or	none
	events		
Attended <b>Summer Music Camp</b> for your instrument (100 Points/camp): *Limit 2 per year.	100 x _____ = _____	or	none
	camps		
Have you <u>received</u> ?...			
<b>Private Lessons</b> on your stringed instrument this year (200 Points): *Must have met <i>weekly</i> with a <u>paid</u> , private teacher.	200	or	none
Have you been an <i>active orchestra mentor</i> ? (200 points): *Must have turned in a log of mentor hours to me for this to count.	200	or	none
Olathe or Kansas City <b>Youth Symphony</b> or Ad Astra Participation (200 Points):	200	or	none
Community / Church Orchestra Participation (100 Points): *Must meet <i>regularly</i> to count. *Limit 2 per year.	100	or	none
Public <u>Solo/Ensemble</u> instrumental performances (100 Points Each): List or Describe: _____ *Limit 2 per year.	100 x _____ = _____	or	none
Do you already have an OE Letter—for <u>ANY</u> Sport/Activity? *The school will only give you ONE letter to count for everything.	Yes	or	No

**TOTAL: \_\_\_\_\_ points**

Most Inspirational Nomination: \_\_\_\_\_

## Orchestra Awards

### Student's Choice:

**Most Inspirational** – Selected by students: recognizes a student (in each class) who epitomizes the quality of an orchestra student. This person has a positive attitude every day, is always prepared for rehearsals, and is dedicated to the Orchestra program.

**Senior Superlatives** – Nominated and selected by students. Based on student character and experiences throughout their years in orchestra. May be humorous but not offensive.

### Director's Choice:

**Musical Improvement Ribbon** – To recognize students who have shown great improvement throughout the concert season.

**Musicianship Ribbon** – To recognize students who are consistently prepared and play at a high level.

**Musical Leadership Ribbon** – To recognize students who are not only fine musicians, but who provide leadership to others.

### Point-based Awards:

**Fine Arts (Varsity) Letter** – A chenille “OE” for Olathe East will be awarded to a student who has been enrolled in the High School Orchestra for at least 2 semesters, has earned a total of 1,000 points or more, and has maintained at least a “B” average for both semesters.

**Service Bar** – A gold bar will be awarded for each 1,000 points after the Orchestra Letter and Orchestra Pin. Limit 1 per year (max 4 bars per person).

**Director's Award for Orchestra** – Honors the top leader(s) of high school orchestra. It is commonly used as a runner-up for the National School Orchestra Award. May also be given at Director's discretion.

**National School Orchestra Award** – This is sponsored by the National Association for Music Education and is presented to a single graduating senior who has demonstrated qualities of leadership, responsibility, and musicality throughout their entire orchestra career. The senior must have met the requirements for a Fine Arts Letter to be eligible for this award. Most likely will be awarded to a senior with the most orchestra points.

### Participation-based Awards:

**Instrument Pin** – A pin indicating a student's instrument will be awarded to all graduating seniors who have served in the OE Orchestra for four years.

**Participation Medals:** Pit Orchestra, NEKMEA District Honors Orchestra (Freshman and High School), Regional and State Solo/Ensemble 1-ratings, KMEA All-State Orchestra

**Participation Certificates:** Regional and State Solo/Ensemble 2-ratings

Most Inspirational Nomination: \_\_\_\_\_