

White Hill Middle School Music Department:

Orchestra Handbook 2018-2019

Ross Valley School District Music Program



WHITE HILL ORCHESTRA

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August 15, 2018
Dear Parents,

Welcome or welcome back to the White Hill Middle School Orchestra Program! I am very pleased to introduce myself to you as your child's music teacher. I look forward to work with you and your children this year.

I have had various roles in education as a teacher for the last 3 years that have allowed me to gain more insight and passion for teaching. My undergraduate studies were in music education at Sonoma State University. My studies have allowed me to continue to do what I do best—learn!

If there is anything that I hope comes through strongly when I teach to all students, is that music speaks to everyone. Through it we can learn about history and culture. I also believe in examining and respecting human differences. As a teacher, I am going to strive to teach not only technique and knowledge, but also love, acceptance, and kindness. Music teaches discipline, order, creativity, expressiveness, and love. Together with your children, I plan to be part of the movement that opens the door to music to the next generation.

Parents, here are a few ways you can help your child to be successful in orchestra:

- Please read the music handbook. A lot of your questions may be answered in the handbook.
- **Make a note and keep track of concerts.** They are a large part of your child's grade. See more about grades below.
- **Please read and sign all Acknowledgement forms** in the back of the handbook. Each one needs to be returned promptly by the due date for credit.
- **Remind your child that practice sheets are due every Wednesday.**
- If your child is new to the WHMS Orchestra Family, they need to obtain all materials on the material list included in the handbook. If your child is a returning WHMS Orchestra Family, they may only need to purchase a couple of things on the material list. Please speak to your children about which materials they need to purchase, I will tell them the first day of class. If your family cannot afford any of your child's materials, please contact me and I will be more than happy to accommodate to your child's needs.

Here's to a happy, successful, and inspiring new school year!

Thank you,
Gricelda Calderon

August 15, 2018

Dear White Hill Middle School Orchestra Family,

Welcome or welcome back to the WHMS Orchestra! I am very pleased to introduce myself to you as your child's music teacher. I look forward to work with each and every one of you.

I am writing this letter to let you all know a little more about myself and to give you a few ways to ensure your success in orchestra.

About myself:

- I started playing the violin since I was 10. I started at Mary E. Silveira (in the Dixie School District in Terra Linda) and continued all the way until college.
- Aside from the violin, I've played multiple instruments. Some of my favorites are the guitar, the cello, and the clarinet.
- My favorite food is Chinese food. I could probably eat Chinese food everyday. Also, my favorite snacks are: popcorn, ice cream, and burritos. (Yes, I know burritos aren't a snack but they had to be on the list.)
- Finally, although my name is Mrs. Calderon, you can call me Mrs. C.

How to be successful in orchestra:

- Please read the music handbook. The handbook has lots of information that will be helpful.
- **Make a note and keep track of concerts.** They are a large part of your grade. See more about grades below.
- **Please have your parents read and sign all Acknowledgement forms** in the back of the handbook. Each one needs to be returned promptly by the due date for credit.
- **Please remember that practice sheets are due every Wednesday.**
- If you are new to the WHMS Orchestra Family, you need to obtain all materials on the material list included in the handbook. If you are a returning WHMS Orchestra Family member, you may only need to purchase a couple of things on the material list. If your family cannot afford any of your materials, please contact me and I will be more than happy to accommodate to your needs.

Here's to a happy, successful, and inspiring new school year!

Thank you,
Mrs. C

Ross Valley School District's Mission:

In accordance with Ross Valley School District's mission statement, we believe that:

"Our Mission is to provide the quality educational experience all students deserve, which is grounded in best practices, reflects the highest academic standards, and is responsive to community expectations. We keep the focus on our students, and we are committed to providing a program of academic excellence, cultural richness, social, emotional, and physical development that educates, supports, challenges and inspires the whole child."

Along with that, WHMS School Orchestras believes:

- Everyone deserves a fair opportunity.
- Everyone should respect, support, and be accountable to each other.
- Everyone should help others be the best they can be.
- Everyone should strive to be motivated to accomplish their goals.
- Everyone's opinions are important and should be respected at all times.
- Everyone is an important member in our Orchestra family!

Course Descriptions:

Intermediate Orchestra (6th Grade Orchestra)

Intermediate Orchestra is a performance ensemble for the continuing orchestra student. Students in the Intermediate Orchestra will study, practice, and perform a wide variety of musical literature, with an emphasis on developing the musical skills, including tone production, technical facility, and musical notation reading skills.

The Intermediate Orchestra performs frequently throughout the year at school, community and festival events. Attendance at all performances is mandatory.

Advanced Orchestra (7/8th Grade Orchestra)

The Advanced Orchestra is a high quality performing ensemble designed for the highly skilled musician. Students in the Advanced Orchestra will study, practice and perform a wide variety of literature, with an emphasis on a high artistic level of performance. The Advanced Orchestra performs frequently throughout the year at school, community and festival events. There is a mandatory performance requirement for this course.

Chamber Ensembles (Grades 6-8)

WHMS offers students the opportunity to perform in a chamber music ensemble. Students involved in a chamber ensemble learn to work in a collaborative environment which promotes individual musicianship and responsibility. Chamber orchestra meets during select advisory periods. There is a mandatory audition requirement for this course. There is a mandatory performance requirement for this course.

Attendance:

As a member of a performing ensemble, students have a responsibility not only to oneself, but to the other members of the group. As a result, attendance, timeliness, and participation in class are part of a student's grade.

All performances outside of the regularly scheduled school day are considered mandatory and are viewed by the Ross Valley School District to be co-curricular, and are a necessary requirement for any music ensemble course.

If a student is not able to attend a performance, a written letter, signed by a parent, must be submitted to Mrs. C **four weeks** before a performance.

PLEASE NOTE:

Attendance at all performances is mandatory. Unexcused absences from any performance will result in a lower grade.

Tardy Policy:

In accordance with school-wide rules, tardies are enforced. School rules state:

- Students must be in their seat with all of their materials and prepared to play when the bell rings.
- If a student is late to his/her's first period of the day, they need to check into the office first.
- Tardies will be tracked. You can't learn if you are not on time to class.
- **PLEASE NOTE:** Part of a student's grade is to be on time to class and prepared for class. Please see grading procedures.

Behavior Expectations:

1. Be on time to class. (This means in your seats with your instruments and materials by the time the bell rings. You will have an additional 3 minutes to put your instrument together and tune after the bell rings.)
2. Be respectful and helpful to one another
3. Be prepared for class. This means prepared to play, sing, participate, and contribute to the orchestra.
4. Clean up rehearsal space and store all instruments in their appropriate spots. This is your space, please take care of it!
5. Please avoid food and drinks while in the classroom.
6. Make decisions that reflect the highest character and integrity.

Grading Procedures:

All student grades are updated weekly through Aries. If your student has not set up a Aries account, I would strongly recommend you do so. It is a wonderful way to keep track of progress and see upcoming assignments as well as any class announcements. If you or your family needs help setting up an account, please ask the front office. They are always more than happy to help.

Students are graded in the following areas:

1. Attendance and Participation
2. Performances and dress rehearsals

3. Performance skills and Musicianship

1. Attendance and Participation (Possible points: 25 per week)

Students can earn up to 5 points per day. This grade is determined by several things:

- Being prepared for class. This includes having their instrument, music folder, pencil, and rosin.
- Active participation in class. This includes attendance and tardies. If a student is not able to attend class, they will not be able to receive any points for that day. If a student is tardy to class, they will only receive half of the points for the day.
- Being professional. Students must demonstrate appropriate behavior in class at all times.

2. Performances and Dress Rehearsals (Possible points: 50 each)

A large part of our class involves being present at performances and dress rehearsals. Most of these are already planned out (please see our calendar for dates). Students are all expected to be at each performance and dress rehearsal unless otherwise noted.

Below are some expectations students should adhere to in regards to performances and dress rehearsals:

- Students must be on time to call time. Call time is usually 40 minutes before performance time.
- Students must be dressed appropriately according to our concert dress (please see below for more information on concert dress)
- Students must be professional. This means all students must demonstrate appropriate behavior at all times and adhere to all school rules, regardless of our concert location.

PLEASE NOTE:

If students adhere to the regulations above, they will be eligible to receive the full 50 points. Failure to follow expectations will result in a lower grade.

Also, no excused absence will be granted two weeks prior to a performance. All excused absences must be submitted four weeks prior to a performance. They must be written and signed by a parent or guardian.

Any unexcused absence will result in a grade of "0".

3. Performance Skills and Musicianship (Possible points: 20 each)

Students will be given regular tests during the school year to ensure that they are on the right track for a wonderful performance. These tests often allow for students to get more support on areas that they need help on and allow students to get a taste of being critiqued like they do at many music festivals.

Here is a list of the tests that students may receive this year:

- Playing Tests (in class and outside of class):
 - Playing musical excerpts, scales and rhythms.
- Written Tests:
 - Rhythmic, theoretical, and music notation tests.
- Student and Self Critique:
 - Students will use a rubric to grade recordings of themselves and peers.
- Practice sheets:
 - Students must practice 80 minutes per week. Practice sheets must be signed by a parent. Practice sheets will be collected every **Wednesday**.

Grade Scale:

Grades will be determined by a student's average of points earned and total possible points.

A= 90-100%

B= 80-89%

C=70-79%

D=60-69%

F= 59% or lower

Concert Dress:

Concert Dress is the following unless otherwise noted:

- Black bottoms or long black skirt
- Black shirt or black blouse
- Black dress shoes and black socks/hose. Please note, no tennis shoes or black athletic shoes are allowed.

If you have trouble acquiring parts of the uniform, please let me know and I will be more than happy to help. If you have black pants, black skirts, black shirts, black socks, or black dress shoes please considering donating them.

Equipment:

Ross Valley School District will provide students will music stand, chairs, and sheet music at no cost. The school district can provide students loaned instruments on an as needed basis.

It is a student's responsibility to take care of instruments, sheet music, and binders. Students will be charged for damaged or missing music.

Materials can be purchased at any of the following local music stores:

Magic Flute:

(415) 479-3112

Dolce Violins (San Rafael):

(415) 453-1517

Ifshin's Violins:

(510) 843-5466

Loveland Violins:

(707) 526-9777

Materials required for Orchestra:

_____ Instrument and bow

Must be appropriate size for student. (Most music stores will size a student for their instrument but if they don't, I am more than happy to size a student as well.)

_____ Shoulder rest and rosin

Again, the shoulder rest should be the appropriate size for the instrument.

_____ Tuner and Metronome

These last two can be purchased at a music store. They are also various apps that can be downloaded for free straight onto your phone. There is also a good, free, and easy to use online version on:

www.metronomeonline.com

_____ Music Binder with 5 tab dividers

_____ Soft Cleaning Cloth

_____ Extra Set of Strings

_____ Rock Stop (For cellists and bassists)

_____ Pencils!

If you would like to make a donation, here's a list of materials that often run low.

1. Rosin
2. Shoulder rests
3. Pencils (Please!)
4. Tissues
5. Strings – for full size violins and violas 14, 15, or 16 inch violas
6. Volunteers are appreciated. Please contact me if you are available. There are certainly volunteer opportunities that require no prior musical experience.

**2018-2019 WH Orchestra
Performance Calendar:**

<u>Date:</u>	<u>Event:</u>	<u>Time:</u>	<u>Place:</u>	<u>Participants:</u>
September 4, 2018	Back to School Night	7:00 PM	WH Orchestra Room (303)	Everyone
December 11, 2018	WH Winter Orchestra Concert	7:00 PM	WH Gym	6-8 Orchestra
February 1-2 2019	MMEA Honor Band/Orchestra	TBD	TBD	TBD
February 7, 2019	RVSD Orchestra Concert	7:00 PM	WH Gym	5-8 Grade Orchestras
February 14-17 2019	CASMEC and All-State Band and Orchestra	TBD	Fresno, CA	7/8 Select Orchestra members
May 4, 2019	WH Music Department Spring Trip	7:00 AM	Six Flags	6-8 Orchestra
May 5, 2019	CMEA State Solo & Ensemble (Tentative)	TBA	Sacramento State University	Chamber Orchestra
May 12, 2019	CMEA State Band & Orchestra Festival (Tentative)	TBA	Weill Hall, Sonoma State University	7/8 Advanced Orchestra
May 17, 2019	WH 7/8 Grade Orchestra Concert	7:00 PM	College of Marin Theatre	7/8 Advanced Orchestra
May 21, 2019	RVSD 5th, 6th, and Chamber Orchestra Concert	7:00 PM	WH Gym	5th, 6th, and Chamber Orchestras
June 13, 2019	WH Graduation	5:00 PM	WH	TBD
TBD	Orchestra Field Trip: SF Symphony Concert for Kids	TBD	SF Symphony	6 Orchestra
TBD	Orchestra Field Trip: SF Symphony Open Rehearsal	TBD	SF Symphony	7/8 Advanced Orchestra
TBD	WH 7/8 Grade Music Assembly (Tentative)	TBD	WH Gym	7/8 Advanced Orchestra

PLEASE NOTE: Transportation for all off-campus events will be discussed further at a later time. Chaperones and volunteers are needed for most all events. If you would like to be a chaperone, please send me an email at gcalderon@rossvalleyschools.org and let me know. No musical experience needed!

WHITE HILL MIDDLE SCHOOL ORCHESTRA HANDBOOK FORM

2018-2019

Sign and Return.

Due on WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2018 for full credit.

PLEASE PRINT

Student's Name _____

Grade _____

Parent's Name(s) _____

Phone Numbers: _____

Parent's E-mail Address: _____

We have read the White Hill Middle School Instrumental Music Handbook and understand the rules and procedures explained therein.

- We understand that my student's involvement in the music program is a commitment and that s/he must attend all performances.
- If we have any conflicts we will notify Mrs. Calderon with a note at least 4 weeks before the performance so that a makeup assignment can be considered and so that another student has adequate time to learn a new part.
- My child is expected to practice at home for 80 minutes and turn in a practice sheet signed by a parent or guardian every Wednesday. I know that practice sheets turned in after class time on Wednesday will result in a lower grade. Phone calls or email verifications will not be considered a substitution for the practice sheet. The practice sheet provided must be used.

Parent Signature: _____

Student Signature: _____