

Hawthorn Middle School South

6th Grade Orchestra Handbook

2019-2020

Ms. Samantha May
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www.hawthornmsorchestra.weebly.com

August 22, 2019

Dear Orchestra Parents and Students,

Welcome to a new and exciting school year! I hope you had an enjoyable and relaxing summer. I'm really excited to be working with the orchestras this year!

The orchestra students will have ample playing opportunities with school concerts, VHHS Orchestra Festival (7th/8th orchestra only), Organizational contest (7th/8th orchestra only), and Solo and Ensemble contest. We also have Chamber Orchestra for any students wanting more of a challenge.

Please review the attached material. It includes dates and other important information regarding the Middle School South Orchestra program. The success of our orchestra depends on all of us working together!

I will communicate with you through email and through my blog on the Hawthorn South website (www.hawthornmsorchestra.weebly.com). Please check those regularly so you don't miss anything.

I am looking forward to working with you and meeting you at Curriculum night on September 11 from 6-8 p.m. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



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Program Overview

- District 73 offers string instruction to students in grades 4-8. After five years of developing skills, it is hoped that Middle School Orchestra students will continue at the high school level.
- Orchestra members will be excused from regular classes one day a week for a thirty-seven to forty-seven-minute small group lesson. The lesson schedule will rotate so that students will miss a different class every week. Attendance at lessons is required. Students are responsible for making up missed classroom assignments and communicating with all teachers involved.
- Each orchestra member participates in a daily thirty-seven-minute orchestra rehearsal.

Student Expectations

- Be respectful of property, including instruments, accessories, and music.
- Be respectful and supportive of peers and the teacher
- Practice outside of class. This will affect your grade. **INSTRUMENTS MUST BE TAKEN HOME FOR PRACTICE!** They cannot be left here on weekends.
- Be on time to lessons, rehearsals and performances.
- Have an instrument with name tag, accessories, music, and a pencil at each lesson and rehearsal.
- Participate in all concerts and performances.
- Always try your best!
- Have fun!

Teacher Expectations

- Be positive and encouraging.
- Communicate with students and parents openly and honestly.
- Foster a safe and welcoming environment for students to learn.
- Challenge each student to work at his/her fullest potential.

Parent Expectations

Parents play a crucial role in helping their child succeed in the orchestra program. **Do not expect your child to be completely self-motivated in the Middle School music program.** You can help by doing the following:

- Make sure your child has the right equipment for practice.
- Ask your child about letters or notes from the teacher, especially near concerts. Check the blog for information.
- See that your child is present and on time for all rehearsals and concerts.
- Show your support and encouragement by attending all concerts and other performances. It means a lot!
- Contact your child's director if you have any questions or concerns.

Materials

Students need to purchase the following materials for orchestra class:

- 1/2" black view binder (with clear plastic on front and back for cover)
- 20 clear sheet protectors
- One of each yellow, blue, and red of colored pencil
- Regular Pencils (daily)
- Functioning instrument
- Violin/viola only - KUN or EVEREST brand shoulder rest is optional but recommended
(available at Classic Violins or www.sharmusic.com)

Orchestra Rules

- School rules are to be observed at all times.
- No talking or playing when a teacher is on the podium unless instructed to do so.
- No food, drinks, or gum are allowed in rehearsal areas unless approved by the teacher.
- Be on time and in your seat ready to play.

Orchestra Grading

Students will be graded using the following point system:

- Students will receive 2 points for each daily rehearsal (10 total points per week). If a 1 or 0 is earned, there will be a comment on the assignment in PowerSchool for your reference.

Score	Description
2	The student follows the behavior expectations, has all equipment/materials, and can play assigned music.
1	The student has problems in one of the above areas.
0	The student has problems in all of the above areas.

- Students will earn 10 points for each orchestra lesson.

Score	Description
10	The student attends the lesson on time with all materials and consistently demonstrates strong effort. Assigned music is practiced and performed with minimal mistakes.
9	The student attends the lesson with most of their materials and demonstrates effort. Assigned music is practiced but is performed with occasional mistakes.
8	The student is missing materials and/or effort is satisfactory. Student performs the assigned music with several mistakes.
7	The student is missing materials and/or the student performs the assigned music with frequent mistakes.
6	The student is missing materials and/or rarely demonstrates effort. Student cannot or will not play large sections of the assigned music.
0	The student is absent (unexcused) from the lesson.

- Students earn 10 points for playing tests. Playing test assignments will be given at the lesson. Students are responsible for keeping track of tests. If a student is absent from a lesson, it is his/her responsibility to get the information from the lesson. See the second chart for evaluation indicators.

Score	Description
10	Assigned music is practiced and performed with minimal mistakes.
9-8	The student has most of their materials. The assigned music is practiced and performed with occasional mistakes.
7-6	The student performs the assigned music with several mistakes.
5-4	The student performs the assigned music with frequent mistakes.
3-2	The student is unable to play large sections of the assigned music.
1-0	The student cannot or will not perform the assigned music.

Category	Description
Pitch	Accuracy to pitches
Rhythm	Accuracy of note and rest values, duration, pulse, steadiness, accuracy of meter, precision
Dynamics/musicianship	Volume, phrasing, emotional involvement, expression
Bowing	Slurs, directions, bow hold, technique
Articulation	Length, ranges, attacks/releases
Tone quality	Warmth, resonance, control, clarity, consistency

All scores and grades are available online through the PowerSchool parent portal. All missed lessons (unexcused) will be counted as 0 points. Students are then required to schedule a make-up lesson. Make-up lessons must be completed with another group within one week of a missed lesson. If a teacher feels that a student must remain in class, the student should see Ms. May as soon as possible after the missed lesson to ensure a make-up lesson can be scheduled. Lesson schedules will be posted on the orchestra website.

Concerts

Performance attendance is required. Please mark your calendar with the performance dates and contact Ms. May well in advance if your child has a conflict and is unable to attend. All absences from concerts will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

Concert Attire: Students will wear **all black** this year:

- Black shirt/blouse
- black pants/appropriate length skirt
- black shoes/black socks/tan stockings with skirt or dress

HAWTHORN MIDDLE SOUTH ORCHESTRA DATES 2019-20

- Aug. 28 First Chamber Orchestra Rehearsal; MS Music Suite, 7:05 AM
- Sept. 9 Last day for ILMEA Audition requests (select students)
- Sept. 21 ILMEA District VII Auditions (selected students); Northbrook Jr. High, 8:30 AM-3 PM
- Nov. 2 ILMEA Orchestra Festival Concert (selected students), Maine West HS, 2:00 PM
- Nov. 8 Veteran’s Breakfast Performance, Middle South Multi, AM during school, exact time TBA; (7/8th grade)
- Nov. 19 VHHS/MS **7th Grade** Orchestra Festival Rehearsal; VHHS auditorium (all day field trip) (7th Graders only)
- Nov. 19 VHHS/MS **7th Grade** Orchestra Festival Concert; VHHS auditorium, 7:30 PM (7th only)
- Nov. 21 VHHS/MS **8th Grade** Orchestra Festival Rehearsal; VHHS auditorium (all day field trip) (8th Graders only)
- Nov. 21 VHHS/MS **8th Grade** Orchestra Festival Concert; VHHS auditorium, 7:30 PM (8th only)
- Jan. 22 Winter Orchestra Concert; 6/7-8/Chamber perform; Middle South Gym, 7:00 PM**
- Feb. 22 NIMC Solo & Ensemble Festival; River Trails MS, Mt. Prospect; specific times TBA (optional event)
- March 6-7 NIMC Organization Contest; Arlington Heights South/North Prairie/Holmes MS; Exact time/location TBA (7/8th grade only)
- March 17 6th Grade/Chamber Orchestra Concert (MSN/MSS), Middle South Gym, 7:00PM (6th and Chamber)**
- May 5 Spring Open House; 6/7-8/Chamber Perform; Middle South Gym, 6:30 PM**
- May 26 8th Grade Promotion at VHHS (8th and select 7th grade perform); VHHS Gym, 6:00 PM

(Dates in bold are required for 6th Graders)

Please review all information and return the bottom portion to Ms. May by August 28th.
OR fill out the return form online at <https://forms.gle/CUTg3tz3qeqw8LQ6A>

I have read the Hawthorn Middle School South Orchestra information and requirements. I agree to encourage my child to fulfill the orchestra requirements.

Parent Signature _____ Date _____

I have read the Hawthorn Middle School South Orchestra information. I agree to be a dedicated Orchestra member and uphold the rules.

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Please write clearly below:

Student Name: _____ Phone number: (main one to be called)

Parent Name: _____ Parent email address(es) for mailings: