

# *Hawthorn Middle School South*

# *7/8<sup>th</sup> Grade Orchestra Handbook*

*2019-2020*

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August 22, 2019

Dear Orchestra Parents and Students,

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

The orchestra students will have ample playing opportunities with Middle South school concerts, VHHS Orchestra Festival (7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> orchestra only), Organizational contest (7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> 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 the Hawthorn Middle South Orchestra website ([www.hawthornmsorchestra.weebly.com](http://www.hawthornmsorchestra.weebly.com)). Please check those regularly so you do not 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,



Samantha May  
847-990-4102  
mays@hawthorn73.org  
[www.hawthornmsorchestra.weebly.com](http://www.hawthornmsorchestra.weebly.com)

## 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, therefore missing the same class once a month. 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 should be taken home at least 2-3 times per week and 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 website and emails for detailed 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.

## 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.

## Materials

Students need to purchase the following materials for orchestra class:

- 1/2" black view binder (with clear plastic on front and back cover)
- 20-30 clear sheet protectors for music
- One of each yellow, blue, and red colored pencil
- Regular Pencils (daily - it is best to designate a few specifically for orchestra)
- Functioning instrument
- Violin/viola only - KUN or EVEREST brand shoulder rest is optional but recommended  
(available at Classic Violins or [www.sharmusic.com](http://www.sharmusic.com))

## CONCERTS

\*\*Please Note - Orchestra Concert Attire is ALL BLACK this year\*\*:

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

Concert Etiquette:

- be on time for concert tuning and warm-ups
- no talking during performances
- cell phones are not allowed

## GRADING

- Grading is based on playing tests, lesson attendance, rehearsal and lesson preparedness, and home practice. Students have weekly playing tests alone or in a group during lessons. Each student is responsible for writing their assignments down. If there is no specific assignment for the week, students should practice the orchestra music.
- Students will receive 10 points a week for lessons. A missed lesson will go down as a zero. It is the student's responsibility to make up the lesson within one week. Make up lessons will be with another group. Students should communicate in advance or as early as possible, with Ms. May if they know about a conflict such as a test or quiz in order to reschedule a lesson with another group. No zeroes will be given for an absence from school. These do not need to be made up.
- Students will earn 10 points a week for rehearsals (2 points/day). Points will be deducted for not having music or instrument and for not participating appropriately or being unprepared to play the music. Students are expected to be quiet and listen when the director is on the podium.
- 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.

EXTRA CREDIT will be given for the following:

- Chamber Orchestra
- ILMEA Orchestra Festival
- Solo/Ensemble Contest
- Attendance at musical events outside of MSS Orchestra concerts  
(students will write a short reflection on the performance)

**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
- 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

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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: