

WINDSOR KNOLLS MIDDLE SCHOOL ORCHESTRA - PETR SKOPEK, DIRECTOR

THE WINDSOR KNOLLS ORCHESTRA HANDBOOK / SYLLABUS 2019-2020

This document is also available 24/7 on the WKMS orchestra website: <http://wkms.weebly.com/orchestra-handbook--syllabus.html>

CONTACT INFORMATION:

WKMS Phone Number: (240) 236-5000 extension 65004

WKMS Email: peter.skopek@fcps.org

WKMS Orchestra Website: www.wkms.weebly.com

INTRODUCTION:

Welcome to the WKMS orchestra! I look forward to working with each and every one of you this year! The orchestra experience is a phenomenal one. Orchestra is an amazing class in which you will not only learn about music and how to play your instrument; you will acquire essential skills which will prepare you for your future! Some of these skills include: the ability to communicate effectively, the ability to lead and follow, the ability to shine as an individual or an effective member of a team, perseverance, dependability, and personal responsibility. As you know, becoming a good musician and being part of an excellent orchestra has many requirements. The following guidelines will help you become an experienced musician and part of an excellent, growing, and disciplined performance organization.

COMMUNICATION WITH STUDENTS & PARENTS

Clear and direct communication is imperative for a successful year in orchestra. Important information regarding orchestra activities will be available in three different ways: email, posts on the band website and Schoology, or hardcopy. Information regarding students' grades will also be available in HAC. In order to have streamlined, efficient communication, please always check the band website for information first. I have the latest information available there at all times, and I usually post it well ahead of planned events. That said, please do not hesitate to email or call if you are still unclear about something.

CLASSROOM / REHEARSAL BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS:

Orchestra is a class in which we are always actively working together, and the negative actions of one individual directly impact the progress of everyone in the class. It is therefore absolutely essential that you understand the class expectations, and that you are very aware of the personal responsibilities you have regarding your personal class conduct during the instructional / rehearsal period. Orchestra is a class in which you will have lots of fun and make many friends, but it is important that you remember that music is essentially an academic subject, and hard work and learning always comes first. Also keep in mind that learning to play an instrument and all that comes with it can be difficult and time consuming process to master. Always keep a positive attitude and don't let negativity affect your behavior and outlook.

ALL ORCHESTRA MEMBERS WILL BE EXPECTED TO:

- Be on time to play when class/rehearsal starts.
- Enter the room QUIETLY, with mind set for learning.
- Bring ALL class materials to EVERY rehearsal! This includes your instrument, sheet music, music folder, method book, worksheets that were given to you, lined paper, staff paper and a pencil! PLEASE NOTE THAT STUDENTS WHO DO NOT BRING REQUIRED MATERIALS TO CLASS AND ARE NOT READY TO FULLY ENGAGE IN GROUP ACTIVITIES / REHEARSAL WILL BE COMPLETING AN ALTERNATE WRITING AND READING ACTIVITY.
- Get prepared within TWO minutes of the beginning bell. PLEASE NOTE THAT STUDENTS WHO HAVE NOT UNCASSED AND ARE NOT READY TO FULLY ENGAGE IN GROUP ACTIVITIES / REHEARSAL BY THE DESIGNATED TIME WILL BE COMPLETING AN ALTERNATE WRITING AND READING ACTIVITY.
- Be quiet when the instructor signals it is time to begin rehearsal.
- Follow the instructor's specific instructions the first time they are given.
- Raise your hand and wait to be called on in order to ask/answer a question.
- Avoid making unnecessary disruptions / NOT engage in individual playing/practicing during rehearsal.
- Return all materials to their proper place at the end of rehearsal.
- Not leave trash on the floor.
- Leave the room exactly as you found it when you entered!!!

- Display a positive, healthy attitude toward learning and all individuals associated with the band.
- Be patient! When having a problem, remain calm, patient, and don't get frustrated too quickly!

REQUIRED MATERIALS: BRING ALL CLASS MATERIALS EVERY DAY!!

Orchestra members are expected to have the following items:

1. Instrument in good playing condition, a bow, and a case with a name tag
2. Rosin
3. A set of extra strings (not mandatory, but recommended)
4. Shoulder rest/ Rock stop
5. Cleaning cloth
6. Paper and pencils
7. Staff paper (provided)
8. ½ inch three-ring binder, or a section in a larger binder
9. Orchestra music folder (provided)
10. All orchestra music
11. Method/ text books:

Sixth grade- String Basics – Shade & Woolstenhulme book 1

Seventh grade – String Basics - Shade & Woolstenhulme book 2

Eighth grade- Essentials Techniques for Strings- (green book)

DISCIPLINE POLICY:

Please make sure that you follow The Knolls Code of Conduct every period!!!

- Step 1. FIRST VERBAL WARNING
- Step 2. SECOND VERBAL WARNING
- Step 3. REFLECTION WITH PARENT CONTACT
- Step 4. DETENTION WITH PARENT PHONE CALL
- Step 5. REFERRAL WITH PARENT PHONE CALL

GRADING POLICY AND HAC (Home Access Center):

Grades are accessible online, 24/7. Grades are updated on weekly basis. Please log into HAC regularly to check your grade.

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT: 60%

Examples of formative assessment include:

warm-ups, class work / process, rehearsals, informal performances, notebook checks, other assignments

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT: 40%

Examples of summative assessment include:

written tests, formal playing tests, benchmark assessments, concerts, adjudications and other performances, projects, performance portfolios, final drafts of written assignments, other assignments

GRADING SCALE: All grading in band will be done using the following rubric:

100 – A+	Exemplary Performance Consistently exceeds curriculum standards and class requirements
95 - A	Exemplary Performance Consistently meets curriculum standards and class requirements
85 - B	Skilled Performance Frequently meets and/or exceeds curriculum standards and class requirements
75 - C	Satisfactory Performance Generally meets curriculum standards and class requirements, though some curriculum standards and class requirements may remain as yet unmet
65 - D	Minimally Acceptable Performance Meets some curriculum standards and class requirements, though many curriculum standards and class requirements remain as yet unmet

55 - F	Unacceptable Performance Meets few, if any, curriculum standards and class requirements
50 - F	Work not completed / turned in

LATE WORK:

Any assignment not completed by the due date will be recorded as “Z”. Any assignment submitted after the due date will receive a 10% penalty. Students can complete and turn in assignments up to the midterm or the end of term. If a student does not complete an assignment by the mid-term or the end of term deadline, the grade will change from a “Z” to a 50%.

PARTICIPATION AND CLASS MATERIALS:

Students must have all their materials every day to be able to fully participate in class activities. Students who do not have their class materials will be assigned an alternate (usually written) assignment.

CLASSWORK & PROJECTS:

On occasion, students will be asked to complete projects that require reading, writing and research in addition to playing.

GOOGLE CLASSROOM / SCHOOLGY AND DIGITAL PORTFOLIOS:

Some assignments will be completed in and submitted through Schoology / google classroom. In addition, students will keep a “performance portfolio” by recording and submitting exercises on regular basis. The recorded exercises will be used for assessment (formative and summative), reflection, and progress reports. Not all assignments in google classroom will be graded, but they need to be completed for use with future assignments.

PRACTICING:

It is suggested that each student spend about 90 minutes per week practicing outside of class. Students may use a practice record (calendar) to help them plan out an effective practice session, but these practice records will not be collected.

CONCERT PERFORMANCES: The orchestra presents several concerts during the school year. These include the annual Winter and Spring concerts, the Oktoberfest concert, County and (hopefully) State adjudication, Veteran’s / Memorial Day performances, feeder pattern concerts, recruiting trips to elementary schools, and other performances. The performance calendar is available on the WKMS orchestra web page. It is imperative that all students perform during the concerts. **If a student fails to show up for a concert, a significant reduction in the grade will be made unless it is a case of the extreme emergency.**

Students will receive one summative assessment grade for each formal performance. The grade is based on the following criteria: participation, performance, performance etiquette, audience etiquette.

SPECIAL NOTE TO PARENTS AND STUDENTS REGARDING PERFORMANCES: As stated in the prior paragraph, it is imperative that ALL students perform in ALL the concerts. An orchestra is a delicately balanced ensemble of instruments which work together. Much effort is taken by the conductor as well as the musicians to create a perfect balance and blend in the sound. Every student plays an integral role in contributing to the success of the entire group. In this regard, it is much like a sports team – every student has an assigned role to play. It is not like a sports team however, because in orchestra, there are no “extra” players sitting on the bench ready to jump in when someone can’t play. Please make sure that you check the performance calendar and block off the concert dates for this year. If you already have a prior commitment, please let me know right now – not a few days or even hours before a performance.

CONCERT DRESS:

Every WKMS orchestra performance requires specific concert dress. The dress for this year’s performances is as follows:

OCTOBERFEST CONCERT: (8th grade only) ALL BLACK. Non-toxic glow in the dark paint and stickers may be used on clothes. Glow in the dark stick bracelets and other accessories may be worn as long as they don't impede your ability to play your instruments.

PATRIOTIC EVENTS (such as Veteran's Day or Memorial Day performances): (8th grade only) Sneakers or other comfortable shoes, dark blue jeans with NO rips or holes, SOLID red, blue, or white T-shirt or polo shirt.

WINTER CONCERT: Black dress shoes, black pants or long black skirts. Short black skirts may be worn with black leggings underneath. SOLID white, red, or green shirt with a collar. Tie optional. NO SNEAKERS, BOOTS, FLIP FLOPS, JEANS, OR T-SHIRTS PLEASE.

COUNTY / STATE ADJUDICATION: Black dress shoes, black pants or long black skirts. Short black skirts may be worn with black leggings underneath. SOLID white shirt with a collar. Tie optional. NO SNEAKERS, BOOTS, FLIP FLOPS, JEANS, OR T-SHIRTS PLEASE.

SPRING CONCERT: 6th & 7th Grade - Black dress shoes, black pants or long black skirts. Short black skirts may be worn with black leggings underneath. SOLID white, red, or green shirt with a collar. Tie optional. NO SNEAKERS, BOOTS, FLIP FLOPS, JEANS, OR T-SHIRTS PLEASE.

8th Grade – The 8th graders are welcome to dress up more formally than the standard black and white. Examples include suits and ties, and formal dresses. All attire should be school appropriate. The 8th-grade attire can be colorful – not just black and white. If you do not want to dress up for this final concert, please just wear the standard black and white.

FEEDER PATTERN CONCERTS: Black dress shoes, black pants or long black skirts. Short black skirts may be worn with black leggings underneath. SOLID white shirt with a collar. Tie optional. NO SNEAKERS, BOOTS, FLIP FLOPS, JEANS, OR T-SHIRTS PLEASE.

EXTRA CREDIT:

Students have an opportunity to earn extra credit throughout the year. In order to earn extra credit, students should attend a live concert, then complete a short oral presentation in front of the class about the concert they attended (2-3 minutes). Students may complete up to 4 of these extra credit assignments per term. Each extra credit assignment completed will be worth one formative assessment grade.

TUTORING / EXTRA HELP:

If a student needs extra help or would like more time to practice during school, all they have to do is sign up. There will be a sign-up form in the band / orchestra room. Tutoring / extra practice time will take place during ELT time. Tutoring / extra practice time will not be available during advisory times (Wednesdays). If a student needs even more tutoring time, please see Mr. Skopek to set-up an after-school tutoring session.

PRIVATE LESSONS: Everyone is highly encouraged to take private lessons outside of class! Private lessons are a great way to increase a student's degree and rate of success. If you are considering private instruction on your instrument, look for a well trained professional with experience and references. I have compiled a list of highly trained professionals in our area. The list with contact information is available on the wkmsso website.

INSTRUMENTAL STORAGE LOCKER ROOM:

Students will be assigned their own instrumental storage locker for instrument storage. STUDENTS WILL **NOT NEED TO PURCHASE THEIR OWN LOCK!** ALL students need to be responsible and diligent in following the rules stated below while retrieving / putting away their instrument. Failure in observing the following rules will result in disciplinary action.

1. Do not loiter in the locker room. Get / put away your instrument and get to class ASAP. Spend as little time in the locker room as you can.
2. NO uncasing of instruments in the locker room under any circumstances. All uncasing will be done in the band / orchestra room.
3. Properly put away your instrument **in your assigned locker.**

4. Leave floor clear at all times. There should be nothing on the floor at any time.

5. DO NOT mess with property in lockers that are not yours. PLEASE NOTE THAT ANY TAMPERING WITH PROPERTY IN OTHER STUDENTS' LOCKERS WILL RESULT IN AN IMMEDIATE OFFICE REFERRAL. RESPECT OTHER STUDENTS' PROPERTY.

WKMS ORCHESTRA WEBSITE: www.wkmsso.weebly.com

The WKMS orchestra has its own website. The website offers a wealth of information on all things that have to do with the orchestra program at WKMS. Accessing the website is absolutely the best way to keep current on all WKMS orchestra activities present, past and future. The website is updated often, and should be the first place to check if you have any questions about upcoming events. The website is quite comprehensive, but easy to navigate. Please take a moment to explore the website in order to become familiar with it. The web address is: www.wkmsso.weebly.com

ELECTRONIC DEVICE USE IN ORCHESTRA:

On occasion, students will use an electronic device to complete work in band. Students may use their school-issued chrome book, or use their own laptop, tablet, or chrome book.

Students are required to:

- Only use approved electronic device when directed by teacher
- Access teacher directed resources only
- Keep their device off and away at ALL OTHER TIMES

Abuse may include, but is not limited to, accessing personal data networks, accessing internet resources not approved by the teacher, and using an unregistered device or a cell phone.

FUNDRAISERS: The orchestra typically participates in one to two fundraisers during the year to offset the costs of transportation to field trips, concert sheet music, instrument replacement, maintenance and care, instrument supplies, staging props for concerts, etc. Please participate in this fundraiser, so that we may be able to cover the ever-increasing costs of the aforementioned expenditures. Donations to the program are also accepted.

FIELDTRIPS:

NEW YORK CITY CULTURAL IMMERSION DAY TRIP: The WKMS music department will be sponsoring a one-day field trip to NYC this year in the spring. The trip is not mandatory. This field trip offers an opportunity for cultural and arts immersion in a world-class city. All band students, siblings and parents are invited to take part in this exciting opportunity. Each student must have a parent accompany them as everyone will be following a different itinerary for the day. Each parent will only be responsible for their own child. Each student and parent will determine how they would like to spend the day: sightseeing, visiting historic landmarks and museums, or seeing a Broadway show. Our itinerary for the day is perfect to do a little sightseeing during mid-day, take in a 2:00 matinee, have dinner and then return home.

The cost for the round-trip bus is usually about \$65.00 per person. Please note that there is a maximum of 50 seats available that will be assigned on a first come, first served basis. Once your reservation has been confirmed we will not be able to make any refunds. Specific dates for the trip are on the attached calendar and on the band website.

ADVENTURE PARK USA END-OF-THE-YEAR 8TH-GRADE OUTING:

This outing takes place toward the end of the year and is only for the 8th grade. This is about a half-day outing. Parents or guardians bring their children to the park and pick them up from the park. The admission to the park is free for the students and free for the chaperones.