



**2024-2025**  
**Program Handbook**

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Dear Parent/Guardian,

We would like to congratulate you on your child's decision to be a part of one of the finest orchestra programs in the state of Georgia. The 2023-24 school year will provide an opportunity for continued growth and a Tradition of Excellence. Musical activities encourage each member to reach the highest possible level of success. Here at Richmond Hill Middle School, we are deeply committed to the arts and take pride in the music we create and the instruction which takes place in the classroom.

We want every member to experience a once-in-a-lifetime experience. As with any activity, you get out of it what you put into it. We want the best for each student and that is the reason we demand the best from them. With determination, self-discipline, the right attitude, and willingness to learn; each student will excel in this activity. Most importantly, the students will have FUN learning. What is learned in orchestra translates to other areas of academics and beyond.

As a member, there will be many responsibilities and obligations to meet. We expect each member to do their part – be at rehearsals, all performances, participate in fundraisers, practice individually, etc. Most of all, we expect every student, both inside and outside the orchestra program, to strive for excellence!

Commitment to this program is vital to its growth and success. We are not just another activity on campus; we are a family built on tradition and mutual respect. Parents are an important part of the student's musical growth. Only about 10% of learning an instrument takes place in the orchestra room, the other 90% takes place at home through regular practice. We encourage you to become active participants in our program. After all, you are our cheerleaders!

We WELCOME you and your student to our orchestra family!

Thank You,

James Mock, Ed.S.  
Director of Orchestras  
Richmond Hill Middle School

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**JAMES MOCK, Ed.S. – DIRECTOR**  
**JONATHAN LEA – PRINCIPAL**  
RICHMOND HILL MIDDLE SCHOOL

503 WARREN HILL ROAD  
RICHMOND HILL, GEORGIA 31324  
[WWW.RHMSORCHESTRA.ORG](http://WWW.RHMSORCHESTRA.ORG)

### **RHMS Mission Statement**

Dedicated to rigorous educational tasks that challenge and motivate students while always being focused on continuous improvement.

### **RHMS Vision Statement**

“Committed to Excellence and Success in All We Do”

### **RHMS Core Values**

Be Respectful  
Be Responsible  
Be Ready

### **Program Mission Statement**

The mission of the Richmond Hill Middle School Orchestra Program is a commitment to a standard of excellence through high-quality musical instruction. Promoting citizenship, leadership, respect, and, most importantly, musicianship, each program member develops and understands the importance of hard work and dedication while promoting pride for their school and the Richmond Hill community.

### **Program Vision Statement**

“Excellence through Music”

## **Orchestra Curriculum**

This co-curricular program offers instruction on violin, viola, cello, and string bass instruments with a focus on the skills necessary for long-term success. Fundamentals stressed include proper posture and playing position, development of characteristic tone quality, and training in music literacy. No audition is required for placement in the courses—all that is necessary is the desire and motivation to study a musical instrument! Students meet either on A or B days for 90 minutes by grade level.

## **Chamber Ensembles**

Our chamber ensemble program consisted of students who perform in smaller groups of two, three, four, and sometimes up to eight players. These groups may perform at various functions during the school year and have an opportunity to perform at Solo and Ensemble for a rating.

## **Chamber Orchestra**

This ensemble is considered our top-performing group. This group will consist of 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders (6<sup>th</sup> graders who have more than one year of experience playing) who place in the top placements within each group through their chair placement auditions. These students will perform up to Grade 3 music and will perform at the GMEA Large Group Performance Evaluation in the Spring. These members may be asked to perform at various functions during the school year.

## **Orchestra Staff**

**James Mock, Ed.S. – Director of Orchestras**

Email - [jmock@bryan.k12.ga.us](mailto:jmock@bryan.k12.ga.us)

## **My Music Office**

My Music Office is an online platform designed to be a central location to locate information. As a parent, each of you will receive a unique username and password. Once logged in, you will find your child's financial records, uniform sizing information, a calendar, and other information pertaining to your child. You may also contact the band staff directly through this program as well. Directions will be provided on the band website, in the secure parent portal, and also given at the beginning of the year with your username and temporary password.

## **Orchestra Website**

The official program website is [www.rhmsorchestra.org](http://www.rhmsorchestra.org). Here you will find the most up-to-date information and calendars. Please make sure you check the website for updates before contacting the band office.

## Communication Text Tool

TBD

### Important Site Links

Website: [www.rhmsorchestra.org](http://www.rhmsorchestra.org)

My Music Office Login: <https://www.mymusicoffice.com/login.php>

School Site: <https://www.bryan.k12.ga.us/o/rhms>

### Financial Obligations

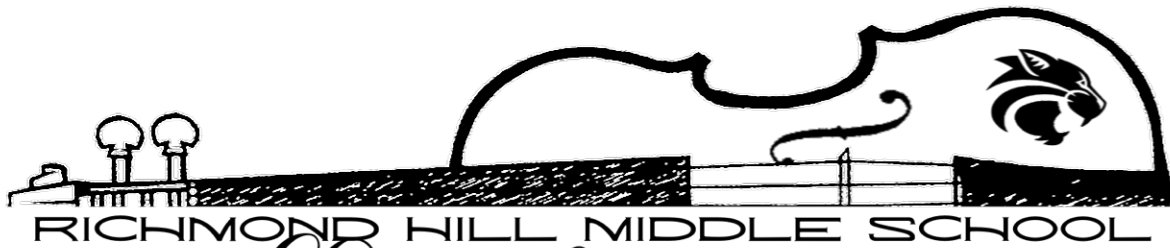
Each student in the Richmond Hill Middle School Orchestra will be assessed a non-refundable fee to cover the following:

#### **New Members (\$50)**

- Uniform Polo
- Subscription to MakeMusic
- Portfolio Binder

#### **Returning Members (\$20)**

- Subscription to MakeMusic
- Portfolio Binder



# *Orchestra*

## **SECTION 1 GENERAL INFORMATION**

## PERSONAL INSTRUMENTS

Students who play on good quality instruments are more apt to practice and perform at a higher level, not to mention enjoy orchestra more. Not only will they feel great about their playing, but the overall sound of the ensemble will also improve because of the high quality of the instruments.

Instruments should be rented or purchased from a local music store. **YOU SHOULD NEVER PURCHASE AN INSTRUMENT ONLINE OR PAWN SHOP WITHOUT CONSULTING ORCHESTRA STAFF.** You may find an “AMAZING DEAL” on Amazon or Ebay, but if it seems like it is the deal of a lifetime, then it probably will not be a quality instrument. Many repair shops will not service instruments purchased online; this means you will most likely have to buy another instrument. Therefore, the rule of thumb is to buy quality. **ALWAYS CONSULT THE DIRECTOR PRIOR TO PURCHASING.**

**Students should also supply their own rosin, an extra set of strings, and a shoulder rest.**

## SCHOOL OWNED INSTRUMENTS

There are a limited number of school-owned instruments available for students to “rent.” Double Basses will be provided in class so that students do not have to carry them back and forth. **We also understand there are times of economic hardships and will never turn a student away from orchestra because they cannot afford an instrument. This should never be a reason for a student not to participate. If you feel you are in this situation and need an instrument, please contact Mr. Mock immediately.**

When an instrument is loaned, the student and parent will be required to sign an instrument agreement form. While the instrument is being loaned, the student and parent are responsible for all repairs deemed “beyond normal wear” by a repair specialist. School-owned instruments in need of repair will be assessed, if the director and repair shop agree that the damage is due to neglect or conditions beyond normal wear, the student and parent will be responsible for the repair or replacement costs.

## CURRENT METHOD BOOKS

6<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> Grade – Habits of a Successful Young String Musician  
7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> Grade – Habits of a Successful Middle Level String Musician  
All Grades – MakeMusic Subscriptions

## CELL PHONE EXPECTATIONS

In conjunction with school policy, cell phone use is **PROHIBITED** during any instruction or performance. The director or staff may confiscate any cell phone found during a rehearsal. During travel, each student will be required to deposit the cell phone in the cell phone box prior to exiting the bus and will not be allowed to use their phones again until after the performance. Failure to comply with this policy will result in an immediate call home by the student and a behavior contract; **this paragraph will serve as a warning.**



## USE OF THE ORCHESTRA FACILITY

### *Orchestra Room*

The use of music facilities before, after, and during school is a privilege. Students who abuse the facility will be punished accordingly. Any abuse or damage will be considered vandalism. **NO OUTSIDE STUDENTS ARE PERMITTED IN THE ORCHESTRA ROOM** except for business with the director. There will be no horseplay, i.e. throwing of things, in or around the orchestra room. No storing of personal items – **THE ORCHESTRA AND STORAGE ROOMS ARE NOT A LOCKER!**

### *Practice Rooms*

Practice rooms are to be used for **practice or private instruction**. Keep the room neat with the appropriate music stands in place.

### *Library, Office*

The **library** is private and is to be used only by the library staff. Materials may be checked out through the librarian; this includes Solos, Ensembles, and Etude Books. The **director's office** is private and is not to be entered by any student without permission from the director or a staff member. All students should keep in mind that this is a place of business. **ALWAYS** knock first.

## CONFLICTS WITH ORCHESTRA

Resolving conflict between orchestra and other activities or events **is the responsibility of the student and parent NOT the director or staff**. Rehearsal and performance schedules are given out in advance and can be found on the website so that arrangements can be made. Students should not become involved with activities that directly conflict with orchestra activities. When outside activities create hardships concerning orchestra, unless it is a situation that should only happen once, the student will need to consult with the director about possible alternatives. Students and parents should have a calendar and be aware of all orchestra dates well ahead of schedule. Students are reminded that orchestra is a commitment and conflicts do sometimes occur. **All conflicts with performances must be resolved in favor of orchestra participation as it is an academic course. Non-school-sponsored sports, vacations, and/or lack of transportation are not an excuse for missing any orchestra activity, including rehearsals.**

## PRACTICING

As with any activity, **you get out of it what you put into it**. Orchestra will not be “FUN” unless you practice! There are many values in the study of music as a discipline that transfer to other areas of life. Although this will not immediately happen, persistent practice will lead to enthusiastic, driven practice. Remember: **“Perfect Practice makes Perfect!”** Here is a suggested plan of study:

- Pick a set time each day
- Use a tuner for a portion of your practice session
- Have a non-boomy place to practice
- Review additional resources in Google Classroom and on the website
- Increase dynamic range

- Use only daily warm-up and think “tone”
- Increase endurance
- Play some form of scales at every practice session
- Increase range (highest note with good tone quality)
- Take a break every 20 minutes
- Use a metronome for part of the time
- Work on technique (bow placement, chin placement, articulations, etc.)
- “I will start with \_\_\_\_ minutes and increase to \_\_\_\_.”
- Practice sight-reading
- Use the Practice Record Chart

### MAKEMUSIC

MakeMusic is our online practice system. Students will be registered at the beginning of each year. The subscription will be included in the student’s yearly orchestra fee. This program will be used to track the student’s practice time, habits, and used as an assessment tool.

### CONCERT DRESS

#### Gentlemen

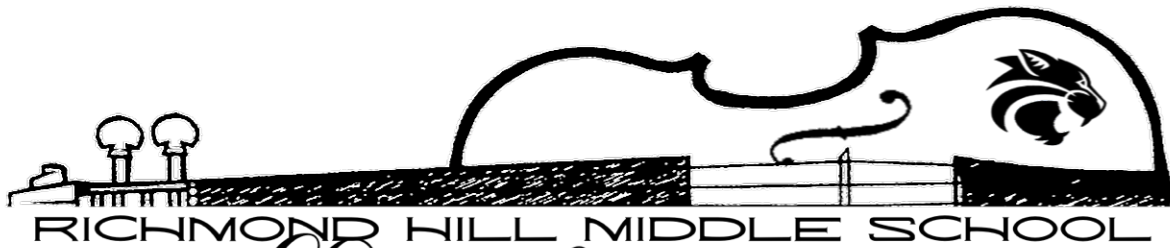
- Black Orchestra Polo
- Black ***Dress*** Slacks
- Black ***Dress*** Shoes
- **Black socks**

#### Ladies

- Black Orchestra Polo
- Black (**Solid**) pants or black skirt (skirt must be AT LEAST knee length and accompanied with black hose/spandex, etc.)
- Black ***Dress*** Shoes

Items not in dress code; athletic shoes, Crocs, flip-flops, shoes with white soles or designs, large jewelry which is a distraction, and items which violate school-dress code.

This dress code will give us a professional look, after all “class always shows!”



# *Orchestra*

## **SECTION 2**

### **CREATING A TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE**

## WHAT IS MUSIC CULTURE?

Simply put, culture is HOW WE LOOK, HOW WE ACT, and HOW WE SOUND. We are concerned about the way we present ourselves and the quality of the music we play. With this mindset, everything else takes care of itself. Numbers grow and placements improve.

As you read this handbook you will not see rules, we believe that all expectations are expressed through our guided principles. These guided principles are what create our culture. Dr. Tim Lautzenheiser states “Culture requires each musician to balance in an ETHICAL fashion.” To meet this goal, one must live by the guided principles. The program’s self-discipline and work ethic determine the group’s success, not just numbers. Therefore, the directors and staff work to develop leaders in the Richmond Hill Orchestra Program.

To achieve greatness, an orchestra member must believe in THEIR program. Achievement can only be accomplished through mastery. Mastery is only accomplished by relevant value. In other words, the orchestra will only achieve greatness if its culture is one of growth, good attitudes, and lots of self-discipline.

Each individual must determine their own happiness in the orchestra. You will read below that regular practice is important for student growth and happiness. With that said, orchestra exists because it is goal oriented and achieves those goals through hard work and dedication. Therefore, each orchestra member must believe in the group, the goals, values, and the reason they are there, TO MAKE MUSIC!

### ***THE IMPORTANCE OF ATTITUDE***

The greatest single factor that will determine the success of any individual or organization is **attitude**. The kind of person that you are is an individual choice and how we feel about something, which involves attitude, is one of the few actual independent choices that we have in life. It takes intense dedication to reach goals. Students should learn to discipline themselves through a daily practice of fundamentals. The “right attitude” must be present along with sincerity, concentration, and dedication as the basic foundation. Such an attitude makes an artistic performance inevitable and is the difference between a winning organization and a mediocre group. The orchestra can do much for you. Make the most of it in every rehearsal and performance.

**It is important to know that without a good attitude; orchestra WILL NOT be FUN.** Not only will the orchestra not be fun, but the overall attitude of the orchestra will also suffer without a good attitude. Having a good attitude means being positive about rehearsals and performances, and following the expectations set in this handbook. Those with a positive attitude, regardless of individual skills, will always have a place in the Richmond Hill Middle School Orchestra. The group’s success will only be achieved with a positive, collective attitude. **Should a student not project this attitude they will be given an opportunity to change their personal perspective or face removal from the program.**

### ***THE IMPORTANCE OF DISCIPLINE***

Because of the nature of the organization, music discipline must be strict! Music students and parents must believe in the ideals, principles, and philosophy of the organization. Each member must always be aware of good behavior and think for himself. Any misconduct casts a bad light on the school, community, and music program. Any member who casts discredit to the organization by his/her conduct or actions in the orchestra, in another class, or on a trip, shall be subject to dismissal from the orchestra program or may lose a privilege within the program. This may include the chance to go on a trip. This decision will be at the director's discretion.

### **STUDENTS' RESPONSIBILITY TO THE ORCHESTRA**

As members of this organization, you have a great deal of responsibility. It is essential to any program that if certain expectations are to be met that they coordinate with the privileges, rewards, and duties of the orchestra program.

#### ***TO OURSELVES***

YOU have the primary responsibility of developing your own abilities. The benefits of a good instrument and private instruction can never be underestimated. What you put into it is what you will get out of it. The director is ALWAYS available for your guidance and encouragement – do not be afraid, just ask!

#### ***TO THE SCHOOL***

The Board of Education and Superintendent of Bryan County Schools provide us with the resources for rehearsals, performances, and equipment. **WE** have the responsibility to provide the best possible services to our community.

#### ***TO MUSIC***

Music has always been a part of our culture. We must take what we have and use it for the betterment of that culture. No one expects virtuoso musicians, only your very best! The great composer Gustav Mahler once said that only 10% of a piece of music is on the page. If that is the case, then we as musicians have the duty of creating and producing the other 90%. The joy of music is not in everything that is apparent. It must be discovered and created.

#### ***TO EACH OTHER***

We must always do what is best for the WELFARE of the group. There can be no selfish acts solely for the benefit of the individual but for all. Respect each other. If there are conflicts, find a way to resolve them. Never insult another orchestra member's integrity.

## DUTIES OF THE ORCHESTRA MEMBER

- Be on time to all rehearsals and performances. EARLY IS ON TIME – ON TIME IS LATE.
- Upon entering the rehearsal setting, acquire your instrument and go directly to your seat.
- When the director or staff member steps on the podium or asks for your attention, all talking should cease.
- Come to rehearsal with a GOOD ATTITUDE.
- There is no excess playing (i.e. horsing around on the instrument); only good solid material.
- Make a real effort to improve on a daily basis and establish a good practice routine.
- At the end of rehearsal, put all materials in their proper place.
- Maintain a strong academic standing in all coursework.
- Become responsible for and assume responsibility for your own actions. Admit when you are wrong.
- Have proper respect for yourself and those in authority, including student leadership.
- Read and play music with insight – have musical expectations.

## PARENTS' RESPONSIBILITY TO THE ORCHESTRA

It is the responsibility of every parent and guardian to see that the policies outlined in the HANDBOOK are followed and that the membership agreement in the back is signed and returned. This states that you UNDERSTAND the policies as set within and that any questions are to be directed to the band director by making an appointment. **Each parent IS responsible for the attendance of his/her child at all orchestra functions.** It is the responsibility of each parent to see that their child practices his / her instrument daily. The hands of the directors are tied without the help of parents.

## HOW PARENTS CAN HELP

When an “orchestra question” arises, it is important that you get factual information before discussing it with others. We do more harm to ourselves, and the orchestra family, when we talk about things that contain one or more “falsehoods” but consider them facts. If questions arise, it is important to contact Mr. Mock immediately and use the resources provided for answers.

- Show an interest in the music study of your child.
- Arrange a regular time for your child to practice.
- Find a quiet place where he/she can practice without interruption.
- Listen to performances of practice material, when asked to do so.
- Help the student keep a DAILY RECORD of practicing.
- Come up with a reward system for DAILY practice.
- Keep the instrument in good repair.
- Be extra careful with private and school-owned instruments. Repair costs are high!
- Teach your child to be prepared and on time for each rehearsal or lesson.
- Provide private instruction!
- Make faithful attendance at all orchestra activities important.

- Buy your child a personal planner for marking important dates.
- Keep the Handbook in a safe place and refer to it often.
- Notify the teacher if the student is to be absent for rehearsals or lessons.
- Double-check behind the student to make sure that they have their instrument.
- If a student is absent, make sure that their folder gets to school if they share it with someone.
- Visit rehearsals occasionally.
- Attend booster meetings, concerts, and contests.
- Turn in fundraising money on time.

## **STUDENT LEADERSHIP**

Student leadership is vital to the overall success of the organization. In order to maintain a high level of excellence, the student should take ownership of their program. These positions are designed to allow students to learn leadership and, most importantly, responsibility. Interviews and teacher recommendations are required.

### **STUDENT LEADERSHIP ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **Concertmaster**

- First Chair in Violin Section and student leader for the class
- Responsible for Tuning the group
- Leads Sectionals
- Checks for correct parts and bowing for the violin section
- Manages other sections when the section leader is absent

#### **Individual Instrument Section Leaders** (selected by the director based on behavior and performance)

- Provide a good example for all other students (prepared with music before class and concert)
- Weekly inspections of portfolios
- Maintain discipline within the section
- Checks for correct parts and bowing for the violin section
- Provides instruction
- Positive role model
- Arrives early to class, concerts, and events

#### **Secretary**

- Takes attendance in each class, at concerts, and events
- Timekeeper for class
- Manages and updates seating charts
- Hands-out and collects papers/supplies
- Arrives early to class, concerts, and events
- Assists the director in planning field trips

**Librarian**

- Hands-out new music
- Files and organizes music
- Checks for missing parts and passes out as needed
- Records copies needed for the director
- Arrives early to class, concerts, and events

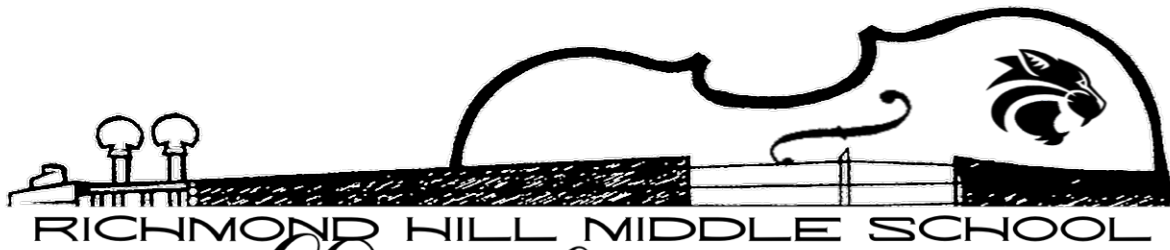
**Treasurer**

- Takes care of instrumentalist needs
  - Pencils, rosin, shoulder rests, etc.
- Promotes and updates class on fundraising
- Updates class on field trip deadlines
- Arrives early to class, concerts, and events

**Historian**

- Takes pictures
- Keeps a record of accomplishments and events
- Liaison to yearbook/media staff





# *Orchestra*

## **SECTION 3 CURRICULAR COURSE EXPECTATIONS AND PARTICIPATION**

## OVERVIEW

### *After-School Rehearsals*

There may be times when after-school rehearsals are necessary since our curricular courses may not meet at the same time each day. Any after-school rehearsals will be announced 1 month in advance of the rehearsal date. These rehearsals are rare and typically only occur around the concert and LGPE time. A Chamber Orchestra rehearsal schedule will be created following the chair audition process and is an extension of the curricular course.

### *Music Pass-Offs*

To pass off material, the player must successfully demonstrate to the director or designated student assistant his / her ability to perform it. Every note and rhythm must be perfect, though standards will be adjusted to fit the level of the musician. These pass-offs will be used as merits for the end of the year and will result in an end-of-the-year award.

### *Rehearsal Procedure*

- You must be in the storage room or your seat when the bell rings; a downbeat will be given two minutes after the bell. During the two minutes, you should move to your seat, obtain music, a music stand, and a pencil, and begin warming up for the day's rehearsal. Make sure you have your bows rosined and instruments tuned. Announcements will be made at the beginning of class.
- Talking will not be tolerated during a rehearsal.
- The purpose of the rehearsal is for you to learn **the parts of others and how they relate to yours, not to learn your individual music! Therefore, you must practice at home!**
- If you must leave your seat for any reason, please ask. Restroom breaks should be taken between classes.
- In your individual warm-up, it is important to do each of the following on a daily basis:

## CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS

- Chewing gum is not permitted during a rehearsal or in the orchestra room.
- Food and drink are not permitted in the orchestra room. (Water is an exception)
- No hats, head covers, or sunglasses are to be worn inside the building.
- Be in your seat, warmed up, and ready to begin on time.
- Respect authority and others, including their personal property.
- All school rules will be enforced.
- Young adults shall not damage property or equipment.
- If you share a folder and are absent, make sure it gets to school.
- Students may practice in the band room, there will be a sign-up form.

## CLASSROOM CONDUCT CONSEQUENCES

Level 1- Warning

Level 2- Conference with the director

Level 3- Student calls home with director

Level 4- Office Referral

Level 5- Conference with admin, counselor, parent, and director for removal from the program.

## ATTENDANCE EXPECTATIONS

*The only excusable absences are prearranged school conflicts and those that would be excused by the school for regular attendance records, e.g., illness, a death in the family, or a religious holiday.* Individual needs will be addressed as they occur. The system is subject to modification by the director based on the situation or event.

**Performance no-shows!** The student will receive 40 demerits and a failing grade. See rubric for details. Please see grading section for make-up procedures.

For all **APPROVED** absences, the following procedure must be followed by the student and parent:

- The director must be notified in advance.
- For approval, an absentee request form must be filled out completely and returned **no later than one week before the absence. (located on the website and orchestra room)**
- For illness, a parental note or doctor's note must be submitted along with the completed form.
- Although cleared by the school office, absences from an orchestra activity that same day must be cleared with the director as well; please email the director or call the school and leave a message.
- Follow-up is the *sole responsibility* of the *student and parent!!*

The mere filing of an absentee request form does not constitute approval. The absentee policy is cut and dry in regard to what is excused and is at the discretion of the director. Conflicts with employment and other non-school-sponsored events **WILL NOT** be considered an excused absence. Students and parents will be provided ample notice of all performance and rehearsal requirements to avoid these conflicts.

## REQUIRED MATERIALS FOR COURSES

Each student should have the following items in class every day:

- a sharpened pencil (mechanical works)
- Black 3-ring binder (1-inch, paid through fees)
- Sheet Protectors to hold music and handouts (paid through fees)
- your instrument
- your music, including the method book (book remains at school)
- Rosin, shoulder rest, cleaning cloth
- Tuner

From time to time during the school year, you will receive a materials grade. If you have all the items listed above, you will receive a grade of 100. Your grade will be lowered by 5 points for each item you are missing, but students will be given two days to bring in any missing items. The easiest way to avoid this is to have everything that you need, at all time!

## CHAIR AUDITIONS/CHALLENGES

Students will be auditioned for their chair placement at the beginning of each school year. Students will be required to perform a prepared piece, 2 scales (the 7<sup>th</sup>-one octave and 8<sup>th</sup>-two octaves), and a sight-reading excerpt. All students are required to complete this process, regardless of section size. Students who score above 80 will be placed in the Chamber Orchestra.

Students may challenge the chair above them up to 2 weeks before a concert. Students will be asked to play a difficult section of their music. The director and one other student will count the number of mistakes made. The student with the least mistakes will take the higher chair placement.

## GRADING

Grades are assigned for the orchestra course and performances, which are co-curricular.

- All legal documents of intervention (IEP, 504, etc.) will be observed and followed.
- Orchestra is an academic course. The grade received for the quarter will be counted in the GPA of the student.

**Auditions, Performances, Festival Attendance, Rubric Tests = 75 percent.** It is the student's responsibility to turn in all assignments, prepare for auditions/music pass-offs, and make scheduled events. Playing assignments for the school year will be short and played each Grading Period following the assessment rubric.

**Class Performance, Sectionals, Practice Logs = 25 percent.** This includes after-school rehearsals on the schedule. Every day, students must have their instruments (in good working order), a pencil, portfolio, and music at every rehearsal, and show maximum effort to earn the best grade. Please see daily grading rubric.

### **Deductions:**

See the appropriate rubric for grading.

### **Make-ups:**

Make-ups must take place within the quarter grading period during which the concert took place; students will be required to perform their concert music to the director. An unexcused make-up grade will not exceed 90.

## LOST MUSIC

Each student will be responsible for replacing copied music from someone else in their section. If the student loses an original copy, they must replace that part or the entire orchestra set at the current market price. See librarians or the director for any problems concerning music.



**SECTION 4**  
**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**  
**RESOURCES**

## MERIT SYSTEM

Students go above and beyond, and a merit system is a great way to reward them. The top five students with the highest merit points will receive a merit award at the end of the school year. Unfortunately, students may receive demerits. The following is the system that will be used.

### **Merits (Found in My Music Office)**

Before-school practice (personal)	2 points
Private Lessons	2 points per lesson
All-State Audition	4 points
All-State Member	10 points
Honor Orchestras	2 points
Solo and Ensemble Participation	2 points per event
Leadership Workshop (school or outside)	2 points
Youth Orchestra	20 points

### **Demerits**

Excessive Talking	5 points (tracked weekly)
Unexcused missed rehearsals	20 points
Tardiness	2 points per five minutes
Missing materials/no instrument	10 points
Missed performance	40 points

**Demerits may be worked off at the director(s) discretion.**

### **Middle School Orchestra Awards**

Students with demerits will be disqualified.

### **Master Musician (Wall Plaque, Certificate, and Pin)**

- One complete solo movement or etude of your choice for your instrument on a concert
- Perform GMEA 9/10 Grade Scale Requirements
- Key recognition test for major and minor keys
- Sight-reading at GMEA All-State Level
- Auditioned for all GMEA sanctioned honor orchestras.

### **Advanced Musician (Certificate and Pin)**

- One complete solo movement or etude at GMEA Solo and Ensemble
- Perform Middle School GMEA scale requirements
- Key recognition of major scales
- Sight-reading
- Auditioned for at least one GMEA approved honor orchestra.

### **Intermediate Musician (Certificate)**

- Spring audition solo for your instrument performed at an exceptional level
- Perform Middle School scale requirements at 2 octaves
- Key recognition on the Circle of 5<sup>th</sup>'s
- Sight-reading at an exceptional level

## SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

As we begin each school year, it is essential to review the orchestra program's social media policy and the expectations of each member and their family in regard to social media posting and use. The orchestra staff of Richmond Hill Middle School fully supports the freedoms of free speech, expression, and association, including the use of social media networks. As a Richmond Hill Orchestra Program member, you represent your community, Bryan County Schools, RHMS, and your directors. You are expected to portray yourself and your peers in an appropriate manner that fits within the Code of Conduct of BCS, RHMS, and the orchestra. Remember, participating in the orchestra is a privilege; we must always uphold the highest standards and integrity.

As a student, please remember that freedom of speech and expression is not unlimited. Social media sites do have privacy and terms of use policies. It is expected that you comply with these policies. With that said, some repercussions come along with violating the policies. Keep in mind these couple of things:

- **Everything you post on social media is considered public information** (even when you list a post as private). Anything you post can be accessible after you remove it and if copied prior to your deletion, could make its way around social media, which you have no control over.
- **What you post CAN affect your future.** Many employers, colleges, and athletic recruiters review your social media to evaluate you before offering jobs, scholarships, or even admission to schools.

Behaviors not tolerated:

- Derogatory language or remarks that may harm peers, directors, other teachers, administrators, representatives of the school, school district, or the community.
- Incriminating photos or comments which depict violence, hazing; bullying; harassment of any nature; inappropriate photos; using, or possessing controlled substances; or any other inappropriate behavior outlined in the BCS code of conduct.
- Threats or danger to the safety
- Violations to the Code of Conduct of BCS, RHMS, or the orchestra program policies.

We must present ourselves to the best moral standards. As an orchestra member, you are in the public eye and what actions you take on social media DOES reflect the orchestra program, its director(s), and the school. The positive image you present will be noticed and your reputation as an orchestra will be a positive one if you hold yourselves to high personal standards.

Any violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action outlined by the administration and possible removal from the orchestra program.