2025-2026
Program Handbook

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Dear Parent/Guardian,

We want to congratulate you on your child's decision to join one of the finest orchestra programs in Georgia. The 2025-2026 school year allows the orchestra to continue its outstanding tradition of excellence. Our musical activities encourage each member to reach their highest level of success.

As a member of this orchestra, your child will have many responsibilities and obligations to meet. We expect each student to do their part by attending all rehearsals and performances, participating in fundraisers, practicing individually, and striving for excellence. Our students excel not only in music but also in all areas of their lives.

Long-Term Commitment
It's important to recognize that joining orchestra is more than a one-year commitment. Our program builds skill, leadership, and musicianship year after year. Continued participation allows students to grow musically, socially, and academically, and the friendships they make often last throughout their school careers. By staying committed to orchestra long-term, students truly get the most out of this once-in-a-lifetime experience.

We want every member to have a meaningful, lasting impact through their time in our orchestra. Like any worthwhile activity, students will gain as much as they put into it. Our goal is for every student to grow with determination, self-discipline, a positive attitude, and a willingness to learn. What they gain through orchestra will enhance other areas of academics and beyond.

Your commitment to this program is vital to its continued growth and success. We are not just another school activity — we are a family built on tradition and mutual respect. Parents play an essential role in supporting student growth. Only about 10% of learning an instrument happens in orchestra class; the other 90% takes place at home with regular practice. We encourage you to become an active participant in this program.

We warmly WELCOME you to our orchestra family!

Thank You,

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

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 Richmond Hill Middle School Orchestra is committed to excellence through high-quality musical instruction. We strive to cultivate musicianship while fostering values of citizenship, leadership, respect, and dedication. Through hard work and pride in our school and community, each member grows both as a musician and as a responsible, engaged individual.

Program Vision Statement

"Excellence through Music"

The RHMS Orchestra Guided Principles - "The Orchestra Way"
We care about….

HOW WE ACT!
HOW WE LOOK!
HOW WE SOUND!

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Orchestra Program

This co-curricular program provides instruction on violin, viola, cello, and string bass, with an emphasis on the foundational skills essential for long-term musical success. Core techniques include proper posture and playing position, cultivating a characteristic tone, and developing strong music literacy.

No audition is required — only a desire and motivation to study a musical instrument! Students meet for 90 minutes on either A or B days, grouped by grade level.

Chamber Ensembles

Our chamber ensemble program features students performing in small groups of two, three, four, and sometimes up to twelve players. Throughout the school year, these ensembles participate in a variety of events and have an opportunity to perform for a rating at Solo and Ensemble.

Chamber Orchestra

This ensemble is considered our top-performing group. This group will consist of 7th and 8th graders (6th 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 music at the Grade 3 or above level and will participate in 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

My Music Office

My Music Office is an online platform designed to be a central location to locate information. Each parent will receive a unique username and password for their student's account. 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. Here you will find the most up-to-date information and calendars. Please make sure you check the website for updates before contacting the director.

Communications from the Director

We will be using the "Band App" this year for our communication and reminder tool. Emails will be sent only in the event individual information needs to be sent. To ensure you have the most up-to-date information, please download the free app and use the QR Code to register with the group. All other information will be found on the website.

Important Site Links

Orchestra Website: 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

- Per school policy, fees are no longer required from our members.
- Since we do not require a physical book, we kindly ask that parents purchase a subscription for MusicFirst, our at-home practice tool.
- Mr. Mock will never to turn a student away from orchestra due to any financial hardship. Please contact Mr. Mock if arrangements need to be made.

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 the 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. **Students will need to have an instrument at home for practice.**

Instruments should be rented or purchased from a local music store. **YOU SHOULD NEVER PURCHASE AN INSTRUMENT ONLINE OR FROM A PAWN SHOP WITHOUT CONSULTING THE 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 BEFORE PURCHASING.**

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

SCHOOL-OWNED INSTRUMENTS AND ACCESSORIES

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 get in touch with 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.

School-Owned accessories include should rests and rock stops/straps. These items should always remain in the orchestra room. Students may check-out these accessories during class using the check-out form.

If a student forgets their rented/personal instrument at home, students may check-out a school-owned instrument if it is available. Student will also receive a dedication in daily points and demerits.

CURRENT METHOD BOOKS

As of the 24-25 school year, physical books are no longer required for purchase. We will now use an online platform for home practice.

6th/7th Grade – Habits of a Successful Young String Musician
7th/8th Grade – Habits of a Successful Middle Level String Musician
All Grades – MusicFirst Subscriptions ($15)

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 and reported to administration. **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 reserved for **practice or private instruction.** Keep the room neat by placing the appropriate music stands in their designated locations.

Library, Office

The **library** is private and is intended for use only by library staff. Materials may be checked out through the librarian, including 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

Students and parents are responsible for resolving conflicts between orchestra activities and other outside events. The director and staff cannot manage these conflicts. Rehearsal and performance schedules are distributed well in advance and are posted on the website, allowing ample time to make any necessary arrangements. Students should avoid participating in activities that directly conflict with orchestra commitments.

If an outside commitment may cause a hardship concerning orchestra attendance, and it is not a one-time, unavoidable event, students must consult with the director to explore alternative

solutions. Both students and parents are expected to maintain a personal calendar of all orchestra dates and plan ahead.

Students are reminded that orchestra is a commitment and part of the academic curriculum. Conflicts with scheduled performances must be resolved in favor of orchestra participation. Please note that non-school-sponsored sports, vacations, lack of transportation, or other similar conflicts will not excuse absences from orchestra rehearsals or performances.

PRACTICING

As with any activity, **you get out of it what you put into it. The 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 and start slow
- 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

MusicFirst

MusicFirst is our new online practice system. Students will be registered at the beginning of each year. The subscription cost is $15 and should be paid through My Payments Plus at the beginning of each school year. This program will be used to track the student's practice time and habits, and will also serve as an assessment tool.

CONCERT DRESS-CODE

Please see the Parent Resource tab for dress code examples.

Gentlemen

- Black Long-Sleeve Dress Shirt
- Black ***Dress*** Slacks
- Black ***Dress*** Shoes
- **Black socks**

Ladies

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

Items not in dress code include jeans, athletic shoes, Crocs, flip-flops, shoes with white soles or designs (Converse style), large jewelry that is a distraction, and items that violate the school dress code.

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

Section 2

Creating a Tradition of Excellence

WHAT IS OUR 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 achieve this goal, one must adhere to the guiding 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 a growth mindset, a good attitude, 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, the 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. he 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, the music discipline must be strict! Music students and their parents must share the organization's ideals, principles, and philosophy. Each member must always be aware of good behavior and think for themselves. Any misconduct reflects poorly on the school, community, and music program. Any member who casts discredit on 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, 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. t 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.
- Take responsibility for and accept the consequences of 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 crucial to the organization's overall success. To maintain a high level of excellence, students 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

Section 3
Co-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 a 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 coverings, or sunglasses are permitted 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, ensure it reaches school.
- Students may practice in the band room; a sign-up form will be available.

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 the school would excuse 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 completed and returned **no later than one week prior to the absence. (Google Form located on the Orchestra Website)**
- For illness, a copy of a 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, other non-school-sponsored events or transportation issues **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 with sheet protectors (1-inch, paid through My Payments Plus)
- 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 (7th, one octave and 8th, 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 fewest mistakes will take the highest 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.

Summative Assessments, Performances, Concert 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, Portfolio Materials, 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 80.

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. All students will begin with 100 merit points.

Merits (Found in My Music Office)

Private Lessons	10 points per semester
All-State Audition	10 points
All-State Member	20 points
Honor Orchestras	10 points
Solo and Ensemble Participation	5 points per event
Leadership Workshop (school or outside)	2 points
Youth Orchestra	10 points per semester
On-time Pass-offs	5 points each
All Practice Records Turned-in	20 points per quarter

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.

Grade-Level Awards

- There will be a most dedicated and most improved award given out to each class at the end of the year. Criteria for this award is attendance, daily performance, merits, and participation.

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.