

Swanson M.S. Orchestra

Orchestra Handbook 2022-2023



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Course Overview

Welcome to the Swanson Orchestra! This year you will enhance your musical foundation through the study of orchestral performance. I take great pride in being a part of the orchestra program at Swanson and it is very important to me that you also take pride and enjoy our program. We all have the opportunity to put forth our best effort and get the most out of our time together in orchestra. It is my hope that this is just the beginning of your lifelong musical journey and that through orchestra you will:

- Advance your understanding of musical concepts
- Develop performance skills to play your instrument with a beautiful tone
- Improve music literacy
- Practice cooperation and self-discipline

Materials

REQUIRED:

- **Instrument**
 - Students must have a properly sized instrument to participate in the orchestra, and are encouraged to rent an instrument from a local music store (see list of local music stores).
 - There are a limited number of school instruments available to rent. **Priority will be given to students who qualify for financial assistance.**
 - Cello and Bass students may use a school instrument so that they don't need to bring their own instrument to school every day, but must have an instrument at home.
 - **School instrument rental fee:**
 - **\$100.00 – Standard rate**
 - **\$25.00 – Free/Reduced Lunch rate**

- **Accessories:**

- [Rosin](#)
- [Violin/Viola: Shoulder Rest or Sponge](#)
- [Cello/Bass: Endpin anchor](#)
- [Music Stand](#)
- [Metronome/Tuner](#)
- Pencil (provided in class)
- Soft Cloth

*Please contact Ms. Levy about information pertaining to instrument rental or purchase from a local music store if you have any questions. It is recommended that students change the strings on their instrument and re-hair the bow before the start of each school year to keep their instrument in good playing condition.

Local Music Stores

Foxes Music Company

416 Washington St.
Falls Church, VA 22046
<https://www.foxesmusic.com>

Day Violins

14221A Willard Rd #500
Chantilly, VA 20151
<https://www.dayviolins.com>

Brobst Violins

5584 General Washington Dr.
Alexandria, VA 22312
<https://brobstviolinshop.com>

Potters Violins

7711 Eastern Ave NW.
Takoma Park, MD 20912
<https://potterviolins.com>

Online Music Shops

Shar Music

2465 South Industrial Hwy
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
1-800-248-7427
www.sharmusic.com

Johnson String Instrument

11 John Street
Newton Center, MA 02459
1-800-359-9351
www.johnsonstring.com

Southwest Strings

1721 S. Cherrybell Strav
Tucson AZ, 85713
1-800-528-3430
www.swstrings.com

It is not necessary to buy an instrument. In fact, I recommend that you rent an instrument until you are certain your child has made a long term commitment and is ready for a full-sized instrument. **Your child must be measured by your teacher or at the music store to be fitted for the correct sized instrument.**

If you are considering purchasing an instrument from another source, please contact me to assist you. **EBAY and PAWNHOPS are NOT reliable sources** and often sell defective or simply unplayable instruments. **The #1 reason students lose interest is due to an instrument of poor quality that is difficult and frustrating to play.**

Grading Policy

Rehearsal Technique	25%
Quizzes and Tests	25%
Performances	50%

Rehearsal Technique

Students will earn 25 points per week for their participation in class. Students earn points by having all their materials, coming to class on time, following appropriate rehearsal protocol, and playing their instrument with the orchestra. Students who are not able to play because of long fingernails or inappropriate clothing (cellists!) will not earn their weekly participation points.

Quizzes and Tests

- **Performance Test**

Performance tests will be held once per quarter and will be used to determine seating placements. Performance tests will include excerpts from the concert music.

- **Fundamentals**

Fundamentals are instrumental skills learned during orchestra class and include left hand and right hand techniques. Students will practice fundamentals during class and will be assessed on these skills during class time. Each fundamentals playing quiz is worth 25 points for a total of 75 points per quarter.

- **Music Literacy**

Students will be responsible for completing written music theory and literacy assignments. Literacy assignments will be explained during class but completed for homework. Each unit culminates with a written literacy quiz given during class time. Literacy quizzes are 50 points.

Performances

Students are required to attend all concerts and dress rehearsals. Students should arrive on time and in concert attire to receive full credit. Be sure to mark all concert and rehearsal dates in your calendar well in advance, and let Ms. Levy know if you have an unavoidable conflict. Students who must miss a concert for any reason will have to submit an alternative assignment to earn concert credit. An alternative assignment must be completed to receive credit if rehearsals are missed.

Swanson M.S. Orchestra

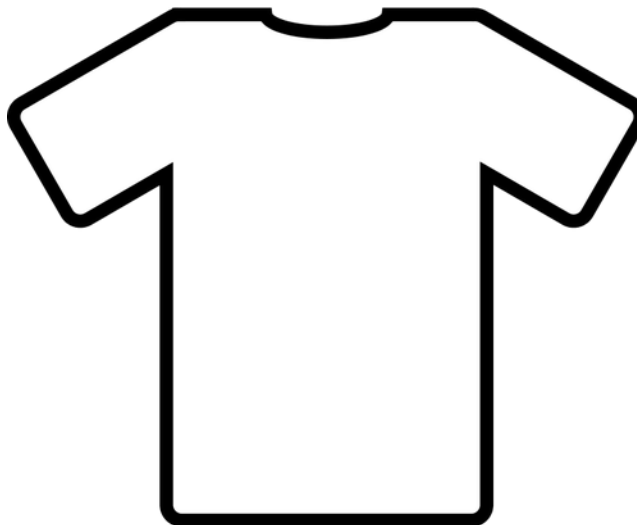
Formal Concert Attire (Winter Concert, Assessment, Spring Concert)

- White Shirt
- Black dress pants or long black skirt (no leggings or jeans)
- Black dress shoes

Informal Concert Attire (In-school performances, Field Trips)

- Swanson Orchestra Short Sleeved T-Shirt
- Jeans (no holes)
- Sneakers (no crocs)

Would you like to design our Orchestra T-Shirt this year? I would love some ideas!



Information on ordering Orchestra T-Shirts will be available very soon.
*If you need financial assistance please contact Ms. Levy

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2022-2023 EVENT CALENDAR

Dates in Bold are Required Attendance

October 28, 6:30 pm 7:00-9:00 pm	Orchestra Halloween Concert* Masquerade Party (Band, Choral & Orchestra Students)
Wed, Nov. 9, 4:30-7:30pm	APS Honor Orchestra Auditions - Kenmore MS*
Tues, Nov 15, TBD	Jr. District Orchestra Audition - Franklin MS*
Fri. Dec 2, 7:00pm	Winter Orchestra Concert
Tues, Jan 10, TBD	APS Jr. Honor Orchestra Rehearsals Begin - Kenmore MS*
Fri-Sat, Jan 13-14, TBD	Jr. District Orchestra Event - Langley HS*
Wed-Fri, Jan 25-28, 5:30-8:30pm	APS Honor Orchestra Rehearsals - Kenmore MS*
Sat, Jan 28, TBD	APS Honor Orchestra Concert - Kenmore MS*
Wed, Feb 15, 7:00pm	Orchestra Pre-Assessment Concert - YHS
Fri-Sat, Apr 28-29, TBD	District 12 Solo and Ensemble Festival - Rocky Run MS*
Fri-Sat, Mar, 10-11, TBD	Middle School Orchestra Assessment - Marshall HS
Sat. May 6	Possible Spring Trip for Prelude Ensemble (6th grade)*
Fri, May 12	Possible Spring Trip for Admiral's Orchestra (7th and 8th grade)*
Fri, June 2, 7:00pm	Spring Orchestra Concert

Field Trips

Each spring the orchestra tries to participate in Music at the Parks. This is an all day field trip to a Theme Park where students have the opportunity to perform as an orchestra for judges to receive a rating and feedback. Students will also have time to enjoy the park with their friends. More information about this will be coming soon. The tentative date for our spring trip is Friday, May 12. Parents chaperones are needed for this trip so save the date!

Private Lessons

Students who enjoy their instruments and who are interested in improving their performance may consider taking private lessons. Private instructors teach one on one, at the student's pace, and help each student develop technical and musical skills specific to their instruments. These skills can be well applied in an orchestra setting, and in most cases, students who work with a private instructor progress much faster than those who do not. Teacher fees vary and are generally between \$60 to \$100 an hour. Lesson lengths may also vary - 30 mins is recommended for 6th grade, 45 minutes is recommended for 7th/8th grade. If you are interested in getting instruction see the [PRIVATE TEACHER LIST](#).

APS Junior Honors Orchestra

This is an honor orchestra for APS students in 4th-6th grade by audition. Students accepted into this ensemble rehearse weekly from January through March and perform in the honors concert. The audition for Junior Honors Orchestra will be held on Wednesday, Nov. 9. More information can be found at <https://www.apsva.us/honors-music-band-chorus-orchestra/>.

APS Honors Orchestra

This is an honor orchestra for APS students in 7th-9th grade by audition. Students accepted into this ensemble rehearse Jan. 25-28 in the evening and perform in an honors concert on Saturday, Jan. 28. The audition for Junior Honors Orchestra will be held on Wed., Nov. 9. More information can be found at <https://www.apsva.us/honors-music-band-chorus-orchestra/>.

Junior District Honors Orchestra

Junior District Honors Orchestra (JDHO) auditions will take place on Tuesday, November 15th. The Junior District Honors Orchestra Event will be held Friday – Saturday January 13-14, 2023. Students in grades 7-8 interested in auditioning for JDHO must apply. Applications and fees will be due on or about September 16, 2022.

Solo and Ensemble Festival

Solo and Ensemble Festival will be held April 28-29 at Rocky Run Middle School this year. Students who would like to participate prepare a solo or ensemble piece to perform for a judge who will give feedback and a rating. Students who are interested should register and pay the fee on about March 1, 2023.

Orchestra Expectations and Policies

Class Community Expectations

- Work hard and be kind.
- Follow directions.
- Try your best and don't be afraid of making mistakes!

Attendance and Absence

- If you are absent, please check Canvas to see what you have missed.
- It is your responsibility to submit missed projects and assignments on time unless discussed with Ms. Levy.

Late Assignment Policy

- All assignments are due by 10:00PM the day it is due, unless otherwise specified, or discussed with Ms. Levy.
- Students who submit late work will receive a 10% deduction per day until the assignment is submitted.
- Students who score below 70% on any assignment, quiz or project may submit a retake.

I confirm that:

- I have read and understand the policies stated in the Orchestra Handbook.
- I agree to comply with the class rules, procedures and expectations.
- I have a calendar of this year's orchestra events. I understand that scheduled events may be changed as this year progresses, and safety/health will be the priority. Parents will be notified immediately of any changes.
- I understand the financial obligation to the orchestra program. No student will be denied participation due to financial concerns. Contact Ms. Levy for assistance.

Student Name

Parent/Guardian Name

Student Signature

Parent/Guardian Signature
