



ThunderRidge High School Orchestra Handbook 2019-2020

The TRHS Orchestra program stresses the creative and artistic values of music through the performance of quality literature that combines techniques, historical and cultural significance and aesthetic values. There is a place for anyone who wishes to learn and pursue excellence!

The purpose of the ThunderRidge HS Orchestra Program is to help students:

1. Develop skills in playing a string instrument
2. Develop music performance skills
3. Develop music reading skills
4. Understand music theory
5. Understand music styles and music history
6. Enjoy playing and listening to music

Orchestra Procedures and Guidelines

1. Students are expected to be in their seats with instruments, music and supplies ready for rehearsal by approximately 5 minutes after the beginning of the period. Students are considered “tardy” if they are not in their seats ready for instruction.
2. Backpacks are not allowed in the rehearsal area.
3. There can be no food, gum, candy or drinks (except water) in orchestra class.
4. There are to be no electronics in orchestra class. Please leave your phones and iPods off.
5. Students should take care of bathroom needs before and after class.
6. Student behavior should not interfere with my ability to teach or any student’s ability to learn.
7. Instruments and equipment are to be treated with respect. This includes chairs, stands, and music. Fines will be assessed for repair or replacement of damaged property.
8. If a student does not have an instrument during rehearsal, they will not receive daily participation points.

Concerts

Each ensemble will perform several concerts each year. **All performances are required.** The only exceptions are extreme illness or family emergency. All other conflicts should be communicated no less than one week prior to the performance and will be determined to be excused or unexcused at the discretion of the director.

Make-up work for excused absences will be offered for full credit. Only partial credit will be offered for unexcused absences. The make-up work is a 3-4 page (or 3000-4000 word) composer report selected by Mr. Hutchins. The report should include a brief biography of the selected composer, followed by a report on their career, accomplishments, musical achievements, impact on music, etc. Be specific. The report should be typed, double spaced, and written in a professional and educational manner. Make-up assignments are due within one week of the concert.

Concert Attire

Attire for all performances is “concert black.” Students should strictly adhere to the dress code. Dresses should be floor length and modest. Tuxedos should include black jacket, bow tie, pants, shoes (and socks). If a student’s attire for the concert is deemed inappropriate by the director, that student will be asked to not perform with the ensemble, and receive an “unexcused absence.”

This is subject to change at the discretion of the director

Concert Dates

Thursday **October 24th** - 7 PM

Thursday **November 14th** - 7 PM (Feeder Festival, in TRHS Main Gym)

Thursday **December 12th** - 7 PM

Thursday **February 27th** - 7PM

Thursday **May 7th** - Orchestra Banquet and Concert, 5:30PM

CHSAA or Other Festival Performance TBA

Important Dates

Friday **September 20th** - Western State Auditions Due

Tuesday **November 12th** - All-State Orchestra Auditions Due

Instrument Guidelines and Maintenance

We have very good equipment available at TRHS. We are very proud to provide our students with equipment that will enhance their performance and allow them to progress. Please be meticulous in your use of all school owned equipment. Report any problems with instruments and equipment to Mr. Hutchins.

Instruments may be rented from the school. Rental is \$100.00 per semester. You will be billed through your Infinite Campus account. School owned instruments will be issued on the basis of need, and student interest. Students receiving school instruments assume all responsibility for the care and handling of the instrument, and will be charged for the cost of repairs or replacement. See Mr. Hutchins if you need to rent a school instrument.

Lockers

Students will be assigned a locker to store his/her instruments. You must provide your own combination lock. Do not store food, or drink in your lockers. We reserve the right to inspect lockers at any time.

Required Materials

1. Strings – Each student **must** have a complete set of replacement strings. Strings break at inconvenient times. Please purchase “Dominant” brand strings. They have a better sound than cheaper brands.
2. Metronome/Tuner - These can be downloaded for free or cheap (<\$5!!!) on your smart phone. I recommend “Tonal Energy.”
3. Mute – Mutes for string instruments are available from music vendors in the Denver area.
4. Shoulder rest (for violins & violas) – **ALL VIOLINISTS AND VIOLISTS MUST HAVE A SHOULDER REST.** Students cannot tune their own instruments or develop a good playing posture without one. There are many shoulder rests on the market and most of them are good. A popular brand is the “Kun” shoulder rest. I also really like the “Wolf” and “Mach One” shoulder rests. The advantage to these shoulder rests is that the legs are made of metal and don’t break as readily. These shoulder rests range in price from \$18-\$60. At the very least, students should have a contoured sponge shoulder rest. These are available through most string music vendors for around \$4.
5. Cello/Bass stop – Anytime cellists play on a surface other than carpeting they will need an end pin stop. Without a cello stop the instrument will slide around and can’t be played properly. These are available at all string music dealers.
6. Rosin – Every string player must have his/her own rosin and use it often. Rosin should be used twice a week or more depending on how much a bow is used. It is available through all string music vendors beginning at \$3.50.
7. Pencil – Students should have two pencils in their music folders at all times.

Grading

Grading for instrumental music is based on participation, assignments and performances.

Participation:

Students can earn 15 points weekly (5 daily) for positive participation in class. Positive participation is:

- *Having all necessary equipment including instrument, pencil, extra strings, etc.
- *Being on time
- *Keep talking to a minimum and avoid using your cellphone
- *Do not play out of turn and show respect for others

Points will be deducted at the discretion of the director for not complying with the above. If you do not have your instrument you will lose all 5 (daily) points.

Sight Reading/Google Classroom Assignments:

Students are required to complete sight reading assignments per semester (as assigned by the director through Sight Reading Factory). Each sight reading assignment is worth 5 points. These assignments can be retaken at will, and are given pass/fail credit. Final due date is Friday, December 13th..

Each class will have Google Classroom assignments to complete throughout the course of the semester. These assignments will be submitted online via Google Classroom, and can include playing-checks, or written/listening assignments. These assignments will be worth between 25 and 50 points each. Late work for Google Classroom assignments will be accepted for up to one week after the due date.

Performances

Performances are worth 200 points and are required. See above for details.

The grading scale for orchestra is the standard DCSD grading scale. “90-100 - A”, etc.

Tardies

Make-up work will be assigned for students after every 3rd tardy. This make-up work will include a sight reading assignment, and a brief playing-check of materials covered in class at the time of the tardy. This make-up work will be assigned for credit and worth points similar to participation grades.

“Remind 101”

I will asking students to register for the text-message app called “Remind101.” This is an app that allows for teachers to send mass secure, one-way text message reminders to students. Students will **not** have to download the app, simply sign up for my class lists.

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact me.

Taylor Hutchins
thutchins@dcsdk12.org
Cell: (719) 659-7452 (Emergencies only!)