Dickerson Middle School Orchestra
2021-2022
Student/Parent Handbook

August 2021

Welcome to the Dickerson Middle School Orchestra!
It is our pleasure to welcome you to an exciting new year of making music. Students will learn the proper care and technique of playing a string instrument. Each student will learn to read music, as well as understand and apply music vocabulary. Students will work as individuals and as a team to experience the process of learning and performing music. In order to accomplish this, we will need the full support and dedication of orchestra families. Please use the guide below to help get a head start on materials required for orchestra this year. We, along with the Dickerson Middle School Orchestra appreciate your commitment as a music parent. We are excited about our upcoming musical experiences.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide a clear outline of the goals and requirements needed to succeed in the orchestra program. Please feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns. It is very important that you read this guide and return the required forms as an indication that you and your child have:

1. Read and discussed this information together;
2. Thoroughly examined and notated the calendar section
3. Subscribe to the DMS Orchestra email list on our website.

Tricia Hardy, Director and Jacob Bitinas, Assistant Director
855 Woodlawn Drive
Marietta, GA 30068
770-578-2710
Tricia.Hardy@cobbk12.org
Jacob.Bitinas@cobbk12.org

www.dickersonorchestra.org

Expectations

Students will learn music through string instruction. They will learn to read, count and perform music on their respective instruments. Students will perform in a variety of performances throughout the year as part of the music curriculum. Students will also learn music through music history, theory, listening, vocabulary, writing and guest artists.

Behavior

All students are expected to follow the policies set forth by Dickerson Middle School and the Cobb County School District, which can be found on the Cobb County Schools website.

Consequences

If a student has difficulty following the classroom rules the following consequences will result:

1st Offense Teacher acknowledgement and verbal warning
2nd Offense Loss of rehearsal skills points, behavior is noted in agenda
3th Offense Parent contacted, administration notified if necessary

Concerts/Performances

Orchestra is a team effort. If one person misses, the entire team is let down. You are expected to perform at every concert. If you are aware that you are unable to attend a concert, please give notice as soon as possible. Full concert credit is given when you are in attendance at the requested time, required uniform, demonstrate expected concert behavior, and are prepared with the required materials. If a concert is missed, students have two weeks to perform the concert music on the orchestra iPad for a grade.

Seating

Seating is constantly rotated and is not according to playing ability. Student seating within the ensemble is based solely on the director's discretion. Students may be moved at any time throughout the school year. The goal is to have a balanced orchestra that works as well as possible for everyone.

Music Standards:

Standard #1: Singing, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music
Standard #2: Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music
Standard #3: Reading and notating music
Standard #4: Improvising melodies, variations, and accompaniments
Standard #5: Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines
Standard #6: Listening to, analyzing and describing music
Standard #7: Evaluating music and music performances
Standard #8: Understanding relationships between music, the other arts and disciplines
Standard #9: Understanding music in relation to history and culture

Grading:

In order to be promoted to the next grade level of orchestra, students must demonstrate musical comprehension of classroom material as well as instrumental performance. This is done by maintaining a minimum 70% average each quarter. Grades are determined based on the following percentages:

25%-Performances
25%-Rehearsal Skills
20%-Class Assignments
30%-Playing Checks

Before School Policy: Students must check in the cafeteria, make sure a director's name is posted, and be on task practicing an instrument during this time. Students may lose this privilege if policy is not followed.

Rehearsal Skills-100 points, every two weeks
Each student begins with 100 points. Points are deducted for not meeting the following expectations:
-Prepared with materials
-Performing with correct posture and participation
-Demonstrating appropriate classroom behavior

Binder/Folder
Notebooks (3-ring,1-inch binder with 50 sheets of lined paper OR 3-prong folder) are to be labeled with student's name, grade, instrument and orchestra class. They are to be kept in the orchestra classroom and used only for orchestra. The orchestra notebook will be used to keep all papers and notes given out during the orchestra class period. Notebooks will be checked every nine weeks for a grade. It is crucial that each student keep the notebook in order and to make sure they have all materials, especially if a day has been missed. Assignments will be graded accordingly. This binder can be reused each year or orchestra so students will leave the middle school program with a portfolio-type resource book.

Assignments/Playing checks
In-class assignments value will vary based on the material. Any assignments or quizzes will be out of 100 points.

Lockers: Students will be assigned lockers that are shared, school property. It is the responsibility of the students to keep the locks locked and materials put away properly. Any locks that are not regularly locked and go missing become the responsibility of the students. The cost to replace a school lock is $5.

Materials

All students will need the following: (Please have the first week of school)
-**A one-inch, 3-ring binder** or 3-prong folder used only for orchestra. Please label the notebook with student name, grade, instrument and orchestra class.
-**50 sheets of lined notebook paper** (ruling is your choice)
-**Pencils** (No pens in music)

Beginners (6th Grade): Please Purchase
-Essential Elements for Strings, Book 1 –appropriate instrument*Purchase at music store/ online

Intermediate (7th Grade): Please Purchase
-Essential Elements for Strings, **Book 2** –appropriate instrument (should have from previous year). *Purchase at music store or online

Music

Each student will be provided a music folder and a copy of music to take home for practice. Extras copies for practice cannot be guaranteed. Please take of music copies and folder.

Instruments

Violins and violas are expected to rent or purchase an instrument for their use. Instruments are expected at school every orchestra day unless told otherwise. Students needing to borrow an instrument from the school must sign it out for class. School instruments are not guaranteed to be available and alternate work may be assigned at the teacher's discretion. Students that repeatedly missing their instrument will receive deductions from the rehearsal skills portion of their grade.

Cello and bass players may use school instruments. Students are expected to rent or purchase an instrument for home practice. School instruments are to be treated with the utmost respect and handling. If any abuse is noticed, disciplinary action will be taken.

If you would like any assistance with finding a rental or to purchase an instrument, please feel free to contact me.

Many times, a poor-quality instrument inhibits the progress of the student and cost a great deal of money to make it playable. PLEASE keep the following in mind:

Keys to finding a quality instrument:

1. **Rent to Own** Stores offer great services like free repair, upgrades and trade-in policies. Please work with a store that has a **string specialist** and completes repairs in house and in a timely manner.

2. **Bring it in!** I would not recommend purchasing anything until I have had a chance to check it out. I would be more than happy to assist in trying out potential instruments.

3. **Go to a reputable dealer** Don't just look for a cheap price. All instruments should be played before purchase. Rental instruments are typically higher quality than cheap purchases and can eventually be upgraded.

4. **Absolutely no "internet specials."** Instruments deemed unplayable will be sent home. Ms. Hardy's favorite analogy: Could you run a foot race in flip-flops? Sure. Would it be the best to run in a decent pair of running shoes instead? YES. Please trust your experienced experts, we know what we are doing and can produce a quality product with a quality instrument.

Required Instrument Supplies

Violins/Violas: Shoulder rest ****PLEASE consider comfort and obtain a genuine shoulder rest such as Everest, MUCO or KUN brands.** Sponges are tough for young musicians to maneuver (not recommended), Rosin, Clean Cloth (old clean rag), Instrument nametag

Cello/Bass: Rock stop, Rosin, clean cloth, Instrument nametag

The Cobb County School District does not have insurance or any other plan that will cover damage, theft, or loss of privately-owned equipment. If that equipment is to be covered, it must be through the parent's personal insurance, such as homeowner's policy, etc.

Performance Uniforms and Fees

Uniform dress is required for orchestra members to present an appealing stage appearance as an ensemble. Uniforms are aesthetically pleasing and reflect the formality of an orchestra performance. It also allows the listener and performer to focus on the beauty of the music and not be distracted.

7/8 Orchestra Students

Ladies:

Concert dress ordered through school orchestra supply**:**
This dress should last student through 7th and 8th grade. Used dresses are available at a lower cost on a first come, first served basis.
-Black or nude flat dress shoes
***You are responsible for the dress alteration for appropriate length of ½" from ground when shoes are on.**

Gentlemen:

-Black tux shirt and tux pants purchased through school orchestra supply:
-Black dress shoes
-Black dress socks
***You are responsible for alteration of the pants to the appropriate length of ½" from ground when dress shoes are on.**

Other: One pair of small earrings only. No necklaces, bracelets, rings or anything "un-uniform" to other students. Hair should be styled appropriately and out of the face. Look professional.

Orchestra Website

The Dickerson Middle School Orchestra has its own website. All families and friends of the orchestra are invited to view the website. Forms, information, photos and orchestra news will be available. **PLEASE sign up for email notifications of when the website is updated.** First names and photos from class/music events will be shared on the site. The web address is:

www.dickersonorchestra.org

Orchestra Classroom Policies

1. Be respectful

Of adults, other students, instruments, and materials. You do not have the right to touch anything that doesn't belong to you. **Negative words about others are unacceptable.**

2. Follow "pass" rules

-Bathroom/water/hall passes all with approval from teacher and with pass. All such events may occur **before and after class unless an emergency. You have FOUR minutes to get to class, use the facilities then.**

3. Food, Drink, Treats: Only through teacher

-No gum, candy, food, drinks allowed in the orchestra room.

4.Instrument Storage and Care

-Treat your instrument and materials with respect. Keep your instrument in the case at all times when not practicing. Do not store it in the car, or any place with drastic temperature changes.

5. **Please give it your best** Every day, in everything you do.

Handbook Contract
Dickerson Middle School Orchestra

I have read the 2021-2022 Dickerson Middle School Orchestra Handbook and reviewed with my child the policies and procedures contained therein. I understand that there may be extra rehearsals and performances scheduled outside the school day. I agree to the uniform requirements as stated in the handbook.

The policies set forth in this handbook are subject to change or amendment at the discretion of the principal or the orchestra director. I understand that I may contact a director if any questions or concerns arise regarding the orchestra program.