

**Dr. Phillips High School
Orchestra Handbook
2016-2017**

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Dr. Phillips High School Orchestra

Student and Parent Handbook

This handbook has been written to provide orchestra members, parents and other interested persons with information concerning the Orchestral Activities at Dr. Phillips High School. It is not possible for this handbook to answer to all questions that may arise. All orchestra members and parents are urged to read this booklet carefully in order to avoid conflicts with the policies stated. It will also give the reader an idea of what is expected of each student.

School rules and policies are in effect any time a student is involved in an activity sponsored by or in the name of Dr. Phillips High School. School policy shall have priority over orchestra policy in the event of any conflict.

The orchestra director has the authority to suspend or amend any policy at any time deemed necessary to maintain the integrity of the orchestra program.

Membership in the Orchestra Program

The orchestra program is open to all students demonstrating the desire, ability, academic eligibility and proper attitude to be a member of the group, provided the student has AT LEAST one CONSECUTIVE year of playing experience (a student cannot play in elementary or middle school, skip grades, then join our orchestra program). Students with no playing experience are not eligible to join. Each student will have an equal and fair opportunity for participation and advancement in the orchestra program. Students will be placed in an orchestral ensemble at the discretion of the director based upon audition results.

All students entering the program must have and maintain at least a 2.0 GPA. Students may be asked to show the director their grades in order to verify that they are following this rule. Any student failing to remain eligible shall be suspended from all orchestral activities until their academic status has been regained. However, this does not excuse the student from attending orchestral functions. These functions include, but are not limited to, regularly scheduled class periods, after school rehearsals and concerts. Students who are ineligible from performing may be assigned an alternative project to offset the loss of points *at the director's discretion.*

Orchestra Class Description

Sinfonia Orchestra (Orchestra III, IV, V, VI)

Sinfonia Orchestra is for players who have mastered the fundamentals and are ready for more intermediate techniques. This full-sized string ensemble performs in several concerts during the school year. In addition, Sinfonia Orchestra also offers the opportunity to participate in performance assessment at the district level. Members of this class are strongly encouraged to participate in District Solo & Ensemble.

Philharmonia Orchestra (Orchestra III, IV, V, VI)

Philharmonia Orchestra is an ensemble for players who *already have a solid set of intermediate skills*. It is devoted to strengthening & advancing players' skills and ensemble playing techniques to a more advanced level. Philharmonia Orchestra also offers the opportunity to participate in performance assessment at the district level. Members of this class are strongly encouraged to participate in District Solo & Ensemble.

Chamber Orchestra (Orchestra III, IV, V, VI)

Chamber Orchestra is a more advanced ensemble. Students in this orchestra have mastered both fundamental, intermediate, & early advanced skills and techniques, and are ready to learn or improve skills like shifting and vibrato in higher levels of repertoire. Members of this class are required to participate in TWO of the three following activities: District Solo & Ensemble, audition for All-County, audition for All-State. In the event a student completes all three, they will be eligible for extra rewards, including, but not limited to, an automatic A in the class.

Premiere Orchestra (Orchestra III, IV, V, VI)

The Premiere Orchestra is the Advanced Ensemble at Dr. Phillips HS. Music selection for this ensemble includes advanced string repertoire, from the standard orchestral repertoire to contemporary compositions. Members of this class are required to participate in TWO of the three following activities: District Solo & Ensemble, audition for All-County, audition for All-State. In the event a student completes all three, they will be eligible for extra rewards, including, but not limited to, an automatic A in the class.

VPA Magnet Program

The Visual and Performing Arts Magnet is a special program offered only at one school in the county - Dr. Phillips High School. This program is intended to give students with a serious interest in music extra opportunities to develop and explore their art on the highest level. In addition to performing in the orchestra, a string magnet student takes keyboard, music history, electronic music and music theory, including Advanced Placement music theory, which can earn college credit. Students participate in and attend monthly recitals, technique classes, master classes and seminars to enhance their learning opportunities. Students can apply for VPA after their eighth or ninth grade year. It should be remembered that VPA students are **REQUIRED** to take private lessons, AND participate in District Solo & Ensemble.

The Importance of Discipline

Due to the nature of the organization, discipline within the orchestra must best be strict. Orchestra students and their parents must be willing to accept the ideals, principles and rules of the organization.

Orchestra members are constantly on display. Therefore, each member must always be aware of the importance of good behavior. Basic values are a requirement. Any misconduct casts a negative light on the orchestra, as well as Dr. Phillips High School. This may very well undo the hard work and good effort of many loyal students. In addition, misconduct reflects on your community and parents/guardians. Students should discipline themselves in order to be the best possible person. Students who are repeatedly

disciplined by school authorities for violation of school policies are a liability to the program, and are subject to dismissal.

The Importance of Responsibility

Attendance Makes Progress Possible !!!!

- Be at all rehearsals and performances on time...which means early! There is a difference between being present and being ready.
- Being absent from a rehearsal or performance is not like missing a class such as English or History. When even one member of a performing ensemble is gone, the total musical experience is diminished for all. There is no possible way to make up the experience of a missed rehearsal or performance.

Respect, Respect, Respect!!!

- Take care of your personal and school equipment and do not touch what is not yours.
- Respect the right of others and learn, and the teacher to teach by not causing an interruption to the rehearsal. There are times to work and times to play....do not get the two confused.
- If you cannot say something positive, do not say anything at all. We are here to build people up, not tear people down.

***Students who are found engaging in hurtful, racist, disparaging, harassing, abusive, homophobic, or intolerant actions or communication will receive severe consequences, including **possible dismissal** from the orchestra program. The orchestra room, and our program, is a place where ALL are welcome and should feel safe from fear of bullying. Students who actively try to hurt another human being, in any capacity, are the only ones not welcome into our community. Be kind, always.

The Importance of Communication

Communication Is KEY!!!!

- Call or email in advance if you are going to be absent.
- Know your calendar and work out schedule conflicts well in advance of the event.
- If you would like extra help, just ask. If I can't help you, I'll find someone who can.
- If you are ever troubled or unsure about something that has to do with this program, please come talk to me first. My door is always open.

The orchestra director will maintain communication in a variety of ways. It is suggested that students check the following resources DAILY in order to stay informed.

- Weekly email newsletters (sent to email addresses provided by the students)
- Updates from the DPHS Orchestra Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/DPHSOrchestras/>
- Texts using the Remind texting system. A class code will be provided on the first day of class.
- Posting music, and other assignments through Edmodo. A class code will be provided on the first day of class.

Performing Arts Department Rules

No Food, Gum, Candy or Drink in the orchestra rehearsal, ensemble, practice or keyboard rooms, with the exception of bottled water that has a screw-cap lid.

The orchestra building will be kept clean. This includes hallways, restrooms, classrooms, ensemble and practice rooms, keyboard room and lockers. Any personal items left outside of a locker or designated area in the orchestra room will be considered abandoned and will be discarded after being placed in the "Lost and Found" for a period of one week.

Students must have all materials present for rehearsal in order to receive full credit for participation. Students are expected to have instrument, pencil and music every day.

Uniforms

Uniforms must be clean and presentable for all performances. Students who are not dressed properly will lose points from their grade for that performance.

Men

Black, long-sleeved dress shirt, black dress pants (no jeans), and a BLUE tie (one can be purchased for \$5.95 at <http://www.solidcolorneckties.com/Solid-Royal-Blue-Tie-p/ra57na-0036.htm>). You must provide your own black dress shoes (no sneakers) and black socks.

Women

Floor-length black velvet and chiffon gown. One can be purchased for \$59 at http://www.stageaccents.com/quick_delivery/product/2526/start/2/. All materials are machine washable. You must provide your own black stockings, and all-black, plain (no sequins, shiny buckles, etc.) **closed-toe** shoe. The shoes may be flats or heels. Obviously you must also wear appropriate undergarments, which you must provide.

Attendance Policy

In a performance class, attendance is crucial. Missing even one day is almost impossible to make up. It is imperative to attend every rehearsal and performance.

After school rehearsals

After school rehearsals are mandatory. All after school rehearsals will be listed in the calendar at the end of this handbook, and any changes will be communicated two weeks in advance. This allows student's work schedules to be changed and transportation arranged. In the event of a student conflict with another school function, it is the student's responsibility to talk to both faculty members in order to work out a compromise. This must be done at least one week in advance. If you give Mrs. Allen an excuse, written or otherwise, less than 5 days before an after school rehearsal, it **WILL NOT BE EXCUSED, NO EXCEPTIONS!!!** Another school event does not excuse the orchestra member from rehearsal. According to OCPS rules on music performance classes, after school rehearsals are considered to be an extension of the class, therefore grades can be lowered if rehearsals are missed. Orchestra is a co-curricular activity, whereas sports, clubs and organizations are extracurricular. Participation in outside activities is encouraged, but in the event of conflict, a graded class takes priority over an extracurricular activity. Students should be picked up immediately after rehearsal ends.

After school rehearsal schedule

Whenever an after school rehearsal is scheduled, it will ALWAYS follow the schedule below. Each rehearsal is 45 minutes long, unless otherwise stated in the orchestra calendar. All rehearsals are in the orchestra room on North Campus unless otherwise stated.

Rehearsal grading policy:

If a student is between 1 and 10 minutes late to rehearsal, their grade will be lowered to a C. If a student is more than 10 minutes late, they will not receive credit for that rehearsal.

Rehearsal Schedule (rehearsal times are an hour earlier if rehearsals are on Wednesdays):

Chamber 2:30pm Premiere 3:30pm Sinfonia 4:30pm Philharmonia 5:30pm

Performances

Concerts are mandatory. Because music is a performing art, failure to perform on a concert will result in a severely lowered grade. In the event of a student conflict with another school function, it is the student's responsibility to talk to both faculty members in order to work out a compromise. This must be done at the earliest possible time. Another school event does not excuse the orchestra member from the concert.

Whenever a concert is scheduled to take place in the DPHS Performing Arts Center, it will ALWAYS follow the schedule below. Changes to this schedule will be avoided whenever possible, and should changes need to be made, they will be communicated well in advance.

Concert grading policy:

Students should arrive by the call time listed below. At that time, they will pick up their name card, which they will keep until after the concert. Students who do not arrive by call time to pick up their card will be considered tardy. IT IS THE STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY to arrive in enough time to collect their card. Tardiness lowers a concert grade from an "A" to a "C". Students then follow the schedule below and any directions from the director. AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE CONCERT (students are not permitted to leave early), after the stage has been cleaned, and the instruments have been secured, then students may turn in their name cards for full credit. Students who try to turn in another student's card who already left will receive an "F", as will the student who left early.

Concert schedule:

3:30pm- CALL TIME. Present in the orchestra room with card in hand
4:00pm- Depart orchestra room with instruments, heading for PAC
4:30pm- Sinfonia dress rehearsal on stage (All others may eat, do homework, change, etc)
5:00pm- Philharmonia dress rehearsal on stage (All others may eat, do homework, change, etc)
5:30pm- Chamber dress rehearsal on stage (All others may eat, do homework, change, etc)

6:00pm- Premiere dress rehearsal onstage (All others may eat, do homework, change, etc)

6:30pm- DOORS OPEN. Students are to be in their places by this time (Sinfonia on stage, all others in their seats in the audience).

Grading Policy

All students will be graded fairly based on their own individual accomplishments. The grading policy will be clearly defined in this handbook, specific to the course in which the student is enrolled. The county grading scale of 90-100 = A, etc., will be used:

State Grading Scale:

- A 90-100%
- B 80-89%
- C 70-79%
- D 60-69%
- F 59% and below

The following articles are used to determine a students' final grade in orchestra. There is no "weight" system, each item "worth" the same amount as every other item.

***The director reserves the right to lower or raise a students' final grade to reflect behavior, participation, or accomplishment as necessary. These grade changes can be provided with an explanation upon request, but that will not necessarily change the final grade.

Daily Participation – Students will be awarded points during each class period. Failure to bring all materials to class, disruption, lack of appropriate participation, tardiness to one's seat and violations of room rules, such as food, gum, candy or drink cause deductions in participation grades. ***After one unexcused tardy, each successive unexcused tardy will result in 0 participation points for that day. If you think you might be late, get a pass; a long walk from South Campus will not be considered "excused".

Tested Materials - Playing tests will be given at the director's discretion. All will be announced beforehand. Finger nails that are too long to accommodate required categories of the playing tests will result in a low test grade. Written or electronic tests or quizzes may also be given as appropriate to the material being studied, some of which may be unannounced.

Rehearsals – REQUIRED. Preparation for concerts and MPA performances is crucial; therefore students should make every effort to not miss rehearsals, both during class and after school when applicable.

Performances – REQUIRED. Concerts and MPA Performances are a large part of the student's grade.

Absence Policy

UNEXCUSED – These situations are automatically unexcused except in extreme circumstances at the discretion of the director.

Work

Detentions (Orchestra students are expected not to get detentions)

No ride home/parent did not provide needed transportation

“I forgot” (this includes I forgot my instrument)

Club meetings

EXCUSED – Submit a detailed parent note the next day the student is present. These situations are automatically excused.

Extreme personal illness – provide note from Doctor

Medical appointments, which were scheduled prior to rehearsal schedule

Family emergency (please provide a note from your parent)

MAY BE EXCUSED – Submit a note prior to the absence and clearly state the situation. The decision of unexcused/excused is according to director’s discretion.

Conflicting school activity (sports, honor organizations)

Tutoring

Religious activities

***Do not assume that an absence is excused. Any situations not covered in the lists above will be handled at the discretion of the director. Any absence for which there is no parent note submitted are automatically unexcused.

Parent Notes – in order for an absence to be given consideration for “excused” status, a detailed parent note is required. The note must include the following:

-Date of absence

-Detailed reason for absence (“personal reasons”, “family matters”, etc are too vague to be considered a valid excuse and will be unexcused if not clarified.)

-Contact number for parent/guardian submitting the note

-Parent/Guardian signature

Seating

Seating is determined entirely by the director. Factors such as individual strengths and overall balance of the ensemble are taken into consideration when seating individuals within the orchestra. That means that at some point this year, you might have to sit in a seat/section you don’t like. Students should remember that regardless of where they sit, they have the same expectations as everyone else, and that the most important thing is to lead from where you are, regardless of where that is. The best place for your ego in this classroom is at the door when you come in.

Concerts

There will be many performances in a standard school year. As stated in the grading section, concerts are mandatory. Please check the calendar of this handbook for tentative dates. Students will be required to arrive at the announced time before the start of each concert. A nominal fee is charged for admission to our concerts to help fund raise money for basic upkeep of the program and assist students in meeting their Fair Share obligations. General admission for concerts is \$5.00, student admission for concerts is \$3.00. OCPS faculty and staff are admitted free of charge when they present their employment badge. **Parents are encouraged to attend these concerts. Students are not permitted to leave before the end of a concert.**

Music Performance Assessments (MPA)

Beyond the traditional concerts, the orchestra will participate in several other events. These events could involve missing classes. Students are still responsible for missed class work. These performances will require special meeting times, which will be

determined closer to those events. Dress still follows the concert guidelines. Participation in MPA is mandatory and a large part of students' grades.

Florida Orchestra Association District MPA

This performance involves presenting a concert for three judges. The judges will rate the performance on many standards. This event normally takes place in Orange County. Quality performances at District MPA allow the group to attend State MPA.

Florida Orchestra Association State MPA

This performance involves presenting a concert for three judges. The judges will rate the performance on many standards. This event rotates and could take place in a number of locations.

Other Performance Opportunities

Individuals will also have many other performance opportunities, both on the local and state level. Participation in these events is highly encouraged for some, and required for others; check the course descriptions.

- ***Florida Music Educators All-State***

Student players from around the state of Florida form these ensembles. To be a member of these groups, a student must audition for admission. Auditions normally take place in September for the January event. All-State orchestra takes place annually in Tampa, Florida.

- ***Solo and Ensemble MPA (participation required for those with private lessons, VPA students, and Chamber & Premiere students who choose this as two of their three events.)***

Students can form small ensembles and/or prepare solos. At Solo and Ensemble, the individual or group performs for a judge, and is rated on several performance standards. Solo and Ensemble MPA occur at district and state levels. Student who participate in S&E are required to do two things: provide proof of a practice schedule, and secure a pianist if the piece requires it. Mrs. Allen will provide a pianist if the student does not already have one, but it is then the responsibility of the student to pay them.

- ***Orange County All-County Orchestra (Audition required for Chamber & Premiere.)***

Student players from around Orange County form these ensembles. To be a member of these groups, a student must audition for admission. Auditions are recorded and are normally due in October for the November event.

Orchestra Officers

In order to facilitate a smoother running organization, officers are appointed by the director and/or elected by the orchestra members. Holding one of these positions will not affect a student's grade, and should be considered a service to the orchestra program. Students in these positions must maintain minimal overall GPA's of 3.0. At no time will officers dictate classroom procedures or music

selection. The director reserves the right to dismiss any officer for justifiable reasons.

President – Junior or Senior standing

- Conducts meeting and votes
- Hold group discussions
- Send letters and invitations to performances
- Organize and supervise special projects and social activities
- Organize campaigns for recruiting new students

Vice President(s) – Junior or Senior standing

- Assist the president
- Assumes duties of president in absence of president
- Carry out specific categorical duties, i.e. VP Fundraising, VP personnel, VP Programs

Secretary

- Maintain the orchestra information and correspondence board
- Send thank you notes
- Assist with attendance-taking (to be verified by the director)

Head Librarian, Library Staff

- Maintain the music library
- Coordinate distribution and collection of music
- Lead the library team

Equipment Manager, EQ Staff

- Responsible for setting up chairs, stands and any other special items for rehearsals and performances
- Organizes and supervises loading crew

Historian

- Take/collect/organize pictures/videos of the group throughout the year

Instruments

Students are encouraged to have their own personal instruments. However, Dr. Phillips High School does have violins, violas, cellos and basses that can be used. However, should you decide at any time during the school year to purchase your own instrument, **please consult the director before purchasing anything.** The director can point you in safe directions. Under no circumstances should an instrument be purchased from E-bay or over the internet!!! The likelihood of getting a very poor quality instrument through these venues is extremely high. Price alone does not dictate quality. A reputable vendor will allow you to have the instrument examined by your teacher before it is purchased. Be very suspicious of a vendor who is not willing to do so.

Instruments will be issued for class use first to students who do not have an instrument at all. Remaining instruments may be issued to students who have issues in transporting larger instruments back and forth from home. **During the time of usage, the student is expected to treat the instrument and its accessories with the utmost of care.** If it is discovered that a student is mistreating an instrument, the student will lose the privilege of using it, thus forcing them to procure their own or to not participate, which would lead to a poor grade due to lack of participation. Possible financial/legal proceedings will take place depending on the damage. The director may have strings available in the event a string breaks during class.

Signing an instrument out/Borrowing school instruments

Due to past instances of misplacement and outright theft, STUDENTS ARE NO LONGER PERMITTED TO BORROW SCHOOL INSTRUMENTS. The only exception is for students who are participating in orchestra events like solo and ensemble, all county, or all state. Students who would like to practice their orchestra music for homework must do so during Mrs. Allen's office hours after school. Office hours are as follows (unless otherwise stated): Tuesday 2:30-3:30, Thursday 2:30-3:30, Friday 2:30-3:00.

Miscellaneous

Student Valuables

Students are not to bring large amounts of money, I-pods, cameras, etc. to orchestra. If worn, glasses, watches and any other jewelry is the students' responsibility to keep track of them. Students are responsible for their personal items in the rehearsal area. While not in their hands, instruments should be locked in a secure and labeled case. **The Orange County School System does not have insurance or any plan to 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.** The director, Dr. Phillips High School and Orange County Public Schools are NOT responsible for missing or damaged property. This includes instruments.

Storage

There is an instrument storage room where all students are expected to keep their instruments. Students will be able to choose the location of their instrument storage spot during the first week of school, and it will be labeled for easy access. Lockers will be available on a 1st come, 1st served basis.

Fair Share, Fundraising and Trips

Dr. Phillips High School Orchestra Program is an expensive program to run. Although we do receive a small amount of funding from the county, this amount is not nearly enough to cover our yearly expenses. Like other campus organizations, we must raise enough money to keep our program in top shape. Students enrolled in orchestra must participate in the "Fair Share" program. Each year, each orchestra student is responsible for \$100.00, contributed as his or her "fair share." This money is used for music, entry fees in festivals, orchestra room supplies, and group transportation costs. On average, one new piece of music costs between \$40 and \$120. Entry fees plus transportation costs for district AND state MPA average over \$1,000. These are just a few examples of our costs. Fair Share payments will be made through www.schoolpay.com, or by check, cash, or money order. Through schoolpay, parents can pay using VISA, Mastercard, or bank drafts.

How does fundraising fit in with "fair share"?

Of course most of us do not have an extra one hundred dollars. For this reason, students are provided the opportunity to participate in fundraising activities. Fundraisers vary

from year to year, but there are a few traditional ones you can expect annually: Butter Braid Pastries (Fall), a Spring fundraiser, & ticket sales to each concert (tickets cost \$5.00 per person).

***Parents that would like for their ticket purchases to go towards Fair Share obligations will need to fill out a short information slip at the time of the ticket purchase at concerts. This information will be maintained in the orchestra office to keep track of how much each family spends on tickets that will then be applied to their child's fair share balance. Parents that do not fill out this slip will not be able to apply that amount towards their child's fair share, as there will be no record of the purchase.

What if we don't want our student to have to fundraise?

No student is forced to fundraise, but each student is responsible for a contribution to the program of \$100. The money may be paid in full or in payments during the year. The fundraisers are provided to take the burden of payment off of your shoulders. Students may also use a combination of fundraising and payment. If paying in installments, students are expected to pay \$50.00 at the beginning of the Fall semester (within the first week of classes), and \$50.00 at the beginning of the spring semester (within the first week of classes).

PLEDGE OF RESPONSIBILITY

Student:

I have received a copy of the DPHS Orchestra Handbook, have read its contents, and have been given the opportunity to ask questions.

I agree to abide by the rules and policies of this organization.

I understand that I am making a commitment not only to myself, but also to the group and the school I represent.

I will strive to the best of my ability to be a positively contributing member of the orchestra at all times.

I understand that failure to do so will result in negative consequences and possible dismissal from the orchestra program.

Print student name:

Student signature:

Date:

Parents/Guardians

I have read the rules and policies of the DPHS Orchestra Handbook and I understand my child's commitment to this organization.

I understand & accept that my child following or not following the policies in this handbook can and will effect my child's grade.

I understand that my child is a member of a performing ensemble, and his/her actions affect the group and the school we represent.

Print parent/guardian name:

Signature:

Date:

Please complete, detach and return this page to the Director.