



♪ Handbook ♪
2018 - 2019

Ms. Mindy Florian, Director
Mr. Pedro Funez, Assistant Director

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I. Forward

Welcome to the Oak Ridge High School Orchestra! Whether you are a parent, student or family member - we are excited to have you be a part of this phenomenal organization!

This handbook has been created by the directors and approved by the Oak Ridge High School administrators. The purpose of this handbook is to provide parents and members with information concerning the activities, procedures and policies of the orchestra program at Oak Ridge High School. We strongly encourage that all parents and members read this handbook **in its entirety** in order to avoid conflicts with the information stated. School rules and policies are in force at all times a student is directly or indirectly involved in any activity sponsored by or in the name of the Oak Ridge High School Orchestra.

At any time deemed necessary in the best interest of the orchestra program, the directors shall have the authority to: suspend or amend any policy, alter the calendar, and dismiss a member from the program.

II. Goals and Objectives

The Oak Ridge High School Orchestra has a tradition of excellence as well as continuous improvement. Goals will be determined by the directors to best meet the needs of the program as a whole. The orchestra curriculum is centered on the following objectives, which students are regularly assessed on:

- Principal of sound production
 - Rationale: The number one goal for all students of music at all times is to make a good sound on the instrument. No matter if they are practicing at home, rehearsing in class, or performing on stage as a soloist or ensemble member.
 - Assessment: Assessed both informally and formally during rehearsals, playing tests, and performances.
- A wide repertoire of bow strokes and when to use them appropriately
 - Rationale: Demonstrating correct utilization of bow strokes is important for ensemble unity. Ensembles that do this well are always in the same part of the bow. This is the mark of a mature ensemble.
 - Assessment: Assessed both informally and formally during rehearsals and performances.
- Accurate sight-reading of notes and rhythm
 - Rationale: Sight-reading well is the mark of a mature musician. We spend time on this daily so that students improve their music literacy.
 - Assessment: Informal assessment as the director will walk around the room while students are completing daily sight-reading exercises to monitor progress of students.
- Elements of music (rhythm, melody, harmony, dynamics, timbre, texture)
 - Rationale: Demonstrating all of these elements simultaneously is the mark of a mature musician who is well-rounded and understands what each element contributes to the music.
 - Assessment: Assessed both informally and formally during rehearsals, playing tests, and performances.
- Music in relation to the students' lives and experiences
 - Rationale: Programming music that will be meaningful to students is a goal of the directors. Music that they relate to and learn from (not necessarily just pop music) will result yield increased motivation to master it. We know this from human learning theory; students learn better when they can relate it to their personal experiences.
 - Assessment: Mastery of music in performances as well as their personal concert reflections will be an indicator of successfully completing this objective.

- A professional work ethic
Rationale: Serving the literature we play is satisfying to the performer who has worked hard to learn it. Students should always come to rehearsal ready to learn, ready to serve the music, and each other.
Assessment: Consistent demonstration of willingness to learn, and preparedness for rehearsal will be assessed informally over time.
- Strategies for more efficient and effective individual practice
Rationale: It is a value of the directors to instill in orchestra members HOW to practice effectively. Effective practice methods are reinforced during rehearsals by the directors and students are welcome to ask the directors for help in being successful during their practice.
Assessment: Informally assessed throughout concert cycles as students master or continue to struggle with material.
- Performing with phrasing and musical expression
Rationale: Students cannot just play the notes and rhythms and qualify that as a quality performance. They must exhibit emotion and affect into their playing.
Assessment: Execution of dynamic and phrase markings will be assessed informally and formally during playing tests, performances and rehearsals.

All goals will, of course, align with the National Standards for Music Education, the Scope and Sequence for CISD Fine Arts as well as the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS).

III. Time

Don't say you don't have enough time. You have exactly the same number of hours per day that were given to Helen Keller, Michelangelo, Mother Teresa, Leonardo da Vinci, Thomas Jefferson and Albert Einstein. We make time for what is important to us.

IV. The Directors

Mindy Florian is the head director of the ORHS Orchestras.

The director's conference period is 1:30 - 2:30 p.m. daily by appointment. The director can also be contacted via email at: mglorian@conroeisd.net or by phone at 832-592-5430.

Pedro Funez is the assistant director of the ORHS Orchestras.

The director's conference period is 1:30 - 2:30 p.m. daily by appointment. The director can also be contacted via email at: pfunez@conroeisd.net or by phone at 832-592-5431.

The orchestra website is: www.orhsorchestra.com. There is a link to this website from the faculty websites for Ms. Florian and Mr. Funez on the ORHS website. Orchestra information is maintained on the website.

V. The Orchestras

We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit. – ARISTOTLE

Oak Ridge High School has five orchestras. They are Chamber Orchestra, Symphony Orchestra, Sinfonietta Orchestra, Concert Orchestra, and Philharmonic Orchestra.

Chamber Orchestra:

This is the most advanced orchestra and is considered a Varsity Orchestra. Students will have the opportunity to continue their development at the most advanced level. As a member of this orchestra, each student is expected to maintain the highest level of responsibility and musical preparation.

1. Attendance at ALL rehearsals (both during the school day and after school), sectional tutorials, and performances is required. This orchestra meets Mondays after school from 3:00 p.m. until 4:30 p.m. In November, Chamber Orchestra students become the string section and they are combined with brass, woodwind, and percussion students to form the Oak Ridge High School Full Orchestra. This orchestra rehearses on Wednesdays from 3:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m. from mid-November through the end of April. Additional rehearsals are required and are part of the orchestra grade. Students are expected to be in their chairs with instrument out and ready to play **NO LATER THAN 3:00 p.m.** Routine appointments, college prep review classes, make up tests, tutorials, and driver education do not qualify as excused absences for after school rehearsals. Students with a school conflict are required to provide notice no later than the previous Friday and are expected to not schedule make up work, make up tests, retests, and tutorials for that time. First and foremost, all students are expected to exhibit responsibility in all classes and to maintain academic eligibility.
2. Attendance at TMEA Region Orchestra auditions is optional. Ninth and tenth graders in Chamber are required to audition for CISD 9th/10th Honor Orchestra. All members of Chamber Orchestra are required to participate in UIL Solo/Ensemble contest. Continuing on to Texas State Solo & Ensemble Contest in May has other requirements that must be achieved by the student before leaving for Austin. Please refer to the TSSEC policies in this handbook for more detail. Chamber students must notify the directors immediately regarding a conflict with UIL Solo/Ensemble contest dates. Last minute notification will not be accepted or excused.
3. This orchestra is frequently called on by Dr. Null and other members of the community to provide music at meetings, fundraisers and breakfasts. Students will be notified as soon as possible to see if they can participate. Little rehearsal is required and students can count these events as community service hours.

Symphony Orchestra:

This is the Non-Varsity Orchestra. Students will have the opportunity to continue their development in a challenging environment. Regular attendance, individual musical preparation, and successful attention to responsibilities in all classes are crucial to the success of the ensemble. Freshmen have the option to audition for the CISD 9th Honor Orchestra. Participation in UIL Solo/Ensemble Contest is required for ALL members of this orchestra. This orchestra will participate in UIL Concert/Sightreading Contest. This orchestra meets Tuesdays after school from 3:00 until 4:30 p.m. Additional rehearsals are required and are part of the orchestra grade. Students are expected to be in their chairs with instrument out and ready to play **NO LATER THAN 3:00 p.m.** Routine appointments, college prep review classes, make up tests, tutorials, and driver education do not qualify as excused absences for after school rehearsals. Students with a school conflict are required to provide notice no later than the previous Friday and are expected to not schedule make up work, make up tests, retests, and tutorials for that time. First and foremost, all students are expected to exhibit responsibility in all classes and to maintain academic eligibility.

Sinfonietta Orchestra:

This is our Sub Non-Varsity Orchestra and its expectations are similar to those for Symphony Orchestra. Students will have the opportunity to continue their development in a challenging environment. Regular attendance, individual musical preparation, and successful attention to responsibilities in all classes are crucial to the success of the ensemble. Participation in UIL Solo/Ensemble Contest is required for ALL members of this orchestra. This orchestra will participate in UIL Concert/Sightreading Contest. This orchestra meets Thursdays after school from 3:00 until 4:30 p.m. from February through early April. Additional rehearsals are required and are part of the orchestra grade. Students are expected to be in their chairs with instrument out and ready to play NO LATER THAN 3:00 p.m. Routine appointments, college prep review classes, make up tests, tutorials, and driver education do not qualify as excused absences for after school rehearsals. Students with a school conflict are required to provide notice no later than the previous Friday and are expected to not schedule make up work, make up tests, retests, and tutorials for that time. First and foremost, all students are expected to exhibit responsibility in all classes and to maintain academic eligibility.

Concert Orchestra:

This orchestra is an intermediate orchestra that gives students the opportunity for musical and personal growth needed to develop skills necessary for membership in a competitive ensemble. Attendance is required at all concerts.

Philharmonic Orchestra:

This orchestra is a preparatory orchestra for other orchestras in the Oak Ridge High School Orchestra program. It also gives students an opportunity to maintain their string music connection while participating in other school activities. Attendance is required at all concerts.

Aquila di Guerra:

This is a chamber ensemble that focuses on playing music of the Renaissance period using the viola da gamba. The viola da gamba is a string instrument that is related to the guitar. You play the instrument with a bow and it has frets. **Instruments are provided.** In the past the ensemble has performed at functions for Bach Society of Houston, Texas Renaissance Festival, Viols of Houston and have been invited to perform at Boston Early Music Festival. There are many opportunities to play in the community. This is a unique opportunity that no other high school in Texas can offer to their students! YOU MUST BE IN ORCHESTRA TO BE PART OF THIS ENSEMBLE!

VI. Teamwork and the Orchestra

Each orchestra is a team. A superior ensemble will produce more enjoyable experiences for the members of that team. Therefore, a "teamwork" philosophy needs to be nurtured for the good of every student. Students with a successful teamwork philosophy exhibit a willingness to improve their musical skills, a work ethic that will improve the orchestra team, and a positive spirit that promotes the orchestra program.

Orchestra students will learn to speak the language of music in a comprehensive manner that will include reading the language, understanding critical notational symbols and words, and the historical nature of composers and works being prepared for performance. Students will develop a high level of musical literacy. Students will gain the ability to make music value judgments, as they pertain to a musical setting, through critical listening. The student will know and use quality of sound, pitch, style, tempo, rhythm, blend, balance, phrasing, dynamics, and articulation in producing and evaluating music through practice and performance.

Students must maintain passing grades in all classes to perform at functions subject to UIL no pass-no play rules. When a student cannot perform due to failing grades, the entire orchestra suffers. Because of the standard of excellence expected from members of the Chamber Orchestra, Symphony Orchestra and Sinfonietta

Orchestra, students in those orchestras who fail one or more classes during for a nine weeks grading period are not guaranteed returning positions in the those orchestras during the following year. Entry fees that have been paid by ORHS Orchestra and/or CISD on behalf of ineligible students must be repaid in full.

Important: The director may find it necessary upon occasion to alter the orchestra's instrumentation to achieve a balanced sound.

VII. Attendance

All excused absences must be made up. It is the student's responsibility to obtain the assignment. An unexcused absence from a performance usually results in the lowering of the nine weeks grade by at least one letter. Last minute excuses may not be accepted unless they involve serious student illness (not just a cold) or death in the family. Each absence will be considered on an individual basis. Schedule and transportation conflicts DO NOT constitute an emergency. Again, students with emergency circumstances are required to contact the director via telephone (832-592-5430) or email (mgflorian@conroeisd.net) prior to the performance report time. Submission of written notice for consideration does not automatically cause the absence to be excused.

A daily participation grade is taken each time class meets or an ensemble has a required rehearsal outside of the school day. For unexcused absences, that grade is 0. Students who are absent should follow ORHS Student Handbook procedures to communicate with the attendance office to have the absence coded as excused. Students are expected to be sure that all parents, employers, coaches, sponsors, and other teachers are informed of their orchestra commitments and activities. Prior notice should take precedent and conflicts should be minimal. Remember, it is a violation of the attendance policy to schedule a medical appointment on top of a previously scheduled rehearsal regardless of whether the student or parent schedules the appointment. Unexcused absences include but are not limited to the following situations: work conflicts, doctors' appointments (unless related to absence that day), driver education, test prep classes, and out of town trips. ORHS teachers are required to offer multiple tutorial opportunities and the testing center is always available two or more afternoons each week. Do not schedule these at a time that conflicts with an orchestra rehearsal to which you have previously made a commitment. Conflicts with other school organizations must be submitted at least one week in advance. Planning ahead is a necessity!

A student who misses a rehearsal cannot make that up by simply spending more time in individual practice. Individual practice is expected of all students so that rehearsal time can be used to address balance, blend, and musical interpretation. Instructions are given to the orchestra as an ensemble and while the student who is absent can get markings for music, he or she has missed the discussion and teaching that went with the markings. We are team and we are most successful when all members are present.

Attendance at all concerts is required. If a student fails to attend a performance without proper notification to directors and fails to complete the alternate assignment (if eligible), he or she is no longer eligible for a letter jacket from orchestra regardless of other points earned. Likewise, ineligible students who are unable to participate in either UIL Solo & Ensemble Contest or UIL Concert & Sightreading Contest are no longer eligible for a letter jacket or letter from orchestra regardless of other points earned.

VIII. Grading Policies

“If you are going to achieve excellence in big things, you develop the habit in little matters. Excellence is not an exception, it is a prevailing attitude.”

- General Colin Powell -

Major grades: 70%

Concerts/Auditions/Contests	60%
In class playing tests	40%

Minor grades: 30%

Technique Quizzes	50%
Playing quizzes	25%
Daily class participation	15%
Personal Reflections (Post Performance)	10%

Daily class participation includes being in class promptly with all materials and prepared for rehearsal with an attitude designed to work for the good of the team. Home practice should be evident in class participation. This is assessed weekly. Unexcused absences from orchestra class have an impact on the participation grade. Absent students are expected to follow ORHS attendance policy and to provide appropriate documentation to the attendance office immediately upon return to school. Students who fail to bring their instruments to school (unless in repair shop) will lose credit for half of the participation grade for that day. Requests to make up work or tests during rehearsal time will not be permitted.

To receive full credit for a major grade performance, the student must be present on time for attendance check, be wearing the correct uniform, and remain until the conclusion of the event.

Playing tests provide individual assessment and evidence of student preparation and mastery. Some of our playing tests will require the electronic submission of a recording through Charms. These tests are as much a part of the student grade as are playing tests during orchestra class. If a student is "grounded" from his/her device used to record tests, then the student and parent must work together to find another way for the student to submit the required recorded assignment. All parts of the playing tests have a significant role in determining seating within sections for orchestra performances, but are not the sole determination. At any time, the directors may deem it necessary to have a performance quiz or test. These are often scheduled, however, the directors reserve the right to hold a playing quiz or exam whenever it is necessary. Please be prepared for rehearsal.

Each orchestra and section is seated to promote the best sound for that ensemble.

IX. Individual Practice

All orchestra students should purchase the app called Tonal Energy that can be loaded on smart phones. This app has capabilities far beyond serving as a tuner and a metronome. Students who consistently use this app in their practice sessions will improve a great deal. We use Tonal Energy every orchestra rehearsal, so it is a program that students need to be familiar with.

Success of the group and of each student depends on individual hard work. Daily practice is essential. It helps many students to have a regular time and place to practice. Practice is more than just playing the notes; it needs to have a goal. Good practice is playing in tune, playing correct rhythms as well as playing with a clear tone and playing musically. Most of the time, it is best to work slowly in 4 to 8 measure sections, repeating

problem areas many times until each section can be played easily, perfectly, and up to tempo. Students should have a metronome to monitor tempo. Twenty to thirty minutes is suggested for practice each day.

Listening to a professional recording of the music the student is currently studying contributes greatly to his/her musical growth. The tone, intonation, rhythmic accuracy, style, and memory are improved almost in direct proportion to the number of times a recording is heard.

It is the job of the directors to help students learn their music, but it is the job of the student to recognize what they need to work on during their own time. Rehearsal time does not replace practice time. Students have to work outside of class to fully learn their music. Some students will need to practice more than others - this is why we do not have practice logs. It is the job of the student to show up to rehearsal prepared knowing their part so that the ensemble improves after every rehearsal.

X. Concerts

Concerts are the product of a team effort. Every student is important to the overall sound of the group. Thus, we all depend on each other not only to practice and play the part well, but also to participate in each performance. When you join an orchestra, you and your family are making a commitment to the others in the orchestra. Finding a suitable substitute is likely not possible.

Concerts produce a grade in the grade book and are impossible to redo. The pressure of performance in front of a live audience, the opportunity to apply hours of practice, the experience of applause for a job well done, and the pride of knowing you helped contribute to an evening of beautiful music are lost when a student misses a concert. A "make-up" assignment cannot provide the same educational experience. A make-up assignment follows ORHS Fine Arts Department guidelines and is available only to students whose performance absence is excused in accordance with orchestra guidelines and policy as outlined in this handbook. Concerts are considered to have three parts: attendance check, performance, and listening. **The concert begins for the student at the attendance check time. A concert concludes when the last group concludes and directors have given permission for students to be dismissed.** The student must remain dressed in the required performance uniform from the beginning to the end of the performance as described above unless given specific permission by a director to do otherwise.

PLEASE NOTE: While it is understood that emergencies and illness arise, it is expected that students and their families will plan ahead to be in attendance for all required events. Transportation arrangements for concerts should be made well in advance. **Students with emergency circumstances are required to contact the director via telephone, Remind101 or email prior to the performance call time.** Like sports, the music that we make is a "team effort" and we cannot be our best without all members of the team present. All concert and audition dates are given as soon as possible so families have adequate time to plan their schedules.

Students in the orchestra program may/will participate in:

- Concerts and performances at ORHS
- Joint concerts and performances with other schools
- UIL Concert & Sightreading Contest
- UIL Solo & Ensemble Contest
- ORHS Orchestra Senior Recital
- Texas State Solo & Ensemble Contest

All-Region Orchestra
All-State Orchestra
Performances at feeder schools
Public performances in the community
Social activities

XI. Private Lessons

Orchestra is a wonderful medium to experience music in a public school setting. The "team" of students works together playing intricate rhythmic patterns with contrasting dynamics and blending harmonies. The result can be a rewarding memorable experience when all parts are played well on an individual basis. It is this individual work that forms the infrastructure of an outstanding orchestra; each student strives to reach his/her full potential. High school music can be very difficult. In a typical classroom rehearsal, time does not permit each student to receive large amounts of individual instruction. Techniques such as vibrato, advanced bowing, shifting, and intonation need to be dealt with on an individual basis. Sectional rehearsals help with this, but nothing has proven as effective as private lessons. In order to prepare high school music, in addition to instruction on solo and ensemble work and region audition material, it is highly recommended that orchestra students retain a private teacher. Unfortunately, the orchestra director cannot arrange private study with every student in spite of the profound results that could be attained. That is why it is essential, foremost for the benefit of the student, and eventually for the welfare of the orchestra, that students seek private study.

We live in an area of the state where several good private teachers are available. Please contact ORHS Orchestra directors for more information. Information will be provided for teachers who teach in private studios outside the school day and within the school day on campus.

Private lessons are offered to students at school during orchestra class. Lessons are scheduled as one 30 minute lesson per week. Private lesson teachers complete an application process and background check through Conroe ISD and must be approved before teaching lessons at a CISD campus. Each teacher sets his/her lesson policy and often requires a contract signed by student, parent, and teacher; some charge per lesson and some charge per month. Prompt payment is expected in accordance with the agreement; most of us would not be happy if our employer told us we would be paid "later" on the day that we expected a check! Often simply being absent from school is not an excuse for a missed lesson without forfeiting the charge for that lesson. Communication is directly between student/parent and the teacher and policy often states a required notice for missed lessons. ORHS provides a time and place for lessons. Financial, attendance, and policy arrangements are strictly between student/parent and the private lesson teacher. Private lessons are an individual arrangement from which the entire orchestra benefits!

XII. Orchestra Fees

Conroe ISD provides funding for contest entry fees, some supplies and music, and letter jacket awards. Students who fail to attend (for any reason) a contest for which an individual entry fee was paid will be required to reimburse ORHS/CISD for that expense. The orchestra fee per student for this year is \$100 (\$50 for students on free or reduced lunch). This fee was created in order to consolidate purchases required of each student as well as expenditures made on behalf of the department as a whole for funds not provided by CISD. In the event that you have extenuating circumstances that need payment arrangements for this fee, please notify the director as soon as possible. The orchestra t-shirt (different from orchestra polo) and window decal are included with this fee for students new to the orchestra. The following items are NOT included in the fee: Orchestra Banquet ticket, private lessons, tickets for charged events, additional expenses for specialty ensembles, and accompanists for contests.

Refund Policy:

Most fees other than activity, uniform, and maintenance fees, involve advance payment for a service or an item. In such cases (i.e. Trip Payments), the orchestra has a deadline for receiving reimbursement from the supplier. Because of this, once a student is dropped from an activity, the orchestra has already paid for it with no possibility of a refund; consequently, the orchestra is charged for the cost of the activity regardless of the actual student participation. Because of this, the following policy will be strictly followed: There will be no refunds to students in any case where a student has paid for an activity or supply but is no longer able to participate. The policy applies regardless of the reason for withdrawal and specifically includes but is not limited to the situations of illness, ineligibility, unexpected family travel, or withdrawal from the ORHS Orchestra.

For students using school instruments, the following policy is applied:

Conroe Independent School District **does not provide** insurance for individually or school owned equipment. Students will be held responsible for school owned instruments issued to them. This responsibility will include fire, theft, and accidental damage and abuse. **Minor repairs and general maintenance are the responsibility of the student.**

Students and parents must sign an instrument checkout form and pay the maintenance fee before the student can use the instrument. **The Maintenance is \$75 per instrument during the year. If an instrument is damaged due to negligence, i.e., dropped, falls, bumps, etc., the student and his or her family will be responsible for the repairs.**

Each instrument will be issued in good playing condition. Each issued instrument will be checked and cleaned by a music company prior to issue. Students are expected to maintain their issued instruments accordingly. The orchestra member is financially responsible for all equipment and/or materials checked out to him or her. All items are required to be returned to school in good working condition upon request.

Fee Summary:

Activity Fee:	\$100 (\$50 for students on free/reduced lunch)
CISD Instrument Maintenance Fee:	\$75 (waived for students on free/reduced lunch)

XIII. Concert Attire & Alterations

Dress for concerts will be either formal or informal depending on the venue. Dress will be announced in advance, and it is the student's responsibility to know and wear the proper attire. We are a team and this is our uniform. It is also part of the concert grade. All students are expected to arrive and depart from the performance dressed in the appropriate uniform. Jackets, hoodies, and other items that cover the uniform are not permitted while at the performance venue unless given specific permission by a director

FORMAL MEN: Tuxedo with white shirt, black bow tie, cummerbund, black dress shoes and black socks. The tuxedo, shirt, tie and cummerbund are provided by the school. The student will provide his own black dress shoes (no boots, black tennis shoes, flip flops, brown deck shoes, etc.) and black calf length dress socks. Low, "no show" socks are not an accepted part of the required formal uniform. Undershirts, if worn, must be white and free of writing or any other design.

FORMAL LADIES: Formal black gown (floor length) and black dress shoes, small or no jewelry, nails that are trimmed and pale. The black gown is provided by the school. The student will provide her dress shoes (again, no boots, black tennis shoes, flip flops, etc.). Hair should be worn away from the face. Appropriate undergarments that are not visible are required at all performances where the dress is worn. The gown **MUST** be hemmed (not taped) to an appropriate length so that it does not drag the floor and become unsafe for both the student and her instrument.

All formal wear must be dry cleaned and returned in good condition by the date specified in the orchestra calendar. Failure to do so may result in a substantial fine. Should formal wear be in need of alterations, please follow the guidelines on the next page. Each uniform item is numbered and is assigned to a specific student. All students are responsible for returning or paying for all items issued to them.

INFORMAL (all students): Orchestra polo shirt or orchestra t-shirt, blue jeans. In addition girls are responsible for providing their own camisole to be worn underneath the polo. The camisole must be white or skin toned and is an inexpensive item that can be purchased locally. Young men may opt to wear an undershirt. As with the formal uniform, undershirts must be white and free of any writing or other design. The shirt is available in standard adult men's sizes and in slim fit women's sizes and is made in a high tech performance knit fabric.

Alteration Guidelines (Dresses)

1. Remember that the gown is the property of the ORHS Orchestra whenever you are doing any alteration. Dresses may be taken in to fit properly as long as no fabric is cut away. Remember that someday, another girl will wear the gown; she may need to let out/down what you needed to take in/up.
2. If you need to do much alteration to the dress, have a professional do it for you unless you have a family member who is a good seamstress. That way you will be proud of how the dress fits you and no one will get overly frustrated while doing the alterations.
3. When altering your gown, remember there may be times that both of your hands are busy with your instrument and music. Set your hem length to allow you to go up and down stairs without stepping on your dress even though both of your hands are full. (This is generally at ankle length or just slightly below your ankle.) Correct hem length will prevent you from walking on your hem and ripping the waist or hem of your dress. You will be held responsible for damages incurred due to failure to properly alter your dress.

4. If you need to take your gown up more than two inches in the hem, have your seamstress consider taking a deeper seam at the waist. This is easier to gather than the hem and allows you to retain the fullness and flow of the skirt.
5. We have almost 2 weeks before you need your gown for our concert. Please take advantage of this time to do any alterations to your gown. Your mom and seamstress will thank you for not leaving it to the last possible moment.
6. If you don't have a family member who sews well and haven't used an alteration shop, there are many local alteration services. Most can be found with an online search. You can also ask other orchestra members for recommendations. Most dry cleaners can do a simple hem.
7. Please take care of your gown, hanging it correctly when not in use.

Alteration Guidelines (Tuxedos)

1. Remember that the tuxedo is the property of the ORHS Orchestra whenever you are having any alterations done. The tux may be taken in to fit properly as long as no fabric is cut away. Please remember that someday another young man will need to wear this tux, and he may need to let out/down what you needed to have taken in/up.
2. If you have any alterations done, please use a reputable tailor or alteration shop unless you have a family member who knows how to alter a tux jacket or pants correctly.
3. If you have never needed to have alterations done, there are several alteration shops in our area. You can also ask other orchestra members for recommendations. Most dry cleaners can do a simple hem in a pair of pants.
4. Please take care of your tux, hanging it correctly when not in use.

No alteration should ever remove the size tag from the garment.

XIV. Communication

The directors will communicate with students and parents via email (both directly and through the CHARMS organizational system). Please be sure that email addresses provided for parent and student contact are addresses that are checked regularly. We require every student and at least one parent of each student to provide a working phone number and a regularly checked email address on the Charms Personal Information page.

Information is maintained on the orchestra website and on Charms. To access student/parent information on Charms, log on to www.charmsoffice.com and click the Enter/Log In link at upper right. Locate Parent/Student Members Login section of the webpage. Log into the ORHS Orchestra account with the following school code:

ORHSOrch (case sensitive)

This brings up the main page that is public. To access a student's personal account, enter charms plus the 6 digit student ID number as a password. A student with ID 123456 would have password: charms123456
Do not change this password!

The directors will also communicate with students via the Remind 101 text messaging service. This is a secure site where cell phone numbers of no parties are visible to others. All orchestra students and parents are asked to sign up for this service. To sign up, send the appropriate orchestra class text message to 81010.

Chamber: @a7ha7k

Symphony: @orhsorch1

Sinfonietta: @orhsorch4

Concert: @orhsorch6

Philharmonic: @orhsorch5

In addition, the directors may find it necessary to communicate with students directly via text message. The guidelines for this are found on the signature page at the end of this handbook. Please be sure that the directors have your accurate contact information.

Parents and students are encouraged to communicate with directors when they have problems or concerns. Solutions can be found more easily when an issue is addressed before it becomes large. The directors cannot solve problems or work with circumstances about which they have not been informed. Director contact information is in the previous section.

XV. Required Supplies and Materials

Each student is expected to have **ALL** of the following supplies and materials:

Instrument, bow, and case in good working order

Rosin and soft cloth for cleaning

PENCIL for marking music (A musician ALWAYS has a pencil!)

Violin/Viola shoulder rest

Smartphone app called Tonal Energy (metronome, tuner and SO MUCH MORE!!)

Scale book for at home practice

- Directors will provide titles of scale books of the appropriate level to students.

Folding music stand for home practice and off campus performances

Extra strings for emergencies

Cello/Bass strap or rock stop

It is very important that all necessary supplies (first five items) be brought to class daily. Students who fail to bring instrument and/or materials lose a daily grade for each rehearsal at which this occurs.

Music

Music performed by the orchestra is provided by CISD. Originals are the property of ORHS Orchestra and will remain at school in the stand folder. Any markings should be easily erased. Each student is provided practice copies of music for individual home practice. A charge of \$1.00 per page is assessed if lost originals need to be replaced. Students without music are unable to rehearse. This results in loss of a daily grade. Do not leave music lying in the rehearsal room. The student provides music for UIL solos (original part, numbered for judge) selected from ORHS Orchestra music library.

XVI. Instruments

Each student is required to have an instrument and bow available for practice at home. This instrument can be purchased or rented. *See the director immediately if you do not meet this criteria.* String instruments are quite sturdy if well-maintained. A cared-for instrument is much more fun to play; it sounds better and plays more easily. Here are some guidelines to be followed by all students whether using a personal instrument or CISD instrument:

1. Replace bow hair if it is dirty, oily, or thin. Loss of hair to one side or the other can even warp the stick. Loosen the hair for storage each time after playing. Do not touch the hair.
2. Many times strings need replacing long before they break. Strings that have worn places on them will play notes that are out of tune; strings that are old and dry will not ring. This can be confusing or discouraging for any student. The cheapest strings will often wear out the quickest. It is wise to have an extra set of strings available for emergencies.
3. Avoid heat and humidity, which can soften glue, cause warping or blistering, allow cracks to develop, and even melt the rosin. NEVER leave your instrument in an unairconditioned or unheated car! ALL students are ALWAYS required to take instruments home over extended breaks.
4. Take care of the bridge which supports many pounds of pressure. It needs to stand up straight at all times and to rest centered on the top. A warped bridge needs to be replaced.
5. Keep your instrument clean; wipe fingerprints and dust from the bow and instrument after each use. Cover it with a soft, clean cloth. With this daily effort, polish becomes optional.
6. Pegs and tuners should be kept in good working condition.
7. A maintenance fee of \$75 will be assessed to cello, bass, and harp players to cover use of a school instrument during rehearsal throughout the school year. This is a CISD policy.
8. A yearly check up at a reputable string repair shop is recommended to keep your instrument in good working order and to catch small problems before they become big ones.

Instrument Storage

There are lockers and racks in the instrument room for violin and viola storage. Each student will be assigned his/her own locker or space on a rack. A combination lock is provided for each locker. If the student chooses to bring his/her own lock, the combination must be given to the director before the lock is installed. Students will not play on equipment they do not own or have permission from a director to use. Students will not touch, handle, borrow, or use anyone else's instrument, uniform, or personal belongings. Students will respect the property of others. Students may not use another student's instrument without his/her permission.

ORHS Orchestra Directors are not responsible for items left in student lockers, including lockers that are left unlocked.

XVII. String Dealers, Luthiers, Repair Shops

Listed below are area violin shops and music stores where you may find instruments for rental/purchase, strings, method books, sheet music, accessories, supplies, and instrument repair. Vendors marked with * visit schools regularly.

All-Pawn Inc
25907 I-45 North
The Woodlands, TX 77380
281-363-2103

Amati Violin Shop
2315 University Blvd
Houston, TX 77005
713-666-6461

*Fishburn Violin Shop
11435 Spring Cypress Road, Suite C
Tomball, TX 77377
281-290-4580

Gold Violin Shop
7010 Mapleridge
Houston, TX 77081
713-729-2231

*Lisle Violin Shop
4510 South Burke, Suite D
Pasadena, TX 77504
713-487-7303

Music & Arts Centers – Portofino
19075 Interstate 45
Shenandoah, TX 77385
936-273-3602

Online/Mail Order Resources (good prices on string & other supplies -- call for a free catalog or visit their website).

Shar Products Company
PO Box 1411
Ann Arbor, MI 48106
7427.1-800-528-3430
www.sharmusic.com

Southwest Strings
1050 South Park Ave.
Tucson, AZ 85719
www.swstrings.com

Young Musicians, Inc
PO Box 48036
Fort Worth, TX 76148
www.ymonline.com

XVIII. Student Responsibilities

It takes everyone's best effort to make the orchestra team powerful and exciting. Your loyalty and cooperation will reflect as you:

1. Follow rules as stated in the ORHS Student Handbook.
2. Honor your commitments. Better yet, be ready to give a little extra when needed.
3. Attend all rehearsals and performances and be on time.
4. Practice every day so you can do your best.
5. Be prepared for playing tests.
6. Be prepared to give your best in class. Be attentive and ready to play. Have your music, instrument, and a pencil in class daily. Good playing positions are a "must".
7. Refrain from socializing during rehearsal. Sections may not visit when the director is working with another section. Shadow bowing and fingering of parts is recommended for this "down time".
8. Keep your nails short and neatly trimmed.
9. Extend courtesy toward others. A gracious musician never publicizes another's mistakes.
10. Do your part to keep our rehearsal hall clean and in good condition. NEVER BRING FOOD OR DRINK INTO THE ORCHESTRA ROOM! Water in a clear bottle is the ONLY exception to this.

XIX. Letter Awards

Letter jacket points are awarded for participation in the following orchestra activities.

1. Attendance at every concert = 3 points
2. Participation at UIL Concert & Sight Reading Contest = 1 point
3. Participation in Solo & Ensemble Contest = 1 point
4. Audition to All Region Orchestra = 1 point
+1 member of All-Region Orchestra
5. Audition to All State Orchestra = 1 point
+1 member of All-State Orchestra
6. Participation in Texas **State** Solo & Ensemble Contest = 1 point
+1 awarded medal at TSSEC
7. Fulfilling fundraising goal = 1 point
8. Participation in private lessons for entire school year = 1 point
9. No unexcused Absences from after school orchestra = 1 point
No unexcused absences for **Chamber Orchestra** after school orchestra = 2 points
10. 5 volunteer hours for orchestra activities = 1 point

To receive a letter in orchestra, students must earn a minimum of 5 points in the first year and 7 points in the second and subsequent years. A jacket or letter is awarded after the second year if all requirements are met. Additional letters are awarded to students who earn 7 points and meet requirements in subsequent years. **3 points must come from concert attendance every year.** Points are compiled on Charms (www.charmsoffice.com). Upon fulfillment of the proper requirements, letter jackets are ordered at the beginning of the following year. Letter jacket points are totaled at the end of the year only, and jackets are awarded only once a year. Students must be a member of one of the orchestras that participate in UIL during the year prior to being awarded a letter jacket or letter and fulfill all requirements of that orchestra. During that year, students must also earn the required points for participation in both Solo & Ensemble Contest and UIL Concert & Sightreading Contest. **Absolutely no exceptions will be made regarding the above policy.**

To receive letter jacket one year earlier one must successfully become a member of All Region Orchestra/All State Orchestra or receive Superior Rating at State Solo and Ensemble.

XX. Texas State Solo and Ensemble Competition

Students who participate in District Solo & Ensemble Competition and receive a Superior (I) rating for performing Class I repertoire have the opportunity to advance to Texas State Solo & Ensemble Competition. This competition is held in May over Memorial Day weekend at the University of Texas at Austin.

Participation in State Solo & Ensemble is earned with the expectation that students will continue in their musical preparation in order to represent Conroe ISD and Oak Ridge High School Orchestra at the highest level. The expectation is that students will continue a consistent rehearsal schedule between February and May. All students advancing are required to create a rehearsal schedule that they will adhere to and submit it to Ms. Florian within one week of receiving their Superior rating from District Solo & Ensemble. The rehearsal schedule must include practice time in the orchestra room for a minimum of two hours weekly. This time may be divided up during Eagle's Nest or after school, but may not be during any other designated orchestra rehearsal time. This two hours of rehearsal is strictly for the purposes of preparing Solo and Ensemble repertoire. Students may be asked to perform in front of their class, perform at Irons Jr. High and/or perform for the band and choir directors for additional feedback as they are preparing for their final performance in Austin.

Taken from UIL Policy Constitution Subchapter B: Music Section 1101: Policy and Ethics: Observance of the Code: Student Policy E(2): "maintain a sense of the educational purpose of participating in music contests and events, keeping uppermost in mind the two-fold benefit of self-gratification in an artistic activity as well as the representation of one's school community;"

Students will perform for college professors of applied instruments and music education. These individuals are leaders in our discipline and it is an honor for our students to perform for them. Thus, this performance opportunity is to be treated with great respect. Students are to take preparation seriously and be diligent to adhering to their practice schedule. Students should realistically understand the time necessary to give a successful performance and represent our program, school, district and most importantly themselves, at the highest level. Students who do not meet these expectations will be pulled from the contest and not participate. In order to ensure that these expectations are understood, a contract signed by both the student and parent or guardian is due at the time they turn in their rehearsal schedule one week from receiving their Superior rating at District Solo & Ensemble.

Oak Ridge High School Orchestra
Texas State Solo & Ensemble Contest
Rehearsal Contract

Each soloist or member of the ensemble must commit to creating and adhering to a rehearsal schedule in order to participate in Texas State Solo & Ensemble Contest. At least two hours of rehearsal will take place in the orchestra room weekly and must be attended by all members of the ensembles. Students have until the following Friday after District Solo and Ensemble to adjust their work schedules accordingly and provide Ms. Florian with an answer. If schedules cannot be arranged by all members to consistently rehearse, the ensemble will not participate. Please turn contracts into Ms. Florian.

Participation in State Solo & Ensemble is earned with the expectation that students will continue in their musical preparation in order to represent Conroe ISD and Oak Ridge High School Orchestra at the highest level. The expectation is that students will continue a consistent rehearsal schedule between February and May.

I agree to the attached rehearsal schedule for my participation in Texas State Solo & Ensemble. I understand that my failure to adhere to the above rehearsal schedule will result in my ensemble not participating.

Student Signature

Date

Parent Signature

Date

XXI: Region IX Orchestra

Students in Chamber and Symphony Orchestra are tasked with learning the region etudes regardless of whether or not they decide to audition and participate in the TMEA Region and All-State processes. At the beginning of August, a portion of each region etude is selected for the region audition. There are two region etudes for each instrument.

Students in Chamber Orchestra will have four performance exams over segments of the region etude leading up to region orchestra auditions. Students will select one etude to learn for the four performance exams. The first three performance exams will each cover a third of the etude that the student selected. The final performance exam will be over the entire region etude.

XXII: Orchestra Placement and Auditions

All students will participate in placement exams at the end of the academic year for the upcoming year. There are different audition requirements for each orchestra. Students are responsible for preparing their audition for the orchestra they would like to be in the following year.

Additionally, at the end of the fall semester, students who would like to advance into a higher orchestra for the spring semester have the opportunity to audition. Factors contributing to moving a student into a higher orchestra include: attendance at all orchestra rehearsals and concerts, strong work ethic and character, commitment to progressing on their instrument, academic eligibility, and mastery of discipline objectives. Directors reserve the right to keep a student in the orchestra they are currently placed in even if that student auditions for another orchestra the spring semester. Likewise, students who do not meet the above criteria, might find themselves being moved out and moved into another orchestra in order to preserve the performance integrity of the ensemble.

XXIII. ORHS Orchestra Officers

Orchestra officers will be combined to create the ORHS Orchestra Council. In addition to the responsibilities for each office, the Orchestra Council will plan and coordinate social activities for the orchestra. The Orchestra Council is comprised of the Orchestra President, Orchestra Vice-President, Vice-President of Events, Orchestra Historian, Librarian and Class Representatives for each Orchestra. Orchestra President, Vice-President, Vice-President of Events and Historian are elected by students in all orchestra classes in the spring of the school year preceding their terms. Class representatives are elected within each orchestra class during the third week of school in the school year that they will serve. To be included on a ballot for any office, students must meet requirements listed for the position and submit a complete application by the posted deadline. Any officer who loses academic eligibility will be immediately removed from office.

XXIV. ORHS Orchestra Booster Club

The success of the orchestra program relies upon parent support and participation. The goals of the booster club are two-pronged: to raise funds, and to support the orchestra director(s) and students. The booster officers and members meets once a month to discuss how to help students in the orchestra program, organize the orchestra banquet and discuss fundraising.

Music programs grow more and more dependent upon the support of booster organizations. As a 6A high school in one of the most musically prestigious regions in Texas, providing our students with the opportunities to experience a high quality music education is a priority. This requires cooperation and participation amongst orchestra students and families in the booster club.

Many hands make light work! The more parents we have helping, the less work required of each person. If you would like to support the orchestra program by making a donation of your time or funds, please contact Ms. Florian. We are always happy to discuss sponsorships with local businesses so that our students have a great experience.

Please consider how you can help this organization support the ORHS orchestra program.

How to access parent/student information in

CHARMS

- Log on to www.charmsoffice.com, and click the “ENTER/LOG IN” link at upper right.
- Locate the “PARENT/STUDENT/MEMBERS LOGIN” section of the web page.
- Login to your child’s program account using the following School Code (case sensitive):

ORHSOrch

- This will bring up the main parent page. This will allow you to look at the “public” calendar for your organization, event list, handouts and other files.
- Clicking on an event on the calendar brings up the details for that event, such as times, attendance requirements, volunteer opportunities, and other event details. Note that if a calendar event is specifically assigned to your child, it may NOT show up on this calendar - check the “Student” calendar after entering the student’s ID number (see below).
- When you enter your child’s **Student Area Password**, another more detailed screen appears with even more options to view your student’s uniform assignments, music assignments, financial records, forms and inventory.
Your child’s password is

charms+ID number (the 6 digit school ID number) - thus, a student with ID 123456 would have password:

charms123456

Do NOT change this password!

- An important area in which you can help the director maintain his/her records:
Update Personal Information - if the director has allowed it, you may help make changes to your child’s student information page (such as updating phone numbers and email addresses if they change) to help the teacher communicate with you more effectively. Click the ***Personal Info*** button. We require every student and at least one parent of each student to provide a working phone number and a regularly checked email address on the Charms Personal Information page.
- Most importantly, the parent page assists both you and the teacher to communicate with each other. Stay up to date on what’s going on with your student!
- Find the Charms app for your smart device. Search for “Charms Blue” in the app store for your device. It is the most current version for students and parents and it is the app students need to submit required recordings.

STUDENT NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

The Conroe Independent School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, gender, or disability in providing education services, activities, and programs, including vocational programs, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

DECLARACIÓN CONTRA LA DISCRIMINACIÓN DE ALUMNOS

El Distrito Escolar Independiente de Conroe no discrimina por motivos de raza, color, lugar de procedencia, sexo, religión, edad o discapacidad en cuanto al ofrecimiento de servicios educativos, actividades y programas, incluyendo programas vocacionales, de conformidad con el Título VI del Acta de Derechos Civiles de 1964, según enmiendas; Título IX de las Enmiendas Educativas de 1972; y la Sección 504 del Acta de Rehabilitación de 1973, según enmiendas.

ORHS ORCHESTRA HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Please return no later than Friday, August 31, 2018

We have received, read and understand the contents of the Oak Ridge High School 2017-2018 Orchestra Handbook and we agree to adhere to all policies rules, procedures, and fees outlined therein. These include but are not limited to: student responsibilities and expectations, eligibility, attendance, grading, uniforms, performances, and the refund policy. We also understand that this is not an all-inclusive handbook and that rules and regulations set forth by CISD and ORHS administration apply equally to all members of the ORHS Orchestra.

Furthermore, the parent or guardian signing this document expresses a desire and gives consent for his/her child to be allowed to travel to and from the events listed in the Orchestra Calendar provided that said child meets eligibility requirements for those events (i.e. passing all classes at the time of the events, turns in the required forms). The parent agrees to support his/her son/daughter in his/her participation in orchestra and to help foster the sense of pride that he/she can acquire through such participation.

As the parent or guardian of this student, I agree to allow my student's photo, sound recording, and/or unidentified photo in a group shot to be posted on the Oak Ridge High School Orchestra website and to be submitted to the CISD website, the ORHS Wingspan (principal's electronic newsletter), and local newspapers. I also give permission for my student to communicate with the director via text message. This is a necessary form of communication when students travel with the orchestra. I understand that use of electronic information resources and communication is for educational purposes.

My child _____ does _____ does not have an appropriately sized instrument and bow available for home practice as required by the ORHS Orchestra.

Student PRINTED NAME

Student Signature

Date

Parent PRINTED NAME

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Parent email address (please print clearly) – This should be an email account that is regularly checked.
Email will be used for providing parents with orchestra information. If you do not have any email access,
please indicate that above and provide a phone number where you can be reached.