

## WELCOME

Congratulations! You have chosen to be a part of the Orchestra in Irving ISD. Orchestra will prepare you for the future by teaching determination, self-esteem, organization, and time management. By enrolling in orchestra, your entire family has signed up for a truly unique experience. We firmly believe that family support is crucial, not only to the success of the student, but the overall program as well.

Please take the time to read through this handbook with your parents or guardians. It contains the various policies and procedures concerning the program. If questions arise, contact your orchestra teacher directly or contact them via email. We are here to make this the best possible musical experience for students and parents.

After you have read through the handbook in its entirety, **please sign and return the required form.**

## COURSE SYLLABUS

### **Beginner Orchestra Course**

This is an introductory course which provides students with a real world understanding of how to play a stringed instrument, including fundamentals, history, techniques, procedures, and etiquette. It is designed primarily for students who are entering sixth grade but may be available to seventh grade beginners as well. Students will learn how to listen to, respond to and evaluate music and musical performance by playing an instrument, alone and in groups, at an appropriate level of difficulty while relating music to history, culture, and the world. Each student must have access to an instrument solely dedicated to his/her use, their own method book and any other supplies/tools as requested by the teacher. Grading will be based on the standard level of mastery in performance skills, written and oral exams and concerts. IISD grading policy will be followed as to formative and summative evaluations. Other information can be found in the IISD Middle School Orchestra Handbook and the orchestra calendar issued at the beginning of each school year.

### **Non-Varsity Orchestra Course**

This course provides students with a real world understanding of intermediate performance skills on a stringed instrument, including fundamentals, rhythm and pitch reading, history, techniques, procedures, and etiquette after the successful completion of Year One. This course is designed primarily for students who are entering the seventh grade but is available to interested sixth grade students adequate prior experience, and who have pre-approval of the teacher. Students will learn how to listen to, respond to and evaluate music and musical performance by playing an instrument, alone and in groups, at an appropriate level of difficulty while relating music to history, culture, and the world. Each student must have access to an instrument solely dedicated to his/her use, their own method book and any other supplies/tools as requested by the teacher. Grading will be based on the standard level of mastery in performance skills, written and oral exams and concerts. IISD grading policy will be followed as to formative and summative evaluations. Other information can be found in the IISD Middle School Orchestra Handbook and the orchestra calendar issued at the beginning of each school year.

### **Varsity Orchestra Course**

This course provides students with a real world understanding of refined performance skills on a stringed instrument, including fundamentals, history, techniques, procedures, and etiquette after the successful completion of Year Two. This course is designed primarily for students who are entering eighth grade but is available to interested seventh grade students with a pre-approval of the teacher. Students will learn how to listen to, respond to and evaluate music and musical performance by playing an instrument, alone and in groups, at an appropriate level of difficulty while relating music to history, culture, and the world. Each student must have access to an instrument solely dedicated to his/her use, their own method book and any other supplies/tools as requested by the teacher. Grading will be based on the standard level of mastery in performance skills, written and oral exams and concerts. IISD grading policy will be followed as to formative and summative evaluations. Other information can be found in the IISD Middle School Orchestra Handbook and the orchestra calendar issued at the beginning of each school year. *Membership in this Advanced Orchestra requires a higher level of commitment. Students must strive to maintain eligibility in all classes.*

## GRADING POLICY

See Irving ISD Secondary Grading Procedures Handbook

**Formative Assessment (40%):** - Assessments designed to provide direction for improvement and/or adjustment of teaching and learning activities for individual students or a whole class, e.g. sectionals, teacher observations, home practice, instructional questions, individual skill development, performance assessments.

**Summative Assessment (60%):** - Assessments designed to provide information to be used with making judgments about student's achievement at the end of a sequence of instruction, e.g. performance assessments, written/oral/aural exams.

- Performance Assessments are authentic assessments that require students to perform complex tasks representative of activities done in and out of school settings used in either a formative or summative way. *Concerts are considered performances.*

## INSTRUMENT POLICY

**School-Owned Instruments** are available for use through the *IISD Fine Arts Department Instrument Usage Agreement Contract*. However, it has been observed that students who are the most successful do so because their parents make an investment in purchasing their child's own instrument. We highly recommend parents consider renting or purchasing instruments for their child as students enter their second and third year of orchestra.

**Private rentals** must possess certain markers of quality, including working fine tuners, pegs and fingerboard made of ebony wood, and bow hair made from real horse hair. Additionally, the instrument must be of natural wood color. Painted instruments are novelty instruments. Please avoid purchasing instruments online. It is very important to have your teacher's recommendation and to play on the instrument prior to purchasing. We want to ensure you are getting the best quality for your budget. *See recommended Vendors on "Orchestra Supplies List".*

**Instrument Responsibility/Maintenance** - Students will be instructed on instrument care and maintenance. However, It is highly advised to you insure your instrument. Check your homeowner's or renter's policy for specific coverage whether your child is using a school-owned instrument or a private-rental. If you are renting an instrument from a local music company and have taken the optional insurance, ask specifically what is covered and what is not. The student is responsible for taking proper care of the instrument. If the instrument incurs any damage due to negligence (including theft) or improper use, parents or guardians will be held responsible for the cost of repair or replacement of the instrument. Do not attempt repairs to an instrument at home under any circumstances! You can cause greater damage leading to higher expense.

## FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

**Uniform Shirt/Polo** - An order form will be sent home so that parents can purchase this for their child.

**Materials** - Irving ISD is committed to providing a superior education opportunity to all students interested in the performing arts and as such provides the use of school-owned instruments at no charge. However, Personal Materials will be the responsibility of each student. Please see the "IISD Orchestra Supply List" for specifics. We will help parents get the most for their money by arranging Supply Drives with vendors offering brand named products at the lowest possible prices. Supply Drives will vary from campus to campus.

**Fundraising** - Fundraisers will take place each year to help provide an exceptional experience in orchestra. All funds collected through fundraisers will be deposited into the campus "orchestra activity account" and spent with approval from teacher and orchestra officers. All contributions associated with the fundraiser belong to that organization.

## UNIFORM POLICY

This uniform policy is set in place for the safety of your child at off-campus events while maintaining group uniformity at all orchestra events.

**Casual Uniform** - The casual uniform is worn by beginner students and for some of the Intermediate and Advanced events. It will include an orchestra shirt or polo that follows the school dress code and thus can be worn any day of the school week as well as orchestra events. An order form will be sent home the first semester to obtain this for your child.

**Formal Uniform** - The formal uniform is worn for some of the Non-Varsity and Varsity concerts and competitions. Cost of Maintenance of this uniform is built into your financial responsibilities.

**Nail Maintenance** - All students will need to keep their fingernails short, especially on the left hand. They must be able to play on their fingertips; otherwise poor left-hand position and poor intonation will result. Girls will not be able to play with sculptured nails, nail tips, or press-on nails.

Please see table below for what is available on your campus.

	<b>Casual Uniform (All orchestra students)</b>	<b>Formal Uniform (Non-Varsity and Varsity only)</b>
<b>Austin MS</b>	Khaki bottom (pants or skirt) and orchestra Polo *school appropriate shoes and belt	<b>Girls:</b> Alixandra Dress <b>Boys:</b> 4-piece Tuxedo <i>*Student will need to provide their own pair of Black Dress Shoes and Black Socks/Hose</i>
<b>Bowie MS</b>	School-approved pants and orchestra shirt *school appropriate shoes and belt	<b>Girls:</b> Corelli Dress <b>Boys:</b> 4-piece formal ensemble <i>*Student will need to provide their own pair of Black Dress Shoes and Black Socks/Hose.</i>
<b>Crockett MS</b>	Khaki bottom (pants or skirt) and orchestra shirt *school appropriate shoes and belt	<b>Girls:</b> Alixandra Dress <b>Boys:</b> 4-piece Tuxedo <i>*Student will need to provide their own pair of Black Dress Shoes and Black Socks/Hose</i>
<b>de Zavala MS</b>	Khaki bottom (pants or skirt) and orchestra shirt *school appropriate shoes and belt	<b>Girls: Dress</b> <b>Boys:</b> 4-piece Tuxedo <i>*Student will need to provide their own pair of Black Dress Shoes and Black Socks/Hose.</i>
<b>Houston MS</b>	School uniform bottom and orchestra shirt *school appropriate shoes and belt	<b>Girls:</b> Corelli Dress <b>Boys:</b> 4-piece Tuxedo <i>*Student will need to provide their own pair of Black Dress Shoes and Black Socks/Hose.</i>
<b>Lady Bird MS</b>	Khaki bottom (pants or skirt) and orchestra T-shirt. <i>(Navy bottom is unacceptable)</i> *school appropriate shoes and belt	<b>Girls:</b> Corelli Dress <b>Boys:</b> Vest and Bow Tie (Boys must supply own white long sleeve, collared shirt & black pants) <i>*Student will need to provide their own pair of Black Dress Shoes and Black Socks/Hose</i>
<b>Lamar MS</b>	Khaki bottom (pants or skirt) and orchestra Polo *school appropriate shoes and belt	<b>Girls:</b> Oratorio Dress <b>Boys:</b> 4-piece Tuxedo <i>*Student will need to provide their own pair of Black Dress Shoes and Black Socks/Hose.</i>
<b>Travis MS</b>	Khaki bottom (pants or skirt) and orchestra shirt *school appropriate shoes and belt	<b>Girls:</b> Corelli Dress <b>Boys:</b> 5-piece Tuxedo <i>*Student will need to provide their own pair of Black Dress Shoes and Black Socks/Hose.</i>

## OFF-CAMPUS AND AFTER-SCHOOL EVENTS

These events may take place before, during or after school hours. Similar to tutoring, rehearsals and sectionals will be held periodically to prepare the students fully. Attendance at these rehearsals and sectionals will ensure your child meets the performance standard.

**Beginner Orchestra** - Orchestra members will participate in school concerts, IISD Solo & Ensemble contest and local music festivals.

**Non-Varsity and Varsity Orchestras** - Orchestra members will participate in several events ranging from All-City Audition, All-Region Audition, Concert & Sight Reading Contest, IISD Solo & Ensemble contest and local music festivals.

**No Pass/No Play Law** - Students must be passing with a 70% or above in all classes at the end of the six weeks prior to the event in order to participate in all UIL contests, and music festivals or social events.

**ISS/RAC** - Per IISD guidelines, students assigned to In-School-Suspension or RAC may be prohibited from participating in off-campus or after-school events. Future participation due to conduct will be left to the discretion of the director.

**Behavior** - Students are expected to adhere to all the requirements stated in the IISD Student Code of Conduct.

## POPs AND YOLO

**POPs** - Proud Orchestra Parents was established to aid the students and the orchestra program. Membership in POPs is open to anyone with a vested interest in the orchestra program including parents, alumni, and grandparents. The orchestra program has a proud past and a bright future; however we need your involvement to keep our program strong.

You help provide:

- Chaperones
- Assist teachers with administrative tasks
- Concert/contest stagehand
- Providing and serving snacks
- Assist with assigning and returning of uniforms
- Assist with sizing and cleaning of uniforms

**YOLO** - Young Orchestra Leaders Organization is an integral part of the orchestra. It is comprised of any interested intermediate and advanced orchestra members. These students are responsible, serious, and dedicated members of their orchestra. Orchestra officers will be chosen from this membership.

Responsibilities include:

- Concert ushers
- Concert/contest stagehands
- Concert announcers
- Solo and Ensemble contest monitors
- Mentor younger students
- "Gofer" (runner)

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