

**WORTHINGTON KILBOURNE HIGH SCHOOL**

**ORCHESTRA HANDBOOK**

**2014 - 2015**

**Mrs. Lori Wright, Director**  
**Mrs. Peggy Burton, Assistant Director**

# INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this handbook is to provide members of the Worthington Kilbourne High School Orchestra a clear understanding of what the program expects from its members and what its members can expect from the program. This handbook was developed to eliminate the possibility of student and parent misunderstanding of orchestra policies.

It is recommended that all orchestra members and parents take the time to read and understand the responsibilities outlined in this handbook. With everyone's cooperation, we can hope to have a positive and successful year for everyone involved.

## NOTES FROM THE DIRECTORS

**You have the power to make a positive difference in YOUR orchestra!!**

Attitude probably is one of the single most important factors in determining the success of an orchestra or any other organization. Every individual makes a difference...there are no unimportant people!!! We all have something important to contribute. When we do not contribute to the whole, we cheat everyone **including ourselves**, by not using our full potential.

If some of the following expectations seem high, keep in mind that these responsibilities are essential to your full development as a musician and to the success of the orchestra. It is an individual's responsibility to meet these standards; it is not possible to have a great orchestra experience without everyone's cooperation at all times.

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

Orchestra is a four-year course providing instruction in individual technical development, interpretive skills, ensemble training, and musicianship. Class instruction addresses these areas as they relate to each student's instrument within the orchestra program.

Selection of literature is based upon technical, musical, and performance considerations. During any particular year, the group performs a wide variety of music from all historical periods. While one musical period may be stressed for its contribution to individual skills, another may be used to develop of a particular aspect of musicianship or ensemble style.

**This course is designed to develop skills in cooperative learning and leadership skills. Advanced students and section leaders have additional**

responsibilities in rehearsals and are encouraged to participate in musical theater when the opportunity arises.

**Orchestra is offered as a full year course, not by semester.**

## **REHEARSAL PROCEDURE**

1. Be in place with equipment (instrument, music, pencil), and as needed mute, rosin, and a soft cloth, and ready to begin rehearsal at the 8th period bell. If not, you will be considered tardy to class.
2. Be courteous to everyone in the room- that includes when and how you talk!!
3. All talking, playing, and moving around should stop as soon as the director or the concertmaster steps onto the podium.
4. Respect the property of other individuals. This includes instruments as well as music. You do not have the right to use anyone else's materials without their permission.
5. Dismissal from class will be by the teacher and not by the bell.
6. Food and drink (except water) are **never** permitted in the music area.

Students are expected to have the proper equipment at each class. This includes an instrument and bow in good condition, music, pencil, mute, and rosin. Violin and viola players need to have an extra set of strings and a nametag on their case. If you do not have the proper equipment, see Mrs. Wright or Mrs. Burton for information on obtaining needed items.

For your instrument security, violin and viola players will be assigned a locker and lock. The instrument must be placed inside the locker and locked securely during the school day.

## **MUSIC**

All music performed by the Worthington Kilbourne Orchestras will be provided by the school district. Music used for solo and ensemble purposes will usually be provided by the student. However the school district does have a small solo and ensemble library that students are welcome to use. All original copies of music remain the property of the Worthington Schools. Students are expected to take good care of all

music. Markings should be made lightly with soft lead pencil only. Excessive markings and "doodles" are not acceptable.

All original copies will be kept in school folders. No student is allowed to take their school folder home. Practice copies will be provided by the directors. These copies are for home use only. It is a good idea to keep your practice copies at hand during all rehearsals so that you may copy fingerings, bowings, and other markings from your original copies into your practice copies.

## INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION

Being a member of a successful orchestra requires that students practice his or her instrument outside of the orchestra period. The amount of practice time required will depend on the individual and how well that student is able to perform the assigned orchestra part. The quality of practice time is more important than length of practice time. It is very important to understand that **frequent practice for a moderate length of time is of greater benefit to the student than one or two extended sessions.** In addition to individual practice on assigned orchestra parts, students will improve their technical facility on the instrument by practicing scales, etudes and/or solos as part of their chosen area of concentration in the ability levels guidelines for technical development. It is an expectation that every member of this orchestra play in tune with proper posture and bowing technique. Each student's goal must be to improve and do their personal best every day.

## SEATING AUDITIONS

Seating auditions are held at the beginning of each school year. These auditions have two purposes: (1) to hear each student individually in order to learn and understand the student's strengths and areas for potential improvement, and (2) to be able to effectively seat each section. This is an excellent opportunity for a student to demonstrate his or her abilities, for new members of the group to meet the director, and for the director to get to know everyone in the orchestra. **Students should also realize that the audition only provides the director a "snapshot" of their playing abilities on that particular day.** Nerves, stress or just having a bad day may affect the outcome, and for these reasons challenge opportunities are made available.

Material for the audition will include excerpts from music in the students' folders, scales, rhythms and sight-reading. Each example played in the audition will be scored by a rating scale. Areas of evaluation include tone, pitch, rhythm, dynamics, tempo, key signature, style, phrasing, articulation and facility. If you need individual help with any of these areas, please see the director or section leader.

# CHALLENGE REGULATIONS

## A. PHILOSOPHY:

Seating in an orchestra has functioned for years as a form of recognition for advanced players. Everyone in the orchestra is expected to learn their parts, but more advanced players and those who practice hard will receive recognition for their efforts, in part, through seating. At the high school level, there will be quite a variety of playing differences among students, especially when four grade levels are expected to participate and learn together in one class. Challenges should be looked upon as a learning experience--there are no "trophies". Challenges can develop a student in the areas of: successful goal setting, improved work ethic, and improved individual performance.

With the advancement to a higher chair comes the responsibility of leadership in the section and helping others learn their parts. Students who earn "principal" of a section set bowing direction, give entrances in musical parts and will conduct sectional rehearsals. They are asked to share their abilities as a team leader and helping others achieve the same skills.

There will be a general seating of the group into one orchestra, the **Symphonic Orchestra**. Students will then be divided, according to their strengths in the areas of musicianship, leadership, and technical strengths, into two separate orchestras: the **Concert Orchestra** and the **Chamber Orchestra**. All students will be performing in the Symphonic Orchestra as well as participate in either the Prelude or the Finale Orchestra. A student from Concert Orchestra may not challenge another student for membership for the Chamber Orchestra. Students may be moved from one orchestra to another at the discretion of the directors.

## B. CHALLENGE GUIDELINES:

1. Material for any challenge will be current music in the orchestra folders. Generally, four excerpts will be asked. Each student will select one excerpt and the directors will select two excerpts. Challenges will be evaluated by both directors.
2. The challenger must request the audition with the directors and then inform the person who is to be challenged.
3. The student who is challenged must accept the challenge or forfeit their chair.

4. After the challenge is complete, another challenge may be held after three (3) weeks. After two (2) weeks the challenger may inform the directors of an intent to challenge again.
5. There will be no challenges two weeks prior to a concert.
6. When evaluating the performances, the directors will consider the same areas of evaluation as an audition or play test.
7. In very close challenges, sight reading may be used as a tie breaker.
8. The directors have the right to declare the challenge a tie. The seating order will remain the same.

## PERFORMANCES

Performance is the natural culmination of the daily learning experience in rehearsal, and is an important part of the evaluation process. Both rehearsal and performance are necessary for a positive orchestra experience. A student who misses a performance not only negates previous efforts, but also affects the overall sound of the orchestra. **Attendance at performances and extra rehearsals is mandatory.**

All concert and contest dates are printed in this handbook. Any changes in the dates or times will be given up to three weeks prior to the event. If changes cause a conflict, the conflict must be discussed with the director within three (3) days after the change is announced.

Any students involved in athletics, other school and/or community organizations or who have work commitments must inform your coach, advisor, or supervisor well in advance about his or her orchestra performance schedule so conflicts may be avoided. Students have an obligation to the orchestra and to themselves to fulfill this responsibility.

It is very important that all concerts start on time. In order to accomplish this, all students must arrive 30 minutes prior to the scheduled beginning of the concert. This time is for tuning, music check, and proper warm up. Students who arrive late will have points deducted from their concert grade.

**At the conclusion of each performance, all members are responsible for putting their chairs and stands back on the racks provided.** Section leaders are responsible for making sure this is accomplished and for making sure that all music is returned to its proper place. Failure to do your part will be reflected on your concert grade.

## CONCERT ATTENDANCE

Participation in all performing events have been designated as "mandatory" for previously stated reasons as well as course requirements. Therefore, consequences will be given as a result of non-fulfillment of this obligation. Consequences include but are not limited to: grade lowering and/or demotion in seating within the section. Repeated violations may result in permanent dismissal from the orchestra.

The only time a student is excused from a performance is in the event of family emergency (i.e.- death in the family, a student's extreme illness). A parent needs to inform the director preferably before the concert, or at least by the next school day. The director's office phone is 450-6479 and is accessible 24 hours a day.

A final decision on whether or not an absence is excused will be made by the director and Student Services. If the absence is excused, the director will assign the student make-up work either in the form of a playing test or a written paper. **If an absence is unexcused, the student will not receive credit and will not be allowed to make up the points lost due to the absence.**

## CONCERT DRESS

**There is a set stage "uniform" for all students.** These guidelines not only improve overall appearance of the orchestra but also help to establish greater sense of unity within the ensemble.

- 1.) **MEN:** Men will be required to wear a black suit, black dress shirt, long black tie, black dress shoes (**not black tennis shoes**), and black socks. No variation will be allowed. Shirt sleeves are to be worn buttoned at the wrist and shirt tails are to be tucked in.
- 2.) **WOMEN:** Women will be required to wear either long black dress pants or a long black skirt *down to the ankles* with black nylons. The top may be a black blouse or a black dress jacket with long sleeves. Women must also wear black, closed toe dress shoes (**not black tennis shoes**). **Clothing must be solid black without any print or design that is not black on the material.**

If you are not sure about a specific outfit or if you need clarification on the above, see the directors. Any student with inappropriate dress (i.e.- white socks, short skirt, sneakers, no ties) will have points deducted from their performance grade.

# GRADING CRITERIA

All nine weeks grades are based on the following criteria:

- Daily Participation
- Equipment Upkeep and Accessories
- Sectional Evaluation
- Play test and/or Ability Level advancement
- Performances

## **Class Participation**

Class participation is worth 40% of the nine weeks grade. Points are earned by:

1. Following rehearsal procedure.
2. Promptness.
3. Attending class.
4. Demonstrating good posture and playing position.
5. Demonstrating an attentive attitude.
6. Marking music during rehearsal.

## **Equipment Upkeep and Accessories**

This area is worth 10% of the nine weeks grade. Equipment includes instrument, a full ribbon of horse hair on bow, music, pencil, mute, rosin, spare strings, and a soft cloth. It also includes replacing broken strings and needed instrument repairs within a reasonable period of time. All strings need to be replaced every year. Old strings are very difficult to tune and to keep in tune. They also tend to "deaden" the tone of the instrument. Violinists and violists need to keep a spare set of strings in their cases.

## **Sectional Evaluation**

This area is worth 10% of the nine weeks grade. There will be an average of three (3) sectionals per nine weeks. Evaluation is based on how well the group works and how much is accomplished during the sectional rehearsals. Sections that let out early or are not working will have points deducted from their sectional grade. All students must treat principal players with the same respect you would give the directors. They are your colleagues and fellow students; the expectation is your best behavior.

## Performance & Play Test

This area is worth 40% of the nine weeks grade. Details on areas of evaluation for this section are given under the sections labeled "Concert Attendance" and "Performance".

### Grade Scale:

A+	= 100%	C+	= 78-79%
A	= 93-99%	C	= 73-77%
A-	= 90-92%	C-	= 70-72%
B+	= 88-89%	D+	= 68-69%
B	= 83-87%	D	= 63-67%
B-	= 80-82%	D-	= 60-62%

## IDENTIFICATION OF EQUIPMENT AND LOCKERS

**All personal equipment should be clearly labeled with the student's name, address, phone number and school. This is for your protection.** You should also have your instrument's make, model, serial number, and purchase price written down and filed at home. Having a good photo of the instrument and accessories is also a good idea. Instruments that are not locked up can, and have, disappeared. Specific information on the instrument may help the police recover the instrument.

All violinists and violists will be assigned a school lock and locker. The director will have all lock combinations on file. Each lock will be assigned to a specific locker so **do not put your assigned lock on a different locker. All students will also be required to lock their instruments in their locker with the lock securely fastened.**

## SCHOOL MUSIC AND EQUIPMENT

Students are responsible for all school-owned equipment assigned to them. This includes instruments, rosin, bows, end pin stops, and mutes. Any equipment damaged or lost will be the responsibility of the student or students assigned to them. The student may either replace the equipment or may reimburse the cost of replacing or repairing the equipment to the orchestra fund.

All students will be assigned a specific folder with music. The music in the folders are all original copies from the publisher. It may cost from \$2.50 up to \$10.00 to replace a piece of music. Some parts are permanently out of print, which means that they are irreplaceable. In other words, take good care of your music!! Do not fold, tear, or

mutilate music. **Light** pencil markings are encouraged, **no** ink markings or colored pencil markings EVER!!

Generally, two people are assigned to a folder. Both students are responsible for the care of the music. Both students are responsible for making sure that the folder is put away and both are responsible if the folder or specific parts disappear. Moreover, both students will be responsible for reimbursing the orchestra fund for the cost of replacing the lost or mutilated music. **Music folders must remain at school in the music cabinet, not in your lockers. Practice copies are to be taken home.**

## **PRIVATE LESSONS**

Students are strongly encouraged to take private lessons. In an orchestra program this large, it is virtually impossible to meet the individual needs of each student, though every possible effort is made. With Private lessons, even just two lessons per week, participating students can have the luxury of extra help on orchestra literature and instrumental technique sessions on an one-on-one basis. If you do not have a private teacher and are interested in beginning lessons, a list of teachers in this area is available from the directors.

## **SOLO & ENSEMBLE ADJUDICATED EVENTS**

Students in the vocal and instrumental music programs are strongly encouraged to participate in the OMEA Solo & Ensemble Adjudicated Events held every January or February. The purpose of this event is to promote and encourage students' improvement in the areas of musicianship and technique.

The following guidelines are required for students to benefit from this experience:

1. Students must select music from an approved list of music published by the Ohio Music Educators Association. Your director has this list.
2. Students must be a member of the school orchestra in order to participate in string events.
3. Students must have a copy of their solo or ensemble for the adjudicator. The adjudicator's copy **must have every measure numbered or the overall rating will be lowered by one level.** Any ensemble copies must be in score form.
4. Music is divided into three categories **C, B, and A**, with **A** being the most difficult.

5. It is strongly recommended that a student at the high school level who is not taking private lessons or has not participated in contest, enter "B" or "C" classification. The second or third year will provide ample time to advance to the "A" level.
6. Students receive a rating and a written comment sheet about the performance. The rating system used is I, II, III, IV, and V with a I being the top rating or "superior". Students who participate and receive a I or a II rating are entitled to purchase a medal. All participants receive a certificate.
7. Students who participate as a member of an ensemble should be aware of the importance of regular group practice three (3) months prior to the contest. Two (2) or three (3) rehearsals per week will result in an outstanding experience for all!!
8. Soloists are not required to have accompanists, but are strongly encouraged to use piano accompaniment for the best overall experience.
9. Freshmen have a choice of entering in either high school or middle school contest, but may not participate in both.

## **STATE ORCHESTRA ADJUDICATED EVENT**

The Worthington Kilbourne Orchestra will be participating in the Ohio Music Education Association State Orchestra Adjudicated Event held every spring. The decision to participate is made on a year-to-year basis and with the following considerations:

1. Educational benefits to be gained for the students in the particular group.
2. Instrumentation of the particular group.
3. Group characteristics such as rehearsal technique throughout the year, presenting a teachable attitude, an ability to listen and take directions, and a willingness to work hard as a group in order to achieve something that cannot be achieved as individuals.
4. Music ability level of the particular group to handle music required in regular classroom lessons. Other orchestra literature cannot be excluded at the expense of preparing for the event.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

All students must travel to and from performances or other activities on school buses, not in personal cars. The director must have a signed permission slip with the medical information filled out in her possession from each student by the day of the trip. Any student who does not have a signed form turned in will not be able to go.

Any student who needs to return from a performance or activity with a parent or guardian **MUST** submit a permission slip signed by the parent or guardian one week prior to the trip. Permission will then be granted by the administration, not the orchestra director.

## **REGIONAL, ALL-STATE, N.H.S.H.O.**

At the beginning of each school year, OMEA sends to all high school orchestra and band directors a letter and applications for students to audition for the South-Central Region Orchestra. This orchestra is made up of the best instrumentalists from Franklin County to counties extending down to the Ohio River. Over two hundred (250) students audition each year and only one hundred (100) are selected.

Every student auditioning must have a completed audition form, checks covering the audition fee and must be a member of the school organization. A student must audition on the instrument that the student plays as a member of their school orchestra (A student who is a member of the school band on trombone cannot audition for the orchestra on violin unless the student is a member of the school orchestra on violin.) These are the rules set by OMEA.

The top players in each of the five regional orchestras are selected to participate in the OMEA All-State Orchestra. This elite group performs for the OMEA Convention held every February at a major city in Ohio. This is a wonderful opportunity to perform with some of the best young instrumentalists in the state.

Every two years, students who participated in the All-State Orchestra are given the opportunity to audition for the National High School Honors Orchestra held at the MENC Convention. This convention has been held in cities all over the country. This group is made up of the best high school instrumentalists in the entire country. Worthington Kilbourne High School has had two students accepted to perform with this group in past years.

## CSYO, YPCO, AND CADET ORCHESTRAS

Students in the orchestra have the opportunity to audition for the Columbus Symphony Youth Orchestra (grades 9-12), The Youth Orchestra of Central Ohio (grades 9-12), and for the Columbus Symphony Cadet Orchestra (grades 7-10). These orchestras are made up of members from all over Columbus and outlying areas. All students are required to audition and must be a member of the school orchestra. Auditions are held every spring.

These groups have weekly rehearsals and several weekend retreats. Performance schedules are quite challenging, yet rewarding and the groups often travel outside of Franklin County for concerts and clinics.

## SENIOR SOLOS

Each year the director offers the opportunity for seniors to solo with the orchestra. This is an excellent opportunity for seniors to be accompanied by an orchestra as well as the orchestra to learn accompaniment skills. We believe senior solos to be one of the high points for our audience during the concert.

Students only qualify for this privilege through auditions held in November, and must have a private teacher. Seniors may choose from, but are not restricted to, our school concerto library. Music can also be borrowed or rented. A limit of \$50 for rental or \$100 for purchase are within the parameters of the orchestra budget. It is the director's sole discretion as to whether a piece will be purchased by the school.

The student is required to play for the directors prior to the work being programmed for a concert and prior to rental or purchase. Seniors must have the solo mastered at the end of the first nine weeks and be able to project their instrumental sound over a string or full orchestra. Pieces selected must also be within the ability level and instrumentation of our school orchestra. Senior solos must be at a level of accomplishment worthy of the orchestra's study for a period of eight weeks. The directors have the final say in this matter.

**Seniors must make their desires known and have music selected by the end of September.** A late April/early May Senior Solo Concert will feature soloists from both WKHS and TWHS Orchestras. At the director's request, one senior solo may be featured in the May Festival program. Others must be ready in December or March. Due to lack of rehearsal time, seniors should know that a solo will not be programmed during "walkabout" at Linworth, or Senior Project at WKHS, without daily attendance in Orchestra. These students should program their solo for either December or March.

**\*Senior solos will be phased out after this year.**

## **SENIOR AWARDS**

At the end of every school year, senior awards are given which include 1, 2, 3 and 4-year awards to all seniors, the National School Orchestra Association Award, the Director's Award, and the Arion Award to the most outstanding seniors.

Senior recognition will be held during the Senior Solo concert. This program is a combined effort with TWHS. The program offers an opportunity to feature several senior soloists and functions as a senior awards night.

## **HOW TO CONTACT MRS. WRIGHT**

My office phone/voice mail number is **450-6479**. My email address is **[lwright@worthington.k12.oh.us](mailto:lwright@worthington.k12.oh.us)**. Students and parents are encouraged to contact me at any time by phone or email.

## 2014-2015 ORCHESTRA CALENDAR

This section is very important for all parents and students to read over carefully. These dates should be immediately posted in calendars at home so that possible conflicts do not occur later in the year.

- |                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| <i>*August 15, 2014</i>      | District Convocation<br>TWHS Auditorium, 8am  |
| <i>October __, 2014</i>      | Auditions for OMEA<br>South-Central Region<br>Orchestra; Gahanna Lincoln<br>H.S. time TBA |
| <i>November __, 2014</i>     | OMEA South-Central<br>Region Orchestra;<br>Gahanna Lincoln H.S. time TBA                  |
| <i>* November 5, 2014</i>    | Orchestra Concert;<br>WKHS Auditorium, 7:30pm   |
| <i>January 24, 2015</i>      | OMEA Solo & Ensemble<br>Events; location and times TBA                                    |
| <i>*February 19, 2015</i>    | Pre Contest Concert<br>WKHS Auditorium, 7:30pm  |
| <i>*February 27-28, 2015</i> | OMEA State Orchestra Contest;<br>Friday/Saturday<br><b>Location and time TBA</b>          |
| <i>*April 16, 2015</i>       | Senior Night<br>TWHS Auditorium, 7:30pm   |
| <i>* May 12, 2015</i>        | West District Orchestra Festival;<br>WKHS Auditorium, 7:00pm                              |
| <i>* May 24, 2015</i>        | Commencement;<br>Battelle Grand, 12:00pm  |

**\*mandatory attendance**

# PARENT INFORMATION SHEET

I have read the 2014-2015 Worthington Kilbourne High School Orchestra Handbook and have received the 2014-2015 performance calendar. I understand the responsibilities of my child as a member of the orchestra.

PRINT STUDENT NAME \_\_\_\_\_

STUDENT SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

STUDENT EMAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

PARENT/GUARDIAN  
SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

HOME PHONE NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

WORK OR CELL PHONE NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

PARENT EMAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

**THIS MUST BE RETURNED BY THE SECOND  
WEEK OF SCHOOL!**