



## **WORTHINGWAY MIDDLE SCHOOL ORCHESTRA PROGRAM**

Parents and Students:

Welcome to the 2017-2018 Worthingway Middle School Orchestra Program. I am looking forward to working with students during their middle school years in preparation for high school. As students have already experienced in elementary school, orchestra offers the opportunity to share, collaborate, and team build in the process of music making. It is an activity that builds life long social and academic skills.

Please keep this handbook/syllabus and read it carefully so that you understand the expectations. The back page includes a form that needs to be filled out and returned indicating that you and your child have read the handbook/syllabus and understand the expectations. Included on the sign-off section is a place for your e-mail address(s). It has been very helpful and efficient to e-mail everyone as a group or individually when communication is needed. It is also important to notify me if your address changes, so that you continue to receive any communications. The completed sign-off section is to be turned in to the orchestra director within one week of distribution.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call me.

### **A. PROGRAM EMPHASIS AND GOALS**

1. To promote good individual playing technique.
  - a. Review and refine previously learned skills.
  - b. Learn new skills appropriate at this level.
2. To promote good playing within a group.
  - a. Learn skills necessary for good ensemble playing.
  - b. Learn responsibility as a member of an ensemble.
3. Music is chosen to accomplish the above goals.
  - a. Music is chosen to reinforce the skills taught.
  - b. Music is chosen to challenge a student to improve.
4. To promote the enjoyment of playing your instrument, and the enjoyment of music of different styles and periods.

### **B. ORCHESTRA GUIDELINES**

1. Be in the right place at the right time.
  - a. Be in class on time. School wide attendance policies must be followed.
2. Respect the rights and property of others.
  - a. Each student has the right to play and learn without distractions from others.
  - b. Use your instrument for what it was intended.
  - c. Keep your hands off other students' instruments!
3. Attitude.
  - a. You should be in orchestra only if you want to play and learn.

b. Take pride in your efforts during the learning process. Your effort will contribute to a satisfying result for you personally and for the group.

c. Have the proper equipment at all times – instrument with good working strings, music, pencil, shoulder pad, rock stop, rosin, and cleaning cloth. Fingernails must be short.

4. Make the right choice.

a. Most everything you do in this class will be covered by the above guidelines.

b. Consider them carefully before you act.

5. Most of all:

a. Enjoy yourself.

b. We are here to learn about music, your instruments and each other. Don't let anything else get in the way.

### **C. INSTRUMENT MAINTENANCE**

A student's instrument and accessories are necessary to guarantee success in playing. Poor or missing equipment will have a detrimental effect on the students' ability to perform well, and more importantly, to feel good about their playing. The following items are mandatory for good playing:

1. A quality instrument of the proper size.

a. Properly adjusted bridge, sound post, and pegs.

b. Bow with a full width of horsehair and properly working frog.

c. Fine tuners at this level to insure proper tuning.

d. End pins on cellos and basses that can be raised to the appropriate height.

e. Instrument free of cracks or open seams.

2. Good strings on any size instrument.

a. Violin

1. Thomastik Dominant. 2. D'Addario Pro-Arte. 3. Aricore. 4. Helicore. 5. Prelude.

A Wondertone E string with the above G, D, and A strings is recommended.

b. Viola.

1. Thomastik Dominant C, G, and D strings and a Jargar A string. 2. Aricore. 3. Helicore.

4. D'Addario Pro-Arte. 5. Prelude.

c. Cello

1. Jargar. 2. Prim. 3. Helicore.

d. Replace strings at least yearly – sooner if strings are damaged or worn. Old strings become false and are very difficult to tune. Your ability to play well is hampered by old and worn strings.

e. The above are suggestions of good strings. There are often new or improved strings introduced to the market. The Loft Violin Shop can assist you with good string selection.

3. Miscellaneous important stuff.

a. A good shoulder pad for violin and viola players is a requirement. There are two styles of foam pads as well as a variety of other shoulder pads that fit across the back of the instrument. I would like to recommend that at this level, the student have a more professional and comfortable pad such as the "Everest" which is reasonably priced. Please do not get the small moon-shaped pad. Again, the Loft Violin Shop can assist you. Everyone is shaped and built differently, so be sure to take the instrument to the shop and try a variety of pads to determine what fits well and feels good.

- b. A good end-pin stop (rock stop) for cellos and basses to prevent slipping. There are a variety of wood, plastic, and rubber rock stops available.
- c. Good rosin. Do not buy cheap rosin. Decent rosin is worth the money. Again, the Loft Violin Shop can assist you.
- d. A soft cloth to clean your instrument after each playing. Flannel or t-shirt material will work well.
- e. Music stand. It is very important that each student have a decent music stand for home practice. Wire music stands are available for \$15-\$20 at most music stores. They come with either 2 or 3 sections that extend. I recommend one that will extend tall enough for the student to see music at eye level when standing.

#### **D. LOCKERS/EQUIPMENT**

All violinists and violists will be assigned a locker for their instrument. Two students will share one locker. It is important that students keep their instrument locked at all times when not being played. Instruments can and have disappeared when not locked. The director will have the lock combination and serial number on file.

School cellos and basses that are assigned to students will be stored in a storage room that is locked when class is not in session. Students are responsible for school-owned equipment that is assigned to them. This includes all accessories. Students/parents will be responsible for repair/replacement costs if the instrument is not responsibly cared for.

Finally, all personal equipment should be clearly labeled with the student's name, address, phone number and school. For added protection, record the instrument/bow's make, model, serial number, purchase/rental information and keep in a file at home.

#### **E. MUSIC**

**All students will need to purchase a ½ inch blue binder from school. The cost of the binder is \$3.** These binders will be used for supplemental material and for home practice parts. Students will transport the binders to and from school.

Students sitting together on a stand will share one folder with school owned music. Each folder and music part is numbered and kept in a correspondingly numbered slot in the music storage cabinet. If a student changes stands during the year, they will also change music folders and slots. Parts can be easily lost or misplaced, so it is important that all music be put away in the correct folders.

As middle schools students, you will now have more individual parts to pieces that we play. It is very important that you take care of these parts – it is expensive to buy music. **Music should never be folded, and all markings should be done in pencil, never in pen.** When music is turned in, you will be checked off on a chart. If a part is lost, it will cost you and your stand partner \$3.00 to replace it.

7<sup>th</sup> graders will need to have Essential Elements, Book 2 and will need to purchase “Essential Technique for Strings 2000” (green) to have at home later in the year. 8<sup>th</sup> graders will need to have the green “Essential Technique for Strings, 2000”.

#### **F. SEATING**

Students will periodically rotate through their section. It will give students a chance to sit with different stand partners and for students to move from the back to the front of the section. This will benefit playing and listening skills.

Two or three weeks prior to each district concert, skills are assessed for a final concert seating.

## **G. DAILY SCHEDULE**

Students will have 5 orchestra classes each week. 7<sup>th</sup> grade orchestra is 3rd period from 10:28-11:12. 8<sup>th</sup> grade orchestra is 6th period from 12:41-1:25. Students who are scheduled to participate in orchestra and band will split the weekly rehearsal time. “Combo” students will have band on M/W and orchestra T/TH and will alternate Fridays. A “combo” schedule will be given to these students. Students who skip or miss a class will need to make it up during assist time.

## **H. GRADES**

1. Students can earn 3 points a day based on:

**a. Preparation – 1 pt.**

proper equipment – pencil, shoulder pad or rock stop, music – and instrument.

**b. Promptness – 1 pt.**

Arriving in class on time and in seat– music and instrument ready to go when the bell rings.

Students need to be in the classroom by the time the bell rings. They will then have one minute to get in their seat with their instrument and music, ready to go. School wide attendance policies music be followed.

**c. Rehearsal/concert etiquette and respect – 1 pt.**

Rehearsal etiquette includes disciplined classroom behavior related to performing in a musical ensemble. Students are expected to keep instruments quiet unless directed to play, stop immediately when the director stops conducting, be respectful and quiet if another section of instruments is rehearsing a passage of music, and display respectful behavior during playing assessments. Eating, drinking and chewing gum is not allowed. Dialogue and questions concerning performance aspects of the music will be encouraged. Students will raise their hand to ask a question or offer a suggestion/idea. Other students will respectfully listen and then respond if desired. Students will not be constantly reminded about behavior during class as it is a distraction to others and takes up valuable time. It may be indicated to the student that their point has been lost. If their rehearsal etiquette improves, they may earn their 1 pt. back on to their daily grade.

**CELL PHONES – will be placed in a box as you enter class and picked up at the end of class. Cell phones can be useful devices for tuning or other musical purposes. The teacher will guide/direct/approve the use of the phone. Misuse (use other than musical) of the phone will result in loss of your etiquette point and contact with a parent.**

**Additional assignments will include:**

**d. Periodic performance assessments** based on a performance rubric, concert literature and the orchestra program Graded Course of Study. These assessments may occur during class time or as homework. They may be individual or small group assessments. They will be entered into Infinite Campus. If an assignment is missed due to an absence, it will be made up in consultation with the teacher (generally within 3-5 days). Students may also be asked to complete a weekly practice chart.

**e. Periodic written assessments** based on musical vocabulary important to the general understanding of learning a musical instrument and based on the performance literature used during the year. Students will be responsible for musical vocabulary learning objectives that will be assessed at the beginning and end of the year. All written work will be kept in the student’s blue binder as reference/study material.

**f. Binder check-ups.** Students will be graded twice each quarter on the organization of their orchestra binder. This is to help ensure that students are putting the materials I give them in the binder and can easily reference them when needed, either in class or at home.

Rehearsal/concert etiquette and respect is the most important element. It demonstrates your attitude, your effort and your ability to follow the above rules in letter C. Effort is a broad area that includes observation of the student's performance abilities and improvement over the course of a week. It is an indication of the student's personal practice and willingness to work hard at accomplishing challenging musical tasks. It also includes the effort it takes to prepare periodic performance assessments and study for written assessments. Concert attendance is also an important part of effort and participation. Concert attendance is discussed below.

1. Daily points will be added and totaled for a weekly grade in each of the above areas. The weekly and quarterly grading scale is:

98 – 100 = A+	83 – 86 = B	70 – 72 = C-
93 – 97 = A	80 – 82 = B-	67 – 69 = D+
90 – 92 = A-	77 – 79 = C+	63 – 66 = D
87 – 89 = B+	73 – 76 = C	60 – 62 = D-

2. Bonus points can also be earned for private lessons and/or an organized outside ensemble such as a chamber music group or a youth orchestra (2pts.), and for participating in the spring solo/ensemble festival (10 pts.), and for attending other music concerts (2 pts. plus the program).

**SmartMusic** – Families have the option of purchasing a student subscription for a nominal fee. The company has been in the process of making some changes to the operation of the program and the fee structure. This is a wonderful program that enables the student to conveniently practice pieces on the computer with accompaniment, complete performance assignments that are emailed to the teacher, and receive immediate assessment feedback. A microphone is also required. A home subscription provides more flexibility and time for use. This is not required, but is an added benefit for fun, enjoyable home practice and motivation.

## **I. CONCERTS**

Unlike elementary school, attendance at concerts is required and is considered a part of your grade for any nine-week period in which a concert is scheduled. While not the most important part of the curriculum, performance is an integral part of the life of a musician, and it does represent the culmination of daily work and preparation in the classroom and at home. Group playing skills aid in your development as an individual player, and your growth and development as an individual player is an asset to the group process. In becoming a member of the orchestra, you have a responsibility to the group, bringing your individual skills to each practice for the benefit of a positive team result.

Students who are members of outside groups such as the Columbus Symphony Youth Orchestras or the Youth Philharmonic of Central Ohio are required to be involved in their school music program. School concerts take priority if there is a conflict. Please refer to the handbook for that group.

### **Concert Attendance**

An orchestra experience is a team effort and needs everyone's participation to be successful. **A concert is considered the “final exam” of all the daily study and preparation that has taken place.** Therefore, concert attendance is required, and an unexcused absence from a concert will result in a loss of 50 points. An excused absence consists of personal illness or family emergency and requires personal contact with the teacher in advance of the concert and a note. An excused absence may be possible depending on the reason or conflict, and I know about it well in advance. It may be a judgment call on my part. In this instance, a portion of the grade can be made up with the student turning in a tape of his/her performance of the concert pieces. If there are sporting conflicts, there is usually a compromise that can be made, so that both events can be attended. Keep in mind that you are important to the success of the experience – you're not just “another player”. Most

concert dates are known well in advance. Please put these dates in your calendar. Concerts for this year are listed below. Concert points are as follows:

**Preparation**

Proper concert dress – 10 pts.  
Proper equipment – 10 pts.

**Promptness**

Arriving at the requested call time for tuning and warm-up – 5 pts

**Proper performance/audience etiquette and behavior** - 25 pts. (Cell phones must not be visible at any point during concert presentation or concert listening. They will be taken from the student and a parent must come to get the phone at the end of the evening).

**Concert Dress Code**

District Orchestra Concerts and Worthingway music department concerts and tour - black or dark blue pants/skirts (no mini-skirts) and the Worthington Orchestra shirt (more details to come later-cost is approximately \$15-\$17). Black shoes -no tennis shoes, leggings or jeans.

**J. SOLO/ENSEMBLE FESTIVAL** – This is an adjudicated event and is an optional activity in which students may choose to be a participant in a prepared solo or ensemble piece. Due to time constraints, solos are best prepared if the student is taking private lessons. I will be happy to help small chamber groups with music selection and preparation. This has been a very positive experience for students in the past.

Saturday, April 14th, 2018 – Junior High Solo/Ensemble Contest, location and times tba.

**K. PRIVATE TEACHERS**

Private teachers are highly recommended for everyone, regardless of ability level. While important playing skills are taught and learned in an orchestra setting, individual attention is more difficult to accommodate. A private teacher can give this individual attention, focusing on the skills needed to help the student succeed and advance. A list of private teachers in the area is available if you would like one.

## **WORTHINGTON PERFORMING ARTS EVENTS – 2017 - 2018**

Please put the following concert dates in your calendar and/or post this list on your refrigerator. The concerts listed in bold print involve Worthingway music students (band, orchestra, choir). Some students are involved in more than one group. Additional listings are other district concert events that students may want to attend throughout the year. It can be very motivational for the younger students to hear the older students – they get a good sense of how much they can accomplish if they continue through the program. Dates with (\*) are concerts that involve **Worthingway orchestra students**.

### **SEPTEMBER**

**Friday, September 22 - 8th grade recognition night at TWHS football game.**

### **OCTOBER**

**Thursday, October 5 – 8<sup>th</sup> grade band at Middle School Bowl @ TWHS, 6:30pm.**

**Thursday, October 30 - Fall 8th Grade Choir Festival Concert - 7:30pm, Worthington Christian Church.**

### **NOVEMBER**

Thursday, November 9 – WKHS/McCord/Phoenix Orchestra concert @WKHS, 7:30pm.

**\*Tuesday, November 14 –TWHS/Worthingway & Kilbourne MS Orchestra @ TWHS, 7:30pm**

**Thursday, November 16 – Fall Band Festival, 7:30pm @ Worthingway**

Monday, November 20 – 6<sup>th</sup> grade band concert at TWHS, 7:30pm.

### **DECEMBER**

**Monday, December 11 – Holiday Choir Concert @Wway, 7:30pm.**

Tuesday, December 12 – East side 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> orchestra concert at TWHS, 7:30pm.(Snow date, Jan.10)

Wednesday, December 13–West side 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> orchestra concert at WHKS, 7:30pm.(Snow date, Jan.9)

### **JANUARY**

January 22 – auditions for the Worthingway musical begin

### **FEBRUARY**

Wednesday, February 7 – TWHS/WKHS pre contest orchestra concert at WKHS, 7:30pm.

Friday/Saturday, February 16 and 17 – OMEA State Orchestra Contest

### **MARCH**

**\*Thursday, March 8 – WMS Music Department tour day, all day – band, choir, orchestra – (for Music In Our Schools Month). Assembly for Worthingway students at the end of the day.**

**\*Tuesday March 13 –All Middle School Orchestra Festival MS – at TWHS, 7:30pm**

**Wednesday, March 14 – MIOSM 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> Grade Choir Concert, 7:30pm @ Worthingway**

**Thursday, March 15 – MIOSM/ WMS Band concert, 7:30pm. at Worthingway.**

### **APRIL**

Thursday, April 12 - OMEA music recital at Worthingway - 7:00pm

**\*Saturday, April 14 - OMEA Solo/Ensemble Festival, time and location, tba.**

**Friday/Saturday, April 20th and 21st - Worthingway musical**

**\*Saturday, April 21 or 28 - COSI, Central Ohio String Invitational, Hastings MS, Upper Arlington**

**MAY**

Wednesday, May 2 - West Side District Orchestra Festival, grades 5 – 12, WKHS, 7:30pm

Wednesday, May 2 – TWHS band awards concert at TWHS

**\*Thursday, May 3 – East Side District Orchestra Festival, grades 5-12, TWHS, 7:30pm.**

**Monday, May 7 – Worthingway choir showtime concert, 7:30pm.**

**Tuesday, May 8<sup>th</sup> – Worthingway Bands – “Hello, Goodbye” concert @ TWHS, 7:30pm.**

Wednesday, May 9 – Orchestra Senior Concerto Night at WKHS

**May 16, 17, or 18 – MS Adjudicated Large Group Contest, band and choir.**

**\*Saturday, May 12 or 19 – orchestra trip to Cedar Point for adjudicated performance & day at the park.**

**Monday, May 28 – Memorial Day Parade, 8<sup>th</sup> grade band.**

If you have any questions regarding the handbook/syllabus or aspects of the program, please don't hesitate to contact me. I am looking forward to a great year!

Sincerely,

Beverly Wedell

Orchestra Director

Worthingway Middle School

Slate Hill

Worthington Estates

Worthington Park

**Please complete the form below and return to the orchestra director. This handbook/syllabus will also be accessible on the orchestra website at [www.worthingtonorchestra.com](http://www.worthingtonorchestra.com).**

**We have read the handbook and understand the expectations of the orchestra program.  
We have put the concert dates in our calendar!**

Parent e-mail address #1: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent e-mail address #2: \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE WRITE CLEARLY

Parent Phone # (h) \_\_\_\_\_ (c) \_\_\_\_\_

Student Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

I would like families to join the Remind app which allows teachers to send parents and students important text messages concerning their classroom activities. Please go to “Remind” which will then direct you how to join either “Wway 7th orchestra” or “Wway 8th orchestra”. Please checkmark on this form \_\_\_\_\_ yes, I have joined.

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_