John Overton High School Orchestra

2016-2017
INFORMATION AND POLICY HANDBOOK

Director
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JohnOvertonOrchestra.com
Why study music? Why participate in orchestra?

Participation in orchestra offers each member a wide variety of opportunities to collaborate and work together to achieve common goals. Students gain an understanding of teamwork and realize the value of each member’s contribution to the ensemble. Every student MUST perform at the highest level of excellence or the performance of the whole will suffer. Through this realization, students develop a sense of self-worth, a connection to their ensemble and a sense of satisfaction and pride understanding the importance of their contribution to the ensemble.

The primary goal of the Overton Orchestra is for each student to develop the highest-level of music skills possible, making the orchestra a quality, life enriching, and aesthetic musical experience.

In addition to teaching performance skills, participation in orchestra teaches the student to be an active thinker. For each note played, there are numerous considerations and instantaneous decisions to make. How loud or soft? How fast or slow? How does the note start? How does it end? Who else plays it? Am I in-tune? Nowhere else is the demand for active thought processes any stronger.

Orchestra also teaches life skills. Communication is a main component of music. The rehearsal and performance schedule of the orchestra demands planning and time management...skills that will be valuable all through life. Goal setting, problem solving, and peer interaction--all of these develop quickly as a part of the orchestral experience. An overwhelming number of highly successful individuals, Fortune 500 executives, and those with appointments to military academies were involved in their school music programs. Students studying music consistently score an average 45-60 points higher on the SAT than those not taking music courses. A study by the National Association of Secondary School Principals has found that participation in extra-curricular activities (and particularly music) is the greatest predictor of student success in life.

Objectives of the Orchestra Program

- **Cultural** - To foster the continued development of music appreciation and understanding through the study and performance of a variety of musical genres.

- **Educational** - To develop interested and discriminating listeners, provide a well-rounded music education including; music theory, composition, and music history, and prepare students for musical activities beyond high school.

- **Service** - To provide entertainment and atmosphere for school and community activities while promoting and enhancing the dignity and reputation of excellence of John Overton High School.

- **Citizenship** - To develop the ability to function as a responsible member of a group, to enhance the member’s ability to interact with others in a positive manner, and to develop the ability to function as a responsible member of the community.

- **Recreational** - To foster in each student a life-long appreciation for music, provide members with an emotional outlet, and participate in valuable social experiences.
Performance Opportunities

Middle Tennessee School Band and Orchestra Association Concert Performance Assessment (Spring)

This large ensemble performance assessment takes place in March. A panel of judges made up of accomplished conductors, university professors, and esteemed music educators rate each ensemble on their stage performance and sight-reading ability. It is a comprehensive evaluation of the orchestra as a whole. Ensembles prepare two pieces for the stage performance and work to develop skills necessary to show mastery in sight-reading.

All Mid-State and All-State Honor Orchestras

The Tennessee Mid-State and All-State Orchestra audition process is a tremendously competitive opportunity for students. Students prepare a required solo, perform scales, and are asked to show sight-reading skills during an audition. Students from all over Middle Tennessee compete for placement in one of these ensembles. Auditions occur at the end of the fall semester and, if selected, students participate in the Honor Orchestra in January. Selection into these ensembles is one of the most prestigious honors a young musician can achieve and can often serve as a way to gain acceptance or scholarships from colleges across the country. Students are encouraged to challenge themselves and to strive for excellence in order to receive selection into one of the Mid-State Honor Orchestras. The cost to audition is $10 per student.

MTSBOA Solo and Ensemble Performance Assessments

These performance assessments serve as an exceptional opportunity for students to receive an evaluation of their individual performance by professionals on their instruments. It is an opportunity for specific feedback that may not always be available in the orchestra class setting. Students prepare and perform for an adjudicator on campus and receive a rating. This is a fantastic solo performance opportunity, particularly for students preparing for college scholarship auditions. All students in the orchestra are required to participate in this event.

MNPS High School Honors Orchestra

The MNPS High School Honors Orchestra is similar to the MTSBOA Mid-State Orchestra mentioned above, but the audition pool is restricted to middle school and high school students in Metro Nashville. It is a great opportunity for students to go through the competitive audition process and develop their skills for the mid-state auditions. Students are strongly encouraged to audition, even if they do not intend to audition for Mid-State.

Chamber Ensembles

Any student that is interested in exposure to a different type of musical experience and repertoire is encouraged to form a chamber group to practice at Overton. Chamber music is an excellent way to develop ensemble skills that are hard to achieve in a large ensemble setting. These students have performance opportunities that are different than the large ensemble opportunities.

Other Ensemble Opportunities

Students are encouraged to audition for acceptance to pre-collegiate or regional orchestra programs at the Williamson County Youth Orchestra, Blair School of Music, or other ensembles and summer programs.
Fair Share and Fundraising Opportunities

It is an unfortunate truth that it takes a lot of money to finance a quality and active instrumental music program. We do everything in our power to keep costs as manageable as possible without sacrificing the quality of the program. Through the years, the generosity of the orchestra parents has made it possible for all students to participate fully in the music program. They provided the funds needed to support a highly successful and visible orchestral program that is recognized throughout the State.

Fair Share

The Overton Orchestra does not function on a traditional set of “fees.” Instead, we calculate an approximate amount that each student is asked to contribute or fundraise to help maintain the functioning of the program. This pledge goal is called the “Fair Share.” This year we ask for $50 to help cover the cost of music, instruments, repairs, instrument storage, electronics, stands, instrument and classroom supplies, bus transportation to and from performance assessments and field trips. These funds are also used to pay our school association fees for NAfME, MTSBOA and ASTA. These organizations sponsor all our performance assessments as well as Mid-State and All-State Orchestra. Any checks for the Overton Orchestra “Fair Share” should be made out to John Overton Orchestra by September 30th.

The Overton Orchestra is available to all students who wish to participate, regardless of family financial situations.

Fundraising Opportunities

There are fund raising opportunities available to help orchestra members contribute to their fair share. More information on the specific fundraisers held will be distributed in the first nine weeks. We appreciate your dedication to the orchestra program and thank you for your support!

Concert Attire

Students are expected to dress in the appropriate concert attire for each performance.

Girls: Black skirt or dress pants
       Black Blouse
       Black hose or tights and black dress shoes (no flip flops)
       Black long dress
*Skirts need to extend past the knees when seated.
*Shoulders need to be covered.

Boys: Black dress pants with a belt
      Black long sleeved dress shirt
      Solid black long tie
      Black socks and black dress shoes (no tennis shoes)
Class and Rehearsal Expectations: Rehearsal and Concert Etiquette

Classroom Expectations

1. Treat your peers, teachers, and instruments with respect.
2. Be on time to class. Students will be in the classroom when the bell rings. Downbeat five minutes after tardy bell. Bell 0 – 8:50-10:18
3. Dispose of any food or drink before entering class. Water is allowed.
4. Conceal and silence any electronics prior the start of class. Cell phones may be used as tuners before class begins.
5. Be prepared- have your instrument, music, pencil, and any other prescribed assignments for every class.

Ensemble Expectations

1. Each student is responsible for their own instrument (with name tag), shoulder rest/rock stop, music, accessories, 1” Black binder with sheet protectors, rosin, and pencil.
2. Students using school owned instruments are responsible for that instrument (including repairs) while they have it checked out.
3. All students are expected to contribute to the responsibilities of moving, setting-up and tearing down equipment for rehearsals and performances.
4. All instruments must be put in the designated storage area when not in use.

Grading Procedures

Grading procedures for the Overton Orchestra are based on assessing student development and mastery within the categories and guidelines listed below:

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<tr>
<th>1st Nine Weeks</th>
<th>3rd Nine Weeks</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rehearsal technique</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Performance/Written assessments</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Concert Performance</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<th>2nd Nine Weeks</th>
<th>4th Nine Weeks</th>
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<tr>
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Rehearsal technique: grade is compiled once a week and is based on a variety of skills learned and exhibited during daily rehearsals. These skills include: rehearsal promptness and readiness, proper rehearsal etiquette, small group and section collaboration, possession of all materials and supplies necessary to play your instrument, etc.
Performance/Written Assessments: grade is based on mastery of performance and is compiled through multiple individual performances, in class, given by each student. The performance rubric is included in the forms section on the JOHS Orchestra website. Written assessments will be based on music theory and listening journals.

Concert performance: grade is based on a variety of skills learned and exhibited at the semester concerts. These skills include: mastery of concert repertoire, appropriate concert preparation, proper ensemble etiquette, having all necessary materials, etc. **All concert performances are required, as well as any after school rehearsals leading up these performances.**

Final exams: exams are given at the end of the fall and spring terms. Each exam consists of two sections: a written portion and an individual performance portion.

**Overton Orchestra Communication**

**Website:** JohnOvertonOrchestra.com is the best resource to find information pertaining to events of the Overton Orchestra. You may find information such as staff bios, the calendar, a photo gallery, the handbook, mid-state audition material, contact information, and other resources.

**Calendar:** To view the yearly calendar go to the website (johnovertonorchestra.com) and click on the ‘calendar’ tab. If you wish to sync the Overton Orchestra calendar with your own, you may click the ‘+GoogleCalendar’ tab at the bottom right section of the calendar.

**Remind App:** This app is used to keep students informed in a timely fashion. Students may download the app or sign up to just receive messages as a text. Follow the prompts after entering the following information.

Enter this number:
81010

Text this message:
@johsor

Audio/Video Taping, Photography, and Display of Images: Today's varying communications media - including the local newspapers and the internet – could allow the publication of a student's name and/or photo in a manner accessible throughout the district, community, and across the world via the world wide web. During orchestra rehearsals, performances, and master classes, photographers from various news sources take photos and videotape of the whole orchestra, over which we have little or no control. Please be advised that it is the John Overton Orchestra's policy to only disclose first names when associated with photos posted on the official orchestra website. Any other postings, publications, or broadcasts in the media are not the responsibility of John Overton High School or the orchestra director.
JOHS Orchestra “Fair Share Pledge” 2016-17

Each year, the director develops a budget by which the orchestra will operate. Understanding that we do not receive any funding, it is up to our membership to secure the funds necessary so that we can continue to offer the opportunity for your student to experience orchestra in high school.

The “Fair Share” amount is determined by taking the budget and dividing it equally among the membership. We then ask that every family make a pledge to fulfill this amount through fundraising, sponsorships, or personal donations.

Please also note that any direct donations to the orchestra program as part of this fair share at TAX DEDUCTIBLE. Simply use a cancelled check as a receipt.

As an example of how the Overton Orchestra tries to minimize costs, the fair share for the Overton Band is approximately $700 and that amount is similar among other Middle Tennessee programs. Obviously, the marching band components of those programs require additional resources, but it still allows the observer to keep the Overton Orchestra costs in perspective.

The Overton Orchestra is structured to be available to all students who wish to participate, regardless of family financial situations. If an expense causes a legitimate and dire financial hardship, please reach out to the orchestra director. Arrangements can be made for extended payment time, work-study, or other means of financial assistance. In understanding these concerns, we appreciate any amount donated to help support the operations of the orchestra program.

The “Fair Share” for 2016-2017 will be $50.00. If your family plans to not participate in orchestra fundraising activities, we ask that any direct contributions to the orchestra program be submitted by September 30th. This simply helps allow us to effectively plan expenditures throughout the year. $50 is our fair share goal. If you are unable to contribute the full amount by September 30th, understand that many families choose to break the amount into installments throughout the year (ex: $10/month).

I, the undersigned, do hereby agree to make every effort to fulfill my families’ “fair share” of the Overton Orchestra’s 2016-2017 budget, either by fundraising, sponsorships or personal donations. It takes everyone making a contribution for this program to exist.

____________________________________ _______________
Student Signature Date

____________________________________ _______________
Parent Signature Date
The following donation in the amount of $________________ is to go to the Overton Orchestra Department.

________________________________________
Student Name

________________________________________
Parent/Guardian Name

________________________________________
Parent/Guardian Signature
PARENT PERMISSION FORM
FOR THE
INDIVIDUAL MUSIC INSTRUCTION PROGRAM

I GIVE MY PERMISSION for ________________________________  __________
(Student’s Name)  (Class Period)

To participate in the private music instruction program understanding that a fee of $18.00 for individual lessons of thirty minutes will be charged by the instructor delivering the lessons. I also understand that while private music instructors may not be employees of the John Overton High School Orchestra, a district employee or an adult volunteer will be supervising the area in which the individualized instruction is taking place. We must have enough interested students on your particular instrument in order to provide a private lesson instructor. Lessons for beginners will not begin immediately, but at the director(s) discretion. Please do not secure a private lesson instructor without first consulting your orchestra director.

PLEASE PRINT ALL INFORMATION BELOW:
Name:__________________________________________________
Instrument:_______________________________________________
Number of years playing: 4 years ___ 5 years ___ 6 years___ 7 years
Parent’s name:_____________________________________________
Parent’s Phone:_____________________________________________
            (Area Code)
Parent’s Email:_____________________________________________

When is the best time to reach you? Daytime_____ Evening_____


Overton Orchestra Handbook Signature Page

I have read the orchestra handbook, which contains the philosophies, policies, procedures, and expectations for the 2016-17 school year.

Parent’s Name (Print)______________________________________________

Parent’s Signature ________________________________________________

Student’s Name (Print)______________________________________________

Student’s Signature ________________________________________________

Date ___________________________