

HOBART MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL
ORCHESTRA HANDBOOK
AND
POLICIES
2017-2018 School Year

HOBART
STRING
ORCHESTRA



Mr. Brian Grenier, Director
Hobart String Orchestra
2211 East 10th Street
Hobart, IN 46342
219-942-8521 x8129 (high school)
email: grenierclass@hobart.k12.in.us

I. Course Description

❖ ADVANCED ORCHESTRA 9-12 (2 Semester Class)

*Prerequisite: You must have taken Orchestra as a 6th grader.

Advanced Orchestra at HHS offers a balance of learning individual and ensemble skills. New opportunities include chamber ensembles, fall musicals, full orchestra, and performance trips. Orchestra is a co-curricular class with 4-6 required evening performances throughout the year.

❖ ORCHESTRA 7-8 (4 grading periods - full year classes)

*Prerequisite: You must have taken Orchestra as a 6th grader.

7th and 8th Grade Orchestras offer a balance of learning individual and ensemble skills. New opportunities include Solo & Ensemble Contest, after school ensembles and performance trips. Orchestra is a co-curricular class with 4-6 required evening performances throughout the year.

❖ BEGINNING ORCHESTRA 6 - This class offers beginning instruction on violin, viola, cello, and string bass instruments with a focus on the skills necessary for long-term success.

Fundamentals stressed include proper posture and playing position, development of characteristic tone quality and training in music literacy. Orchestra is a co-curricular class with 3-4 required evening performances throughout the year.

II. A Musician's Goals and Objectives

- Develop as better individual musicians.
- Develop a quality understanding and use of the elements of rehearsal and performance etiquette.
- Develop a balanced overall music program giving equal emphasis to all ensembles available at our schools.
- Provide a base for further study after graduation.
- Create a positive, rewarding atmosphere of group effort to achieve improvement and reach objectives, also for social interaction and group activity.
- Create an understanding of self discipline.
- Build respect for self and others.
- Enhance the students' musical experience through extra activities and opportunities.
- Develop an understanding of group responsibility, commitment, and teamwork.
- Develop and maintain PRIDE in the achievements and efforts of the Hobart Arts activities.

III. Classroom Expectations/Daily Rehearsal Policies

Students are expected to understand and follow the guidelines set forth by your *Hobart School Handbook*. In addition, the following will be expected from every student every day:

1. Students are productive and exhibit self-discipline during rehearsal.

2. Students are prepared for rehearsal and engage in as much practice as necessary to achieve an acceptable level of preparation.
3. Students will arrive to class on time and will
 - a. be seated with instrument and rosined bow in hand, ready for tuning.
 - b. have all music materials necessary for rehearsal.
 - c. have a pencil ready for director comments.
4. Students attend to all maintenance and repair concerns outside of rehearsal time. A representative from Quinlan & Fabish Music Company visits each week to deliver materials and pick up instruments in need of repair. Call the store in advance to place orders.
5. Students will not bring food, candy, or gum into the orchestra room. Bottled water is acceptable.
6. At no time is anyone to play an instrument other than their own, whether it is school-owned or student-owned without prior permission from the director. (that includes pianos and percussion Instruments). This can lead to damage, illness, etc.

IV. Disciplinary Actions

Failure to meet the expectations listed above will be considered an act of disrespect to your fellow students and the director. The following disciplinary actions will result:

TARDIES: Students are to be in the room when the tardy bell rings; additionally, students have two additional minutes to be in their seats with all materials needed for class. Excessive tardies will result in disciplinary action as prescribed by your school.

DISRUPTIONS: If the student disrupts rehearsal with talking, personal problems, or other disrespectful behavior, the student will be warned to correct the misbehavior. If the disruption continues, the student may be assigned a detention and/or referred to the office. Contact may also be made to the parent/guardian. *Extreme Discipline Clause:* In case of a serious disruption, the student will be asked to leave class immediately and an office referral will follow.

ABSENCES: Beginning with the first unexcused absence to a rehearsal, sectional, concert, or other performance, the student will be placed on "responsibility probation" for a length of time to be determined in writing by the director and the student's grade will be lowered (see section V. Grading). Any further infractions will seriously compromise the student's future in the ensemble.

POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES include, but are not limited to: loss of participation points, lunch detention, parent conference, 30 minute detentions before or after school, disciplinary referral, and removal from class.

V. Grading

The following three (3) components will be considered when determining a student's grade:

- I. Daily Performance Grade (30%)
- II. Attendance at Required Events (30%)
- III. Classwork (40%)

**HHS ONLY: HHS requires uniform grading across its performing and non-performing music classes. The ASSIGNMENTS category (30%) includes Daily Performance Grades and most Classwork. The SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENTS (70%) category includes playing exams and attendance at required after-school events.*

(1) DAILY PERFORMANCE GRADE (DPG) (30% of total grade)

The DPG grade will be assessed on a daily basis according to the student's performance in class. This grade will include preparedness (bringing music materials to class, showing evidence of practicing) musicianship (demonstrating proper playing posture, contributing to the musical ensemble, musical growth and maturity), and classroom participation (following musical cues, taking written notes when instructed, demonstrating proper rehearsal etiquette). DPG grade will be inputted in skyward on a weekly basis. Simply put, we want to give students credit for the good things they do in rehearsal each day!

(2) CO-CURRICULAR ATTENDANCE (30% of total grade)

Attendance is mandatory for all scheduled rehearsals, sectionals, concerts, and other performances. The expectations and disciplinary consequences have already been outlined! Each orchestra activity occurring outside of the school day will be assigned a point value according to importance (1, 2, or 3 points). These points will weigh very heavily on the student's grade. If any student misses a concert as a result of an unexcused absence, his/her attendance grade will be lowered by that point value. Missing one concert will most likely result in a failing grade for the grading period. **Prior** to an absence, a student is expected to fill out an absence form and submit it to the director. The following is the official orchestra policy regarding absences:

The HMS Orchestra has adopted the following co-curricular policy which includes all required music ensemble activities. Co-curricular activities usually occur outside the regular school hours. They are the direct outgrowth of, and an objective of a particular curricular offering. Enrollment in (or satisfactory completion of) a designated curricular offering is a prerequisite for participation in co-curricular activities and the activity is essentially a class project or an extension of curricular expectations. When the quality of class projects is dependent upon individual attitudes, responsibilities and classroom preparations, such factors are relevant to individual student evaluation.

1. *Co-curricular activities shall be scheduled well in advance of the rehearsal or performance. Students shall be provided a copy of the schedule of known activities at the beginning of the year or semester. Any additional activities will be shared with the students at the earliest possible date.*

- A. *Since rehearsals and performances are an extension of, and vital to, the regular school program, participation in all scheduled rehearsals and performances is required.*
- B. ***Valid excuses for absence are:***
1. ***An illness that would confine the student at home or hospital.***
 2. ***A death in the family.***
 3. ***A School City of Hobart sponsored activity which requires the student to participate in an event scheduled previously to the announcement of the rehearsal or performance. Performances as an extension of the classroom outweigh sporting events; however, we have found that most conflicts can be resolved in advance.***
 4. ***A religious holiday.***
- C. *Valid excuses will require a verifying written notice signed by ensemble member and parent or guardian to be submitted upon return of the student. All other reasons for absence must be submitted, in writing, at least (7) days prior to the absence. The reason for absence must include date of absence, reason for absence, student signature and parent or guardian signature, and must be submitted to the teacher. Absences for any reason other than those listed above will be reviewed by the director. Students may appeal a decision to the teacher and ultimately to the principal. Special circumstances should be brought to the attention of the director at the earliest possible time.*
- D. *Concerts and performances are unique experiences that cannot be simply replaced, so if an alternative assignment is assigned to an unexcused absence, it can only replace up to 80% of the missing concert grade.*

NOTE: Work, not having a ride, family outings are not acceptable excuses for missing a scheduled performance.

(3) CLASSWORK (40% of total grade)

PLAYING EXAMS, QUICK QUIZZES, PRACTICE ASSIGNMENTS provide us goals and benchmarks for learning our instruments.

- ❖ **Playing Exams (PE):** Most playing exams can be repeated for a better grade for one week after the exam day. If time allows, they may be performed in advance as well. Students have the option of performing live in class, or submitting video (so I can see posture, left hand and bowing) to my email address.
- ❖ **Quick Quizzes (QQ):** These are just like playing exams, but they demonstrate a specific skill or learning goal and are worth less points.
- ❖ **Practice Assignments (PA) and Practice Logs (PL):** Practice assignments (PA) ask students to practice specific items or explore new concepts for a completion grade. Practice Logs allow students to organize time and track their own process. Minutes are recorded, signed by a guardian and submitted by a due date. Everybody has busy weeks, so turn in what is completed to at least receive a partial grade. Part of a grade is better than a zero!

EXTRA CREDIT: Extra credit is given for attendance of director-approved musical events. To receive credit, a student must submit a program and a short paragraph about the performance. Students may also choose and submit one of the listed “make-up” assignments for extra credit. Other extra credit is offered throughout the year--see Mr. Grenier for details. In the event a student is absent (excused or unexcused) from a co-curricular event during a nine-week period, all extra credit earned for that grading period will be forfeited and nullified.

PLAGIARISM: Plagiarism, as defined in the dictionary, is "a piece of writing that has been copied from someone else and is presented as being your own work." Plagiarism is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Plagiarized assignments will not receive credit and a student who commits plagiarism may be subject to disciplinary action.

MUSIC PREPARATION: Each student is responsible for preparation of music assigned for performance or evaluation. The following are guidelines for students to use:

- A. Each student is assigned a part and a seat for a reason. A student may not change parts or seats without the permission of the director. Seating will be rotated based on several factors. All parts are important and it is important that each musician learn these musical roles for ear training. More confident players are often seated to help those around them and to tie the entire physical location of the musicians together.
- B. Each student is fully responsible for the preparation of their part. The group is only as strong as its weakest player. It is imperative that each student takes that responsibility seriously if the group is to advance. The assigned part is the student's homework. It is not the purpose of the daily rehearsal to learn the parts, but rather to develop a group understanding of the music and to improve ensemble performance. That is, the rehearsal enhances the understanding of the music to the level that the student understands the whole of the music, as well as how their part fits in that whole. Students' parts must be prepared through daily practice at home.
- C. Music preparation not only refers to daily practice but also to the daily rehearsal so as to meet the goals listed (above) in B. The following are also goals of the daily rehearsals: improving tone quality, blend and balance, intonation, musicianship concepts, rhythm, articulation, technique, etc.
- D. The student needs the following in order to prepare his/her music:
 1. PENCIL - an absolute must - Each student must have a pencil at his/her stand or seat to mark accidentals, changes, expression marks, etc.
 2. DAILY PRACTICE - At all levels, the music student should spend time outside of the classroom rehearsals working on learning and developing their musicianship. Students should have a dedicated routine of at-home music preparation. Music is not something you "cram" at the last minute. It is a slow building process. Rarely does one "cram" for an exam, and get an "A" on the final test. See *How to Practice* below.
 3. A SERIOUS ATTITUDE AND DEDICATION - To accomplish our goals for advancement, an effective rehearsal atmosphere is needed. There should be a respect for the music itself, and for fellow musicians in order to make music out of the notes on the page, and develop pride in one's accomplishments. Commitment is a key word.
 4. AN APPRECIATION OF THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF MUSIC - The student must understand that at all times techniques will be practiced to develop skills, especially

listening skills to accomplish the ability to perform the music. Fundamentals and performance are inseparable and will be treated as such in the classroom teaching and performance preparation.

5. PRIORITY ORDER - For the initial learning of a piece of music, attend to the musical components in this order:
 1. Rhythm
 2. Pitch
 3. Dynamics
 4. Articulation
 5. Phrasing/Musicality
 4. Ensemble skills (playing and negotiating the demands of section, ensemble, and Conductor)

6. CREATIVITY - use the skills developed to interpret the music as more than just notes on a page. Pull the music out of the written page by creating emotion in the music. Exaggerate the expression. Be critical of the printed page by analyzing the music and looking for progress that need enhancing by finding places to use your own interpretation. The music is much more interesting if it shows emotion, and it is the duty of the performer to create that emotion.

HOW TO PRACTICE:

Listed are some tips for successful home practice:

1. Practice in fifteen minute blocks. Take a refreshing break between every fifteen minutes.
2. Practice undisturbed. For best results, practice in a quiet part of the house using a "DO NOT DISTURB" sign. Parents and siblings should respect this as time valuable to your success.
3. Always begin with a warm-up period. Scales with each note doubled is a great place to start.
4. Have goals! Are we learning something new, or improving something learned?
5. Practicing a passage one-time slow is worth 10 times fast. Learn how to play it slow and later speed it up.
6. Practice away from the music. Can you play it memorized? Simply playing the notes is not making music. The music becomes much more meaningful to you and to your audience if you are more interested in communicating the musical message. Now you are beginning to make your music an art form.
- 7.

VI. Private Lessons

Private lessons are extremely important to the growth of the student's musical ability. Lessons are not part of a student grade, but it is logical to assume that private study will improve performance in class, thus helping the student's grade. Please speak to Mr. Grenier for names of area lesson teachers.

VII. Auditions

Auditions may be called for if there is a written solo in our full ensemble concert music, or if there is an advanced part available in the music. In orchestra, daily participation, old playing grades, and/or an audition demonstration may be used in determining who would play the solo or advanced parts. It is the director that has the final decision in student selection.

VIII. Monetary/Property Commitments

All students are expected to cooperate and help build good habits which are part of becoming a total musician. These are intended to protect the belongings of others, promote proper use of the rooms and equipment, and assure a good learning atmosphere for each student. For optimal use of the rehearsal room, stands and equipment, personal instruments, and instruments on loan from the School City of Hobart, the following guidelines are given.

Fair Share Fee: I ask that all orchestra students and parents participate in all fundraising or to donate the determined fair fee.

Maintenance Fee/Property Use: Cello and Bass students are expected to rent an at-home instrument for at-home practice and school performances. There is no fee for using the stay-at-school cello and basses. Students and parents are expected to pay for damages to school instruments that go beyond the normal wears of daily use. Students who negligently or intentionally damage instruments will, of course, still be held accountable for their behavior and appropriately disciplined.

Orchestra Lockers: HMS Orchestra does not have lockers at this time. We ask that all cases are tagged or taped with student names and contact information. Any storage that is provided is only intended for the school day and not for overnight, weekend, or holiday storage.

Payment Procedures: **ALL** monies to be turned in must be placed in a labeled envelope and handed to the director, Mr. Grenier. Please follow due dates as I have strict guidelines passed down from SCOH. Checks are to be made payable to your school "Hobart (middle or high school) Orchestra". If you have ordered something from Quinlan & Fabish, pay them directly.

USE AND CARE OF MUSIC

1. Take care of your music!
2. Write your name on music and music folders (pencil).
3. Students are asked to share music stands in class, but are expected to always bring their music so they can write down indications from the director.
4. Mark music when specified by director. Use **ONLY** pencil for marking music.
5. **Be responsible! Don't lose or forget music.**
6. Each student will be required to have a pencil.

USE AND CARE OF INSTRUMENTS

1. Accessories - the player is solely responsible for the care of the instrument and should have the following items, appropriate for the instrument:
 - a. Rosin for bows.
 - b. Cleaning cloth which should be used EACH time before the instrument is put away.
2. Maintenance
 - a. Daily maintenance SHOULD NOT occur during rehearsal time. All daily work should be done BEFORE class time by arriving early if necessary.
 - b. Instruments must be stored in cases at all times. Cases must be latched while in storage to prevent losses, damage, or accidents. At some time, someone may need to move another's case for some reason.
 - c. Bows should be loosened before storage. Re-hairing of bows is both time consuming and expensive.
 - d. To minimize risk of damage and other problems, no one is allowed to play another's instrument, school-owned or otherwise.
 - e. Be prepared for a periodic check by the director or student designee.

Any student needing to purchase needed materials is encouraged to contact Quinlan and Fabish Music Company at www.qandf.com or 1-800-63-SOUSA

CLASSROOM TRASH

At the end of every rehearsal, the floor is to be free of paper, gum wrappers, books, bottles, etc. Any student who does not clean up his area before leaving the room will stay for a detention the following day to pick up trash in the orchestra room and locker area.

IX. Uniforms

The uniform is to be worn at all public performances, unless otherwise specified by the director. Students who do not meet the following specifications will be asked to modify clothing or be withheld from the performance. Meeting the uniform requirements affects the performance grade. At the present, we ask that students dress nice like they might for church or other special event. No jeans, t-shirts, or tennis shoes. Dresses past the knees. No bright hair coloring that would draw the audience's attention to one student.

X. Extra-Curricular Activities/Optional Events

- A. ASTA String Days
- B. All-Star Orchestras (November)
- C. Northwest Indiana Youth Orchestra - Must be accepted by audition for fall session and/or spring session. Inquire for details.
- D. Orchestra Small Ensembles - Program designed by Mr. Grenier which allows Quartets and Quintets to perform for local community events throughout the year.
- E. Del Segno Studios - This is a place in Portage that offers beginning instruction and mixed-age ensembles for students.

- F. Summer Symphony at Portage (summer) -- A summer orchestra of Chesterton, Portage, Valpo and Hobart Students that rehearses and performs throughout the summer months.

XI. Events Worth Attending

- A. Northwest Indiana Symphony - Students are strongly encouraged to attend these concerts at the Radisson Star Plaza Theatre in Merrillville or the Centre of Visual and Performing Arts in Munster. There are often student discounted tickets for classical concerts.
- B. Chicago Symphony Orchestra - One of the finest orchestras in the world. They give local performances frequently at Orchestra Hall in Chicago.
- C. Other school concerts at Hobart and elsewhere.
- D. Musical and other theatre productions.
- E. Events on the calendar at the Centre of Visual and Performing Arts in Munster.
- F. Summer Music Offerings
 - 1. Summer Orchestra - Chesterton, IN
 - 2. Indiana University Summer Clinic - Bloomington, IN
 - 3. Mid-America Music Camp - Ball State University, Muncie, IN
 - 4. Summer School for Strings - Valparaiso University, IN
 - 5. Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp - Twin Lakes, MI
 - 6. Interlochen Academy of the Arts - Interlochen, MI
 - 7. Lutheran Summer Music Camp - Valparaiso University, IN

XII. How Parents Can Help

Parents are a valuable support system. Listed are some ways you can help the success of your child's musical endeavours:

- 1. Encourage your son/daughter to take private lessons. Try to attend these lessons.
- 2. Encourage your son/daughter to give home recitals as often as possible whenever there is company. Allow them time to prepare in advance!
- 3. Encourage your son/daughter to exercise a good practice routine. Praise your child's effort to reach this goal. Remember students need help with planning time!
- 4. Encourage your son/daughter to believe a VALUABLE EDUCATION is his or her FIRST PRIORITY! Try to help arrange work schedules AROUND school activities.
- 5. ATTEND concerts. Your presence and praise is vital to your child's sense of accomplishment and self-worth.
- 6. A calendar of events is distributed to students at the beginning of the year. Please ask to see this calendar to assure that you are well informed of all activities.
- 7. Become involved in the orchestra organization. Parents can enrich the orchestra experience with fundraising, enriching concerts, or planning events that help recognize students and show that we appreciate their hard work!

XIII. Co-Curricular Calendar/Required Events

CALENDAR DATES CAN BE FOUND
AND UPDATED AT

<http://hobart.schoolwires.com/orchestra>

FOLLOW THIS LINK TO
DOWNLOAD AND PRINT A
HANDBOOK
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

APPENDICES TO THE HANDBOOK

[ABSENCE FORM](#)

[ORCHESTRA LIST CALENDAR](#)

[HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM](#) - Print & Return 8/25/2017

[INSTRUMENT CARE AGREEMENT](#) Print & Return 8/25/2017, CELLO & BASS ONLY

[DAILY PERFORMANCE GRADE SCALE](#)