

MIDDLE SCHOOL ORCHESTRA SYLLABUS 2014 -2015

(Intermediate Orchestra & Advanced Concert Orchestra)

Course Description

Intermediate Orchestra and Concert Orchestra are for intermediate and advanced middle school string players on violin, viola, cello, or bass. Students generally should read music fluently and have successfully completed two or more standard method books, (such as Essential Elements, Strictly Strings, Suzuki etc.). Technical skills should include some two octave scales, proper basic posture, with good left hand position, and good use of all parts of the bow. Orchestra is both work and fun. One goal of any musical endeavor is quite simple and can be summed up in a few words: learn the music until it sounds good! But our greater goals are to understand how and why musicians apply their many skills and experiences, to express and create within this genre of Orchestra. Technique is developed with everything we do, from etudes, scales, to solo and orchestra literature. The fundamentals of basic posture, left hand and bow hold position are essential to developing quality tone, accurate rhythm and good intonation. We apply all our skills to repertoire of appropriate difficulty for Intermediate and Concert Orchestras.

Best wishes for a great year!

John Middleton, Orchestra Teacher

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Orchestra info on Capitol Hill website <http://capitolhill.spps.org/>
click on "Classrooms" "Arts at Capitol Hill" "Mr. Middleton"

A brief synopsis of the SPPS Music Standards that guide our curriculum and work:

ARTISTIC FOUNDATIONS (Strand I)

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the foundations of music.
2. Demonstrate knowledge and use of the technical skills of the Art form.
Read and notate music using the standard notation system
Play an instrument alone and in a group using music expression.....

CREATE OR MAKE (Strand II)

1. Improvise, compose or arrange a new musical composition.....

PERFORM OR PRESENT (Strand III)

1. Rehearse and perform music from a variety of contexts and styles alone or within small or large groups

RESPOND OR CRITIQUE (Strand IV)

1. Analyze and interpret a variety of musical works and performances, using established criteria.

COURSE WORK EXPECTATIONS AND GRADING

50% Quarter Performance Tests and Written Assignments

Students will be graded on approximately 5 items per quarter on the "Assignment List" This will include scales, etudes, excerpts from orchestra pieces, solo pieces and written assignments. Some assignments may be highly individualized, to reflect differences in experience and skill levels.

Emphasis will be on each student's personal progress. We keep your "Assignment List" in class and check items off, as they are due throughout the quarter.

10% ORCHESTRA PRACTICE RECORD

Though I do not score specific minutes of home practice, you must plan, reflect and write about your individual home practice work. Track your assignments and daily practice right in your regular school planner, then turn in the "Orchestra Practice Record" two times per quarter. Students will generally require 20 to 30 minutes practice time per day to progress, develop skills and master assignments.

20% Class Participation & Rehearsal Work

Full participation with instrument is required for each rehearsal. This includes prompt set-up, starting and stopping at appropriate times and listening attentively when other students or sections are working.

Students are responsible for bringing and maintaining their home practice folder, with your current solo piece(s), and practice copies of current orchestra pieces, scales, etudes etc.

COUGAR EXPECTATIONS IN ORCHESTRA

WE ARE RESPECTFUL

Give every speaker full attention, with instrument and voices quiet

Start and stop with conductor

Save questions for appropriate pauses in the rehearsal

WE ARE RESPONSIBLE

On time arrival & set up with equipment & music

Watch & listen for non-verbal and verbal instructions, and respond appropriately

Learn your part so you make a positive contribution to the music

WE ARE SAFE

Always use calm body movements around people & instruments

NO damaged instruments ALL YEAR LONG

Always keep instrument volume safe for our hearing

20% Evening Concert Performances (3 Per year)

Evening performances are the equivalent of the final exam for that grading period. Students must attend, unless special circumstances are discussed between parents and the teacher, or due to an excused absence that school day. An alternate, individual assignment may be given.

Each individual person is responsible for accurately playing all assigned pieces of music, while observing correct bowings, expressive markings, etc

DECEMBER ORCHESTRA and CHOIR CONCERT

Thursday December 18th, 2014 6:30 PM

ORCHESTRA FESTIVAL REHEARSAL & CONCERT with Ramsey Jr. High and Central H. S.

Date TBA, in February 2014 5:00 to 9:00 PM held at Central H.S.

SPRING ORCHESTRA CONCERT

Thursday May 21st 2014 6:30 PM

General membership responsibilities

Always prepare your part for the benefit of the group and yourself.

Develop an appreciation for a variety of musical styles and for quality musical performances.

Respect and support the efforts of every member of the Orchestra.