

Wheaton Christian Grammar School

Concert Orchestra Handbook

2024-2025

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Concert Orchestra Handbook

2024/2025 School Year

Dear Orchestra Members and Parents,

Welcome to the 2024/2025 Orchestra Program at Wheaton Christian Grammar School. I look forward to being your conductor and teacher this year. In this handbook, you will find all the policies and procedures in order to make your orchestral experience positive, problem-free, and great fun.

Parents

Thank you for allowing your son or daughter to be in orchestra this year. They will have the opportunity to experience the joy of making music and mastering new skills. It is essential that we partner together to encourage each student to reach their potential through effective practice. I believe that students who use effective practice techniques become more enthused about playing music and progress more quickly. Let's work together on this.

Please take the time to read the following information carefully whether you are new to the orchestra here at WCGS or returning to the program. Students and parents must sign the commitment form and return it by **Tuesday, September 3rd**.

I am looking forward to having a wonderful year together. Please feel free to contact me at school.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Emily Mittlstaedt

630.668.1385 ext. 262

emittlstaedt@wheatonchristian.org

Daily Rules and Procedures

The following rules are set in place to create an atmosphere of learning and success. Students who violate these rules are responsible for reducing the amount of time for rehearsal and consequently hurting the entire orchestra.

1. Enter the orchestra room in a quiet, courteous, and orderly manner.
2. Quickly get your instrument and music and take your seat.
3. Students that are late to rehearsal must bring a pass from the teacher of their previous class in order to be excused from being tardy.
4. Students are to tune as soon as they have prepared their instrument. Any tuning help should be addressed before class begins.
5. Concert attention will be observed when the director steps on the podium and no further talking will be permitted.
6. Students will not play other students' instruments.
7. Orchestra members will have the following at every rehearsal:
 - a. INSTRUMENT (with necessary accessories)
 - b. BINDER WITH ALL MUSIC
 - c. PENCIL (you supply your own)
8. Good posture is of great importance at all times.
9. Instruments **MUST** be stored in instrument lockers when not being played at school.
DO NOT LEAVE YOUR INSTRUMENT IN HALLWAYS.
10. Practicing is very important. More is accomplished in rehearsal when you have learned your music at home. Leaving your instrument at school overnight should be the exception rather than the rule.
11. Students who do not have their instrument or music for rehearsals or sectionals will have points deducted from their grade. Students will receive a detention if they are unprepared more than 3 times per quarter.
12. Absolutely no gum, food, or drink in rehearsal (water is OK).
13. Respect the rights, safety, and property of others.
14. Accept responsibility for yourself and your learning.

Grades are based on an average of Student participation and preparedness in Class and Sectionals, Concerts, and Assignments.

Beneficial Experiences

Concerts/Recitals – Students are encouraged to attend concerts or recitals featuring their instrument. Concerts and recitals can be very inspirational.

Private Lessons – Every instrumentalist should consider taking private lessons on his/her instrument. Although not a requirement, private lessons can be extremely beneficial.

IGSMA Solo and Ensemble Contest – Solo and ensemble contest will be coming up in February. Now is a good time to begin thinking about your involvement in this contest. Information will be sent home when it is available.

ILMEA District Honors Orchestra – *The ILMEA Orchestra is an extra challenge for students who prepare and audition on the pieces selected by the district.*

Sectionals

All students in orchestra have a scheduled sectional once a week during FLEX time. Students will not be allowed to miss sectionals to make up homework or tests or quizzes. Students are expected to do that during study hall or another day during FLEX time. **It is critical that every orchestra student attend these sectionals. They are vital to the progress of our orchestra's success.** Students who miss sectionals more than 3 times per quarter will receive a detention.

Practice

All students are required to practice at home. A minimum of 100 minutes per week is required. Consistent, daily work is essential to improvement on your instrument. Practice is most effective when it is broken into smaller practice sessions. For instance, practicing 20 minutes, 5 days a week, or 25 minutes, 4 times a week is much more beneficial than 100 minutes at one time. Practice logs are not required but I strongly suggest that each student record each day's practice time for personal accountability. Quantity and quality of student practice will be evaluated through the completion of Teams Video Assignments and in-class assessments.

Class Materials/Curriculum

Each student will be issued a binder with copies of the music the orchestra will be playing. It is the student's responsibility to take good care of this binder and have it present at every rehearsal and sectional. Music and binders that are lost are subject to replacement fees.

Instrument Care and Maintenance

All students must have instruments in good playing condition. Students are expected to maintain proper care of their instruments throughout the school year. This year, Quinlan and Fabish will visit our school weekly and can be utilized for repairs.

Rehearsal Schedule

Concert Orchestra rehearses twice a week on Tuesdays and Fridays during 8th period. Always be on time. Rehearsals are mandatory and may not be missed for any reason other than absence from school. Attendance and punctuality are a part of your grading period average. A pass will be required if a student is late.

Seating Auditions

In an effort to assign a part to each student that is within his or her range and technical ability, each student will play a private audition. Each student will be assigned an audition time at the beginning of the school year. On the basis of the results of the auditions in August, students will be assigned seats within the section. Playing ability, as well as bowings, attitude, and responsibility will determine any changes for concert seating.

Concert Uniforms

Each student is required to provide a uniform for performances. The mandatory concert dress code is:

Boys: Black shirt, black dress slacks, black belt, black socks, and black dress shoes.

Girls: Black dress or skirt (knee-length or longer), OR black dress pants, and black socks and shoes.

Concerts and Important Dates

Veterans Day School Assembly.....Monday, November 11th, 2024
Christmas Concert.....Thursday, December 12th, 2024
Music Ministry Performance Day.....TBD
Spring Concert..... Thursday, May 15th, 2024

In addition to concerts, students may choose to be involved in the following events:

ILMEA Orchestra Auditions.....virtual submission, deadline TBD
ILMEA Music Festival.....Saturday, November 16th, 2024
IGSMA Solo and Ensemble Contest.....Saturday, February 22nd, 2024

Concert Orchestra Commitment Form

I have read the preceding information. I understand and accept the commitment and expectations of becoming a member of the Concert Orchestra. I also realize that I am making a one-year commitment for the 2024/2025 school year to the WCGS Orchestra Program.

Printed Student's Name

Student's Signature

Parent's Signature

Please detach this form, sign, and return it to Mrs. Mittlestaedt by **Tuesday, September 3rd**.