

Mill Creek Orchestra Handbook

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Orchestra Website: www.dexterorchestras.org

Daily Classroom Expectations and Routines

1. All students are required to bring all music needed for class, a pencil, their instrument, and any other music accessories required to perform music (rosin, shoulder rest, etc.).
2. All students are expected to do their *very best* on their instrument and in their behavior at all times.
3. When entering the classroom:
 - Put your instrument together quickly, sit in your assigned seat, and begin warming up with scales or music for class.
 - Tuning as an ensemble will start the class. At this time, all talking and playing should cease in order for instruments to be tuned.
4. Food and beverages, other than water, are not permitted during class unless otherwise directed. *This includes chewing gum.*
5. Unless otherwise directed, cell phones, iPods, or other electronic devices are not permitted during class. The expectation is that each student is actively participating in the lesson, and electronic devices can be distracting. This is in accordance with Mill Creek policy.
6. Students are expected to respect classroom space at all times, keeping it neat and orderly. This includes all school property and the property of others in the class.
7. Read instructions on the board(s) before class and follow directions accordingly.

Grading Policy

The following criteria are used to establish academic, work habit, and citizenship grades for each student throughout the school year.

Academic Grades: Performance/Written Assessments

- **Concerts** – Students are expected to be at ALL performances throughout the school year, excluding extenuating circumstances that have been *previously* discussed with Mrs. Campbell*.
- **Playing Quizzes/Tests** – submitting recordings on time, with grade based on performance rubric (i.e. intonation, rhythm, tone quality, dynamics/interpretation, etc.).
- **Written Quizzes/Tests** – preparing for these assessments and putting forth your best effort; study guides or practice packets will be provided prior to the quiz/test.
- **Listening Journals/Activities** – turning in assignments on time, with grade based on effort and content.

Work Habits

- **Practice Records** – turning in practice records on time (at the end of each month) with all requirements completed.

Citizenship

- **In Class Participation** – being engaged in class discussions, performing and rehearsing as an ensemble, and treating peers/teachers respectfully and kindly.

*Every member of the orchestra is important to the ensemble's performance. As orchestra is a year-long, performance-based commitment, parents & students should check with their family schedule to ensure that each student can attend every performance.

However, conflicts may still arise (such as illness or other unforeseen circumstances) despite everyone's best efforts. Students must provide Mrs. Campbell *ahead of time* (as much as possible) with a written excuse by a parent or guardian when a student misses a performance in order to schedule a make-up assignment. Make-up assignments will be determined on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of Mrs. Campbell. Some examples include a writing assignment on a music-related topic, or a recording of the student's performance of all concert music.

School Equipment

The school supplies our orchestras with instruments that students will have access to that are only to be used during class, unless otherwise directed by Mrs. Campbell. At the beginning of the year, cello and bass students may be assigned to a specific instrument to be used in class in order to better keep track of the instruments. Careless handling of school equipment will not be tolerated, and repairs or replacement costs for damaged equipment will be charged to the offending student(s) if found guilty of mistreating equipment. *Treat classroom instruments with the same respect you show your own instruments.*

Music

All students will be issued their own copy of music for class. **You** are responsible for bringing your music on a daily basis, not your stand partner. All students will also be provided with music folders (at no cost) to keep your music in. If you so desire, a three-ring binder is also a great music holder, but is not required. When marking your music, **use pencil! No ink!** Markings may need to be altered or erased at a later date. Music may be collected at the end of the quarter, semester or school year, so do not throw away copies of music unless instructed to do so by Mrs. Campbell.

At Home Practice

All students are expected to practice their instruments approximately 30 minutes 4-5 days a week as a minimum. The more you practice, the more your technique will improve and the more you will be able to accomplish on your instrument. Practicing orchestra music at home also allows our ensemble to accomplish more in class. Practice records (graded E, M, P, C with 120 minutes required for an "E") will be used throughout the year to document student practice time and content, asking students to reflect on their practice habits.

Private Lessons

All students are strongly encouraged to take private lessons on their instrument(s) outside of orchestra class. Private lessons are the perfect way to improve your technique, build on skills learned in class, and gain more experience in solo playing. Please refer to the online Dexter Orchestra site (dexterorchestras.org) for a list of private lesson teachers, or talk to Mrs. Campbell or Mr. Deloria for further assistance.

Dexter Music Boosters

Parent involvement is integral to the success of our program, and the support is greatly appreciated. The Dexter Orchestra Booster meetings take place at 6:00 p.m. in the high school library on the first Tuesday of every month. Please contact Mrs. Campbell or Mr. Deloria if you are interested in joining us, we'd love to have you on board!

Concert Dress

Black on bottom, white on top. Legs should be covered with tights, leggings, or other stockings when wearing dresses or skirts. Socks should also be black. We want to look our most professional on stage and represent Dexter schools well ☺

Jeans, sweats, flip-flops or sneakers are not appropriate for formal concerts or festival. Shirts should be t-shirt length at the least. No spaghetti-strap or other tank tops, and skirts/dresses must be at least knee-length when seated. If it would not be appropriate to wear during the school day, it would not be appropriate to wear at a concert.

If you have difficulty obtaining these garments, please notify Mrs. Campbell for assistance as soon as possible.

Awards & Recognition

- Orchestra Festival - If the orchestra receives a Division 1 or 2 rating from the festival, an MSBOA approved medal may be ordered by the student at their cost (approx. \$3.00).
- Solo & Ensemble Festival - Students are *strongly encouraged* to participate in the MSBOA Solo & Ensemble Festival. Students who earn a Division 1 or 2 rating will be given an MSBOA approved medal for each event in which they participate.
- Other awards or certificates may be given at the discretion of Mrs. Campbell at the end of the year.

Communication

All communication will be done by email, phone, and PowerSchool. Regular communication will be sent out through Blackboard, so be sure to check for these Mill Creek Orchestra emails. Parents and students are strongly encouraged to reach out whenever there is a question, concern, or even just a positive message! Please check PowerSchool regularly, along with the Dexter Orchestra website (dexterorchestras.org). There is also a Dexter Orchestra Facebook page that students can check for updates, instructional videos, or other encouraging messages.

Acceptance of Responsibility

After you have thoroughly read this handbook, please sign and return the Orchestra Handbook Form. Keep this handbook and the calendar for future reference, though both can be found on the Dexter Orchestra website. If you have any questions, please call or email Mrs. Campbell for clarification or further explanation. Effective communication between parents and teachers is necessary for students to succeed. Please communicate any problems or concerns you have as early as possible.

Here's to another wonderful year of music making with Dexter orchestras! ☺