

*Oxford Middle School*

*Orchestra Handbook*  
*2019 - 2020*

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# Oxford Middle School Orchestra Handbook Overview

The goal of our program is to produce an outstanding orchestra. In doing so, we are also determined to produce outstanding citizens. This orchestra will foster student development in all senses of the word; that is, we will encourage students to develop their musical talents as well as their self-discipline skills, responsibility, overall knowledge, social skills, and hopefully, a sense of pride for their work as part of such an outstanding ensemble.

The following pages will outline the basic policies and requirements that all Oxford Middle School orchestra students are expected to adopt and understand. After finishing reading this handbook, please sign (parent/guardian and student) and submit the contract either in person or via pdf attached to an email to the director, and keep this handbook in your records for future reference.

## Basic Expectations and Rehearsal Room Rules

One of the most difficult things about participating in a large ensemble like the orchestra is that there is never enough time to get everything done. Consequently, it is essential that the time we do have available to us is put to the best use possible. In order to do this, each student must do his or her part to ensure that the following rehearsal room rules are respected and upheld.

1. Be on time to class, set up immediately, and begin your bellwork *before doing anything else!*
2. Avoid talking during the rehearsal without permission.
3. Play your instrument only when you are requested to do so.
4. Food and drink (other than water) are not permitted in the orchestra rehearsal room.
5. Respect others and yourself.

The above basic procedural expectations will be discussed on the first day of school each year with students, as a review for the returning students

and as an orientation for students new to our program. The director will provide a more detailed description of appropriate and inappropriate behaviors to the students during this time, and if there are any questions regarding these policies, both students and parents are encouraged to contact the director at any time.

## Attendance Policy

Orchestra members are responsible for attending classes and rehearsals regularly. An orchestra cannot be successful without all its performing members on stage at a concert or in the classroom during a rehearsal. Therefore, it must be stressed that **all director-scheduled concerts and rehearsals (both during school hours and outside of school hours) require mandatory student attendance.** Only illness, family emergencies, or extreme unforeseen circumstances will be excused *with* a note from a parent/guardian, doctor, etc. Decisions as to whether a situation is deemed extreme or unforeseen will be left to the discretion of the orchestra director and an administrator.

If the student is already excused from school on the day of the performance, the student is also excused from the performance.

If the student is absent from a concert due to illness, family emergency, or unforeseen circumstances, the student is excused. If after a reasonable amount of time (or a director request for documentation of an excused absence) following the performance the student has not submitted an excuse, he/she forfeits the opportunity to make up the points for the concert (or similar) and will therefore earn a zero for that portion of his/her grade.

Although there can be no real substitution for a missed performance or dress rehearsal, students who submit written excuses and are excused by the administration and director will be given the opportunity to complete an alternate performance assignment (and, if appropriate, a brief written assignment) to substitute for the missed points. If the alternate assignment is not submitted to the director within the time period designated by the director and/or an administrator (and agreed upon by the student), the student forfeits the opportunity to make up the points and will therefore earn a zero for that portion of their grade.

# Grading Scale and Determinants



For each quarterly marking period, grades will be determined by the following factors:

1. Daily rehearsals	5 points per day
2. MIOBI (homework check)	5 points per assessment
3. Playing tests	50 points per test
4. Performances	up to 150 points per performance
5. Special rehearsals/sectionals	50 points per rehearsal/sectional
6. Practice logs (7 <sup>th</sup> and 8 <sup>th</sup> grade)	700 - 900 points per quarter
7. Other (TBA)	Points determined by director

Notes: In the case of a daily rehearsal, performance, or special rehearsal (such as for Area Festivals), **if a student is tardy, half the points will be deducted for that day/event.** If a student is unprepared (such that his/her deliberately “achieved” inability to perform is detrimental to the success of the group), only half the points will be awarded for that event. Zeros will only be “awarded” if a student is absent (unexcused) from class, performance, or rehearsal, *or if the student violates one of the classroom rules/procedures during daily class.*

**There will be a deduction of points for failure to follow the basic procedural rehearsal room rules as discussed earlier in the handbook.**

Points will be added up and divided by the total number of points that students had the opportunity to earn during each marking period to produce a percentage. Letter grades will be assessed using the following percentage scale.

Percentage	Letter Grade
90-100	A
80-89	B
70-79	C
60-69	D
59 and below	F

## Seating Placement in the Orchestra

Seats will change after each concert. **It must be understood that seat assignments are the sole responsibility of the director** and the decision to place a student in a particular seat is always made for the benefit of the orchestra. Rotational seating may be employed so that all students have the opportunity to sit in different places in the orchestra.

## Required Daily Supplies for Orchestra

The following items are **absolutely essential** to have in class during each rehearsal:

1. Instrument and Accessories (Bow, Rosin, Shoulder Pad, Rock Stop, Cleaning Cloth, Extra Strings, etc.)
2. Pencil
3. Music and/or assigned method books (such as *Essential Elements*) stored IN YOUR FOLDER

**6<sup>th</sup> Graders** need the *Essential Elements for Strings* – Books 1 and 2 (The “orange” book and “purple” book) for their respective instrument.

**7<sup>th</sup> Graders** need the *Essential Elements for Strings* – Books 2 and 3 (The “purple” book and “green” book) for their respective instrument.

**8<sup>th</sup> Graders** need the *Essential Elements for Strings* Book 3 (The “green” book), as well as the *Advanced Technique for Strings* (The “brown” book) from the Essential Elements Comprehensive String Method Series.

Each student is expected to provide their own pencil, book, instrument, and accessories. Music will be generally be provided by the school unless the music is considered to be part of an extra-curricular activity, in which case students will need to purchase their own music (Ex: solo and ensemble competitions). If there is a financial situation that requires the use of a district or school-owned instrument, please contact the director as soon as possible so that an arrangement can be made to accommodate.

## Concert Attire

While many schools require students to purchase tuxedos or black performance dresses, the Oxford Middle School Orchestras will not require such an expensive purchase at this time. However, students are still expected to dress professionally at all concerts and travel events. Students must wear black on the bottom and white on top. Black dress shoes and black socks are necessary for all students. Ladies are permitted to wear skirts or pants, but skirts must be full-length (down to the ankles) black skirts. **Black jeans and short skirts are not permitted.** Shirts should be long-sleeved, button-up for gentlemen. Short-sleeve shirts are permitted for ladies, provided that the sleeve extends at least 4 (four) inches below the shoulder. Students wishing to wear black dresses or tuxedos will not be penalized for doing so, but parents and students should be aware that only those expenses inherent in attaining the items described above are mandatory. Should the need arise for any additional special attire for a particular event, adequate notice will be provided to parents by the director. We will be ordering OMS Orchestra T-Shirts for some of our performances. This information will be provided at a later date.

THIS YEAR, ORCHESTRA DATES WILL BE POSTED ON CANVAS! YOU CAN USE THE CALENDAR OR YOU CAN PRINT THE ONE PAGE DATES DOCUMENT. NO E-CONTRACT REQUIRED, BUT PLEASE KEEP YOUR EMAIL UP-TO-DATE.

# Signature page

Please keep the handbook for your records. After reading through the handbook with a parent/guardian, remove this sheet, sign it, and submit it to Mr. Green no later than **August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2019** as your first official assignment.

Additional copies can be found on the homepage of our class in Canvas. Select the link "OMS Orchestra Handbook 2019 2020" and a pdf will be downloaded on your device.

Student Name (please print neatly): \_\_\_\_\_

I have read through the handbook and gone over it with a parent/guardian. I understand and accept the expectations outlined in the handbook.

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Student Signature

Date

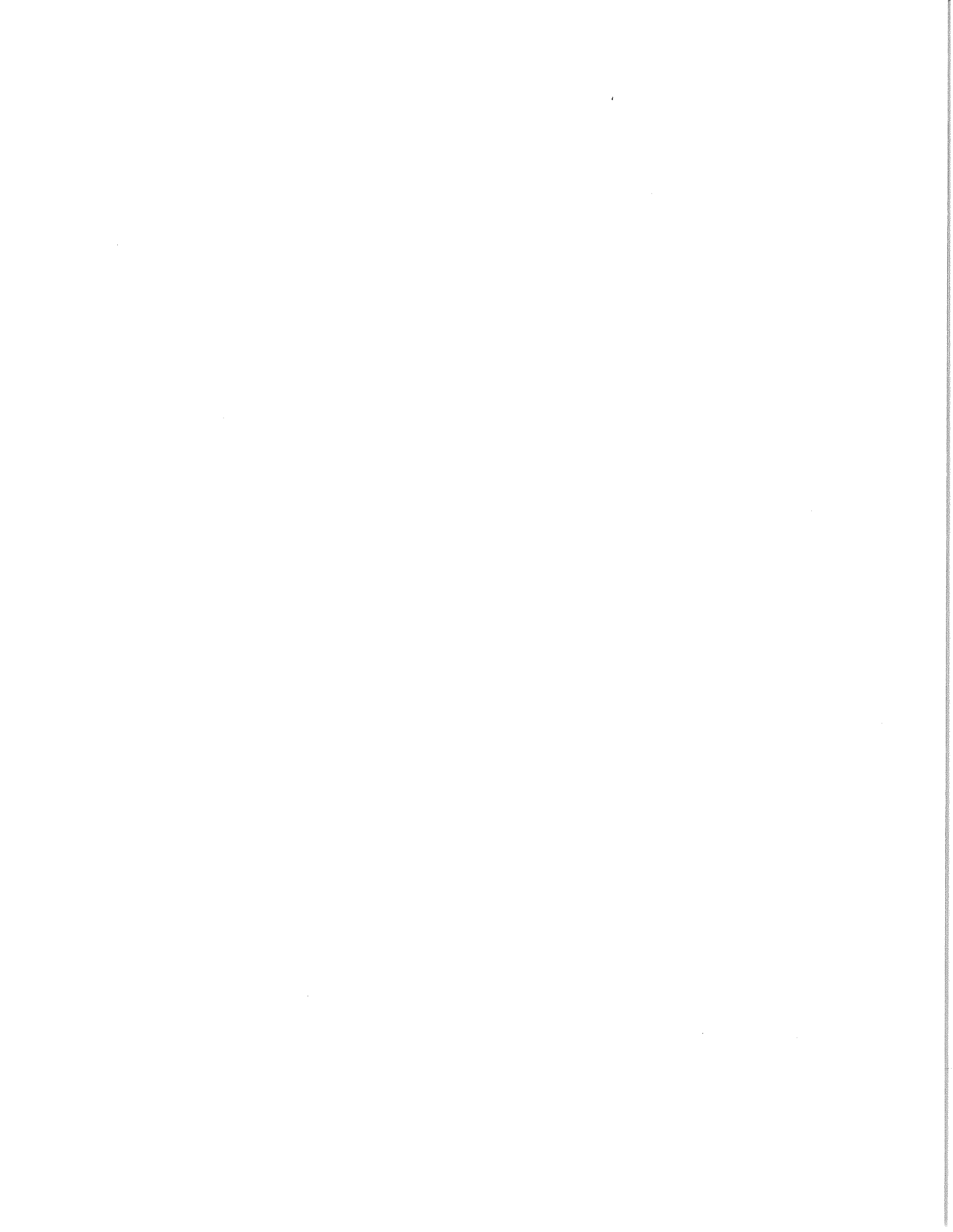
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Parent/guardian Signature

Date

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Parent/guardian printed name





Date	Time	Event	Who	Location
10-14-19	6:00-8:00	Rehearsal	Strings 7, 8	BVNW 505/PAC
10-16-19	7:00 pm	Spooktacular CONCERT: Orchestra 7, 8 BVNW	Strings 7, 8	BVNW
11-13-19	6:45-7:30	Rehearsal	Strings 8	Room 32
11-15-19	9:00-2:00	CONCERT: District MS Orchestra Festival	Strings 8	BVW
12-5-19	7:00-8:00	CONCERT: Elementary Strings	Strings 4/5	OMS Gym
12-10-19	7:00 pm	CONCERT: Strings 6, 7, 8	Strings 6/7/8	OMS Gym
12-17-19	7:00 pm	Orchestra back-up date if snow day on 12-10	Strings 7/8	OMS Gym
12-20-19	9:45 am	WINTER ASSEMBLY	C8, B8, S8, Show Choir	OMS Gym
		WINTER BREAK		
1-9-20	6:15-8:00	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Orchestra Night	Strings 8	BVNW 505
3-7-20	TBD	District Solo & Ensemble Festival (Strings)	Strings 7/8	LKMS
3-25-20	7:00 pm	CONCERT: BVNW Orchestra Festival	Strings 5, 6, 7, 8	BVNW
4-27-20	4:30-6:00	PRE-FESTIVAL REHEARSAL	Strings 7, 8	Pod 6
4-28-20	6:30-8:00	Chaperone Meeting	Strings 7, 8	Pod 6
5-2-20	7:30-5:30	FESTIVAL: WORLDS OF FUN	Band 8, Choir, 8 Strings 7, 8	BVNW/WOF
5-7-20	7:00 pm	CONCERT: Elementary Strings	Strings 4, 5	OMS Gym
5-13-20	7:00 pm	CONCERT: Strings 6, 7, 8	Strings 6, 7, 8	OMS Gym

## OMS Orchestra Concert/Event Calendar 2019 – 2020

Dates and times are subject to change. Please check your email for communication in the event of an alteration.