



2015-2016 Handbook



Lafayette High School Orchestra Department

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Dear Orchestra Students and Parents:

A new year has begun! Welcome to the Lafayette High School Orchestra Department, we hope that you will enjoy your time here at Lafayette and hope that your musical experience will be the highlight of your high school career. As a member of the orchestra, you are now a part of an important program that provides many educational opportunities. The Lafayette High School Orchestra Department has held a long tradition of musical excellence and now you are continuing that important job. You will not only be asked to support that tradition through the musical arts, but also through your character, personality, attitude, work ethic, and academics. A long tradition of musical and personal excellence has been established and now it is up to both you and us to continue our heritage. Welcome to the orchestra family!

You will receive information through our website www.lafayetteorchestra.org, our e-mail list, the Charms Office Assistant, and through information sheets sent home with the students. Please make sure we have an updated e-mail address for you. You may submit new or corrected e-mail addresses through the website and the Charms Office Assistant Program (link from our orchestra website).

Don't miss the chance to meet our booster president and the executive board members at our informational meeting on **Tuesday, August 25th at 6:30** in the orchestra room. They have worked very hard with preparations for the new school year so feel free to come and meet everyone.

We wish every Lafayette Orchestra student and parent a year filled with incredible experiences that will last a lifetime. I look forward to making beautiful music and lasting relationships with all of you!

Musically,

Phil Kent
Director of Orchestras

Laura Fallon
Associate Director of Orchestras

II. PURPOSE OF THIS HANDBOOK

This handbook is provided to make your orientation to the Lafayette Orchestra Program informational and beneficial. We encourage you and your parents to read this handbook so that you may better understand our policies and regulations, and your obligations. The rules and procedures outlined in this handbook have been developed to accomplish these goals in the most efficient and productive manner, and to provide an accurate method of assessing each student's progress. Personal and musical progress is based on the concept of each student's performing his or her assigned tasks to the best of his/her ability. Each student is capable of making a contribution to the group as well as growing in knowledge and appreciation.

All Lafayette Orchestra classes will offer a continuation of musical development as an advanced level performing organization. The focus for these classes will be to continue learning the fundamentals of the student's instrument and to study and perform music literature from all style periods. Students will work to improve their skills in all areas of music including rehearsal, performance, theory, history, sight-reading, analysis, evaluation, and listening. Performances will be given in both solo and ensemble settings. Concerts and other ensemble performances will be scheduled outside the regular school day. It is mandatory for Chamber Orchestra to audition for All-State Orchestra and participate in Solo and Ensemble. String, Concert and Symphonic Orchestras have the option to audition for All-State Orchestra, Solo and Ensemble and participate in other events throughout the year.

Please read this entire handbook carefully and sign and return the Signature Packet.

III.PROGRAM GOALS

- Practice literacy through expression of music by reading, analyzing, and performing notation, rhythms, tempo, dynamics, precision, tone, and the ability to be versatile to any given musical circumstance.
- Development of proper relaxed playing position in both left and right hand technique.
- Acquire knowledge of how to practice, perform, and improve advanced string technique.
- Practice the ability to work cooperatively with others toward the performance of music in and with the ensemble.
- Demonstrate confidence through practice, performance, and presentation.
- Improve upon the current knowledge of orchestra literature.
- Develop a high level of quality artistry through individual musical awareness, control, and technical facility.
- Understand the importance of self-discipline, self-confidence, responsibility, and dependable behavior as it pertains to the ensemble, the section, and the individual.
- Experience a sense of satisfaction through hard work and the personal rewards of a great performance.
- Respect for and proper use of equipment.
- Have fun and enjoy this experience together!

IV. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:

String Orchestra, Concert Orchestra, Symphonic Strings, and Chamber Orchestra shall include the following essential elements.

Students will be expected to master the objectives in each of the identified areas:

1. Care and handling of instruments.
2. Posture and playing position.
3. Instrumental technique.
 - a. Develop characteristic tone
 - b. Develop listening and intonation skills
 - c. Develop rhythmic skills
 - d. Develop ability to phrase musically
 - e. Develop dynamic control
 - f. Develop articulation
 - g. Develop aural skills to blend and balance in the ensemble
 - h. Develop ability to play, sing and count part securely and independently
4. Music reading skills:
 - Understand and interpret printed musical symbols through performance on instrument.
 - Read beyond the printed music to make music.
5. Recognize musical elements and demonstrate expressive qualities in varying styles of string music.
6. Develop rehearsal skills that will allow us to rehearse and perform at the highest level.
7. Develop correct rehearsal etiquette by having proper equipment, putting forth one's best at all times, being respectful to peers and teachers, giving energy and emotion to each and every piece, giving oneself to the music and organization. Understand that playing exactly what is on the page without emotion is not music, just a skill.
8. Musical sensitivity through performance and listening.
9. Evaluation of musical performance quality.
 - a. Evaluate progress toward self-established musical goals
 - b. Evaluate solo and group rehearsals and performances
 - c. Recognize quality of sound, pitch, style, tempo, rhythm, blend, balance, phrasing, dynamics, and articulation
 - d. Develop confidence in performing by practicing performance etiquette and decorum.
10. Creative self-expression:
 - Express oneself in every rehearsal and performance experience through active participation.
11. Develop strong personal skills in the areas of teamwork, leadership, and communication.
12. Develop a desire to continue musical experiences outside of school organization and after high school.

V. ORCHESTRA CODE OF CONDUCT

Please keep voices to a calm conversational level.

Refrain from loud noises, such as screaming or yelling.

Absolutely no horseplay in the orchestra room.

Entering Orchestra Room

1. Place all backpacks and school related items (on the empty tables) well away from doors.
2. Upon entering the orchestra room, always read the whiteboard for instructions, get your instrument/equipment out and move into the rehearsal area within the first 5 minutes of class
3. Food, gum and beverages are not permitted in the orchestra room, practice rooms or instrument room. Only CLEAR bottled water allowed as long as you recycle and dispose of the empty container! For 3rd block classes, all snacks must be consumed *before* the bell.
4. Per FCPS policy, cell phones must be silenced and stored during class. Students must practice self-regulation.
5. The white boards are for communications from the staff only. If students have announcements, please ask the instructor to use the board or to speak to the class.

Rehearsal Procedures - During the School Day

1. Be in chair five minutes after bell with your instrument, your music, a pencil and all materials needed for class (warm-up folders, rosin, etc.). Tune and warm up independently before rehearsal begins. Bass students have access to a tuner located in the stereo cabinet within the first ten minutes of class.
2. All instrument cases will be stored under the student's chair.
3. When an instructor stands in front of the group and raises their hand, please stop talking and listen for further instructions.
4. Talking during a rehearsal will not be tolerated. Rehearse in a professional manner and be courteous to your fellow students.
5. The only person that should be talking during rehearsal is the instructor.
6. Do not leave the room without permission from the instructor. Do not ask to leave the class to make up work or to take a test. You must remain in class for the entire block.
7. Use the required sign language for permission for bathroom or water. Students must remain in seats unless given permission to move about the room. All materials should be prepared during the first five minutes of class.

Rehearsal Procedures - After-School Rehearsals

1. Between the regular school day and after school rehearsal, all snacks and drinks must be consumed in the hall.
2. At the beginning of rehearsal you must be in your seat for attendance at least 5 minutes before your start time. If you are tardy, it is your responsibility to check with the instructor or you will be marked absent for the entire rehearsal.
3. Do not leave rehearsal without permission from an instructor.
4. The only person that should be talking during rehearsal is the instructor.
5. Do not leave campus to get food. You will be late!

Practice Rooms

1. When using the practice rooms, the lights must always be on.
2. When exiting the practice rooms, turn off lights and shut door.
3. Please do not leave trash in the practice rooms.
4. If you borrow a rock stop, shoulder rest, tuner or metronome, and take it to a practice room, it is your responsibility to return it to the proper storage area.

VI. ADDITIONAL BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

Pay attention and follow along in rehearsal. Sometimes in the course of rehearsal, only one section will be playing. The members of other sections should be carefully following the musical part that is being rehearsed so that the total knowledge of the score is achieved. Excessive plucking will not be tolerated as it is a distraction to the director and the other students. Cell phones should be put away at all times during rehearsal and may be used with specific permission from the director.

Listen closely for each instruction given by the directors, section leaders, or volunteer parents so that the follow-through of the instruction can be done correctly by every member of the group the first time.

No texting or other use of your cell phone during rehearsals or performances!!!

Cell phones will be confiscated if seen or heard. Phones will be turned over to the LHS administration. If you must use your cell phone, you should ask permission. There will be times during announcements that the director will give you permission to use the calendar feature of your phone to add a specific orchestra date.

Always have your individual copy of music with your name labeled at the top. This goes for rehearsals and especially in performances. Do not rely on your stand partner to take care of your music.

Exhibit common courtesy toward others at all times. Treat others as you would want them to treat you. This includes substitutes, student teachers, guest directors, Lafayette staff, parent volunteers and other students.

Restroom passes will be given only in an emergency. Students have three breaks and a lunch block to take care of business. Hall passes are a privilege, so do not abuse them. Please take care of everything before you come to class. If you have permission to use a hall pass, sign the hall pass sheet with the proper information. Please do not abuse this privilege!

VII. Student Leadership

Requirements and Responsibilities of Section Leaders

Section leaders are chosen by the director on personal merit, excellent musicianship, proven leadership skills, and through an application process. Students interested in a section leader position are to complete a resume describing their strengths and abilities. Resumes are to be submitted to Mr. Kent by August 28th.

Requirements include:

- Must be an exemplar model of personal etiquette, classroom procedures, and must lead with respect
- Responsible for sharing bowing and fingering edits as noted by the director
- Suggest optional bowing and fingering changes to the director for approval
- Ensure the section follows marked bowings and fingerings

- Upon entering classroom, prepare the room for rehearsal by setting out chairs and stands
- Section leaders have the right and responsibility to call required sections after director approval
- Must be able to perform repertoire at an expectable level in order to demonstrate in class when called upon by the director. Section leaders are among the best musicians in their section.

Leadership Committee

These students demonstrate strong leadership skill- dependable, helpful, and encouraging to others. They not only help class run smoothly but help create a unified orchestra culture.

Librarian- oversees distributing, collecting, maintaining, and organizing the music library

Attendance Officer- records attendance at the beginning of class

Social Committee- a group of student volunteers that serve as the student voice in planning orchestra socials, celebrations, and banquets

VIII. GRADING

Grading Scale:

92-100% = A

83-91% = B

74-82% = C

65-73% = D

below 64% = F

Categories:

Formative: Daily Participation, Written Work, Playing Checks = 40%

Summative: Performance Grade and *Playing Tests* = 45%.

End of the Year Final = 15%

Formative: 40%

Daily Participation

A typical week will have 20 or 30 (10 per class) possible participation points. A student will start the week with all points. Deductions will be made for any or all of the following:

- lack of effort in rehearsal
- demonstrating a poor posture
- not following directions
- no noticeable attempt to improve in skill areas
- not cooperating with other students
- not having a pencil in rehearsal
- not having music for rehearsal
- having gum, food, candy or drink in rehearsal
- tardiness to class
- disruption in rehearsal
- unexcused absence from class or truancy

Written Work

Written work will include learning checks, individual and group performance reflections, and completing take-home assignments.

Playing Checks

Playing checks will be announced several days ahead. Excerpts will be assessed on a pass/fail basis. Students will have multiple chances to retake these playing checks as needed until 1 week before the summative assessment.

Summative 45% - Performances and Playing Tests

Playing Tests take place in class and are announced several days ahead. They involve performing an assigned piece or section of a piece in small groups and or by individual. Each playing test has different expectations and requirements. At least two playing test is given each term. "Test grades" will be derived from performances, music playing assignments, written tests, and quizzes. Concerts will receive a minimum of 5 test grades including 2 performance grades, and 1 each for behavior, dress, and for arriving on time and staying until the end of the concert. Each concert is mandatory.

Final Exam- 15%

Final Exams will include an individual and group performance reflection as well as a written portion on material covered within the unit of study.

IX. ATTENDANCE

To have a valuable musical experience, you must be in attendance to every in-school rehearsal. It is crucial that you contribute to the orchestra. When you miss class, you miss out on valuable instruction that can help you improve your understanding of technique and musicianship. Your classmates also suffer without your contribution and your inability to learn your part along side everyone else.

a. Excused class absences and makeup work:

In the event of an excused absence, students must take or download a make-up practice log to be signed and dated to earn credit. There are also other make-up options available online on the orchestra department webpage. If a student chooses not to do the make-up practice he/she will receive a zero for the daily class participation grade. The daily grade will be entered into Infinite Campus as an "M" until the proper documentation has been submitted. Note: practice time outside of class is very important but still does not equal to the wonderful benefits of ensemble experience! All make up practice time must be purely dedicated to LHSO music, not private lesson or assigned CKYO music.

b. Concert Absences:

Concert absences will be excused in the following cases and a note from parent and/or doctor must accompany the student upon returning to school from the events listed below by the next class meeting. A list of optional make-up assignments is available online. The student must choose a "performance" labeled assignment complete in a satisfactory manner for the student to receive full credit for the missed concert. The director should be notified of the student's upcoming absence in advance of the missed event if at all possible. Excused absences are granted for the following and/or similar situations:

- **Death in the family**
- **Medical emergency or illness**
- **Religious holiday**
- **Family out of town**

c. Absences will be unexcused in the following and/or similar cases:

- **Jobs**
- **Personal business or entertainment**
- **Class Tutorials (unless approved in writing 24 hrs prior)**
- **Personal or family birthdays (try and celebrate before or after performance dates)**

- Forgetting that there was a performance
- Failing to mark your calendar for specific dates and times
- Traffic
- Not have proper concert attire
- Failure to find a ride

When a student has a recital they are not excused from school events even if both events occur on the same day. Please schedule individual performances and recitals around the school performances. Please inform the directors of any scheduled performances that are held outside the school curriculum. They would love to attend!

All requests for excused absences from before or after school rehearsals are to be **REPORTED IN WRITING**. If an absence is anticipated, a written request for an excused absence should be **submitted at least two days in advance and two weeks prior for a performance**. Circumstances may justify an excused absence for reasons other than those listed above. In the case of illness or family emergency, an explanatory telephone call or email prior to the rehearsal or performance is appropriate. **Absence information is not to be relayed through another student.**

d. Failure to notify in writing will constitute an unexcused absence that will result in a grade of a zero percent. (Note: All performances are test grades). One unexcused absence or excessive tardiness may result in being removed from a performance resulting in a failing grade. Members may be removed from performances if rehearsals are missed due to illness, lengthy school absences, and/or excessive tardiness. Any member removed from a performance due to excessive excused absences will not have his/her grade affected. If a student is unable to perform the repertoire at the appropriate level, he/she will not be allowed to perform in the concert and his/her grade will be duly affected.

e. Extra Rehearsals and Sectionals

Many times the difference between a superior and a poor musical performance is determined by the amount of rehearsal time spent in preparation. Extra rehearsals allow for many things: individual and small group work, help from visiting clinicians, and more time for that "extra polishing." They are vital for any good performing organizations. Please consult your schedules for rehearsals that will take place outside of class time. **ALL EXTRA REHEARSALS ARE REQUIRED** and they will not be scheduled unless absolutely necessary. Sectionals will be scheduled on a weekly or bi weekly basis for certain ensembles and are required as part of your class grade. Failure to attend will diminish your grade significantly. You will always be notified of an extra rehearsal well enough in advance in order to make arrangements to attend. If students are late or have to leave early, they must have a written note from their parent or guardian. Excuses will be accepted for missing extra rehearsals only if notification is received *prior* to the rehearsal and the director will determine whether an absence is excused or unexcused.

f. Student Activity Conflicts

Although we try our best to avoid scheduling performances at the same time as other school related events, occasionally conflicts do arise which cannot be remedied. When a practice or rehearsal and an event (game, contest, concert) are scheduled simultaneously, the **EVENT** takes precedent. When two events are scheduled simultaneously, a District competition event takes precedence over a regular event, a Regional event takes precedence over a District event, a State event takes precedence over a Regional event, and a National event

takes precedence over a Regional event. When two practices or rehearsals are scheduled simultaneously, the students may SELECT the event in which she/he will participate. **He/She should make the decision, whenever possible, at least seven (7) days in advance. He/she should advise the sponsors/teachers/coaches affected by the conflict immediately and not the day of.** Under NO circumstance will the student be penalized for his/her decision; that is, class grades are not to be lowered or unreasonable make-up work required, the student will not be benched, nor will the student's ability to earn a letter be impaired because of the decision. In case of a disagreement among the parties concerned, the matter should be referred to the administrator in charge for a solution.

The calendar, forms, documents, make-up assignments, and schedules will be available on the orchestra website: www.lafayetteorchestra.org

X. Concert Attire

Unless otherwise directed, all orchestra students are responsible for the care and maintenance of either their concert tux or dress. Cleaning and alterations must be done by the student. At the end of the school year, the orchestra department will be accepting donated concert dresses to keep for future students.

Orchestra Members are responsible for the following:

String

Gentleman: Long black dress pants, collared button down long-sleeve black dress shirt, black socks, black belt, and black dress shoes (no sneakers). Ladies: Long black dress pants (no leggings/tights as pants), solid black dress shirt with $\frac{3}{4}$ or full length sleeves, black dress shoes with closed toes. All skirts and dresses must be full length. Long hair should be pulled back with a minimal amount of jewelry.

Concert, Symphonic, and Chamber

Gentlemen

Tux Jacket and Pants
Black Dress Socks (calf length)
Black Dress Shoes
Tux Jacket and Pants
Black Bow Tie
Black Cummerbund
White Tux Shirt
Long Hair Must Be Pulled Back

Ladies

Black Dress (ordered through boosters)
Black Shoes (no flip flops)
No Large Earrings or Jewelry

XI. Renting a School Instrument

A limited number of school instruments and accessories are available for either at home practice or school use. The FCPS rental contract is available per request. The parent/guardian will be responsible for paying the required yearly fee totaling \$25. This fee covers the school year from August to May. If the student would like to rent an instrument for the summer, please see the director for a new rental form. All damages due to any cause, with the exception of wear from careful use, then will be agreed by the parent/guardian to be paid in full as stated by a repair bill. If the instrument is beyond repair then the parent/guardian must pay the total agreed value of the instrument. Also, no one but the student responsible for the rental instrument is allowed to handle or use the instrument without the consent of the director.

XII. Fundraising Needs

Fundraising is a necessary part of any school music organization. Operating expenses for groups such as ours far exceed the dollars supplied by FCPS to the orchestra program. In order for the department to remain vital and offering quality experiences to our students, fundraiser participation is a necessity for each student. Money raised through fund-raising and fees is used for many purposes (seen and unseen) over the course of the school year.

The Orchestra Department and Boosters work hard to keep student fees low and by offsetting those low fees with fundraising efforts. Please keep in mind all of the often “unseen, behind the scenes” expenses when considering your level of commitment to fundraising. Your help is necessary to continue this outstanding program, therefore, **EACH STUDENT IS ASKED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE VARIOUS FUNDRAISERS THAT THE ORCHESTRA DEPARTMENT SPONSORS EACH YEAR.** The booster board will NOT offer an “In-lieu-of” fundraising possibility. In accordance with IRS regulations for non-profit organizations, Lafayette Orchestra Boosters, Inc does not offer student credits on fundraising.

XIII. CONCLUSION

Your decision to participate in the *Lafayette High School Orchestra* represents the opening of a door to tremendous opportunity. You are very fortunate to live in a place that has a tradition of excellent orchestras and a school administration that values and supports this type of study. Please recognize the value of this opportunity and make the most of it.

This handbook is a guideline to make your experience in orchestra as productive and enjoyable as possible. All of the rules are meant to serve one purpose: to promote the learning of orchestra students. If you have any questions about the policies in this handbook, please do not hesitate to discuss it with your director.