

Kernodle Middle School  
Orchestra Handbook  
*2024-2025*



Alexandria Johnson  
*Director of Orchestras*

*Dear orchestra members and family,*

Welcome to the Kernodle Middle School orchestra program! As your director, I am excited for the road ahead and can't wait to see what's in store for our program this year. I have high expectations for the work we will complete together, and I know that if we all come together as a team, we can succeed. Above all else, this is more than just plucking strings: it's family, teamwork, and it will be fun! I look forward to navigating this journey together.

Please take some time to look over ALL the information included in this handbook, as all of it is pertinent to your success this school year. This handbook includes procedures, objectives, and various other items. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out. Once you have signed this document, you will be held accountable for everything you agreed to in this packet (hence why reading everything is so important).

We are committed to success and excellence, and without you that wouldn't be possible. Thank you for committing to this orchestra program. I am looking forward to working with you, and am ready to make music together!

Alexandria Johnson  
*Director of Orchestras*  
Kernodle Middle School

## **Contact Information**

As much as I love interacting with the students and family, I do need some me time. Email is my primary means of communication, and I will do my best to respond promptly Monday through Friday from 7:30am to 5pm.

Email: [johnsoa23@gcsnc.com](mailto:johnsoa23@gcsnc.com)

Phone: 336-405-8660

**Students** please feel free to reach out to me via Canvas messages as well!

## **Class Expectations and Rules**

1. Students are to display kind and respectful behavior to the director, teachers/substitutes, principals, parents, and fellow students.
2. Students are to respect our classroom by:
  - a. Cleaning up after themselves,
  - b. Only handling their instrument, and
  - c. Handling classroom materials appropriately.
3. Students are not permitted to eat or drink in the orchestra room. The only allowed beverage is water in a closed container or bottle. No gum allowed during orchestra.
4. Students are to arrive to class on time prepared with all their necessary materials.
5. Students are to follow all rules and procedures as they are outlined in this handbook.

## **Consequences**

Stage 1: Verbal warning, student conference, written reflection, bounced to another classroom

Stage 2: Parental notification/meeting, administrative notice

Stage 3: Recommendation for In School Suspension (ISS) or Out of School Suspension (OSS)

All three consequence stages will also result in a write up on Incidents + (Kernodle's online behavior documentation system).

In cases of repeated misbehavior, students may be dismissed from the orchestra program at the discretion of the director.

## **Class Procedures**

### *Beginning of class:*

1. All students must be in their seats and preparing for class by the time the tardy bell rings. Binders, lunch bags, and any other personal supplies should be placed under the students' seat to ensure a clear walkway for everyone.
2. Students will have 3 minutes before we warm up as a class to finalize tuning and allocate any materials they will need for class. There will be no playing until we warm up together as a group.
3. During class, students will be able to use the restroom one at a time by signing out at the front. Students don't need to ask before using the restroom.

### *End of Class:*

1. Students will be dismissed by the teacher to put their materials away 2 minutes before the bell rings to ensure they can make it to their next class on time.
2. Students are responsible for leaving the room how they left it.
  - a. Stands and chairs should be set up neatly and in an organized fashion.
  - b. No student belongings (that aren't instruments) should be left in the orchestra room.

## **Class Materials\***

### *1. Instrument*

- a. Students are expected to rent or buy their own instrument.
  - i. **Please avoid** purchasing instruments from Amazon! It is convenient, however those instruments are poorly made, and will not last!
  - ii. Reach out to Ms Johnson if you would like some reputable places to rent or purchase an instrument.
- b. There are a small number of school-owned instruments available for students to use, however it is not enough for everyone, so renting is strongly encouraged. To use a school-owned instrument, you must sign a contract and it is on a first come first served basis.

### *2. Music Folder and Sheet Music*

- a. Ms Johnson will supply all students with their own music folder and individual parts for sheet music. It is the student's responsibility to keep up with their music.

### *3. Personal Supplies:* Students are responsible for supplying their own:

- a. **Method Book** (please get the correct book for your grade and instrument):
  - i. 6th Grade: Sound Innovations for String Orchestra, Book 1 (blue cover)
  - ii. 7th Grade: Sound Innovations for Strings Book 2 (red cover)
  - iii. 8th Grade: Sound Innovations: Sound Development for Intermediate String Orchestra (green cover)
- b. Rosin
- c. Cleaning cloth
- d. Shoulder rest (violin and viola)
- e. Endpin stop (cello and bass)
- f. Pencils

\*Please don't let the inability to purchase supplies/instrument stop your student from participating in orchestra. This activity is accessible to all, so please don't hesitate to reach out to me if you're unable to get any of the necessary supplies and I will do what I can to help you out!

## **Assignments and Grading Policy**

Bell ringers, exit tickets, performance assessments - 10%

- Occasionally students will be given a written bell ringer at the beginning of class or an exit ticket at the end of class. This assignment is just used for the teacher to reflect on what students are or are not learning and gain helpful information from students.
- Performance assessments are based on how a student performs throughout the week and will be graded by the teacher in class.

Written tests - 20%

- Students will have written tests a few times throughout the semester. All information will be covered during class, and the tests will be given during class.

Playing tests - 30%

- Students will have playing tests once a week during class, focusing on a new skill or exercise we have worked on throughout the week.
- These tests can also be done online through Canvas, but they have to be submitted the night before the test is done in class.

Performances - 40%

- Every single student is a valuable member of this orchestra program, therefore it is so important that they are at every single performance we have this year. Dates and times for these events will be sent out weeks, if not months ahead of time, so please plan accordingly.
- If a student has a conflict with a performance date, they should let their teacher know at least two weeks in advance. They are then required to complete a playing test and written assignment to make up for their missed performance grade. This also applies to students who have true emergencies the day of a performance (i.e. sickness, death in the family, etc).
- A missed performance without proper notice or emergency will result in a grade of a 60 and it cannot be made up.

## **Concert Attire**

It is imperative that students adhere to the concert dress code so that we can all look uniform. Students have to meet the dress code set in place by Kernodle Middle School. Failure to do so will result in students being unable to perform with the group.

1. *All students* need to purchase a Kernodle MS orchestra t-shirt to be worn with black pants and black shoes. Pants should have a button, a zipper and no holes. Shoes need to be all black and cannot be crocs, slides, or slippers.
2. *7th and 8th graders* will have two formal performances where they will need to wear orchestra shirts, black dress pants/skirt, and black dress shoes.

As always, please don't let not having the proper attire deter your student from joining orchestra. Please reach out if you have questions or concerns about the attire policy or need help acquiring the right clothes!



## **After School Rehearsals and Activities**

Throughout the year, it will be important to have after school rehearsals so students have the chance to collaborate with their peers on a deeper level. These rehearsals are essential to the productivity and preparedness of the ensemble, so it is important that your student plans to attend all of the rehearsals. Ms Johnson will let you know in advance when and where these rehearsals will be held.

### *Voluntary Lessons*

- Ms Johnson will be offering lessons for individuals and small groups after school Monday through Thursday from 3:30 to 4:15.
- Students must bring a written note signed and dated by their parents/guardians stating that they are allowed to stay after school and that they have transportation set up to take them home.
- After school slots will be on a first come first serve basis and students can sign up for a slot on the orchestra room door.

### *Full ensemble rehearsal*

- In preparation for concerts and festivals, we may have rehearsal after school as a full ensemble.
- These rehearsals will be communicated in advance and students should do their best to attend.
- A grade will be given for these after school rehearsals, but a student will not be penalized if they're unable to attend.

### *Pickup*

- It is important that students are picked up NO LATER THAN 30 MINUTES after their scheduled end of rehearsal. For example, if a student's lesson ends at 4:15, they have to be picked up no later than 4:45.
- If a student is picked up late twice, they will no longer be able to stay after school for rehearsals or lessons.

## **Auditions, JWRO, and All County Orchestra**

There are two extracurricular ensembles students have the opportunity to participate in:

### *1. All County Orchestra*

- a. For Guilford County Schools students only and is audition based.
- b. The audition is on October 15, 2024, usually starting between 4-5pm at The Academy at Lincoln.
- c. The clinic is November 20-21, 2024 (all day) at Grimsley High School.
- d. Students must audition with a predetermined solo and scales.
- e. There is NO fee for the audition and the clinic!

### *2. Junior Western Region Orchestra (JWRO)*

- a. For orchestra students residing in the western part of the state.
- b. The audition is on February 8, 2025 at Forsyth Country Day School starting around 8am.
- c. The clinic is May 2-3, 2025 (all day) at Broadview Middle School.
- d. Students must audition with a predetermined solo and scales.
- e. The fee is \$5 for the audition and \$35 for the clinic (subject to change).