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Academy at Lincoln Orchestra Handbook

2023-2024 School Year

OVERVIEW

Welcome to the Academy at Lincoln Orchestra! I am excited to work with you in our class community. This handbook gives you an overview of our orchestra program, expectations for our class community, our curriculum, and opportunities for extracurricular enrichment.

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

Orchestra is the place where we learn how to play bowed string instruments: the violin, viola, cello, and double bass. We learn how to use our instruments with good technique, how to hold our instruments and bows properly to play beautifully in any style of music. We review, learn about, and expand our musicianship, the foundational knowledge about music like beat, tone, rhythm, intonation, tempo, dynamics, and reading and interpreting music notation. We harness and share our creativity through collaboration: in orchestra we work together to share our learning through performances.

When you sign up for the orchestra, you are an orchestra major. Orchestra is a year-long class. Typically, students who begin orchestra stay in orchestra each year, building on the skills and knowledge they gain each year.

CLASS COMMUNITY, PHILOSOPHY, AND EXPECTATIONS

To help build class community, orchestra students develop a classroom ***philosophy of music*** and classroom ***philosophy of learning and teaching***. All students are expected to participate in creating and maintaining our class philosophies. We use our philosophies of music and learning and teaching to develop ***class expectations***, standards for how we behave and interact in orchestra. Everyone in our class community, students and teachers, are accountable to these expectations.

Expectations-"Appropriate Classroom Participation" means we...

1. *Arrive to class on time and prepared with instruments and materials.*
2. *Play and use our instruments when and how we are instructed; take great care in handling musical instruments!!*
3. *Complete non-playing assignments (Bell Ringers, Theory Work, Worksheets, Quizzes, Etc.)*
4. *Complete group and individual assessments.*
5. *Use class time to prepare for performances, assessments, auditions, etc.*
6. *Support each other and encourage participation from all students; expect excellence for our team!*

Expectations-Materials and Instrument Care

Students must arrive to every class with the following materials:

1. Instrument
2. Instrument Accessories (rosin, cleaning cloth, shoulder rest or rockstop)
3. Sharpened Pencils
4. Folder with music and method book. **Folder checks will be conducted weekly: BE PREPARED!**

Students should NOT bring the following items near their instruments, whether at school or home:

1. Food (residues from food items can damage instruments)
2. Beverages (liquids ruin the varnish on instruments)

Food and drink should not be consumed during class time; contact Dr. Blanton if you need clarification.

Expectations-Assignments, Assessments, and Technology

1. Assignments and Assessments must be completed and turned in ON TIME. I need time to review your assignments carefully and thoughtfully to give you the feedback you need to grow as a musician.
2. There are times in class when we will use technology (chromebooks, cell phones) as tools for learning. **In most cases, personal technology and cell phones are not to be used in orchestra class.**

Expectations-Concerts and Performances

All orchestra students are expected to participate in our school concerts. For your planning purposes, the dates of our concerts are listed below: ***please add these dates to your family's calendar.***

- Fall Orchestra Concert (7th & 8th Grade): Monday, October 30th, 2023, 6:30 PM in Lincoln Gym
- 6th Grade Strings Performance (6th Grade): Thursday, January 11th, 2024, 6:30 PM in Lincoln Gym
- Spring Orchestra Concert (All Grades): Tuesday, May 14th, 2024, 6:30 PM in Lincoln Gym

Concert attire is required for our performances. Concert dress is considered any combination of black and white. Appropriate concert dress can include:

- A black or white dress shirt and black dress pants
- A black dress with black or white tights/leggings
- A white dress shirt, black vest, and black skirt with black or white tights
- Cello players should consider their comfortability in playing correctly if they choose to wear a skirt
- If you choose to wear a tie and/or sport coat, consider practicing in these items as extra bulk around the neck or shoulders can impact your playing

All attendees at Academy at Lincoln performances are expected to be attentive, courteous, and respectful to performers. **Cell phones and other electronic devices should be silenced and put away, as these devices can make unexpected sounds and distract performers from doing their best.**

OUR CURRICULUM

Standards for Excellence and Mastery

The primary curriculum used is the ASTA Curriculum (2018). An overview of the [ASTA Content Area Standards](#), their alignment with the [NC Essential Standards in Music](#), and the Scope and Sequence of standards and activities can be accessed [HERE](#).

Classwork and Quizzes/Tests

Classwork is usually paper-based, and can be completed during the time allotted in class. Classwork becomes homework if it is not completed on the day it is due. **Quizzes/Tests** are usually taken during class, but can also be done via Canvas.

Practice Assignments and Performance Assessments

Practice Assignments are technique exercises or examples that you should be practicing at home. Students must record and submit 6 Practice Assignments every quarter. **Practice Assignments help prepare us for Performance Assessments.** Students may choose to be assessed in a large group, small group, or individual performance. Large and small group assessments are recorded during class time; individual performances must be recorded and submitted outside of class time.

Grading Breakdown

- Classwork: 25%
- Practice Assignments: 25%
- Performance Assessments: 25%
- Quizzes/Tests: 25%

EXTRA-CURRICULAR & ENRICHMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Vespa Strings

In Vespa Strings, we play fiddle tunes, jazz, pop music, and create our own arrangements of these musics. Vespa Strings meets before school on Wednesdays from 8:00 AM to 8:50 AM. This ensemble is open to students who play violin, viola, cello, bass, acoustic guitar, banjo, mandolin, dulcimer, bouzouki, and other folk stringed instruments.

Guilford County Schools All-County Orchestra Festival

Guilford County Schools Fine Arts Department hosts this festival annually. Students must audition in order to participate.

Audition Requirements for the 2023-2024 School Year

- Perform the audition excerpt from this year's solo, *Allegro*
- Perform a two-octave scale and arpeggio
- Read and perform a short piece of music you have not prepared (sight-reading)

Important Dates for the 2023-2024 School Year

- Tuesday, October 10, 2023: GCS All-County Orchestra Auditions, 5 PM at The Academy at Lincoln
- Wednesday, November 15 & Thursday, November 16 2023: GCS All-County Orchestra Clinic and Concert at Grimsley High School

Junior Western Region All-State Orchestra Festival

The North Carolina Music Educators Association hosts the Junior Western Region Orchestra Festival annually. Students must audition in order to participate.

Audition Requirements for the 2023-2024 School Year

- Perform this year's solo, *Allegro*
- Perform a two-octave major scale (judge's choice) and a one-octave minor scale (your choice)
- Read and perform a short piece of music you have not prepared (sight-reading)

Important Dates for the 2023-2024 School Year

- Saturday, Feb 10, 2024 : Junior Western Region Orchestra Auditions, 9:00 AM at Burns Middle School: 215 Shady Grove Rd, Lawndale, NC 28090
- Friday, April 26 & Saturday, April 27 2024: Junior Western Region Orchestra Clinic and Concert at Shelby High School 230 East Dixon Blvd. Shelby, NC 28152

Greensboro Symphony Youth Orchestra (GSYO)

[The Greensboro Symphony Youth Orchestra \(GSYO\)](#) is the educational orchestra branch of our local professional symphony orchestra. GSYO has three levels of ensembles for which young orchestra players can audition. Most middle school students audition for the [GSYO Youth Strings](#) or the [GSYO Youth Philharmonic](#).