

*Durham School of the  
Arts  
Orchestra Handbook  
2017-2018*



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*Dear Parents & Students, I am excited to welcome you to another exciting year in the Orchestra program. This handbook should provide you with some information for the upcoming year.*

*There is no secret to what makes an Orchestra program successful for young people - It is parents, students, staff and a community showing pride and involvement!*

*Please read through this handbook with your Orchestra student. Please sign and return the last page along with the Media Release form and volunteer questionnaire by Sept 1, 2017.*

*There will be a very important orchestra parent meeting for all DSA orchestra parents on Wednesday evening, August 30<sup>th</sup> at 6pm in the orchestra room. Last year we formed a very active and supportive parent group. The purpose of this meeting is to elect officers, discuss important items related to the orchestra program including possible trips, fund raisers, and our upcoming orchestra picnic.*

*Be sure to always check the orchestra web site for important information, practice assignments and many other updates, recordings & pictures. To access the web site, just go to the DSA home page, click on String Orchestra.*

*Please feel free to contact me with any questions, comments or concerns that you may have throughout the year.*

*Mrs. Jody Crafford*

## *Course Descriptions*

### **String Fundamentals**

Students will learn the basic fundamentals of playing a string instrument including: instrument set up, proper bow hold, music reading and notation. Students will perform 3 to 4 concerts. Participate in orchestra related field trips.

### **String Technique**

Students will build on the skills learned in String Fundamentals. Students will perform 4 concerts and participate in orchestra related field trips. Advanced students will have the opportunity to audition for DPS Honors orchestra & NC Eastern Regional All State

### **String Ensemble**

Students will build on the skills learned in String Technique. Students will perform at least 4 concerts and participate in orchestra related field trips. Advanced students will have the opportunity to audition for DPS Honors orchestra & NC Eastern Regional All State

### **String Orchestra**

Students will build on the skills learned in String Ensemble. Students will perform at least 4 concerts and participate in orchestra related field trips. Advanced students will have the opportunity to audition for DPS Honors orchestra & NC Eastern Regional All State

### **Chamber Orchestra**

In addition to the above description for String Orchestra, students will be required to audition for either SE Honors orchestra, DPS Honors Orchestra and/or NC All State Orchestra. If accepted, student will be required to participate fully in the event auditioned for. Students will also be required to participate in solo and ensemble events, perform for a variety of community events. Students must attend and report on 2 Professional live performances

## *Equipment & Books Needed*

- All students must have an instrument to participate in orchestra. Instruments are available for purchase or rent from High Strung or Music & Arts. It is strongly recommended that instruments **not** be bought from e-bay or other “discount” places. These instruments generally do not have properly fitted parts which causes many difficulties for the student.

*Students who play the violin or viola* must bring their instrument to class every day. All violin & viola players **MUST** have a shoulder rest.

*Students who play the cello* can leave their personal instrument at home for practice (must bring to school for concerts). All personal cellos **MUST** have an endpin strap. They can rent a school instrument to use every day in class. If a student does not have a cello at home, a school cello can be

rented for the entire year. Please note: the school cello will be shared with other cello players from a different class.

*Students who play the bass* can rent a school bass for use during the school day. If a student does not own a bass, they will pay full rental. These instruments are available for take home (provided there is a vehicle large enough to transport) and must be returned the very next school day. If taking the instrument home for practice is not an option, student will need to arrange a time to come in to practice before or after school.

- Make sure that your instrument is in good repair and ready for school by checking the following:

### **Instrument**

1. Tuning pegs turn easily and stay in place.
2. Bridge is not warped but standing upright with feet flat
3. No cracks or open seams
4. New set of strings – It is recommended that strings be changed every 80 playing hours. Even though the strings are not broken, they lose their tone. If 80 playing hours (will not work for your budget, at the very least once a year. Please use Preludes, Tonicas, Dominants or Chromcor (these are good student strings).
5. Extra set of strings in case of emergency. **IF A STRING BREAKS, DO NOT LEAVE THE INSTRUMENT AT HOME, BRING IT TO SCHOOL. IT CAN BE REPLACED FOR THE WHOLESALE PRICE OF THE STRING.**

### **Bow**

1. Must have a full set of hair.
2. Ivory tip must be in place
3. Be sure the stick is not warped
4. The screw should tighten & loosen the hair
5. There should be a grip on the stick

### **Case**

All cases **MUST** have a name tag on the outside. We have had instruments left on buses, at after school care, at bus stops, etc. with no way of identifying owner. Name & School are required on tag. Home address and phone are optional.

Should be able to close securely and properly. Cases left partially open will cause damage to the instrument

Never cram music, folders or other personal items in the case with your instrument. Fit small items (rosin) in the compartments.

- Never leave your instrument in a car for any length of time. The prolonged temperature change will cause your instrument to crack and the bow to warp. Do not use: furniture (or wood) polish, water or alcohol to clean your instrument. All you need is a soft cloth.
- Always wipe off the instrument and bow stick with a soft cloth after playing. Always loosen the bow hairs.

- **Items needed for class each day**

All students are required to have:

3 ring binder with dividers

Instrument in good playing condition

Tuner – to assist at home tuning of instrument (also available as a download on Phone/computer)

Pencil

Music stand (portable) for at home practice. Do not bring to school.

In addition, the following lesson book is required. Students can purchase from High Strung or Music & Arts. Mrs. Crafford will also be taking student orders for books.

**Lesson Book:**

**String Fundamentals** – Essential Elements Book 1 for their instrument

**String Technique** – Orchestra Expressions Book 2 for their instrument

**String Ensemble** – All For Strings Book 3 for their instrument

**String Orchestra** – Essential Technique Book 3 & A Scale in Time for their instrument

**Chamber Orchestra** – Advanced Technique Book 4 for their instrument

Good online string sources:

Shar products [www.sharmusic.com](http://www.sharmusic.com)

Southwest Strings [www.swstrings.com](http://www.swstrings.com)

## **Orchestra Grading System**

### **I. Assignments & Testing 35%**

15% Portfolios, written quizzes & returned signed Handbook & other forms that require parent signature

20% Playing quizzes & performance assessment

### **II. Daily Participation 25%**

Students are expected to come to class every day with their instrument and music. Students are expected to practice good rehearsal etiquette i.e.: looking over their part while another group is playing, participate fully in all class events. Students are expected to be respectful and cooperative with each other. Students cannot participate fully if they are excessively absent from class.

### **III. Daily Performance 25%**

Students are expected to perform with proper posture and instrument positioning. No long finger nails will be tolerated. Students are expected to show growth in the music being worked on. Students are expected to try to the best of their ability.

#### **IV. Concerts & Performances 15%**

Concert participation by all students is expected for the success of the entire group. Students will be expected to show superior concert etiquette during the concert. Students are expected to dress appropriately.

##### **String Fundamentals, String Technique & String Ensemble**

*Ladies:* solid white blouses and solid black pants or skirt. Skirts must be knee length and not tight. Black Shoes (no flip-flops and athletic shoes)

*Gentlemen:* solid white shirt with collar (tie is optional). Solid black pants (no jeans). Black socks and black shoes (no athletic shoes).

*Jewelry:* should be kept to a minimum. Small earrings are acceptable, nothing dangling. Mrs. Crafford has the right to ask you to remove a piece of jewelry that might cause a distraction or impede performance.

##### **String Orchestra & Chamber Orchestra**

**We will be discussing ordering a formal/uniform concert dress – long black for ladies, tux for guys.**

*Ladies:* solid black blouses, solid black pants, skirt or dress. Skirts & dresses must be knee length and not tight. Must have at least a 3-inch sleeve. Black Shoes (no flip-flops and athletic shoes)

*Gentlemen:* solid black shirt with collar and tie of student's choice (straight or bowed). Solid black pants (no jeans). Black socks and black shoes (no athletic shoes).

*Jewelry:* should be kept to a minimum. Small earrings are acceptable, nothing dangling. Mrs. Crafford has the right to ask you to remove a piece of jewelry that might cause a distraction or impede performance.

To be excused from a concert, the student must bring a written note from parent. A student who is sick and absent from school the day of a concert or if there is a family emergency the night of the concert, a note from parent must be turned in on the next school day that the student attends. Students excused from concert participation will receive 7.5% credit. The student must also complete a report on a topic chosen by Mrs. Crafford. That report will be due on date determined by Mrs. Crafford (usually by the end of that grading period). The grade for the report will be averaged into the concert grade. Students may now elect to do a playing quiz of all of their concert music for a make-up grade. If there is an unexpected emergency between the end of the school day and the concert, please inform Mrs. Crafford as soon as possible.

A concert grade of 0 will be given to a student who misses a concert, and does not bring a note from home. No make-up work will be permitted.

## *Orchestra Rehearsal/Class Behavior*

The success of an orchestra depends on how it rehearses, which is determined by the conduct and cooperation of its members. Students are asked to be attentive, patient and cooperative in following these classroom rules:

1. Each student should enter the on time room with a positive attitude. Upon entering the room, students will immediately take their assigned seat and get ready for the day's agenda. Anyone tardy more than 3 times will serve a detention.
2. Each student must respect his/her instrument and music as well as those of others.
3. Students will refrain from excessive talking and practicing while the director is at the podium teaching and rehearsing.
4. No food, candy, gum or beverages will be tolerated.
5. Students must have their instrument, music, pencil & notebook at every class.
6. Musicians who sit in an incorrect manner &/or have very long fingernails play poorly. Students will be expected to play with correct posture and position at all times.
7. Students must follow all DSA rules and expectations

## *Orchestra is a safe and welcoming environment for everyone*

**Exploring music of different backgrounds** – Music is a cross-cultural medium. People from around the world have been documenting and expressing their life experiences through music for thousands of years. It is our privilege and duty as musicians to learn and perform as many different types of music as possible. Some of the music explored in orchestra will be religious in nature. A large portion of Western music was composed for religious settings. While it IS my intent to expose students to as many varieties of music as possible, it is NOT my intent to impose beliefs upon any student. Students should consider each piece for the musical and cultural relevance that it possesses. If a student feels that they simply cannot rehearse/perform a piece in sound conscience, please talk to me in private as soon as the issue arises and other arrangements will be made in order for the student to have an altered assignment.

**Safe Zone** – The orchestra program is one that welcomes and accepts all students. EVERY member of the program is assured to have a safe environment in which to explore and perform music. Intolerance WILL NOT be tolerated.



## DSA Orchestra Concert & Events (TBA - To Be Announced)

### August

- 30<sup>th</sup> (Wednesday) – Parent Meeting 6pm

### September

- 21<sup>st</sup> (Thursday) – Orchestra picnic 5 – 8pm More details coming soon

### October

- 18th (Wednesday) – Fall Concert, 7pm, Weaver Auditorium. Performing: 2<sup>nd</sup> period String Ensemble & 5<sup>th</sup> Period String Technique. **Mandatory all performing students**
- 19th (Thursday) – Fall Concert, 7pm, Weaver Auditorium. Performing: 1st period String Orchestra & 3rd Period Chamber Orchestra. **Mandatory all performing students**
- 26<sup>th</sup> (Thursday) – 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> Period String Fundamentals Informance/Concert 7pm Weaver Auditorium **Mandatory all performing students**
- 28<sup>th</sup> (Saturday) – DSA Fall Festival – 1st period String Orchestra performing. More details **Mandatory all performing students**

### November

- TBA Chamber Orchestra perform at VA Hospital

### December

- 5<sup>th</sup> (Tuesday) HS Southeast Honors audition recordings due to UNCG
- 18th (Monday) – Winter Concert, 7pm, Weaver Auditorium. Performing: 2<sup>nd</sup> period String Ensemble, 5<sup>th</sup> Period String Technique & 6<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> period String Fundamentals. **Mandatory all performing students**
- 19th (Tuesday) – Winter Concert, 7pm, Weaver Auditorium. Performing: 1st period String Orchestra & 3rd Period Chamber Orchestra. **Mandatory all performing students**
- 21 (Thursday) DSA Showcase – during school day – performances TBA
- TBA – Community performances

### January

- 13<sup>th</sup> (Saturday) – High School Eastern Regional Orchestra (ERO) auditions, location TBA
- 19<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> (Friday – Sunday) High School Southeastern Honors Orchestra UNCG

### February

- 13<sup>th</sup> (Tuesday) – Chamber Orchestra solo & ensemble concert, 7pm, Atrium
- 16<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> (Friday – Sunday) – High School Eastern Regional Orchestra location TBA
- 22nd– MPA concert 7pm Weaver Auditorium

### March

- 6 – 9 (dates to be determined) MPA at NC State University
- 15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup> (Thursday & Friday) – DPS Honors Strings Festival & Concert, Baldwin Auditorium, Duke East Campus; free



- 28th (Wednesday) – Orchestra Concert, 7pm, Weaver Auditorium. Performing: 2<sup>nd</sup> period String Ensemble, 5<sup>th</sup> Period String Technique & 6<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> period String Fundamentals. **Mandatory all performing students**
- 29th (Thursday) – Orchestra Concert, 7pm, Weaver Auditorium. Performing: 1st period String Orchestra & 3rd Period Chamber Orchestra. **Mandatory all performing students**
- Junior Eastern regional auditions TBA

#### **April**

- HS Orchestra trip TBA
- Junior eastern Regional TBA

#### **May**

- 14th (Monday) – Spring Concert, 7pm, Weaver Auditorium. Performing: 2<sup>nd</sup> period String Ensemble, 5<sup>th</sup> Period String Technique & 6<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> period String Fundamentals. **Mandatory all performing students**
- 15th (Tuesday) – Spring Concert, 7pm, Weaver Auditorium. Performing: 1st period String Orchestra & 3rd Period Chamber Orchestra. **Mandatory all performing students**
- TBA – Middle school trip to Busch Gardens

#### **June**

- 2nd (Saturday) – Senior Recital – details TBA