

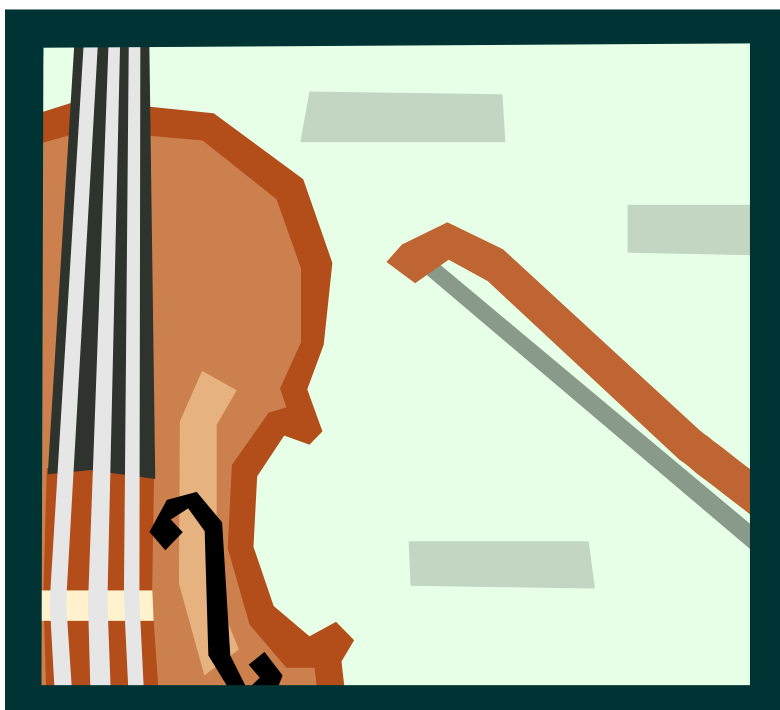
# *Hightower Trail Orchestra*

## *Handbook*

*2009 - 2010*

*Susan H. Brown, Director*

*Susan J. Hendrixson, Asst. Director*



Dear Orchestra Families,

Welcome to new and returning families of our orchestra program! Playing in the orchestra encourages creativity and helps young people learn discipline and focus. We hope each student will take advantage of the many opportunities available through the orchestra program and continue music as a life long pursuit.

This handbook serves as your reference for the activities we have planned this year. It also includes classroom policies and procedures. Please review the information and mark your home calendar with concert and activity dates. Assist your child in completing the student information form.

Parents are encouraged to be involved with the orchestra program. There are many areas that require assistance such as data entry, uniforms, chaperoning, piano accompaniment, and pre-concert assistance. Please consider volunteering and indicate your choice(s) on the student information sheet.

Please contact us if you have any questions or concerns about your child's progress in orchestra. It is best to reach us through school email but you can also call the number printed below. We look forward to an outstanding year of music learning and performance

Musically Yours,

Susan H. Brown  
[susan.brown@cobbk12.org](mailto:susan.brown@cobbk12.org)  
770-578-7225 x266

Susan J. Hendrixson  
[susan.hendrixson@cobbk12.org](mailto:susan.hendrixson@cobbk12.org)  
770-578-7225 x266



# Materials

## Method Books:

Sixth Grade – Essential Elements for Strings, 2000, Book 1

Seventh Grade – Essential Elements for Strings, 2000, Book 2

Eighth Grade – Muller-Rusch, Book 3

*Make sure you purchase the book with your instrument name!*

## Orchestra Supplies:

Case, well identified with name and pod.

Rosin (Bass students must have rosin specifically for bass).

Soft cloth

Shoulder rest, violins and violas (You should try with your instrument before buying).

Extra strings, violins and violas

Endpin stop (rockstop), cellos and basses

3 ring, 1/2" or 1" inch black binder

Pencil

Music stand for home practice (folding wire stand)

*Optional – Smart Music subscription (order information at [www.smartmusic.com](http://www.smartmusic.com))*



Reminders

## Instrument Storage:

**Each student will be assigned a school locker. Students will receive this assignment during the first week of school. Personal instruments and school instruments must be stored in the proper place. Students will lose participation points if they fail to put away materials.**

- *Put your name on your case, book, shoulder rest, and endpin stop.*
- *Violins and violas keep a soft cloth in your case.*
- *Keep your case on the left side of your chair. Make sure it is closed!*
- *Cello and bass students should keep all materials in a small bag, **labeled with name and class**, in designated location.*
- *Each student is responsible for putting away his/her instrument and music at the end of class.*

## Locker Information:

All students are personally responsible for their assigned orchestra lock. Should this lock be lost or stolen, the student will be charged a lock replacement fee of \$7. Keeping your orchestra locker locked at all times should avoid any loss or theft.

If the lock is found unlocked or not in its correct place more than one time, the student will lose the privilege of having a lock.

Only items for orchestra class should be kept in the locker (including music, instrument, instrument accessories and binder).

# Performance Attire

The Hightower Trail Orchestra performance attire consists of the following:

**Sixth Grade**                      Orchestra Shirts/Blue Jeans  
(Shirt order form will be sent home at a later date)

**Seventh/Eighth**                Orchestra Shirt (Shirt order form will be sent home at a later date)  
Black slacks (No skirts please)  
Black socks (or black hose)/Black shoes  
**No white sneakers, white socks or black jeans!!**



**Orchestra concerts are considered formal events for our students and it is very important that students look their best for each performance. Please address uniform issues long before the concert date. Students who arrive for a concert without acceptable clothing will not be allowed to participate in the event. If you have a problem obtaining an outfit, please contact us immediately so we can work together to resolve this matter.**

# Performance Attendance

Students are expected to attend all performances unless a director has approved an acceptable excuse *two weeks prior to the performance*. Students who do not attend the performance must submit a recording of the concert music on the next school day following the concert. Students who fail to submit a recording will have points deducted from their participation grade.

Our performances are intended to showcase the orchestra students' hard work and are also designed to teach stage and audience etiquette. Therefore, students are expected to behave in a courteous and professional manner before, during, and after the performance.

\*Performance attendance and make-ups are required for students attending any orchestra field trips. Students who do not meet these requirements will be asked not to participate in these special events. Field trips are a reward (and not a privilege) for the hard work these students put forth throughout the year and their dedication to the orchestra program.

# Private Lessons

Students who are interested may choose to take private lessons. Private instruction can greatly enhance a student's orchestra experience. A list of private teachers is posted on the large bulletin board in the orchestra room

# ***Grading System***

**Grades will be based on the director's evaluation of each student's work in class and during performances, with emphasis on daily participation, preparation for performances, and general improvement in individual playing and ensemble skills.**

## **Daily Participation – 40%**

- Has instrument, notebook, method book, and pencil
- Actively participates in rehearsal and/or class activities
- Demonstrates correct playing position
- Strives to improve identified weak areas through daily home practice and in class rehearsals.

## **Performance Tests – 40%**

- Scales and techniques
- Method book selections/Repertoire Excerpts
- Smart Music performance tests (excerpts, technical exercises, scales)
- Pass-offs (Sixth Grade students must perform assigned selections from the method book during morning and/or after school sessions. Selections will be listed on a Pass-off sheet. Pitch/rhythm accuracy, correct instrument position, and tone quality are evaluated before students can progress to the next piece.

## **Theory and Written Assignments – 10%**

- Theory Workbook/Worksheets
- Rhythmic and Melodic Dictation
- Music Literacy/Essential Questions
- Possible work assignments in Smart Music

## **Practice Record – 10%**

- Students will be responsible for completing two practice charts per nine weeks grading period. Practice Records must have parent signature to receive credit. 100 minutes per week = 100%. **Practice records without parent signature will not be counted towards 9 weeks grade. Practice charts will also be available to download on the orchestra website.**

[www.htmsorchestra.com](http://www.htmsorchestra.com)

**HOMEMADE PRACTICE CHARTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.**

Consistent practice allows students to benefit more from class rehearsals. Daily practice is considered homework and will be reflected in **both daily and test grades.**

\*Grading scale is subject to change. Parents and students will be notified in writing two weeks prior to starting a grading period if any changes should take place.

## ***Extra Help Sessions and Rehearsals***

The orchestra room is open for extra help, pass-offs, and practice on designated mornings each week from 8:00am – 8:45am and afternoons from 4:15-5:00pm. Students should check classroom announcements and write times down in their agenda. Students may count this time on their practice records. Additional help sessions may be added as schedule permits. Seventh and eighth grade will have sectional rehearsals on Tuesday and/or Thursday mornings as needed. Information will be sent home to notify parents and students of these rehearsals.

# ***Music Department Behavior Management Plan***

*All school wide rules and expectations are in effect in the music classrooms and on any trip the students may take with the Hightower Trail Middle School Music Department.*

Each music classroom exists to educate each and every child in the fundamentals of music on his/her instrument. Respect for school/individual property and each other is expected at all times. The behavior management plan will be based on “Give me Five”.

1. Eyes on Director
2. Quiet
3. Be still
4. Instrument in rest position
5. Listen

## ***Consequences***

- 1<sup>st</sup> offense: Conduct demerit in Behavior Infraction Log; conference with teacher after class.  
2<sup>nd</sup> offense: Conduct demerit in Behavior Infraction Log; conference with teacher after class, parents notified.  
3<sup>rd</sup> offense: Parent called; intervention determined (detention, punishment at home, etc.).  
4<sup>th</sup> offense: Student behavior turned over to the appropriate administrator.

## ***Conduct Grade Determination***

Conduct Grade will be determined as follows:

- 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> offenses: Satisfactory (S)  
3<sup>rd</sup> offense: Needs Improvement (N)  
4<sup>th</sup> offense: Unsatisfactory (U)

*Each student begins with no offenses each 9 week grading period.*

## ***Tips for Parents***

- **Provide a quiet place, music stand and proper chair when your child practices**
- **Schedule consistent, daily time for practice.**
- **Encourage your child to make at least a two year commitment to orchestra.**
- **Keep your child's instrument in working condition.**
- **Provide tutoring by an accomplished musician, if possible.**
- **Show support by attending orchestra functions and concerts.**
- **Encourage your child to play for family and friends.**
- **Praise your child's efforts and accomplishments.**

## ***What to do if your child loses interest***

Occasionally, students may become frustrated with progress on an instrument...especially when the “newness” is over. It is important to guide your child through these situations.

- ◆ Discuss the situation with your child and determine why their interest is fading
- ◆ Discuss the situation with an orchestra teacher
- ◆ Encourage the child to continue for a specified amount of time
- ◆ Find an older student in orchestra to serve as a mentor

If, after consultation with an orchestra director, it is determined that a drop should occur, the following procedures should be followed:

- ◆ Students may drop orchestra within the first three days of school with a parent note
- ◆ At the end of a nine week grading period, students may drop orchestra if a parent/student/teacher conference has taken place. A parent note to drop orchestra is also required.
- ◆ If the decision to drop orchestra occurs, the scheduler and an administrator must be informed.



**Hightower Trail Orchestra  
2009 - 2010 Concert and Activity Calendar**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Time</u>
Sept. 1	Registration Deadline Solo and Ensemble, All-State	N/A	N/A
Oct. 13	Fundraiser Kick-off	HT Theater	Class
Oct. 15	Eighth Grade Fall Concert* 8 <sup>th</sup> Orchestra and Band	HT Theater	7:00pm
Oct. 22	Sixth/Seventh Grade* Fall Concert	HT Theater	7:00pm
Oct. 24	District All-State Auditions	Kell HS	All day+
Dec. 3 & 4	Electrify Your Strings Eighth Grade Orchestra Clinic and Concert*	HT Theater	TBA
Dec. 15	Seventh Grade Orchestra* Winter Concert	HT Theater	7:00pm
Jan. 9	Final All-State Audition	Westminster School	All day+
Feb. 5 & 6	Prelude to Pope	Pope HS	Fri PM/Sat All day
March 4-6	All-State Orchestra	Savannah, GA	Inclusive
March 5	LGPE** – 7 <sup>th</sup> Grade*	Dickerson MS	TBA
March 6	LGPE** – 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade*	Dickerson MS	TBA
March 23	Sixth Grade String Jamboree*	Wheeler HS	7:00pm
March 30	MS Honor Orchestra Auditions	East Cobb MS	5:00pm+
April 16 -17	MS Honor Orchestra Event	McEachern HS	Inclusive
April 22	Night of the Arts	HT Theater	7:00pm
May 10	Sixth/Seventh Grade* Spring Concert	HT Theater	7:00pm
May 11	Eighth Grade Spring Concert*	HT Theater	7:00pm

**\*Required event for the orchestra listed + Individual audition times TBA**  
*Event times and places may change. Notices will be sent home with these changes.*

**\*\* LGPE – Large Group Performance Evaluation (A Georgia Music Educators Event)**

# HTMS Orchestra Student Information Sheet

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Instrument \_\_\_\_\_

\*Instrument Serial number \_\_\_\_\_ \*Brand \_\_\_\_\_

\*( For student owned or rental instruments only. Students using school cellos or basses must complete additional form).

Parent(s) name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Alternate e-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

*\*\*\*If your contact information should change throughout the school year, please notify us so that we may be in contact with you!*

Other numbers where parents may be reached during the day:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_ Work \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_ Work \_\_\_\_\_

-----  
**I have read the HTMS Orchestra Handbook and I understand the behavior management plan and the expectations for successful participation.**

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**\*\*\*Please sign and return all forms by Friday, August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2009.**

# Parent Volunteer Sheet

During the year, we will need assistance with different aspects of the orchestra program. Please check any areas where you are willing to assist!

Clerical \_\_\_\_\_

Hospitality \_\_\_\_\_

Fundraiser \_\_\_\_\_

Pre-Concert Assistance \_\_\_\_\_

Post-Concert Assistance \_\_\_\_\_

Chaperoning \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_

-----  
**Parent Correspondence (for teachers only)**

<b>Date:</b>	<b>Type of Correspondence:</b> _____	<b>Notes:</b> _____ _____
<b>Date:</b>	<b>Type of Correspondence:</b> _____	<b>Notes:</b> _____ _____
<b>Date:</b>	<b>Type of Correspondence:</b> _____	<b>Notes:</b> _____ _____
<b>Date:</b>	<b>Type of Correspondence:</b> _____	<b>Notes:</b> _____ _____
<b>Date:</b>	<b>Type of Correspondence:</b> _____	<b>Notes:</b> _____ _____
<b>Date:</b>	<b>Type of Correspondence:</b> _____	<b>Notes:</b> _____ _____