

Orchestra Handbook

2025-2026

Introduction to teachers:

Ms. Bartholic – Tharp Orchestra Teacher, assists at Weaver and Davidson
Mr. Barrett – Davidson Orchestra Teacher – assists period 3 at Tharp
Mrs. Faulkner – Weaver Orchestra Teacher – assists periods 4 & 5 at Tharp
Dr. Sholl – Fine Arts Coordinator – assists periods 7 & 8 at Tharp.

Grades

Students will receive a grade for Orchestra. “Homework,” which in Orchestra is practicing, will be 15% of each student’s grade. Home practice is necessary to make progress on a new instrument. See “HPO” below. Check Canvas to see comments on each assignment. Check Home Access to see a student’s current grade in class. If you have questions about grades or assignments, check with students first, then e-mail me if you have any questions or concerns.

Worksheets

Students are given time during class to complete worksheets and have teacher help as necessary. Students may redo assignments if they didn’t understand something the first time they submitted it, and turn it in again for credit. Assignments will not be accepted more than 2 weeks late except in special circumstances.

Tests/Quizzes

There will be a few playing tests and written tests this year. Students will always know about them ahead of time and be able to prepare. Playing tests will be recorded at home on the iPad. Students will be given at least one week to complete any playing tests at home and submit them via Canvas. Playing tests may take up to one week to grade depending on when they are submitted.

HPO (Home Practice Organizer)

Students are expected to practice at home at least 3 days per week every week. They will have to fill out a weekly HPO to show what they are practicing at home. The HPO begins each Monday, and will be due the following Monday during class time (unless we don’t have school Monday, then it is due the next school day).

Once students adjust to holding their instruments and build up some endurance. They should be practicing at least 30 minutes per week, and eventually 45 then 60 minutes per week. Change in practice expectations will be communicated to students prior to assignments, and the HPO will always state practice expectations on it.

Students are always welcome to practice more! We just understand that some weeks 3 days may be all students can do outside of their other homework and activities.

Concerts

We have two evening concerts this year which will both be held at Davidson High School in the PAC. Students will need to arrive at 6:15pm for tuning for each concert. They will also need to dress up. We don't require any specific colors, but ask that students dress up and try to avoid jeans, t-shirts, tennis shoes, etc. if possible. Concert attendance is mandatory and a part of each student's grade in orchestra. E-mail miss Bartholic now if you see any conflicts with these dates. Otherwise, students will be expected to be at the entirety of both concerts except in the case of illness of family emergency, in which case a parent/guardian should e-mail Miss Bartholic ASAP.

All students, including cellists and bassists, will need to bring their home instrument and music to the concert. We will provide music stands. Please make sure student names are on their cases so they don't get mixed up after the concert!

Evening Concert Dates:

Monday, November 24th, 7pm@ Davidson

Monday, March 2nd, 7pm @ Davidson

We will also have two during school assembly concerts – one will be the week before winter break, and one will be the last week of school. Families will not be invited in December due to space and safety concerns, but our May assembly concert is outdoors and we will allow families to attend.

Bows

Students should NOT be using bows at home until further notice. Using the bow too soon can result in breaking the bow, ruining the hair, and developing bad bow hand habits that will be difficult to undo later. I will send an e-mail home when students are able to use their bows at home.

Instrument Repairs/Care

Please do not try to repair instruments at home. Teachers at Tharp can reset bridges, change strings, and do small repairs, but anything else will need to go to a rental shop for repair. Do not use any polish or chemicals on the instrument. Do not leave instrument in the car. Do not leave instrument directly in front of heating/cooling vents or windows. Make sure younger siblings and pets do not have access to instruments out of their case at home. Accidents do sometimes happen, and that's why you rent your instrument as basic repairs are covered under your rental plan, but we do everything we can to avoid these.

Instrument/Materials

Students are required to rent their chosen instrument. Violin/Viola will go back and forth to school each day. Cello/Bass will remain at home, only to be brought in for concerts. Students also need to have the Essential Elements Book 1 for Strings, and a ½" or 1" binder for orchestra music. Students also need a music stand for home practice, which can stay at home. If you need help getting any of these materials, please let me know!

Photos/Videos

Occasionally I will include photos/videos in our Weekly Update e-mail to Orchestra families, add them to the closed Facebook group, and students will appear in concert videos. These will only be used to showcase students in a positive light and will not include student names. Please let me know if you have any issue with this.

E-mail Addresses

If you are not receiving the Orchestra E-mail Updates, or would like another guardian in the household to receive them, please update your contact information on Home Access Center as I send all group e-mails through HAC.

Questions/Concerns

You can always e-mail me with any questions or concerns you have about your child's experience in class. If you would like to schedule a phone call please e-mail me. It is difficult to reach me by phone during the day as I am usually teaching and scheduling a call will be must easier. I do try to respond to all e-mails within 24 hours (not over the weekends). If you send an e-mail after school hours it may not be answered until the following school day.

Caitlin_bartholic@hboe.org

By signing below, we agree that we have read and understand all information in the Orchestra Handbook, ***and we have added concert dates to our calendar*** and already alerted Miss Bartholic if we have a pre-existing conflict.

Student Signature:

_____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian Signature:

_____ Date _____