



# Northwood Middle School

## 6th Grade Orchestra Syllabus

2018-2019

Welcome! This handbook has been assembled to inform students and parents of the orchestra's policies. Please read it carefully and fill out the consent form at the end of the handbook for your first grade.



Participation in this orchestra program is a privilege for all students who have met proper course requirements and consistently exhibit the qualities of a fine musician. You are responsible for making the following contributions to the orchestra on a daily basis: Positive character, self-discipline, teamwork, responsibility, dependability, dedication, and musical excellence.

### **Our Goal**

The primary goal of this organization is to provide students with an orchestral experience that produces creative, disciplined musicians and superior performing ensembles. The success of our orchestras depend on the collective efforts of the students, teachers, parents and administration; let's work together to create an orchestral experience that is enjoyable and educational for all.

**Teacher's Information:**

Patrick Murch, Orchestra Director  
Northwood Middle School, Room 303  
Phone: 355-7045  
Email: [pmurch@greenville.k12.sc.us](mailto:pmurch@greenville.k12.sc.us)

**Teacher's Academic Daily Schedule:**

1st 9:00-9:51 6th grade Orchestra  
2nd 9:59-10:50 7th grade Orchestra  
10:54-11:28 Lunch/ Planning  
3rd 11:32-12:22 1st Semester 8th grade Electronic Music/ 2nd Semester Planning  
4th 12:26-1:17 6th grade Orchestra  
5th 1:25-2:16 7th grade Orchestra  
6th 2:24-3:15 6th grade Orchestra

**6<sup>th</sup> Grade Required Materials**

Essential Elements 2000 Bk. 1- by Gillespie, Hayes, Allen

**Course description:**

This class is an introductory course in playing the violin, viola, cello, or bass. Students do not need any previous experience to participate. Skills will be developed in solo playing, orchestral performance and small ensemble. My goal is for all students to be able to perform appropriate grade level music and be confident of their abilities. As students learn to play an instrument, they should also develop an appreciation for the skill and artistry involved on playing a musical instrument. Students should also be able to identify famous composers in a historical context.

**National Music Education Course Standards**

Standard 1-Singing alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music  
Standard 2-Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music  
Standard 3-Improvising melodies, variations and accompaniments  
Standard 4-Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines  
Standard 5-Reading and notating music  
Standard 6-Listening to, analyzing and describing music  
Standard 7-Evaluating music and music performances  
Standard 8-Understanding relationships between music, the other arts and disciplines outside the arts  
Standard 9-Understanding music in relation to history and culture.

**Homework Policy:**

Homework and class assignments include material assigned by the teacher to reinforce musical concepts or current pieces of study. Students with a regular time and quiet place to practice every day tend to perform better on tests and receive higher grades.

A note concerning practice: Regular practice should be considered the primary type of homework. In order to be successful, the student should plan to schedule times totaling at least 90-100 minutes, per week or until the assignment is learned. The time should be spread out throughout the week, not concentrated on just one or two days.

### **Missed Homework/Make-up Policy:**

It is the responsibility of the student to ask for missed assignments after an absence. ALL work should be made up within a week of return.

### **Rules for Student Behavior:**

1. Always treat your fellow students and the teacher with respect.
2. Enter the room quietly
3. Raise hand and wait to be recognized before speaking.
4. Be in class and ready to play on time. Use the bathroom before or after class.
5. Promptly and quietly be seated with your instrument and begin assignment.
6. Act responsibly--protect your precious instrument and those around you!
7. Stay in your seat.
8. No food, candy or gum.

### **Consequences:**

Students will be held responsible if they make poor behavior choices:

1. Verbal warning.
2. Verbal warning/ Parent notified of child's behavior.
3. Lunch detention
4. Referral to office. Parent notified.
5. Parent teacher conference

Students who receive a referral in orchestra class will not be permitted to attend orchestra field trips.

Severe Clause:

Fighting, swearing, violent or disrespectful behavior will result in immediate referral to office.

### **Student Expectations**

Orchestra students take the greatest pleasure and learn the most from participating in ensembles that are well skilled and disciplined. With the collective efforts of the students, teachers, parents and administration, we can create an orchestral experience that is enjoyable and educational for all.

### **Grading Policy**

- Homework will be checked on a daily basis during the rehearsal time.
- Tests and quizzes, either written or performed, will take place once a week and will be announced with at least 3 days in advance.
- Students will be asked to perform, alone and with others, according to the SC Instrumental

## Music Academic Standards.

Students are graded on the following:

- Performance Evaluations, Daily quizzes, homework, Playing tests, and projects (both performing and written)
- Daily rehearsal skills and participation
- Evening rehearsals, concerts, and required events

**Orchestra rubrics** will be designed to measure specific skills or topics at hand. Here is a sample rubric.

(Sample Orchestra Rubric) Assignment: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Score: \_\_\_\_\_

	Excellent	Good	Needs Improvement	Poor
<b>Posture and Instrument Position</b>	6 Feet on the floor. Sits on the edge of the chair. Arms, shoulders, and head are aligned, and relaxed. Instrument angle is correct.	5 Position is correct except for on problem.	4 Position has two problems. Shoulder rest and chin rest.	3 Position has more than two problems.
<b>Left Hand Position</b>	6 Wrist is relaxed and straight. Fingers/thumb are curved, correct fingertip placement.	5 Position is correct except for one problem.	4 Position has two problems. Nails.	3 Position has more than two problems.
<b>Right Hand Position</b>	6 Correct finger placement, curved thumb, curved fingers and all fingers are relaxed.	5 Position is correct except for one problem.	4 Position has two problems.	3 Position has more than two problems.
<b>Intonation, finger patterns, Shifting</b>	12 All notes are in Tune. All fingers and finger patterns are correct. Shifts area accurately and relaxed.	10 No consistent problems; slightly out of tune in one or two places.	8 Some consistent intonation problems. Whole and half steps are slightly incorrect.	6 Many intonation problems; Whole and half steps are wrong.
<b>Tone Quality</b>	6 Even Tone. Correct bow weight, placement, speed, and direction.	5 One problem with bow weight, placement, speed, and direction.	4 Two problems with bow weight, placement, speed, and direction. Bow needs re-hair, rosin.	3 Many problems with bow weight, placement, speed, and direction. Tone is poor.
<b>Articulation and Bowings</b>	6 Bowings, slurs, accents, and articulations are correct.	5 One problem exists.	4 Two problems exist.	3 Many problems exist.
<b>Rhythm, tempo and fluency</b>	6 Tempo is correct and consistent throughout etude. Does not stop.	5 Consistent but a little slow or fast. Does not stop.	4 Tempo is inconsistent. Stops more than once or starts over.	3 Does not finish.

Student met the required memorization      Yes      No      48=100%      40=83%      32=66%      24=50%

### **Fingernail length**

All orchestra students must keep their left hand fingernails cut short. To determine if a student's fingernails are too long do the following test: With a straight finger, firmly press the fingertip down onto the top of a table so that the finger is perpendicular to the table. If the fingertip can firmly press to the table without the nail getting in the way, the nail is short enough. If the nail gets in the way, it is too long to play a string instrument correctly.

Students will receive a penalty for having fingernails that are too long when being tested on any playing test or performance evaluation.

### **Required Participation: Evening Rehearsals, Concerts, and Events**

Students are required to participate in all rehearsals and concerts. Evening rehearsals are graded the same as a test. Concerts and special events are worth two test grades. Students that are tardy or leave early will have their rehearsal grade reduced 25%. Students who come to a concert performance in unacceptable attire will have their concert grade reduced; in extreme cases, a student will be restricted from performing the concert and may receive a zero for this portion of their grade.

### **Uniform**

Students are required to wear the following for all formal concert performances:

**Women:** Black full-length dress or ankle length skirt/pants; legs must be covered (i.e. no slits). Black blouse; sleeves must be long or  $\frac{3}{4}$  length. Black shoes and hose.

**Men:** White dress shirt, black tie, pants, dress shoes, and socks.

### **Instrument Storage**

Students may drop their instrument off in the storage room from 8-8:25am. Instruments cannot be left alone in the hallways or outside the doors.

A locker will be available inside the orchestra storage room for violins and violas only. A locker will be assigned individually and it should be kept clean and neat.

## Northwood Orchestra Materials for Daily Use

All orchestra students must have the following materials each day:

1. A **quality instrument** at school for rehearsal, and at home for practice and daily homework assignments. Instruments must meet the approval of the school director. Instruments need yearly upkeep; the **strings should be replaced and the bow rehaired** at least once each semester. Violin and viola students must **transport** their instruments daily. Cello and Bass students must rent or purchase an instrument to keep at home. Basses and cellos will be available for rent in a limited basis.

2. Required Accessories.

- A **large cake of rosin** and a **soft cloth** to keep the instrument free of dirt, fingerprints, and rosin build-up. EACH STUDENT MUST HAVE HIS/HER OWN.
- **Pencil and Eraser** - Proper and consistent note taking and marking of music is expected. You will learn specific shorthand musical markings that will be of benefit to correct performance. Do not use ink or magic marker to make marks directly on the page. A pencil is the only acceptable tool used to mark music.
- A **spare set of strings**. Strings break from normal wear and tear; when they do, a replacement is needed immediately. The teacher can help change broken strings during lunch or after school as it can take 10 to 30 minutes to change one set. Daily grades for students without a working instrument will be lowered. Student must keep extra set of strings at all times.
- A music stand for use at home (recommended).
- **Violin and Viola**: A sponge or **shoulder rest** to maintain a correct, relaxed and healthy posture.
- **Cello and Bass**: A **rock stop** to keep the instrument from slipping during performance should be kept in the case. For basses, a **stool or high chair** for practicing at home.

Information, weekly lesson plans, and concert video will be located on our orchestra website:

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

## Northwood MS Strings 2018-2019 Concert Dates and Events

### All Concert/Rehearsal Events are in the Cafetorium

September 10 - Cello Choir at Bob Jones University (for any 7th and 8th grade cellist)  
September 15 - Region Audition Registration Deadline  
**September 15 - All-County Orchestra Audition Registration (advanced 6th and all 7th & 8th grade students)**  
**September 25 - All-County Orchestra Junior Auditions at Riverside MS (For Middle School Students) (advanced 6th and all 7th & 8th grade students)**  
September 29 - Double Bass Workshop at Wade Hampton HS  
October 6 - Region Auditions at League Academy  
October 15 - Region Pre-Registration Deadline  
**October 24 - After school rehearsal 3:30-4:30pm (Only 7th & 8th grade)**  
**October 25 - Fall Concert 6pm (Only 7th & 8th grade)**  
December 1 - All-State Audition Registration Deadline  
**December 3 - After school rehearsal 3:30-5pm (6th, 7th, & 8th grade)**  
**December 4 - Winter Concert 6pm (6th, 7th, & 8th grade)**  
December TBA - Nursing Home Tours (We perform for the local nursing homes)  
January/February TBA - Perform for our local elementary schools (Small group of 7th & 8th grade)  
January 12 - All-State Orchestra Auditions at Lexington HS  
January 13 - Greenville County Youth Orchestra Prelude Auditions at Fine Arts Center  
January 15 - CPA Registration Deadline  
January 17 - GCYO Winter Concert at Bob Jones University  
January 24 - All-County Orchestra Event at Wade Hampton HS  
February 1 - All-State Orchestra Pre-Registration Due  
February 2 - Violin & Viola Choir at Converse College  
February 22-24 - All-State Orchestra Event at Irmo/Lexington HS  
**March 15 Solo & Ensemble Registration Deadline (6th, 7th, & 8th grade)**  
March 20-21 - Junior Concert Performance Assessment  
May 2 - GCYO Spring Concert  
**May 3-4 - Solo & Ensemble Festival (6th, 7th, & 8th grade)**  
**May 29 - After school rehearsal 3:30-5pm (6th, 7th, & 8th grade)**  
**May 30 - Spring Concert (6th, 7th, & 8th grade)**  
June 1 - Auditions for GCYO Intermezzo & Sinfonia



**Orchestra Parent/Teacher/Student Contract**

**By signing below, I confirm that**

- I have read and understand the policies stated in this Orchestra Syllabus.
- By enrolling in this class, I agree to comply with all the class rules, procedures, requirements and expectations.
- I am responsible for my child's attendance at after-school events.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student' Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student' Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date