

# Northwood Middle School

## 8th Grade Orchestra Syllabus

2020-2021

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: 355-7074  
Email: [pmurch@greenville.k12.sc.us](mailto:pmurch@greenville.k12.sc.us)

### **Teacher's Academic Daily Schedule:**

Plan 8:25-8:55  
1st 9:01-9:47 8th grade Electronic Music  
2nd 9:54-10:39 8th grade Orchestra  
3rd 11:00-11:46 6th grade Orchestra  
4th 11:52-12:37 6th grade Orchestra  
Lunch/Plan 12:37-1:37  
5th 1:37-2:23 7th grade Orchestra  
6th 2:29-3:15 7th grade Orchestra

### **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Required Materials**

Essential Techniques Bk. 3- by Gillespie, Hayes, Allen

Essentials for Strings - by Gerald Anderson

### **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Orchestra Course description:**

This is an advanced course of instruction in violin, viola, cello and bass for students who have successfully completed at least two years in string class. This class will prepare students for the high school strings class. Students will continue to develop technical skills such as shifting, tuning, sight-reading, position work, advanced music theory and scales. Home practice is required and concerts are presented. Students who demonstrate above average proficiency will be eligible for Greenville County Junior Youth Orchestra, and may be able to audition for Junior All-State.

Prerequisite: Students must have successfully completed **two** year of string class. This is a yearlong course.

The following objectives are based on the National Music Education Course Standards, the South Carolina Music Education Achievement Standards, and the Curriculum Guide adopted by the School District of Greenville County:

#### **Music Performance**

**Standard 1: The student will sing and perform on instruments a variety of music, alone and with others.**

#### **SINGING**

MI8-1.1 Sing with technical accuracy and good breath control, alone or in small and large ensembles.

MI8-1.2 Sing with expression and stylistic accuracy.

MI8-1.3 Sing with well-developed ensemble skills.

#### **PERFORMING**

MI8-1.4 Perform on an instrument while maintaining good posture and playing position and demonstrating good breath support or good bow or stick control.

MI8-1.5 Play familiar music on an instrument by ear.

MI8-1.6 Play instruments expressively with appropriate dynamics, phrasing, and interpretation.

MI8-1.7 Demonstrate the characteristic tone quality of the particular instrument while playing with accurate notes, rhythms, dynamics, articulations, and intonation and maintaining a steady tempo.

MI8-1.8 Perform, alone and in groups, music written in two or more parts, balancing dynamics, blending timbres, and using well-developed ensemble skills in response to the cues of a conductor.

MI8-1.9 Perform with stylistic accuracy a variety of music representing diverse cultures, genres and styles.

MI8-1 Perform scales and music literature at a level of difficulty comparable to that prescribed by the third-year method book, or at a 3 on a scale from 1 to 6.

#### **Creating Music**

**Standard 2: The student will improvise, compose, and arrange music within specified guidelines.**

#### **IMPROVISING**

MI8-2.1 Improvise rhythmic and melodic phrases within a given meter and tonality.

MI8-2.2 Improvise simple harmonic accompaniments within a given meter and tonality.

#### **COMPOSING AND ARRANGING**

MI8-2.3 Compose short pieces for his or her instrument.

MI8-2.4 Arrange short pieces for his or her instrument.

### **Music Literacy**

#### **Standard 3: The student will read and notate music.**

MI8-3.1 Read and notate whole, half, quarter, eighth, sixteenth, and dotted notes and corresponding rests in 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, 6/8, 3/8, and alla breve time signatures.

MI8-3.2 Identify half and whole steps within given keys and sight-read music at a level of 1 or 2 on a scale from 1 to 6.

MI8-3.3 Identify, notate, and interpret symbols and terms of musical expression referring to dynamics, tempo, and articulation.

### **Critical Response to Music**

#### **Standard 4: The student will listen to, describe, analyze, and evaluate music and music performances.**

##### **ANALYZING**

MI8-4.1 Use appropriate terminology to describe the musical form (for example, motive, canon, rondo, theme and variation, call and response) of a work that is presented aurally and visually.

MI8-4.2 Analyze the elements of music in compositions representing diverse genres and cultures.

MI8-4.3 Analyze music by identifying basic principles of meter, rhythm, form, tonality, intervals, and chords.

##### **EVALUATING**

MI8-4.4 Develop and use criteria to evaluate the quality of the music performances of others.

MI8-4.5 Develop and use criteria to evaluate the quality of his or her own music performances.

MI8-4.6 Use appropriate terminology to explain his or her preferences in music based on a variety of genres, styles, and historical periods.

### **History and Culture**

#### **Standard 5: The student will examine and perform music from a variety of cultures and stylistic periods.**

MI8-5.1 Compare characteristics and uses of music from different cultures and historical periods.

MI8-5.2 Compare characteristics and uses of music representing different styles and genres.

### **Making Connections**

#### **Standard 6: The student will make connections between music and other arts disciplines, other content areas, and the world.**

MI8-6.1 Compare common music terms to those found in other arts disciplines (for example, tone, rhythm, volume, form).

MI8-6.2 Compare common music terms to those found in non-arts disciplines (for example, genre, program, dynamics, pitch).

MI8-6.3 Identify musicians from various historical periods, music settings, and cultures and describe their careers and skills.

MI8-6.4 Discuss the costs and labor involved in artistic performances and productions.

MI8-6.5 Examine music's impact on everyday life.

### **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 “facilities” 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. After - school detention or assignment given/ Parent notified
4. Referral to office. Parent notified.

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 the 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:

- Daily quizzes, homework, tests, and projects (50% of grade)
- Daily rehearsal skills and participation (50% of grade)

**Below are the expectations for each section of Orchestra 8/CP/Honors:**

**EXPECTATIONS FOR ORCHESTRA 8:**

- Has completed Strings 6 & 7 with a 'C' average or higher
- Rehearse and perform as a part of the Northwood Orchestra and attend any after/before school rehearsals
- Perform 5 major scales, 2 octaves (C, G, D, A, & F)
  - Bass players will play G & F as 2 octaves, all other as one octave scales.
- Perform 2 minor scales, 2 octaves (A & E)
  - Bass players will play e minor scale as 2 octaves, the other as one octave scale.
- Demonstrates a working knowledge of positions (I-III violin/viola and I-IV cello/bass)
- Demonstrates proper playing position and correct posture
- Consistently performs with a full and confident tone
- Maintain a 'B' average on all playing quiz and playing test assignments for the year in orchestra

**EXPECTATIONS FOR ORCHESTRA 1 CP:**

**In addition to the regular orchestra curriculum and performances, students will...**

- Register and audition for All-County Orchestra (evening audition/add-day event)
- Perform and memorize all 7 major scales, 2 octaves (C, G, D, A, F, Bb, & Eb)
  - Bass players will play G & F as 2 octaves, all other as one octave scales.
- Perform 4 minor scales, 2 octaves (A, D, E, G)
  - Bass players will play e & g as 2 octaves, all other as one octave scales.
- Perform a 2 octave Chromatic scale, as required by All-County Orchestra auditions.
  - Violin: G chromatic; Viola/Cello: C chromatic; Bass: F chromatic
- Rehearse and perform as a part of the Northwood Orchestra.
- Register and audition for All-Region Orchestra (Saturday audition/2 day event)
- Participate in an orchestra experience outside of NMS (GCYO/CYS/other)
- Register and audition for Solo & Ensemble Festival. Perform a solo at grade level 3 or above.
- Maintain an 'A' average on all playing quiz and playing test assignments for the year in orchestra.

### **EXPECTATIONS FOR ORCHESTRA 1 HONORS:**

#### **In addition to the regular orchestra curriculum and performances, students will...**

- Register and audition for All-County Orchestra (evening audition/add-day event)
- Perform and memorize all 7 major scales, 2 octaves (C, G, D, A, F, Bb, & Eb)
  - Bass players will play G & F as 2 octaves, all other as one octave scales.
- Perform 4 minor scales, 2 octaves (a, d, e, g)
  - Bass players will play e & g as 2 octaves, all other as one octave scales.
- Perform and memorize at least one 3 octave scale.
  - Violin: G Major; Viola/Cello: C Major; Bass: 2 octave A or Bb Major
- Perform a 2 octave Chromatic scale, as required by All-County Orchestra auditions.
  - Violin: G chromatic; Viola/Cello: C chromatic; Bass: F chromatic
- Rehearse and perform as a part of the Northwood Orchestra.
- Register and audition for All-Region Orchestra (Saturday audition/2 day event)
- Register and audition for All-State Orchestra (Saturday audition in Columbia/3 day event)  
Pending acceptance to Region orchestra
- Participate in an orchestra experience outside of NMS (GCYO/CYS/other)
- Take private lessons consistently (every week/every other week) for the duration of the school year.
- Register and audition for Solo & Ensemble Festival. Perform a solo at grade level 3 or above.
- Maintain an 'A' average on all playing quiz and playing test assignments for the year in orchestra.

**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 one 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.

### **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. Students must keep an 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)

**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.

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Student' Name

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Student' Signature

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Date

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Parent's Name

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Parent's Signature

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Date