



Handbook 2019 - 2020

Michael R. Tompkins, Jr., Director
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Laura Montgomery, Principal
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Dear Orchestra Families,

Welcome to the 2019-2020 HTMS Orchestra Program! We are very happy that you and your child have chosen to participate in this year's program. Playing in the orchestra encourages creativity and helps students learn discipline and focus. Statistics have proven that students who participate in music programs are among the academically elite in their schools. Students' adult lives are filled with successes, often attributed to skills gained through the orchestra experience: self-discipline, work ethic, attention to detail, teamwork, and confidence. We hope each student will take advantage of the many opportunities available through the orchestra program and continue music as a lifelong 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. Research points to the importance of supporting children in the positive activities they become a part of. 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.

We encourage you to refer to the orchestra website often for up-to-date information:

<http://www.htmsorchestra.com>

Musically Yours,

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Purpose

The purpose of this handbook is to provide each orchestra family with an understanding of the policies and procedures that govern the Hightower Trail Middle School Orchestra Program. These guidelines exist to ensure consistent rules are applied to each and every student in all aspects of the Orchestra Program.

Mission Statement

It is the mission of the Hightower Trail Middle School Orchestra Program to introduce students to the fundamentals of instrumental music performance, so that they may become lifelong participants. It is also our mission to prepare students for membership in the Pope High School Orchestra. Once students' master fundamentals to a competent level in each grade, we then pursue sincere music making for outstanding performances.

School-wide Instructional Emphasis

The HTMS Vision Statement for 2019-2020 is: "Learning through Engagement, Performance, Application." The HTMS Mission Statement is "Success for All."

On some summative assessments, students scoring below 75% will be given remediation and an opportunity to reassess. If a student does not complete the remediation work assigned in the time allotted, reassessment is not an option. Remediation does not apply to end-of-quarter, midterm, or end of grade assessments.

Bring Your Own Device

The Cobb County School District rules regarding BYOD apply in the orchestra room. Only with teacher permission are student allowed to use their device in orchestra class. Your child must have the BYOD agreement on file with their pod teachers in order to use their device.

***BYOD usage in Orchestra class:**

It is highly recommended that students have a metronome/tuner app on their phone. We recommend the app called Practice + Metronome and Tuner.

Materials

Orchestra Instrument

Make sure the store's repair shop provides loaner instruments for students in orchestra class.

Method Books:

Sixth Grade – Essential Elements 2000 for Strings - Book 1

Seventh Grade – Essential Elements 2000 for Strings – Book 2

Eighth Grade – method books will be provided in class (no purchase necessary)

Make sure you purchase the book with your instrument name!

Orchestra Supplies:

Case, well identified with name and pod.

Rosin (Cello and Bass students are required to bring in rosin for class use.)

Soft cloth

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

Endpin stop (rock stop), cellos and basses- for concerts and home use only.

Black 1” hard cover 3 ring binder with pockets

Clear sheet protectors

20 sheets of lined notebook paper

Pencil-keep in your case, binder, or locker

Metronome/Tuner-for home use only

Music stand for home practice/field trips (folding wire stand)



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!*
- *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.

Students are responsible for keeping their lockers locked at all times.

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/Casual Shoes (no sandals)
(Please circle shirt size on student info sheet)

Seventh/Eighth Orchestra Polo Shirt (order form will be sent home at a later date)
Boys: Black slacks, black belt, black socks, black dress shoes
Girls: Black slacks, black hose, black ballet flats
No sandals, flip-flops, open-toed shoes, 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 Playing Test 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.

Grading System

Summative Assessment - Playing Tests/Pass-offs	35%
Summative Assessment - Music Theory	15%
Formative Assessment - Rehearsal Participation	40%
Formative Assessment - Rehearsal/Performance Etiquette	10%

Summative Assessment: Playing Tests/Pass-offs

- Scales and techniques
- Method book selections/Repertoire Excerpts (announced/unannounced)
- Pass-offs- Sixth Grade students must perform assigned skills/music. Requirements 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.

Summative Assessment: Music Theory Assignments

- Theory Workbook/Worksheets
- Rhythmic and Melodic Dictation
- Music Literacy/Essential Questions

Formative Assessment: Rehearsal Participation

- Actively participates in rehearsal and/or class activities.
- Has ALL class material for class each day. Each day a student is missing materials, 20 points are deducted from their weekly participation grade (100 points per week). Students with instruments in the repair shop should bring a signed note. ALWAYS ASK FOR A LOANER WHILE YOUR INSTRUMENT IS BEING REPAIRED. Generally rental programs provide this service at no extra cost.

Formative Assessment: Rehearsal/Performance Etiquette

Students are expected to demonstrate the following qualities on a consistent daily basis; these qualities are expected at concerts as well.

Rehearsal/Performance Etiquette includes the following, but is not limited to:
Proper posture, active listening, sincere attempt to demonstrate mastery, pleasant demeanor, receptive to instruction, proper response to class instruction and correction and silent actions while various groups are addressed which may not always include your child.

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. For all students to receive such an education, the following expectations will set the classroom climate:

1. LISTEN.
2. Follow directions.
3. Show respect.
4. Be prepared.
5. Stay on task.

Consequences

- 1st offense: Student behavior documented in the Behavior Log; conference with teacher after class.
- 2nd offense: Student behavior documented in the Behavior Log; conference with teacher after class. Parent contacted by phone or email.
- 3rd offense: Student behavior documented in the Behavior Log; Parent contacted by phone or email, and intervention to be determined.
- 4th offense: Student behavior documented and turned over to the appropriate administrator.

Conduct Grade Determination

Each 9 week grading period Conduct Grade will be determined as follows:

- 1st and 2nd offenses: Satisfactory (S)
3rd and 4th offenses: Needs Improvement (N)
5th offense: Unsatisfactory (U)

Parents will be notified by email in the event of a conduct infraction.

Ingredients for Success in Orchestra

- Provide a quiet place, music stand and proper chair when your child practices
- Schedule consistent, daily time for practice.
- Decide that you and your child have made a commitment to orchestra and stick to it.
- 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.

Private Lessons

We encourage every student- 6th, 7th, and 8th grade- to take private instruction from an accomplished musician. Private lessons make the most of your orchestra investment, allowing for individual attention and a specialist's advice. Furthermore, lessons typically raise your audition scores for Honor Orchestra and All-State; most students in these groups take private lessons. As an added benefit, private lessons help the orchestra improve. A list of private teachers is posted on the large bulletin board in the orchestra room and is also posted on our website. We will continue to update the list.

What to do if your child gets frustrated...

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. Most parents have their children agree to participate through 9th grade.
- ◆ Find an older student in orchestra to serve as a mentor

If, after consultation with the orchestra directors, the determination is made to withdraw from the orchestra, the following HTMS Music Department Withdrawal Procedure must be followed:

1. A parent note or email must be submitted to the orchestra directors.
2. The parent note must be submitted at the end of the school year. Withdrawal from orchestra class once the new school-year begins is not permitted.
3. Once the parent note is received, director/parent communication will confirm the desire to withdraw.
4. If, after the communication, the decision is made to withdraw from orchestra, the orchestra directors will notify the appropriate administrator of the schedule change.

Extra Help Sessions and Rehearsals

The orchestra room is open for practice most mornings each week from **8:00-9:00am** and most afternoons from **4:15-5:00 pm**. These are times for students to complete Pass-Offs with the director, get help on Solo & Ensemble music, All-State and Honor Orchestra auditions, concert music, Playing Test, or practice individually or with friends. Only students who are interested in practicing should come to these sessions. Homework and socializing can be done in other places. Students who abuse this privilege will be prohibited from attending future sessions.

Personal Instruments

Personal Instruments are defined as instruments that belong to or are rented by an individual student's family from a community music store. These instruments are not owned or insured by Hightower Trail Middle School, Cobb County School District, or the State of Georgia. The student (and family) is responsible for maintaining the instrument in working order with the proper accessories. The orchestra directors will recommend repairs (when needed) as the student progresses through the program.

School Instruments

School Instruments are defined as instruments that belong to Hightower Trail Middle School. These typically include larger instrument: Cello and String Bass. The school bears the responsibility of repair cost on these instruments. However, students are contractually obligated to treat them with special care so that needless and expensive repairs do not have to be made. Future students must be able to use these instruments. Obvious damage to school instruments will be considered vandalism and will be dealt with in the manner outlined by Cobb County Schools in the HTMS Student Handbook. To ease transportation and increase home practice, it would help you child if you could rent one of these instruments to keep at home.

Hightower Trail Orchestra

2019-2020 Concert and Activity Calendar

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Time</u>
Sept. 4	Registration Deadline Solo and Ensemble, All-State	Class	N/A
Oct. 3	Fundraiser Kick-off	HT Theater	Class
Oct. 8	8 th Orchestra Fall Concert*	HT Theater	7:00 pm
Oct. 12	Solo & Ensemble Festival	Simpson MS	8:30 am – 3 pm
Oct. 15	Solo & Ensemble Recital	HT Theater	6:30pm
Oct. 19	District All-State Auditions	Pope HS	TBA
Nov. 7	7 th Fall Concert*	HT Theater	7:00pm
Dec. 5	6-1 Fall Concert * 6-2 Fall Concert*	HT Theater HT Theater	6:30pm 7:30pm
Dec. 10	8 th Winter Concert	Pope HS	7:00 pm
January 11	Final All-State Audition	Stilwell SOTA	All day+
Feb. 8	Honor Orchestra Auditions	Palmer MS	All day+
Feb. 10-12	LGPE**-7 th and 8 th Grade*	Walton HS	TBA
March 5-7	All-State Orchestra	Athens, GA	Inclusive
March 17	Sixth Grade String Jamboree*	Pope HS	7:00pm
March 27-28	Honor Orchestra Event	Sprayberry HS	Fri 7-9pm/ Sat 8-3
April 30	Night of the Arts	HT Theater	6:00 pm
May 6	6 th Grade Spring Concert*	HT Theater	7:00pm
May 7	7 th Grade Spring Concert*	Pope HS	7:00pm
May 12	8 th Grade Orchestra/Band*	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

**Large Group Performance Evaluation