

**Shorewood Intermediate School
Orchestra**

HANDBOOK

Welcome (or welcome back) to the Shorewood Intermediate School Orchestra program! I am thrilled to be starting the new school year with you and excited to build on the excellent work we achieved together last year. Although there are a few changes in the Shorewood Intermediate School Orchestra program this fall, I am confident that everyone will have a musically fulfilling experience.

Your satisfaction with orchestra will be in direct proportion to the effort you invest. You will be expected to work hard and do your best each day. In order for a large music ensemble (or any “team” of individuals working together toward a common goal) to be successful, it is imperative that each member contribute to the learning and growing process to the best of his or her ability. I have selected some wonderful and challenging music for the orchestra to study, and know that with your consistent effort and positive attitude we will have a great year!

The purpose of this handbook is to share with you and your parents the opportunities, policies, and procedures relating to the Shorewood Intermediate School Orchestra program. Please read the following pages--you will find answers to many of your questions in this booklet. Of course, feel free to discuss any additional questions or concerns you may have regarding orchestra class.

Again, I look forward to a very rewarding year in orchestra!

Ms. Karen Frink
Shorewood Intermediate School Orchestra

Orchestra Ensembles

The Shorewood Intermediate School Orchestra Program consists of three ensembles. These are as follows:

Seventh or Eighth Grade Orchestra

Every orchestra student participates in either Seventh or Eighth Grade Orchestra. Each orchestra meets every day during the school day and performs three concerts each year. The ensembles rehearse and perform literature for string ensemble, and orchestra students also continue to study string playing technique and musical knowledge (theory, history).

Chamber Orchestra

The Chamber Orchestra is a select group of approximately twenty advanced, highly-motivated string players who rehearse and perform standard chamber orchestra literature. Performances include concerts, festivals, and special occasions. The Chamber Orchestra rehearses in the evening and membership is by audition only. All members of the Chamber Orchestra must also participate in orchestra.

Other Orchestra Opportunities

Chamber Ensembles

All interested students will have the opportunity to experience music making in a small chamber ensemble. These include various combinations of instruments performing and rehearsing as duets, trios, quartets, and similarly uncondacted settings. Ensembles will receive coaching both during and outside of

class and are expected to rehearse on their own outside of the school day. Qualifying ensembles may participate in the Wisconsin School Music Association Solo and Ensemble Festival in March.

Wisconsin School Music Association District and State Solo and Ensemble Festivals

Each spring, orchestra students have the opportunity to participate in the Wisconsin School Music Association District Solo and Ensemble Festival. Students may perform both solos and various chamber ensembles for a rating or critique only. Students performing in Class A and receiving a 1* rating then perform at the State festival later that spring. These festivals are an excellent opportunity for students to learn and perform solo and ensemble literature. Students must pay entry fees for solos and a percentage of the entry fee for ensembles at the district contest. All entry fees are non-refundable.

Orchestra Tutor Program

Orchestra students interested in teaching may participate in the Shorewood Orchestra Tutor Program. Intermediate school orchestra students give weekly, half-hour private lessons to elementary students enrolled in the Shorewood Orchestra program. The tutors receive five dollars each lesson. The orchestra teacher will provide any necessary teaching guidance. Any orchestra student interested in teaching, working with children, and earning some money should consider becoming an Orchestra Tutor!

Private Lessons

All orchestra students are encouraged to study their instrument privately with a specialist. A list of currently available teachers may be obtained from the orchestra teacher.

Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestras

Orchestra students may audition for one of the Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestras. These orchestras rehearse and perform challenging orchestral repertoire throughout the school year. Auditions are held each spring. Please see the orchestra teacher for details.

Wisconsin State Honors Orchestra

Every April, intermediate school orchestra students are invited to audition for the Wisconsin State Honors Orchestra. This orchestra meets for rehearsals and a performance during the Wisconsin State Music Teachers Convention in October. Please see the orchestra teacher for details.

Grading Policy

The orchestra grade is based on class participation, concert attendance, sectional attendance, playing tests, scale competencies, written assignments, and the final semester exam. Grading scales may vary each quarter depending on the activities scheduled for orchestra class. Points earned will be totaled, a percentage will be calculated, and a letter grade will be assigned based on the percentage. Orchestra students will receive specific assignments and a schedule for completion of assignments at the beginning of each quarter.

Playing Tests

Each semester, every orchestra student is required to perform a playing test for the orchestra teacher. This playing test will consist of a selection of short excerpts from the literature being rehearsed by the orchestra. The results of the playing tests are a portion of the semester grade and are used to determine chair placement within the orchestra. Chair placement will be at the discretion of the orchestra teacher, and all sections will be subject to seating rotation. Every student is important to the success of the orchestra. Therefore, it is essential that seating be viewed simply as a part of the learning process and not an end in itself.

Behavior Expectations

Students must behave in a mature and appropriate manner when dealing with teachers, peers, and substitute teachers. Working in a group for the common good is one of the major objectives of a music performance class. Disrespectful and inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated.

- Be on time for orchestra class. Tardies, as well as absences, will be noted.
- Be in your seat and ready to tune as quickly as possible. Rehearsal begins promptly, at two minutes after the bell.
- Do not bring food or beverages into the orchestra room.
- Do not chew gum during rehearsal.
- Have all of your orchestra supplies available at each rehearsal.
- Refrain from talking during rehearsal.

Each student will receive a possible two points for every rehearsal. Points will be deducted for failure to comply with the above rehearsal expectations. Students are expected to behave in a manner that is conducive to a productive learning environment. Your attitude and level of preparation at each rehearsal demonstrates your commitment to excellence!

Concert Dress

women	Long sleeved white blouse, sweater, or turtleneck. Long black skirt or pants. Black nylons, black dress shoes.
men	Long sleeved white dress shirt with collar. Black pants. Black socks, black dress shoes.

Concert Attendance

It is essential that all orchestra members perform at each concert--every member is vital to realizing the full potential of the group. Therefore, attendance is required at all performances. Students are expected to arrange work schedules and social calendars to accommodate orchestra performance events and occasional dress rehearsals.

Two weeks prior notice in writing from parents will be required should an extreme conflict arise. Illnesses and dire family emergencies are the only acceptable excuses for absence--notify the orchestra teachers as soon as possible, and follow up with a written note from a parent immediately.

Orchestra Materials

Instruments

Generally, every orchestra student is expected to supply his or her own instrument. Shorewood Intermediate School will provide students with cellos and basses to use at school and bring home on the weekends for practice. Instruments must be at every rehearsal and in good playing condition. The orchestra teachers will inspect instruments at the beginning and end of each school year.

This year, all students who use a school-owned instrument will be required to pay a \$25.00 rental fee for the school year. This fee will be used to repair and maintain these instruments. Please refer to the instrument rental contract for more information.

Music

It is essential that every orchestra student attend all rehearsals with his or her own music folder, music, and a pencil. Each student is responsible for keeping his or her music in good condition and transferring any rehearsal markings into the music.

Accessories

Every orchestra student should have the following accessories:

rosin	mute
soft cloth	spare set of strings
rock stop (cello/bass)	
shoulder rest (violin/viola)	

Care and Maintenance of String Instruments

String instruments require proper care. Orchestra students are expected to perform the following maintenance on their instruments:

- rosin bow every day
- wipe off rosin after each use
- loosen bow after every use
- keep bows off floor
- set violins/violas on chairs only
- store cellos/basses on sides, not on backs
- retract cello/bass endpins after rehearsal
- keep instruments in cases when not playing
- keep instruments out of extreme heat or cold

Awards and Honors

Solo and Ensemble Medals

Medals will be awarded to orchestra students receiving first- and second- division ratings for solos and ensembles performed at the Wisconsin School Music Association district and state contests.

Most Outstanding Musician

Each spring, an eighth grade orchestra student will receive the Most Outstanding Musician Award. The recipient must have demonstrated leadership, excellent musicianship, and dedication to the Shorewood Intermediate School Orchestra during their two years as a member of the organization. The recipient will receive a plaque, and their name will be added to a wall plaque at Shorewood Intermediate School.

Director's Award

Each spring, an eighth grade orchestra student will receive the Director's Award. This award will be presented to an orchestra student who has demonstrated exceptional commitment and dedication to the Shorewood Intermediate School Orchestra program. The recipient will receive a plaque, and their name will be added to a wall plaque at Shorewood Intermediate School.