

NEVIN PLATT MIDDLE SCHOOL

2011-2012 ORCHESTRA HANDBOOK

Dear Students and Parents-

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself and welcome you to the Platt Orchestra program this year! I am thrilled to be teaching orchestra at Platt this year and I cannot wait to get started in on a fun and exciting year of music making.

Before teaching in BVSD this year, I obtained my bachelor's in Music Education from the University of Northern Colorado, and am pursuing my Master's degree in Music Education from the University of Colorado. In addition to working with the students at Platt this year, I will also be teaching at: Douglas, Heatherwood, Creekside and Eisenhower Elementary schools. Please feel free to contact me, introduce yourself or ask any questions you may have.

In this packet you will find information that will outline the expectations of being a member of the Platt orchestra. Included is information regarding:

Goals

Expectations

Discipline

Care of Equipment and Music

Grading

Practice Sheet due dates

Materials

Concert Dress

Concert Attendance

Information for Parents

Contract- Must be signed and returned!

Please contact me with any questions

Ashley Brandin

720-561-6280

Ashley.brandin@bvsd.org

Goals

Students in orchestra will:

- Continue learning how to play their instrument
- Develop new musical skills, and improve upon existing skills
- Learn to work as a member of a group
- Play a wide variety of musical styles

Expectations

Students will be expected to:

- Treat instruments, music, folders, stands and school property with respect
- Treat students and teachers with respect
- Come to class ready to participate
- Be an asset to the orchestra

Daily rehearsal expectations:

- Get instruments, music, stand and pencil and be in seats as quickly as possible
- Leave food and drink outside of the classroom, (water bottles are OK)
- Time will be given to pack up at end of class

Students will also be expected to uphold the Platt Middle School H.O.W.L. guidelines:

Honorable **O**rganized **W**illing **L**earners

Discipline

Although behavioral problems are not a regular occurrence, when behavioral problems occur, discipline will be consistent with Platt's Positive Behavior Support system of discipline. Students will have multiple opportunities to reflect upon, and change their behavior. This may include a visit to "The Quiet Zone" where students will have the opportunity to reflect on their actions, "get back on track." Their progression through these steps will be documented. Major offenses, (see school handbook) will result in an office referral.

Care of Equipment and Music

1. A maintenance fee will be charged for all district-owned instruments, along with a rental agreement form. Repair costs will be determined on an individual basis.
2. Treat the orchestra classroom with respect. This includes not writing on, or leaning on music stands.
3. Music should be kept in the folders which will be provided. Keep the music in as good condition as it was issued. Fines may be issued for: lost, damaged, torn, folded or stained music, non-erasable marks, and/or missing music.

4. Please treat instruments with care and respect. This includes proper daily care, including:

- Rosin bow each day, and wipe off instrument after each use
- Keep bows off the floor/loosen bows after use
- Set violins/violas on chairs only, store cellos and basses on sides, not on backs
- Keep instruments in cases, and in a safe place at home
- Keep instruments out of extreme heat or cold

Grading

Students will be given the opportunity to demonstrate their skills and musical growth through various assessments during the year. These assessments will help develop an appreciation for the value of music as a curricular subject. The success from these assessments will be a resource from which I formulate instructional decisions and activities to help facilitate student learning.

Grades will be determined by the following criteria:

Summative and Formative Assessments	Preparation and Practice
90%	10%
Grades in this category reflect a student's <i>mastery</i> of course standards. Grades in this category will be based upon assessments such as:	Grades in this category reflect a student's <i>effort</i> in completing work. Grades will be based on assignments and activities such as:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance tests Written tests Assignments Class projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practice cards Performances Completion work

Grading will be based on the BVSD 4 point scale:

3.5 - 4	Advanced Proficiency
2.75 - 3.49	Proficiency
1.75 - 2.74	Partial Proficiency
< 1.74	Developing Proficiency
0	Not Assessable

Feedback on a student's progress in orchestra will be kept as current as possible. I will try my best to keep student and parent portals of Infinite Campus updated quickly and accurately. I will try to make all assignment and assessment descriptions as thorough and accurate as possible. If a conflict or problem arises, please contact me with any concerns regarding student progress.

Practice for orchestra is equivalent to homework. Since orchestra meets for less than an hour every day, it is essential that students practice at home on a regular basis. Each student will receive a practice sheet that will be signed by a parent on a weekly basis, and turned in every few weeks. Set aside some time on a daily basis that is designated to at-home practice.

Grading Scale:

- > 100 average minutes per week: 4 (Advanced proficient)
- 61-99 average minutes per week: 3 (Proficient)
- 31-60 average minutes per week: 2 (Partially proficient)
- 0-30 average minutes per week: 1 (Developing Proficiency)

Things to practice:

- Scales (In-class rhythms, arpeggios, 2 or 3 octaves, major/minor, etc.)
- Shifting exercises
- Articulation exercises (staccato, off-the-string, detache, legato, slurs)
- Orchestra Music
- Chamber music
- Solos/Duets/Trios with friends
- Essential Elements 2000 or Essential Technique 2000
- Sight-Reading
- Fun stuff (Beatles, movie music, pop songs, fiddle, celtic, etc.)

Practice card turn-in days:

- Tri 1:**
1. September 6
 2. September 26
 3. October 17

- Tri 2:**
1. November 7
 2. December 5
 3. January 9
 4. January 30

- Tri 3:**
1. February 21
 2. March 12
 3. April 9
 4. April 30
 5. May 21

Materials:

Instrument- Violinists and violists need to provide their own instruments for class. Please see me if you are having difficulty with this. If your instrument is forgotten, you will be asked to take detailed notes concerning material covered in class, and may receive reduced credit for participation.

Shoulder Rest – Violinists and violists should use a shoulder rest daily in class and at home. Please contact me if you need more information. Shoulder rests are available at most music stores, and online. Students using a school instrument will need to provide their own shoulder rest. Please see me if this is an issue.

Rosin- Rosin should be kept in a student's case. Please be sure a student's rosin is made for the student's instrument.

Cleaning Cloth - All instruments should be wiped clean of rosin after use. Keep cloths in cases. Please use a soft, clean cloth, preferably cotton.

Rock Stop – Cellists and bassists do NOT need a rock stop for daily rehearsal, but will need one for travel and field trips. An old belt can be used as a rock stop if necessary.

Pencil - You will be expected to write fingerings and bowings in your music, so this will need to stay in your folder at all times.

Method Book – Students will need a method book:

Orchestra 1: Students in orchestra 1 will need: “Essential Elements 2000 Book 2” (purple) for their respective instrument

Orchestra 2: Students in orchestra 2 will need: “Essential Technique 2000 Book 3” (green) for their respective instrument

Concert Dress

School rules regarding appropriate dress will be in effect for all concerts. Concert dress this year will be a Platt Orchestra T-shirt, black pants or skirts, black dress shoes and black socks or stockings for concert attendance. Shirts are \$5.00; please see me if this is a difficulty. More information regarding the T-shirts will come this fall- be thinking of T-shirt design ideas!

Concert Attendance

It is essential that all orchestra members be at each concert to facilitate a successful and balanced program. Concerts are students' opportunity to share what we have learned and to experience the fun and excitement of a concert. Therefore, attendance is required at all performances and dress rehearsals. Should a conflict arise, parents are required to contact me via e-mail, voice-mail, or written letter, at least two weeks in advance of the concert date. Excused absences may include illness or family emergencies, NOT sports games, work, studying, lack of planning, babysitting, etc. Excused absences are the student's responsibility to make up. Students will need to meet with Mrs. Brandin to plan a make-up assignment.

To Parents:

Boulder Valley has one of the finest orchestra programs in the state. Every year, our students are selected for various honors and special programs. Opportunities for travel and college scholarships abound; there is also a vast need today for qualified orchestra teachers around the United States. Students in orchestra not only learn how to express themselves in a creative way; they also learn about personal discipline and goal-setting. They learn to be a part of a group and build valuable social skills. Your child's success in orchestra not only depends upon his or her dedication and commitment, but also on parent support. Here are some thoughts as we enter into this new school year:

Show an interest in your child's musical study

Establish a regular time for practice and provide a music stand at home.

Find a quiet place for practice without interruptions.

Find a safe place to keep the instrument.

Never make fun of the strange sounds that may be made.

Be patient and give plenty of praise.

Be committed to your child's participation in orchestra.

Teach your child to be on time to rehearsals and concerts.

Faithfully attend all musical activities.

I am looking forward to an incredible year and I encourage you to take part in your child's music education as well as his/her academic progress. Please feel free to contact me at school should you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Ashley Brandin

Orchestra Director

Platt Middle School

303-499-6800

ashley.brandin@bvsd.org



Concert Dates for 2011-2012

All events are in the Nevin Platt Middle School Auditorium unless otherwise stated.

Please note grade level indicated for applicable events.

<u>Date</u>		
Thursday, November 17	Orchestra Concert	6:00 PM
Tuesday, December 13	Barnes and Noble Fundraiser (voluntary)	6:00PM
Friday, December 16	Holiday Tour Performances	6:00PM
Wednesday, January 18	Elementary Tour (<i>Orch 1 only</i>)	All Day
Thursday, February 2	Mid-Level Orchestra Festival	All Day, concert 6:30PM
Tuesday, April 24	Awards Night (<i>Orch 2 only</i>)	5:30 PM
Thursday, May 3	Orchestra Concert	6:00PM
Thursday, May 17	Elitch's Trip	All Day