



## Orchestra Handbook

Mr. Mark P. Nelson & Mr. Mark Sunderland, Directors

### Preface and Welcome

This handbook has been written in order to provide orchestra members and parents with information concerning various policies of the orchestra program at Satellite High School. All members are required to sign the "Statement of Acceptance" at the end of this handbook and have a parent/guardian sign it as well. School rules and policies are in force at all times a student is directly or indirectly involved in any activity sponsored by or in the name of the Satellite High School Orchestra. The Directors shall have the authority to suspend or amend any orchestra policy at any time deemed necessary in the best interest of the overall orchestra program. You are a member of the Satellite High School Scorpion Orchestras, one of the most well respected public school orchestra programs in the state. The Satellite Orchestras have enjoyed a reputation of pursuing understanding through the study and performance of the best in music. It is your responsibility to ensure that the orchestras continue to enjoy this position. These orchestras belong to YOU, what you do will determine the caliber of the orchestra this year. With the right attitudes and dedication on your part, the Orchestras will continue on the present path of excellence.

### Satellite High School Orchestra Department Objectives

1. Cultural: to foster the continued development of music appreciation and understanding through the study and performance of the best in music, and to instill in all people an awareness of music's important role in the enrichment of the human spirit.
2. Educational: to develop interested, discriminating listeners, provide a well-rounded music education, and prepare students for musical activities beyond high school.
3. Service: to lend color and atmosphere to certain school and community affairs while promoting and enhancing the dignity and reputation of Satellite High School at all appearances.
4. Citizenship: to develop the ability to function as a responsible member of the group, to enhance the student's ability to interact with others in a positive manner, and to develop the ability to function as a responsible member of the community.
5. Recreational: to provide all students with an opportunity for worthy use of leisure time, an outlet, and good social experiences.

### Academic Expectations

Every music student is expected to be a student/musician! Satellite High School Orchestra members are expected to maintain good grades, represent the orchestra well when working with teachers and administrators, and succeed in the classroom. Music is an art form that requires a person to be well organized and intelligent. In addition, all orchestra students are expected to maintain a cumulative grade point average of 2.0, unweighted, for participation.

### Membership in the satellite orchestras

The orchestra program is open to all interested students who demonstrate the desire, ability, and proper attitude to be a member of the group. Students desiring membership must audition for membership and have permission from the Director. Students will be placed in one of the two orchestras at the discretion of the Director. It should be understood that everyone will have an equal and fair opportunity for orchestra participation. However, from time to time, it may become necessary to dismiss or exclude those students who fail to meet the orchestra's standards of membership, conduct, attitude, and academic eligibility.

## Eligibility Requirements and Policies

All students are expected to maintain a GPA of 2.0 from the previous grading period in order to participate in competitive orchestra activities and must have a passing grade average (not lower than a 'B') in their orchestra class. The following general policies apply regarding eligibility:

1. Academic ineligible students may not perform in any orchestra event where the orchestra is in actual performance. This is a mandatory rule, in accordance with Brevard County Public Schools policies regarding eligibility.
2. Academically ineligible students may be assigned alternative assignments in lieu of participation in or at any orchestra activity, event, or performance which they may be ineligible for or restricted from.
3. Academically ineligible students are not allowed to attend or participate in any orchestra activity, event, or performance that requires the student to miss any academic class time. This includes all off campus functions that require time away from academic classes.
4. Academically ineligible students may be restricted from participation in or at ANY activity, event, or performance of the orchestra at the discretion of the Directors.

## The Importance of Discipline

Because orchestra members are constantly on display, each member must always be aware of the importance of good behavior. Any misconduct casts a direct reflection on the entire orchestra and school and may well undo the good work of many dedicated students and parents. Any student who casts discredit on the orchestra by their conduct or actions either at school, on a trip, or in the community shall be subject to dismissal from the orchestra in addition to other disciplinary action by the school. Basic values are a requirement. Students who are repeatedly disciplined by school authorities for violation of school policies are a liability to the orchestra program and will be subject to dismissal.

## Attendance and Responsibility

It is essential that all members be at all rehearsals and performances. Advance notice is always given to orchestra members concerning rehearsals and performances. Therefore, it is expected of all orchestra members to be at all functions. Rehearsals are not called for the fun of it; it is a time to get things done! Please mark your calendars accordingly and do not schedule doctor's appointments or family outings during these events.

All out of class time rehearsals and performances are considered extensions of the classroom and are therefore laboratory and/or practical applications of the orchestra curriculum. Students are responsible and accountable for their attendance and quality of participation as related to all laboratory and/or practical applications.

## Attendance Policy

*Laboratory Assignments (Rehearsals)* Like any other academic area, students are assigned work outside of class to practice an idea or concept that is taught in the classroom. This is the nature of our rehearsals. Rehearsals are necessary and are called only for the improvement of the orchestra and to meet performance demands.

1. All rehearsals are mandatory unless excused by the Director.
2. **Unexcused absences from rehearsals will result in automatic lowering of participation grade in class.**
3. Generally, all after school rehearsals and sectionals will occur on Wednesdays. Two weeks notice will always be given by the Director or the section leader. Sectionals are mandatory and are considered the same as full orchestra rehearsals. If no rehearsal or sectional is scheduled on a Wednesday, the Director will be available for help after school.

*Practical Applications (Performances)* Like a test in any other academic subject, students are evaluated on how much they have learned about certain concepts and ideas. These application tests require the use of the student working and performing with other students, thus students cannot make up performances.

There are few – if any – excuses for missing a performance. Every student is a vital member of the team effort and absences not only affect the person missing, but also those around him, causing a drop in performance standards. The following policies are in effect regarding performances.

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1. All performances are MANDATORY. If a student becomes academically ineligible, the student is still required to attend the event, however the student will not be allowed to perform. If the even causes the student to miss REGULAR school class time, the student will attend class.
2. An unexcused performance will result in the automatic lowering of numerical grade in class, a conference with the student and parent/guardian, suspension from the orchestra, and, at the discretion of the Director, may result in a failing grade for the grading period.

## Excused Absence

The following constitute an excused absence for rehearsals or performances:

1. Death in the immediate family.
2. **Extreme personal illness.** The student is expected to have a doctor's note for a missed performance. A parent/guardian note is accepted for a missed rehearsal only if a phone number is included. A student who misses a school day when an after school rehearsal is scheduled is expected to attend rehearsal unless the absence is excused from school.
3. Students who are actively participating and representing Satellite in an actual competitive activity may be excused from rehearsal at the Directors' discretion, but **WILL NOT** be excused from a performance for such activities. Students who engage in such excused activities must report to rehearsal immediately after the activity ends if time permits.

**NOTICE:** STUDENTS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO MISS FESTIVALS, COMPETITIONS, OR CONCERTS EXCEPT FOR DIRE PERSONAL EMERGENCIES.

## Tardies • Rehearsals and Performances

Students are expected to be on time to all orchestra activities. "ON TIME" means ready to begin with all necessary items, not rushing to your chair when roll is being taken.

The following specific policies are in effect in regard to orchestra activities:

1. Students are allowed two tardies to class (less than fifteen minutes each) for personal emergencies per grading period and one for co-curricular (after school) rehearsals.
2. Students will lose points off of their participation grade for all additional tardies. Additional consequences may be added at the discretion of the Directors.

**REMEMBER:** Every effort has been made by the Director to eliminate conflicts with other major school activities. **Performances and rehearsals are mandatory!**

## Music Rehearsal Procedures

1. All students must be in the band room seated with your instrument ready to play no later than 3 minutes after the tardy bell rings. Roll will be taken at exactly 3 minutes after the bell. Any student not in his/her seat at this time will be marked tardy.
2. All books and book bags are to be left in the locker area during rehearsal.
3. Announcements and rehearsal order will be posted on the board prior to rehearsal.
4. Adequate warm-up time will always be given. Rehearsal begins promptly when the Director steps on the podium; all talking must cease at this time.
5. To receive credit for your daily participation grade, all students must have the following at their seat prior to the start of rehearsal: your assigned instrument, your assigned music, a pencil, and any other material needed to perform the instrument correctly (bow, rosin, rock stop, etc.).  
Instruments in need of repair should be brought to the Directors' attention as soon as the problem arises.
6. The band room should look exactly the same after rehearsal as it did before rehearsal.

## Instrument Locker Rules

1. All students are responsible for keeping the instrument locker area clean and neat.
2. Do not store food or candy in your orchestra locker.
3. If you choose not to put a lock on your locker, you are taking full responsibility for the items left in your locker.  
**The orchestra and Satellite will not be held responsible for loss, theft, or damage to any items left in an unlocked locker!**
4. While schoolbooks are permissible in your orchestra locker, students are not allowed to enter the locker area when they don't have a class in the band room. Entering the band room during another class is very disruptive.
5. You must provide your combination & locker number on a 3 x 5 index card.

## Orchestra Library and Copy Machine

1. Only Librarians are allowed to seek and/or copy music. Anyone else needing assistance must ask the librarians or receive permission from the Directors.

## Uniform Materials

1. Solid black dress shoes (no sneakers)
2. One pair of PLAIN black socks.
3. Black tuxedo shirt – available for purchase from SIMPPA
4. Black slacks

## Challenges

A challenge system is available for those students who would like to progress to a higher chair in their section. A student may challenge only the person directly ahead of him or her by notifying the student being challenged and the Director. The challenge will occur within the next seven days, provided that both parties are able to arrange an acceptable time. If you are challenging to a higher part, you must prepare the higher part. If the challenged does not appear or accept the challenge, the challenger automatically wins the chair. If the challenger loses, he or she must wait two days before reapplying to challenge. Both parties will be informed of the outcome of the challenge immediately following the challenge. Challenges involving part changes may not occur close to a performance.

The Director may at any time call a challenge on the spot. This challenge will happen immediately and any reseating of students will happen immediately.

## Grading

Throughout the year, your grade will be based on the following criteria:

1. Your Grade Contract, which includes:
  - Attitude
  - Participation
  - Extra Evidences
2. Attendance (at all orchestra functions, including rehearsals)
3. Progress
4. Playing Tests

Playing tests are typically administered on Friday with notice of what is to be played on Monday, however the Director reserve the right to announce any playing test at any time.

## General Expectations

1. Only band or orchestra students and chaperones working an activity are allowed in the band room or any room associated with the instrumental music department.
2. ALL FOOD AND DRINKS ARE TO REMAIN OUTSIDE OF THE BUILDING. THIS INCLUDES GUM.
3. Students are to play and use only their own instruments or instruments that are checked out to them. If it's not yours, don't play it!
4. This is your band room... keep it clean, pick up after yourself, and respect all equipment.
5. Ask for permission to use the phone.
6. There is a time and a place for everything – public displays of affection and/or profanity will not be tolerated.
7. Never enter the director's office unless you have knocked and been invited in. If the directors are busy, do not disturb them. This is common courtesy.
8. If you have a question regarding grades, absences, or want to discuss a point, do so after class.
9. If you break something, please report it to Mr. Nelson immediately!! We can usually get it repaired by filling out a report without the orchestra having to pay for it.
10. BE RESPONSIBLE
11. **Maintain a positive attitude at all times. YOU can make a difference!**

## Rules and Regulations on Trips

1. Personal audio devices that do not have headphones may not be taken on the bus.
2. All talking and noise must cease during roll call.
3. All talking and noise must cease at railroad crossings.
4. Keep the bus clean. Use the trash bags provided on each bus.
5. All students must ride to and from events with the orchestra, unless excused in advance by the Directors.
6. Please make your parents aware of your return time to school. Students will be supervised up to 30 minutes after we return from school. After that, students will be on their own.
7. Stay on the bus until the Directors or chaperones dismiss you.
8. When riding school busses, NEVER throw anything from the windows, yell out the windows, or put your hands or head out the windows. Failure to follow this rule will result in immediate suspension from the Orchestra. Upon arrival, close all windows.
9. No sharing of blankets or sheets is allowed on the bus.
10. Instrument cases and suit bags must be clearly labeled with the students' name.

## Conclusion and "Statement of Acceptance"

It is the hope of the Satellite High School Administration, Directors of Instrumental Music, students, and parents that we continue to maintain as fine an organization as possible. This can be accomplished only by everyone taking a sincere pride and interest in the Satellite Orchestras. Only through hard work and cooperation can we keep our truly fine orchestra program.

It will be the responsibility of parents/guardians to make sure that their children follow the policies outlined in this handbook. Each parent/guardian is responsible for the attendance of their child at all orchestra functions. It is parents that are responsible for making sure that their student practices their instrument daily. The Director cannot play the instruments for the students. It is the responsibility of each parent to support their child's orchestra activities.

It will be the responsibility of each member of the orchestra to uphold certain commitments to the orchestra, school, community, and fellow members. Each member must be in regular attendance and account for any absences. Understand that there are very few excusable absences. Members must make a real effort to improve daily. Every member must have proper respect for those in authority. All members should be honest and fair in all matters concerned. Everyone is expected to cooperate with the Director, instructors, and other teachers. Now that you are in orchestra, you should put your heart into the effort of making great music and be loyal to the art of music. This is your orchestra! What you do determines the quality of music we produce!

# satellite High school Instrumental Music Program

## statement of Acceptance

I have read, understand, and will abide by the rules, regulations, policies, and procedures outlined in this Handbook. I further understand and accept the penalties for not following those rules, regulations, policies, and procedures.

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**PRINT** Student Name

Date

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Student Signature

Date

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**PRINT** Parent/Guardian Name

Date

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Parent/Guardian Signature

Date