

BRENTWOOD MIDDLE SCHOOL

# **STRING ORCHESTRA HANDBOOK**

2022 – 2023



Dear BMSO Students and Families,

WELCOME (BACK) TO ORCHESTRA! This 50th anniversary year is going to be an exciting one at BMS, and I am SO excited to share it with you! Now more than ever, it is my mission to foster an authentic and relevant musical experience for each student. I hope to enrich your child's time in orchestra with a variety of activities and perspectives.

It is a great privilege to be a part of the orchestra and we are incredibly fortunate to have a thriving program here at BMS. Please feel free to reach out with questions, concerns, or constructive feedback about the orchestra or your student. I welcome input from parents and students as we work together to continue to grow our program. At the end of the day, remember that our collective goal is always to do what is best for the students and our program. Thank you in advance for your cooperation, kindness, and support. I have high expectations for another great year ahead!

Please **read and review this packet** with your student and **complete the linked consent form** on the last page indicating you understand and accept the information presented within. Completion of this handbook contract will be one of your student's first grades.

I look forward to another year of positive communication and cooperation here in our BMS orchestra community. There will be some changes happening this year as we continue to grow and evolve. Again, I encourage you to contact me with questions or concerns at any time. Email is always the best form of communication and I will do my best to get back to you within 24 hours during the work week.

In the words of Garrison Keillor, "Be well, do good work, and keep in touch!"

Best Wishes,

Mrs. Tiffany Turner  
Orchestra Director  
[tiffany.turner@wcs.edu](mailto:tiffany.turner@wcs.edu)

# INSTRUMENT USAGE

While we do have a handful of school-owned instruments, we do not have enough for everyone. Cellists and bassists will likely have school instruments to use during class but are required to rent an instrument to keep at home for practice. Violinists and violists should bring their own instruments back and forth to class every day.

It is imperative that your student has a good quality instrument. All students are **STRONGLY** encouraged to rent their instruments from a reputable local shop that is on our district approved list AND specializes in string instruments. Many music stores carry music and supplies, but not many have a dedicated, trained luthier (string instrument maker/specialist) on staff! Rental information (including instrument sizing for each student) will be provided to all classes at the beginning of every year. **DO NOT BUY AN INSTRUMENT ONLINE OR FROM A SOLELY ONLINE RETAILER (Amazon, EBay, etc.)** **IF YOU ARE A NEW STUDENT, PLEASE DO NOT RENT OR PURCHASE AN INSTRUMENT WITHOUT CONTACTING ME FIRST.**

Any student who does use a WCS instrument will be required to have a parent/guardian complete and sign the WCS Instrument Rental Form. Once this form has been completed, the instruments may be taken home. The instrument must be returned at the end of the year in the same condition it was in when checked out at the beginning of the year.

## CLASS FEE

All WCS instrumental music students pay a class fee to cover the costs of participating in the program. **BMS Orchestra has a class fee of \$100 per student, per year.** (If you have any concerns about the fee, please don't hesitate to contact me - we will work something out!) This fee covers all necessary music, materials, supplies, etc.

**\*\*\*This year BMS will only be accepting online payment for all student fees via SchoolCashOnline (see this page for instructions: <https://www.wcs.edu/Page/9623>)**

Class Fee Covers:

- BMS Orchestra T-shirt
- All necessary sheet music
- Method books (with online resources)
- Black orchestra binder and pencil
- Classroom tuners and rosin
- Cleaning cloths
- Whole class field trip/performance/festival fees and registration costs
- Extra strings and maintenance supplies

# REQUIRED MATERIALS

**Students are required to bring the following materials to class EVERY DAY:**

1. Instrument
2. Shoulder rest (violins/violas) or rockstop (cellos/basses)
3. Sharpened pencil (provided)
4. **Black** one-inch binder (provided)
5. Appropriate sheet music/method books (provided)
6. BMS Agenda
7. Chromebook

## CONCERTS

**Attendance at concerts is mandatory for all students.** Students' grades will reflect any failure to show up and participate as a member of the orchestra. If your student misses a concert without prior approval from me, he/she will get a ZERO for that grade. Concert grades will count as double-weighted 50% test grades for our class. Any excused absence must be approved at least ONE WEEK prior to the performance date. Excused absences will be approved on an individual basis and must be due to an emergency or unavoidable conflict (discussed in advance). An alternate assignment will be given for excused absences.

Our students work very hard to prepare for these performances, so please make it a priority to come and support your student and our program!

Exact dates and performances vary year to year and class to class, but we have at least 3 major concerts each year that are mandatory for all students. A more detailed orchestra calendar will be sent out later. Mandatory events are listed below:

**BMS/BHS Winter Concert: Wednesday, November 16 at 6:30 pm (BPAC)**  
**Spring Side-by-Side Concert with BHS: Monday, March 6 at 6:30 pm (BPAC)**  
**Brentwood MusicFest: Saturday, May 6 at 5:00 pm (more info to come)**

**Please check with your child to make sure you receive any documents or flyers distributed in class. It is the student's responsibility to help facilitate communication between parents and myself.** All announcements, concert info, and dates will also be sent out via Skyward email blast.

# CONCERT ATTIRE

Dress code for concerts is **all black**. Please make sure your student has appropriate concert attire prior to the week of the performance. Dress code expectations will be communicated and reviewed frequently. If you have any questions or concerns about concert dress, please contact me at any time.

LADIES: black dress or black top (no spaghetti straps/tank tops), black dress pants/skirt, black shoes. If a skirt/dress falls above the knee, black tights or leggings must be worn underneath. No colored or flashy accessories or jewelry, and no fake nails (at any time!) No jeans or leggings.

GENTLEMEN: black shirt (button-down or polo, no t-shirts allowed), black dress pants, black dress shoes, black socks. No athletic shoes or jeans.

# INSTRUMENT CARE AND MAINTENANCE

All students are responsible for the care and routine maintenance of their instrument. These procedures will be reviewed frequently in class. If a school instrument is damaged through carelessness or abuse, the student is responsible for getting it repaired and/or replaced. (Failure to follow instructions regarding instrument care/handling will be considered carelessness!) The parent(s)/guardian(s) of that student will be asked to make payment arrangements with the school.

**This includes, but is not limited to:**

1. Not maintaining the instrument properly
2. Leaving the instrument in a place/position where it is likely to be damaged
3. Leaving an instrument unattended for an extended period of time where it might be tampered with or stolen
4. Purposefully damaging or defacing an instrument

# INSTRUMENT REPAIR

**PLEASE DO NOT ATTEMPT TO REPAIR ANY INSTRUMENT ON YOUR OWN!** All issues should be brought to me first. I can and will fix most minor issues myself, and if I cannot fix it, we will work with one of our vendors to get it repaired as soon as possible. It often does more harm than good when students, friends, or family members try to help with a quick fix.

# PROCEDURES & CONDUCT

## (The Brentwood “B”s)

### Be Responsible

- Enter the classroom efficiently and quietly
- Stay engaged for the entire rehearsal (while you are playing AND while you are not playing)
- Take ownership of your learning (PRACTICE and keep track of music)
- **No gum, food, or drink in the orchestra room**

### Be Respectful

- Respect yourself, others, materials, and the music
- Talk only at appropriate times (It is never appropriate to talk when someone else is talking or playing)

### Be Proud

- Represent our program well by acting appropriately (both IN and OUTSIDE of our classroom)
- Come to class on time and prepared to learn
- Attend all concerts

### Be Nice!

- Maintain a positive attitude
- Communicate in a kind and proactive way

Expectations will be reviewed frequently and posted in the classroom at all times. Students are expected to take ownership of their participation, behavior, and learning.

## CONSEQUENCES

(Please refer to the student handbook for more case specific/district discipline guidelines)

1. Re-direct and/or warning
2. Phone call home and/or demerit/detention
3. Referral to grade-level administrator

# EXPECTATIONS

## STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

Our classroom and performance expectations for students are as follows:

- Students will be prepared and productive members of the ensemble
- Students will give their best effort and attitude at all times
- Students will live up to school, district, and community expectations as members of the orchestra program

This program runs on high expectations and mutual respect.

## TEACHER EXPECTATIONS

Students can expect a firm and fair learning environment that rests on a foundation of positive relationships. I will hold all students to a high standard of accountability and responsibility. I am here to engage, support, and assist students in any way possible. Providing constructive feedback and pushing students to learn and grow is my job. If your child's behavior, attendance, or grade is unsatisfactory in any way, you will be notified as soon as possible. Communication between teachers, students, and parents is vital.

## PARENT EXPECTATIONS

Parents are encouraged to monitor their student's daily practice sessions. In order to ensure that the orchestra is functioning at the highest level possible, **I ask that you make it a priority to read all communication (via Skyward, email, or documents distributed in classes).** Please reach out and communicate any concerns or questions in a kind way. Our program depends on your cooperation and support.

# GRADING POLICIES

**Grades are comprised of the following:**

### 20 % Category

Weekly participation  
Class work  
Homework

### 30% Category

Projects  
Quizzes  
Sticker Tests

### 50% Category

Playing Tests  
Written Tests  
Concerts

- Other projects/assignments may be given at the director's discretion
- Projects and assessments will be graded and entered into Skyward within *one week* of the date the project/assessment is completed
- Missing assignments will be entered into Skyward as a zero and marked "missing" until they been completed and graded
- Late work will NOT be accepted beyond *one week* past the original due date

**PLEASE CLICK THE**  
**LINK BELOW TO**  
**COMPLETE THE**  
**HANDBOOK CONTRACT**  
**FORM!**

Electronic signature via submission of this form indicates that you have read the information in this packet and accept the conditions of successful participation in the BMS Orchestra program.

CLICK HERE: <https://forms.gle/uq1FbFT7mVXdCXWp6>