

# 5th Grade Orchestra Handbook 2018-2019

Welcome to the 5th Grade Orchestra program. The orchestra program provides each student with the opportunity to learn musical and performing skills by becoming an accomplished player of a string instrument. The students will develop the skills needed to play an instrument and will work towards developing both independent and ensemble performance skills. Our goals are excellence of performance, development as individuals and as members of the orchestra team, and having fun as a result of our success. I look forward to a great year with your child!

Sincerely,

## **Contact Information**

Ph.: (248) 489-3601 during school or (248) 426-4930 before or after school

E-mail: [caitlin.mihalko@fpsk12.net](mailto:caitlin.mihalko@fpsk12.net)

Website: <http://eastorchestras.weebly.com>

## **Remind**

I will be using Remind to send any important/necessary text messages regarding either class cancellations due to weather/school closed, etc. If you provide me with your cell phone number on the Acknowledgement Form at the end of this handbook I will add you to the distribution list for your building. You will receive a message that you have been added and you are able to text message me from this as well. You can use this if your child is sick or can't make it to class, or if you have a quick question.

## **Class Times & Locations**

### **Beechview**

Monday & Wednesday, 7:30-8:15 AM, Media Center

Drop-off is from 7:20-7:25 AM at the Y-Care entrance on the side of the building. The front doors/office will not be open at that time of the morning.

### **Lanigan**

Tuesday & Thursday, 7:30-8:15 AM, Gym-Stage

Drop-off is from 7:20-7:25 AM at the front/main entrance of the building. The office will not be open at that time of the morning.

## **Expectations**

**Be Responsible:** All students are responsible for the maintenance and care of the learning space, school equipment, and instruments. Students must be prepared for each class with instruments in good playing condition, music, and supplies.

**Be Kind:** Orchestra members will be considerate of each student's right to learn and Ms. Mihalko's responsibility to teach.

Be Respectful: Instruments, music, equipment, and the personal possessions of other students are to be respected and left alone.

Be Your Best: Students are expected to approach each class with a positive attitude, try their best, and contribute to a productive learning environment and rehearsal.

**Consequences for not meeting classroom expectations:**

1. Verbal warning.
2. Pack up instrument and complete a written behavior reflection. Reflection will be emailed to parent.
3. Conference with parent and student.

**Curriculum Standards:**

1. Executive Skills & Knowledge: Posture, Left Hand Skills, Right Hand Skills, Tone
2. Musicianship Skills & Knowledge: Music Literacy – pitch & rhythm reading skills, Tonal Ear Training, Rhythmic Ear Training, Creative Musicianship, Ensemble Skills
3. Artistic Skills & Knowledge: Expressive Elements, Cultural & Historical Elements, Evaluation of music and musical performance

**Assessment**

This program is a curricular offering and students will be assessed for their report card. Students will be assessed in the following ways:

- Performances
- Practice Assignments: each week
- Playing Assessments and Quizzes: based on a rubric built off of a 5-point scale for each skill being assessed. Students have the opportunity to retake an assessment at any point within the semester that is was assigned. Point totals will vary.
- Ensemble skills (self-reflections & assessed by the teacher): students are expected to participate fully to the best of their ability on a daily basis. Ensemble skills will be assessed both as student self-assessments and by the teacher on a regular basis using a rubric.

**Attendance**

Regular attendance of the twice a week class is expected. If your child is in school the day of class, they are expected at class. Please send communication if your child will not be in class. If a student misses one class, they have missed 50% of instruction for the week. If a student misses both classes in a week, or have missed at least 3 classes, they will need to meet with Ms. Mihalko on a Friday morning before school to get caught up.

It is also expected that students will arrive to class on time. Students who arrive late will miss instruction and also disrupts the flow of instruction for other students. It is understandable that issues arise from time to time, but tardiness on a regular basis is an issue and will result in your child falling behind in class.

## **Concert Attendance**

All orchestra students are expected to participate in the scheduled concerts. Our concerts are the culmination of weeks or even months of work and represent a “final project” for our class. Every member’s participation is critical for our success. If any student is missing, the orchestra sounds different, and this will affect the performance.

Please mark the concert dates and times on your calendar. If a student has a conflict, a parent must notify Ms. Mihalko as soon as a conflict is known, or at least two weeks before the event. In the event of serious illness or a family crisis, leave a message on Ms. Mihalko’s voicemail, send an email, and/or have the student bring a note from a parent within 24 hours of the performance. If a student misses a concert for any reason and Ms. Mihalko has been contacted by a parent per the expectations mentioned, an alternate assignment will be given for partial credit. Concerts are a large part of the final grade, so it is very important that the assignment be completed.

## **Concert Expectations**

Because orchestra students are part of a larger team, their responsibilities at concerts go far beyond playing their instrument. They are expected to arrive on time for the warm-up session prior to the concert. Throughout the performance time, students are expected to behave in a manner that helps create an environment in which all performing ensembles can succeed. Students’ behavior should not distract from the performance of others or the professionalism of the group. Students are expected to stay for the entire performance and listen to all groups in order to learn from one another and to support their peers. Finally, students are expected to do their very best when playing their music.

## **Concert Attire**

It is important for the group to both sound and look professional. For students, concerts are a formal event and it is expected that students will dress accordingly. The attire for concerts is:

- White shirt (dress shirt/polo/nice top)
- Black pants. Skirts may be worn but must cover the knee when sitting. No leggings.
- Solid black shoes and black socks/tights

## **Practice**

Students need to practice on a regular basis in order to develop and master the skills learned in class. It is essential to the development of fundamental musical skills and realizing their potential as independent musicians and orchestra members. Practicing is not simply playing the instrument, but it is working toward specific goals.

Each student is expected to practice every day. I understand that due to many factors that can be a struggle. To do very well in class, at least 15 minutes of practice 4-5 days a week is expected. Some practice is better than no practice. If all they can do one day is 5-10 minutes, that is better than nothing. Because we are training the brain and muscles to learn and develop skills, time on task is required outside of the classroom. Students will have a practice sheet to guide them through their practice for the week. The practice sheets are due on the first day of class for the week.

For more information about practicing, strategies, and resources, visit [www.eastorchestras.weebly.com/helpful-things.html](http://www.eastorchestras.weebly.com/helpful-things.html)

## **Private Lessons**

Although it is not required, all students are encouraged to take private lessons. It is the single greatest way to accelerate a student's learning and provide them with focused, one-on-one instruction. A list of private teachers is available from Ms. Mihalko.

## **Supplies**

- Essential Elements Book 1 (should be provided with rental instrument)
- Hardcover three-ring binder for orchestra only (½" or 1")
- Sheet protectors for music - highly recommended but not required
- Pencil (not pen) and highlighter
- Rosin - should have come with the instrument
- Shoulder rest or pad for violins & violas - should be provided with rental instrument
- End pin stop or strap for cellos & basses - should be provided with rental instrument
- Cleaning cloth - see Ms. Mihalko if you don't have one
- Extra Strings – if you are renting an instrument from Shar or Anderson replacement strings are covered with the rental of the instrument. It is preferred that students have a spare set provided so that if/when a string breaks I can replace it in class immediately. If a student breaks a string on a personal or school instrument I do have a small supply of strings that can be purchased.

## **Stores**

If you need anything from the stores listed below, you can contact the store directly, or ask Ms. Mihalko to order the supplies. A representative from Shar Music and from Anderson Music visits East weekly.

When purchasing items through Ms. Mihalko, cash or a check made out to "cash" should be sent in an envelope marked with the student's name and the item to be purchased.

**Shar Music (string specialists)** – I highly recommend using Shar for your instrument rental and any supply ordering. Any instruments or supplies ordered over the phone can be delivered by the Shar representative to EMS, or can be ordered online and shipped to your home (free shipping on orders \$25+). A representative from Shar visits East on a weekly basis.

(800) 248-7427 [www.sharmusic.com](http://www.sharmusic.com)

Other stores that carry string instruments and supplies are:

- Anderson Music, Farmington Hills (248) 477-3800 [www.andersonmusiccompany.com](http://www.andersonmusiccompany.com)
- Detroit Violin Co. (string specialists), Berkley (248) 677-4469 [www.thedetroitviolincompany.com](http://www.thedetroitviolincompany.com)

## **Instruments**

### **School Instruments:**

A small supply of school instruments are available for families. These instruments are available on a first come first served basis. An instrument loan contract is required and families are financially responsible for any loss, theft, or damage to the instrument.

Cello and Bass students will use a school instrument during class and do not need to bring their home instrument on a daily basis. They are required to bring their home instrument for any performances. The school-owned instruments must be well cared for by the students. Farmington Public Schools will cover the costs of repairs resulting from students' ordinary, reasonable handling and use of the instrument. Any damage from neglect, carelessness, or intentional misuse will result in financial responsibility on the part of your family.

### **Purchasing Instruments**

I do not recommend purchasing an instrument for your child until they have reached a full sized instrument. I do not recommend purchasing instruments from Amazon, Craigslist, Ebay, Guitar Center, or any other big-box stores that do not specialize in instruments. Very often these instruments are made from extremely low quality materials and are not set up properly for your student to perform on successfully. These instruments seem appealing because of their price, but your child will quickly experience frustration while trying to play the instrument. I also do not recommend purchasing painted/color instruments. These instruments are also made of poor quality materials and due to the wood being painted the instrument does not have a good sound. My primary goal is for your child to be on an instrument that allows them to be successful. I know that instruments can be expensive and I want to make sure you get the best instrument possible for what you are able to afford. If you are interested in purchasing an instrument for your child, please contact me and I will be happy to assist you with finding something within your price range.

## **2018-2019 Orchestra Calendar**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Group(s)</b>
11/17/2018	AM/PM	Day For Strings - 7:30-11:30 AM	NFHS	O - All
5/8/2019	6:30 PM	5th/6th Extravaganza Concert - Orch	EMS GYM	O EMS, Lan, Bee

# Orchestra Handbook Acknowledgement

The handbook acknowledgement (all students) must be completed and returned to Ms.Mihalko by:

**Beechview: Monday October 1st**

**Lanigan: Tuesday October 2nd**

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Hour \_\_\_\_\_ Instrument: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Parent email: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Cell Phone (for emergency only): \_\_\_\_\_

- **I acknowledge that I have read the orchestra handbook and understand the guidelines and expectations that have been outlined.**
- **I agree to follow these guidelines and expectations to the best of my ability.**
- **I have read the Calendar of Events and marked the dates on my calendar.**

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_