

ALAMO HEIGHTS JUNIOR SCHOOL ORCHESTRA

2022-2023 Handbook

Philosophy

The Alamo Heights Junior School Orchestra Program offers students an opportunity to explore, display, evaluate, and refine their musical talents in an encouraging but challenging environment. Additionally, being an AHJS Orchestra member helps students develop their personal growth as artists, musicians, citizens of the community, and life-long learners. This is all doable with the support of our parents and school family.

Program Objectives:

1. Music literacy in elements of rhythmic values, notation, music symbols, dynamics, key signatures, and terminology.
2. The ability to work cooperatively with others for the success of the ensemble.
3. Knowledge of a wide variety of orchestral literature.
4. Personal discipline and confidence in the student's abilities, as well as responsible and dependable behavior.
5. Respect for others, loyalty to the ensemble, and proud representation of the organization.
6. Respect for and proper use of equipment and instruments.

Classroom Expectations:

1. Be seated and ready to work when class starts.
2. All backpacks must be stowed behind your chair
3. Show respect for the instructor, each other, and the property of others. (Do not play on other's instruments)
4. Absolutely no food, drinks (water is okay), or gum in the orchestra room.
5. Music stands are for your music and nothing else. Do not bend or lean on them.
6. Do not use curse words or profane language
7. Do not engage in any horseplay
6. Follow instructions the first time they are given.
7. Come prepared. Practice outside of class is essential to the success of the individual and the group as a whole.
8. Bring necessary supplies each day (instrument and bow, music and binder, pencil, spare strings, shoulder rest or rock stop, rosin, cleaning cloth, and any other supplies as deemed necessary by your instructor).
9. Students will observe all policies set forth in the AHISD Student Code of Conduct and the AHISD Extracurricular Code--found on the AHISD Website under *Student Code of Conduct* and *Student Handbook*.

Rehearsal Etiquette:

1. Remain silent during instruction time
2. Do not play or pluck while the director is working with a different section.
3. If you have a question, make sure that you raise your hand and are called upon before asking
4. Address the director properly
5. Absolutely no cell phones or smart watches during rehearsal
6. Always have your music, pencil, and instrument with you during class
7. If you lose your music, it can affect your personal grade.
8. Take special care of your instrument at all times. Do not allow anyone else to play your instrument.

Consequences:

If a student is disruptive or disrespectful these are the consequences they could face.

1. Verbal warning
2. Teacher student conference
3. Parent phone call home
4. Office referral

A Student may be removed from the program as per the director by violating these rules

1. Violent or physical behavior towards another student
2. Behavior which can damage instruments
3. Open defiance or blatant disrespect of the director

Discipline:

The orchestra program uses the discipline plan found in the AHISD [Student Code of Conduct](#), [Academic Integrity](#) and [Extra-Curricular Code of Conduct](#). The goal of this plan is to encourage students to make appropriate choices by acknowledging that they are responsible for their choices and the resulting consequences, both positive and negative. Students participate in orchestra only with the continued approval of the director.

Eligibility

Students that are failing one or more classes are ineligible to participate in some of the extracurricular events offered, including TMEA auditions, contests, performances, and trips. See [TEA/UII Side-by-Side](#) for updates. Failing students **are** still expected however to participate in curricular events including sectionals, rehearsals, UIL contests, and concerts.

Grading Policy

Students and Parents should check Google Classroom weekly for homework and classroom assignments and check the AHISD Home Access Center (HAC) weekly for student progress. Students are graded on the following components:

- **20% Rehearsal Techniques:**

- Proper student posture and technique during class and rehearsals
- Preparedness: Having instrument and all supplies every class (Reference Supply List)
- Demonstration of orchestra rehearsal routines and procedures
- Academic responsibility and integrity.

- **20% Homework, Quizzes, Classwork:**

- Smartmusic Assignments
- Written and performance-based assessments including:
 - Playing quizzes, written concert evaluations, written work
 - Any outside of class required rehearsals

*No late work will be accepted in this category. We will drop THE lowest grade from this category at the end of the nine weeks.

- **30% Major Grades, Performance Assignments and Assessments:**

- Play-offs, chair tests, or mock auditions.

*Late assignment scores will not be considered for chair placement, but re-assessments for a better grade are allowed. This will be limited to two assessments per nine weeks and limited to major assignments only. (Exceptions: documented excused absences or emergencies. These will be dealt with on an individual basis and will follow the district grading guidelines..)

- **30% Performances:**

- Concerts, contests, auditions. This includes mandatory events and any class-specific requirements (see calendar and see below.)

Concerts

All students are required to attend all concerts in their entirety. Planned absences must be submitted for approval as soon as they are known and at least **14 days** before a performance. Students who miss a performance should expect to have makeup assignments due before the end of the grading period.

Formal Concert Dress Code (“Formal Black”)

Students must follow the dress code for concerts and other performances.

- Solid black slacks, dress pants or solid long black skirt (or solid black dress--mid-calf or longer).
- Solid black (close-toed) dress shoes (not tennis shoes).
- Solid black full-length socks or stockings.
- Solid black, long sleeve, button-up dress shirt or solid black blouse (mid-forearm length or longer.)

Official Orchestra T-Shirt

Our official Orchestra T-Shirt will be used for different types of events. Students and parents will be notified of what they will need to wear. For these events students should dress in either the Official Orchestra T-shirt, long jean pants, tennis shoes. The t-shirt will be included in the activity fee.

Outside Rehearsals

Outside rehearsals and sectionals will be held for special events, such as in preparation for Region Orchestra, UIL Concert and Sightreading Competition or the AHISD Solo and Ensemble Contest. Students will be given a calendar or schedule of required rehearsals well in advance. Unplanned absences due to illness or emergency will be excused with a note from a parent and addressed case-by-case.

Instruments

It is our goal that everyone has access to a high quality instrument. If you do not already own (or rent) a quality instrument, we **strongly recommend** renting-to-own from a reputable music store. We have a limited number of instruments available for student rental and priority **is given to students with financial need.** Those students who wish to rent an instrument from the school must return a signed rental contract with payment of \$50 for combined Fall and Spring semester (\$50 for the summer). Checks should be made out to ‘AHISD.’

[Supply List](#)

To be successful on their instruments, students are required to supply the needed materials for their instrument. This may be found on the [AHJS Strings Website.](#)

Activity Fee

The AHJS Orchestra activity fee is \$50, and is paid annually by every orchestra member. This fee will include the official orchestra t-shirt, and is additionally used to purchase new music, supplies, hire clinicians, and cover contest dues. Please make checks out to 'AHISD' and submit by Friday, August 27th, 2021. The activity fee can also be paid on [AHJS PTO Mule Market](#).

Financial Assistance

If you ever need financial assistance with any of our fees or requirements, please let us know. You may contact our school counseling staff instead. Information will be kept confidential.

Private Lessons

All students are strongly encouraged to take private lessons. Private teachers will offer private lessons during class as arranged with the director and student. The private teacher determines the cost of these lessons. See the *Handbook and Parent Signature page* at the end of the document to sign up for in-school lessons or to get more information regarding outside lessons. Rates, times, and policies differ for outside lessons. See the updated [private lesson referral list](#).

Friends of Strings

Parents should consider joining and donating their money or time to our booster club. Information about Friends of Strings, including a membership form, may be found at ahstrings.org. Meetings take place in the high school orchestra hall.

Teacher Webpage

<https://ahjsstrings.weebly.com/>

Contact

Joemichael Garcia at jgarcia@ahisd.net (210) 824-3231 or Lani Gil at lgil@ahisd.net (512) 763-2681

REMIND 101:

Students and Families, please join the Remind 101 for your Orchestra class. Send a text to 81010 with the message corresponding to your class:

Concertino: [@ahjsconce](#)

Bravo: [@ahjsbravo6](#)

Allegro: [@ahjsallegr](#)

Sinfonia: [@ahjssinfon](#)

Philharmonic: [@ahjsphilh](#)

Chamber: [@ahjscham](#)

Please return the following items to Mr. Garcia or Ms. Gil by Friday, August 26th, 2022

-This page signed by both student and parent

-\$50 Activity Fee (Can also be paid on the [AHJS PTO Mule Market](#) site)

-\$50 Rental Fee (if applicable - must be paid by check or cash)

-\$21 Main Event Fee (if student is attending, this is optional - please see “Main Event Social” -must be paid by check or cash)

***Please include in the memo of your check your child’s name and what is being paid for. All fees can be paid by cash or ONE check made out to AHISD. If you are in need of financial assistance or an extension, please email us at the above emails.**

I have read the Orchestra Handbook and understand the information and expectations given:

Student Name (Print): _____

Student Signature: _____

Parent Name (Print): _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____