

# BASIC GUIDELINES AND REQUIREMENTS FOR JOHN JAY HIGH SCHOOL ORCHESTRA STUDIES PROGRAM

## **RULES FOR THE MUSIC REHEARSAL AREA (S)**

No food or drinks are allowed in any rehearsal areas.

No gum chewing while in the rehearsal area. **DEPOSIT IT IN A WASTE BASKET AS YOU ENTER!**

Do not operate any school stereo, computer or other electronic equipment without the permission of the teacher.

Please do not leave books, coats, etc. in the room after rehearsal. **THERE IS NEVER A GUARANTEE THAT YOU WILL BE ABLE TO RETRIEVE ANY ITEMS IF YOU LEAVE THEM LYING AROUND.**

Use folder cabinets for folder storage. Check these folder cabinets daily for any distributed music or handouts. Use your folder cabinet slots to return any music. Home practice music may be provided for each student. You may take your regular music home to practice and transfer markings, **BUT it is your responsibility to have your own school music for each rehearsal.** It is considered to be part of your class preparation to have your own folder in rehearsal. If you do not have or use your own folder, points may be deducted from your class grade.

**You are responsible for your music.** Mark only appropriate rehearsal/performance directions. Should you lose your folder, you will be expected to pay for the music and folder. The value will be determined by the music contained in the folder at the time it is lost.

ALL INSTRUMENTS must be **properly** put away at the conclusion of rehearsal or lesson. (bows loosened, cases closed properly) All violins and violas need to be stored in the instrument storage room. All celli and basses go in the back right corner of the rehearsal room. **DO NOT** leave instruments lying around the room. **You are responsible for your instrument.**

## **REHEARSAL PROCEDURES**

You are expected to be at rehearsal on time. (**Chronic lateness will lower your class grade.**)

Get out your instrument and music and prepare to begin rehearsal.

**TUNE YOUR INSTRUMENT.** The Concertmaster is assigned the task of providing the tuning note for each section in rehearsal. Section principals are each responsible for their section, but

**EVERYONE is responsible for tuning their own instrument.**

When the director is ready, become silent and prepare for instructions to begin rehearsal.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

You will be assigned a school instrument for rehearsals. (Strings Only). Having your school instrument available and in good playing condition for rehearsal is considered part of your participation grade.

**Take care of your instrument.** The care and storage of your instrument is your responsibility. **DO NOT** ask anyone to put it away, take it out, etc. Do not loan out your instrument. If your instrument is not playable, notify the teacher immediately.

Bring a PENCIL to class or keep one in your folder! **This is imperative** for marking music parts and scores.

**Rehearsal attendance** is and ever shall be **mandatory.** This is the primary method of assessment by the director and each individual has a responsibility to the group to know their music and be prepared for rehearsal and performance.

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**HOMEWORK.** It is your responsibility to know your part. This will require you to take music home and practice. Each and every one of you is considered an important and integral portion of the ensemble. If you are “fudging” a part, you are not only wasting your time, but you are wasting mine and the group’s as well. A portion of your grade assessment will be based on how well you learn your parts . . . be an aggressive and confident participant!

### **SEATING ASSIGNMENT/PART PLACEMENT (Symphony Strings)**

Seating assignments will be determined at the beginning of each semester and will remain in effect through the corresponding concert performance. This staggered seating allows for the strongest players to be evenly divided between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> violins. Many young players have the notion that better players play 1<sup>st</sup> and lesser players play 2<sup>nd</sup>. That is simply untrue. The Director reserves the right to change seating assignments at any time depending on the needs of the ensemble and considering the proficiency of the player(s).

**The seating order will be as follows for the top 8 placing Violins:**

<u>Player ranking</u>	<u>Assignment</u>
1 <sup>st</sup>	I-1 (principal 1 <sup>st</sup> )
2 <sup>nd</sup>	II-1 (principal 2 <sup>nd</sup> )
3 <sup>rd</sup>	I -2
4 <sup>th</sup>	II-2
5 <sup>th</sup>	I-3
6 <sup>th</sup>	II-3
7 <sup>th</sup>	I-4
8 <sup>th</sup>	II-4

Other players will be distributed between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> depending on ability and needs of the ensemble. Viola, Celli, and Bass players will be assigned according to their ability with the top player in each section assigned as principal.

**String Orchestra** seating is flexible and students will be moved around the ensemble based on the needs of the group.

**LESSONS** - Lessons are provided for all students in the Orchestral Studies Program. Lesson periods are important and a time when we can get a lot of work done individually, in sectionals or chamber groups. However, **lesson attendance is not mandatory** but highly encouraged. No student will have points deducted from their grade as a result of not attending lessons but you can add as much as 5% to your grade.

(See GRADING POLICY section) Also note, the school attendance policy is clear that **music lessons are considered an “educationally excused” absence from any classes missed. Students are responsible for any work missed during those classes, but missing the class does not in any way count against them.** The high school teachers are generally very understanding of our lesson schedule and will assist you in any way.

**PERFORMANCES ARE REQUIRED!** This is a PERFORMANCE ENSEMBLE CLASS. Please be responsible and check the schedule. Each and every one of you is important to the performance. If you are not in attendance, **YOU ARE MISSED!** There are a few acceptable reasons for not attending a performance. All absences pre-approved or otherwise **must be explained by parent or guardian in writing.** In the event a student cannot attend a performance, he/she may be asked to complete an alternative assignment or performance. This ORCHESTRA

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assignment/performance will be given grading weight equivalent to a similar portion of the performance rating had he/she attended.

**CONCERT DRESS:** All students are expected to purchase their own concert attire.

### **STRING ORCHESTRA:**

Gentleman - Dark suit, white shirt, black tie, black shoes;

Ladies – Long black dress (ankle length), black shoes (black blouse and long black dress pants are also acceptable).

### **SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA:**

We may be moving to formal concert attire this year. Information on dresses and tuxedo measuring and purchase will be handed out in class should this be the case. If not, the students in Symphony Orchestra will have the same requirements as String Orchestra above.

## **GRADING POLICY**

There are several factors considered when formulating a grade for the student. These are as follows:

Student classroom participation (includes attendance)	60%
Student performances	30%
Music reading/technique	5%
General music symbol understanding	5%
Lesson attendance (not required)	(+ up to 5%)

Some important musical factors in all aspects of grading are:

**Punctuality** (being at rehearsal and set up on time)

**Posture** (sitting in a correct playing position that supports good tone)

**Technique** (holding your instrument and bow correctly, using correct bowings, positions, etc.)

**Attention** (not talking and listening to the Conductor to receive feedback and instruction) (This also includes “noodling” on your instrument)

**Musicality** (making each effort one based on achieving the most musical of results)

***Commitment, responsibility, preparation, and behavior are all factors considered with some or all of the above grading components.***

Extra credit for music-related activities outside the school curriculum may be considered by the Director on an individual basis. Please include any outside ensembles, lessons, other music activities on the form at the end of this packet.

## **OTHER PERFORMANCE OPPORTUNITIES**

The program may offer many other small ensemble performance opportunities for students. Below are outlined some of those ensembles.

**NYSSMA rules state that: YOU MUST BE A MEMBER OF THE CORRESPONDING SCHOOL ENSEMBLE PROGRAM IN ORDER TO PARTICIPATE IN ANY NYSSMA/WCSMA ENSEMBLE.**

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NYSSMA Major Ensemble Festival – We have previously participated in the NYSSMA Major Organization Festival in the Spring. This is a wonderful opportunity for the Ensemble to receive feedback from professional adjudicators. Our participation will be dependent on a number of factors including: date of festival, musical ability of the ensemble and availability of participants

NYSSMA Small Ensemble - This group may be formed by invitation for the primary purpose of performing at the NYSSMA Small Ensemble Festival in the spring.

NYSSMA Solo Festival - This Festival is held each spring and is the audition vehicle for students desiring to participate in the New York All State Orchestra. It can also be a valuable learning experience for all players in the adjudication provided by the judges. The solos are taken from a required list provided by the Organization in the NYSSMA Manual. You Director has a copy of this manual and will be happy to let you look at the list of approved pieces. It is the student's responsibility to pay all fees, select a solo, secure the music (2 original copies are required), prepare the solo, secure an accompanist, schedule rehearsals and provide transportation to and from the festival site.

Chamber Music Nights – There are occasionally Chamber Music nights scheduled. Soloists, duets, etc. are eligible to perform.

### **INSTRUMENT MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR**

You are responsible for all maintenance and repair of your personal instrument. I do have some extra strings for emergencies and some minor repairs can sometimes be done in house, but you need to be sure your instrument is in good playing condition. We do have a string instrument repair service that regularly stops at the school to pick up repairs. Let me know if you have a need and I'll give you their phone number.

### **I ALSO ASK YOU TO BE VIGILANT IN THE CARE OF OUR SCHOOL INSTRUMENTS.**

I need your help in identifying school instruments in need of repair. Please let me know if a string is missing or some other maintenance item is needed for your assigned instrument.

There is a vendor (Music and Arts) who visits the school on a weekly basis and will pick up and return instruments for repair. They also offer rentals and accessories. Their website is: [musicarts.com](http://musicarts.com).

Any questions regarding the rules and guidelines of the Orchestral Studies program should be addressed to Mr. Morse. He can be reached at 763-7463 (PA Office) or a message can be left with his voice mail (763-7200 EXT.9494). Email is: [smorse@klschools.org](mailto:smorse@klschools.org)