



# **Otto Middle School Bobcat Orchestra 2019-2020 Handbook**

OMS Orchestra Parents and Students,

The handbook is designed to help students and parents understand the concepts and policies of this unique group. It answers common questions that you may have and will prove to be an excellent reference resource for defining the boundaries that are important in keeping the OMS Orchestra a quality ensemble. These handbooks will be available at all times via our website and Google Classroom for quick reference.

**Please be sure to read the handbook carefully.  
SIGN ALL FORMS AND RETURN THEM BY  
FRIDAY, AUGUST 16th, 2019!**

Many thanks to you, the parents, for allowing your children to be a part of the Otto Orchestra program! Your dedication to your child's continued success in instrumental music is very much appreciated. Please feel free to call or email us with your questions using the contact information below. It is our pleasure to help you in any way that we can and to teach your children this year.

We are looking forward to a great school year!

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## **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES AND BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS**

The choice to join a successful organization brings with it a commitment to put in the time and energy necessary to add to that success. Lack of practice and preparation, disruptive classroom behavior, or a negative attitude can be very detrimental to the high level of achievement we strive for in the Otto Orchestra. By enrolling in the Bobcat Orchestra, you are making a commitment to the orchestra as an organization and, more importantly, to yourself and the other students in the ensemble. This commitment includes responsibility for the following:

- Participation as a member of the orchestra for the full school year.
- Do your best to grow musically as an individual.
- Maintain a positive attitude and support the goals of the orchestra.
- Do nothing to interfere with the teaching and learning happening in our classroom.
- Practice DAILY! While practice sessions are short at first, they will increase. Inadequate practice will result in poor performances.
- RESPECT all people, equipment, and facilities of the Otto Orchestra. This includes instruments, teachers, guests, peers, and yourself!

## **CONCERT ATTIRE**

### **Formal Concert Attire – ALL BLACK!!!**

- Girls: black tops (MUST HAVE SHOULDERS COVERED – no sleeveless), black bottoms (all skirts must come down past the knees), black socks or tights, and black dress shoes (no platforms or spike heels), minimal jewelry
- Boys: black button-down and collared shirt (tucked in), nice black slacks with a black belt, black dress shoes, black socks

**Casual Concert Attire** – orchestra t-shirt (required), nice jeans (no holes), closed-toe shoes

## **REQUIRED SUPPLIES**

1. Rental Instrument (includes case, bow, and rosin)
2. **Violins/Violas** - Kun or Everest shoulder rest recommended
3. **Cellos/Basses** – rock stop
4. Cleaning cloth
5. Rental Instrument (includes case, bow & rosin)
6. Folding wire music stand for use at home
7. Digital Tuner/Metronome – THESE ARE REQUIRED FOR CLASS USE
  - KORG PitchClip (violins and violas)
  - KORG Sledgehammer (SHG-1) or KORG PitchHawk for Cello and Bass
8. 1-inch BLACK 3-ringed binder WITH POCKETS
9. 5 dividers with labels
10. 3-held pencil bag to remain in the binder
11. 1 highlighter of any color
12. Method book:
  - **Beginners:** Orchestra Expressions, Book 1
  - **Concert:** Orchestra Expressions, Book 1 and 2 (you should have book 1 from previous year)
  - **Recital:** Orchestra Expressions, Book 1 and 2 (you should have book 1 from previous year)
  - **Sinfonia:** Essential Elements, Book 2
  - **Philharmonic:** Essential Elements, Book 2 AND 3
  - **Chamber:** Essential Elements Book 3 AND Habits of a Successful String Musician

**\*\* PLEASE TALK TO US BEFORE PURCHASING A STRING INSTRUMENT!!! Not all instruments and music stores are created equal! Please DO NOT order an instrument from a catalog or online source without first checking with your directors. The directors may call home in the event a student has a poorly made instrument.\*\***

# ORCHESTRA CLASS NOTEBOOK

Students are REQUIRED to have a 1 inch, black, 3-ringed binder with pockets. This notebook should be in class every day. It should go home every night to aid in practice. A notebook organization exam grade will be given each grading period.

Please label the dividers in this order:

1. Practice Records
2. Handouts
3. Calendar and Handbook
4. Tests/Quizzes/Worksheets
5. Music

Rings: Pencil bag containing 2 pencils and highlighter) and dividers

Back Pocket: Private Lesson Materials (if applicable)

**Have your notebook labeled with your name and class at all times!! It is your responsibility to keep up with your notebook and have it at all classes!!**

## PRIVATE LESSON INFORMATION

**We highly encourage students to sign up for lessons.** One lesson per week will be scheduled at Otto before school, during class, or after school. This is a one-on-one environment and will benefit the student tremendously. Students will be assigned teachers in August. This is a first come, first served arrangement. If you wait until September or later, private teachers may not have available time slots! More information about private lessons, as well as the contract and signup form, will be sent home with your child. If interested in taking private lessons, please fill out the form completely and return it to Ms. Phillips or Mr. Mitchell by August 16.

## ORCHESTRA CALENDAR & ATTENDANCE POLICY

The orchestra calendar can be found on our website and Google Classroom. Please review the calendar and notify the Director of any conflicts as soon as possible.

Consistent rehearsal/performance attendance is vital to the continued success of our Orchestra Program and a required part of our curriculum. All orchestra members are expected to attend all rehearsals and performances.

**Never use lack of a ride as an excuse for not being somewhere! Make arrangements in advance.** All absences will be considered unexcused unless cleared in advance. Repeated failure to attend rehearsals or performances may result in assignment to another orchestra, or in the case of excessive absences, removal from the Orchestra Program.

**Written notice from a guardian is required for any absence. Verbal or written excuses from students are not accepted.** We understand that emergencies do occur and will handle this on a case by case basis. Performances are 3 major test grades. If there is an excused absence from a required performance, students will have to complete a comparable written or playing assignment to make up the grade.

## PARENT VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

The core strength of any program is the enthusiasm and support of its community. As a parent to an Otto Orchestra member, your encouragement as your child enters into this exciting new journey is the greatest help you can offer! Throughout the year, we will have several events, that will require chaperones. I will reach out via email when these needs arise. If you are interested, please go to [www.pisd.edu/about.us/partners.volunteers/volunteer.application.shtml](http://www.pisd.edu/about.us/partners.volunteers/volunteer.application.shtml) and complete the online volunteer application. **You must be cleared through the district before you can volunteer.** Thank you in advance. We cannot have a successful program without supportive parents like you!

## SOCIAL EVENTS

This year we will have several social events outside of the school day. These events are not required and usually require a fee. In order to attend these events, students must be in good academic standing as well as good conduct standing! Students who exhibit behavioral problems in class may not be allowed to attend social events, or may be allowed to attend with a parents.

# GOOGLE CLASSROOM

Google Classroom will be the main place where announcements, assignments, practice record links, and calendar information will be displayed and updated. Each student is required to be a member of their corresponding Google Classroom. Playing test videos will also be expected to be uploaded to Google Classroom for grading periodically throughout the school year.

## GRADING POLICY

**PLAYING ASSESSMENTS** – These will happen many times over the course of each nine-week grading period and will be calculated as daily grades, quiz grades, or a major grade.

### **OTHER DAILY AND QUIZ GRADES**

**Classroom Participation-** All students start out with 100 points at the beginning of each week. 20 Points will be subtracted for any infractions of the following daily expectations:

- A. Enter and leave the classroom in an orderly manner and be seated before the bell rings.
- B. No chewing gum, eating food, or drinks other than water in the classroom.
- C. Show self-discipline and focus during rehearsals. Follow teacher directions at all times.
- D. Take care of all equipment, including your instrument (loosen bow, wipe off rosin, etc) and all others.
- E. Follow the Otto student code of conduct
- F. Have ALL materials for each class: instrument, shoulder rest, rosin, cloth to clean instrument, binder Method book, music, pencil, and short fingernails.

### **Practice Records**

- A. Instrument, notebook and music should go home each day for practice.
- B. Students are given specific practice assignments daily. Students should record practice time on their practice records each day and answer any applicable journal questions on sheet if provided.
- C. Practice records need to be signed by a parent (as instructed on practice record sheet) at the end of every second week. Practice Records are due every TUESDAY.
- D. Practice reports may be turned in one day late for a maximum graded of 90%.

**Music Theory Quizzes and Binder Organization Checks** – Written quizzes covering music theory, musical terms, music history, etc. will be given and notebook binders are checked every six weeks for organization.

**Sectionals** - Symphony and Chamber Orchestra may have weekly sectionals. Attendance is required.

### **MAJOR GRADES**

**Rehearsal Etiquette** – A test grade will be given to each student each nine weeks assessing rehearsal etiquette. All students will start with a 100 and points will be deducted throughout the nine weeks for such things as forgetting instruments, repeated disruptions, failure to bring supplies, cell phones out during rehearsal, food/gum, long fingernails, etc.

**Dress Rehearsals and Concerts** - Each student is required to attend all dress rehearsal and concerts on the orchestra calendar. Please check the calendar carefully.

**Concerts** are 3 major grades:

- Concert Etiquette
- Performance Etiquette
- Audience Etiquette

It is your responsibility to avoid scheduling conflicts with the dates on the calendar. Students with an EXCUSED absence will have one week to complete an alternative assignment for up to 100% of the grade, but it is the student's responsibility to make arrangements for any make up work. Unexcused absences from concerts will have one week to complete an alternative assignment for a maximum grade of 70%.

**LATE WORK** – Work that is one day late can be made up for a maximum of 70%. Work that is 2 days late will not be accepted unless at the discretion of the director.

**RETAKES** – Students may retake as many times as they want until the end of the 9 weeks.

## **SCHOOL INSTRUMENT MAINTENANCE FEES**

School owned cello and basses instruments are available for students to use during the school day. PISD instrument maintenance fee of **\$85.00** is required for all school instrument usage. This fee is used for instrument repair and maintenance including bow re-hairs and string replacement. This is a district fee that must be paid prior to the instrument being checked out to the student. If you are on free or reduced lunch please speak to Ms. Phillips if you need part of this fee waived. See below for the district guidelines on instrument maintenance fees.

A usage agreement form will be given directly to the student after an instrument is assigned in the first week of school. It is very important that you return this form with payment promptly! School cellos and basses will mostly remain at school as they are used daily in class by multiple students due to the limited number we have.

See below for the PISD guidelines concerning instrument maintenance fees.

### **Plano ISD Instrument Maintenance Fee Collection Guidelines**

Each band or orchestra student using a school-owned musical instrument will pay an \$85.00, nonrefundable instrument maintenance fee. This fee was adopted by the PISD Board of Trustees due largely to the stress placed on the district budget as recapture funds continue to increase.

Guidelines are as follows:

1. Students will be charged one fee regardless of how many school owned instruments they are assigned (i.e. percussion, concert/marching instruments, etc.). These funds are intended for maintenance of school-owned instruments regardless of whether the student takes the instrument home.
2. Students checking out school-owned instruments during the summer months should be charged the instrument maintenance fee at the time the instrument is issued.
3. In the event of financial hardship, a waiver may be granted at the campus level, provided that the family applying for the waiver meet the same financial qualifications as the free or reduced lunch program.
4. It is recommended that students checking out school-owned instruments also purchase insurance for coverage of damage, loss, or theft if not already covered by a family insurance policy.

## **PERSONAL INSTRUMENT MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR**

Stringed instruments are fragile and need to be handled and maintained with care. If you have a maintenance plan through a music company, then normal wear and tear should be covered. If not, you will have to pay each time a situation arises. Strings will need to be changed and bow hair re-haired on a yearly basis for quality sound. For these reasons, we highly recommend signing up for the maintenance plan on your rental instrument.

## **INSURANCE RELEASE**

### **INSTRUMENT INSURANCE**

The Plano Independent School District, Otto Middle School, and the Otto Middle School Orchestra staff are not responsible for loss or damage to any instrument. We encourage you to insure your child's personal instrument for fire, theft and accidents. Do not confuse this with a "maintenance plan" which covers things like broken strings and bow re-hairs. You may already have it covered with your homeowner's insurance or may have signed up for a policy with a music insurance company. If you do not already have insurance coverage, for your convenience, **MUSIC AGENCY INC.** offers insurance for instruments. Visit them at [www.musicagencyinc.com](http://www.musicagencyinc.com)

### **PERSONAL ACCIDENT INSURANCE**

Since Orchestra is a physical activity and we have events outside of school, I need to have a record on file that states you have been made aware of the availability of the voluntary insurance policy (This form was in the packet with your child's class schedule).

## **PLANO ISD GUIDELINES FOR DISTRICT EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Students involved in extracurricular activities are held to a higher standard of conduct than the general student body. Plano ISD views participation in extracurricular activities as a privilege not a right. Any student who violates the Student Code of Conduct shall be subject to extracurricular discipline and/or regular school district disciplinary action. This

includes any misconduct, regardless of time or location that would reflect negatively upon representing Plano ISD in an extracurricular activity. Students clearly involved in major disciplinary infractions (i.e. including, but not limited to, drugs, alcohol, and violent behavior) will be placed on probation, removed temporarily or permanently from extracurricular activities. Seasons of extracurricular activities may vary and could extend into the next school year.

Discipline action may affect tryout eligibility for the next season. Disciplinary measures taken by the sponsor/principal may be in one or more of three forms, defined as special assignments, probation, and dismissal.

Special assignments may consist of extra duties and may be assigned for minor disciplinary infractions. Probation and/or dismissal from extracurricular activities will be for infractions involving alcohol, smoking, drugs, use of profanity, violence, and other serious offenses when the sponsor/principal believes the integrity and credibility of the organization has been jeopardized by the student's action.

Probation may also be assigned when the student fails to comply with rules and regulations of the extracurricular activity. (Probation is defined as: A trial period in which a student is permitted to redeem bad conduct.)

The student may be dismissed from the extracurricular activity upon any major infraction, or during a probationary period. Prior to being dismissed from extracurricular activities, the student and parents will be notified of the reasons for the action. The student or his/her parents will be afforded the opportunity of a hearing with the sponsor and principal. The appeals process will be outlined at that time. Request for an appeal must be done in writing within 5 school days at each level of the appeals process. The student will not be eligible for any individual or team recognitions or awards that occur after the date of dismissal.

**Plano Independent School District**  
**Guidelines for District Provided Transportation**

The safety of all students is a top priority when traveling in school provided transportation. Students being transported are held to a high standard of conduct. Appropriate behavior is expected to ensure the safety of all students.

Plano ISD provides transportation for those students who qualify. In order to take advantage of this convenience, students must adhere to the established procedures. Any student who violates transportation procedures shall be subject to disciplinary action as stated in the Campus Discipline Management Plan. This includes any misconduct on the bus, at the bus stop, or on any related Plano ISD sponsored transportation. When students are involved in disciplinary infractions (i.e., including but not limited to, fighting, eating or drinking, excessive noise level, hanging out of windows, using inappropriate language, not staying seated, defiance, destroying property, disrespect, littering, etc.), appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

**Plano Independent School District**  
**Agreement District Provided Transportation**

We have read and understand the responsibilities outlined in the Discipline Guidelines For District Provided Transportation.

We also understand the student shall be held accountable for the behavior and consequences outlined in the Discipline Guidelines For District Provided Transportation, including all District sponsored travel (to and from school, extracurricular activities and field trips).

Safety of all students on PISD transportation is everyone's responsibility. We understand that any student who compromises the safety of others shall be subject to disciplinary action and/ or suspension of transportation privileges. This includes any misconduct, regardless of time or location when traveling on any PISD sponsored transportation.

Students involved in major disciplinary infractions (i.e., including but not limited to, drugs, alcohol and violent behavior) are subject to temporary or permanent removal from District transportation.

**Plano Independent School District**  
**Publications, Video, Internet Consent and Release Agreement**

Students who attend school in the Plano Independent School District are occasionally asked to be a part of school and/or District publicity, publications and/or public relations activities. In order to guarantee student privacy and ensure your agreement for your student to participate, the District asks that you sign this form.

The form referenced below indicates approval for the student's name, picture, work, voice or verbal statement to appear in school publicity or District publications, videos or on the District's Web site. For example, pictures and articles about school activities may appear in local newspapers or district publications. These pictures and articles may or may not personally identify the student. The pictures and or videos may be used by the district in subsequent years.

**AGREEMENT**

**Student and Parent/Guardian release to Plano ISD the student's name, voice, verbal statements, portraits (video or still) and consent to their use by PISD.**

Plano ISD agrees that the student's name, voice, verbal statements, portrait or picture shall only be used for public relations, public information, school or district promotion, publicity, and instruction.

Student and Parent/Guardian understand and agree that:

- .. No monetary consideration shall be paid;
- .. Consent and release have been given without coercion or duress;
- .. This agreement is binding upon heirs and/or future legal representatives;
- .. The photo, video or student statements may be used in subsequent years.

If the Student and Parent/Guardian wish to rescind this agreement they may do so at any time with written notice.  
Pursuant to Texas Education Code, Section 26.009(b)(2)  
PISD has no control of media use of pictures/statements which are taken without permission.