

Sahuarita Middle School

Orchestra Handbook

2019-2020

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Attached you will find the handbook for the 2019-2020 school year. This document outlines the academic and behavior expectations, procedures, and grading policy for the SMS Music Program. Please read through the handbook and discuss the information with your student(s). After reading the information, please indicate that you understand the program requirements by signing and returning the bottom portion of this letter by August 9th.

Sincerely,

Jessica England

Choir and Orchestra Director

SMS Orchestra Handbook Agreement

I acknowledge that I have received the course syllabus for orchestra 2019-2020.

Student Name

Student Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Name

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

I. Course Descriptions

6th Grade Beginning Orchestra

Prerequisite: None. An entry-level course designed for student musicians with little or no prior orchestral or performance experience to develop skills for participation in Intermediate Orchestra. This is a performance class, with regular required concerts scheduled throughout the year. A variety of orchestra literature will be studied, with emphasis on developing basic musicianship skills, including: reading music notation, playing instruments with characteristic tone, and performing successfully as a group, as defined by the Arizona State and National music standards. Evening performances will be required at least twice through the school year. It is important to understand that orchestra is a year-long course. Students must provide their own instrument and instrument supplies, or make arrangements with the instructor to rent school equipment if available. Information regarding getting an instrument will be provided at the beginning of the term. Students who register for orchestra must understand the time and financial commitment required, as schedule changes will not be permitted. Instruments to choose from: violin, viola, cello, double bass.

7th Grade Intermediate Orchestra

Prerequisite: Previous orchestra experience. An audition with the director, successful completion of Beginning Orchestra at SMS or SIS, or Director's permission is required. An intermediate level course designed for student musicians with some orchestra performance experience to develop skills for participation in 8th Grade Orchestra. Course will focus on the study of quality orchestra literature for public presentation at concerts and other events. Musicianship skills, including sight-reading, rhythms, scales, characteristic tone, and ensemble blending will be reviewed and emphasized. Participation in performances, which include evening and weekend events, is required. It is important to understand that orchestra is a year-long course. Students must provide their own instrument and instrument supplies, or make arrangements with the instructor to rent school equipment if available. Information regarding getting an instrument will be provided at the beginning of the term, if necessary. Students who register must understand the time and financial commitment required, as schedule changes will not be permitted. Any instrument switching from one year to the next is discouraged, and may only be approved after having a discussion and making a plan with the director.

8th Grade Advanced Orchestra

Prerequisite: Previous orchestra experience. An audition with the director, successful completion of 7th grade Orchestra, or Director's permission is required. An advanced level course designed for student musicians with orchestra performance experience to develop skills for participation in High School Orchestra. Course will focus on the study of quality orchestra literature for public presentation at concerts and other events. Advanced

musicianship skills, including sight-reading, rhythms, scales, characteristic tone, and ensemble blending, will be reviewed and emphasized. Participation in performances, which include evening and weekend events, is required. It is important to understand that this is a year-long course. Students must provide their own instrument, and instrument supplies, or make arrangements with the instructor to use school equipment if available. Information regarding getting an instrument will be provided at the beginning of the term, if necessary. Students who register must understand the time and financial commitment required, as schedule changes will not be permitted. Any instrument switching from one year to the next is discouraged, and may only be approved after having a discussion and making a plan with the director.

II. Materials and Supplies

- a. Method Book
 - i. 6th Grade Orchestra
 - 1. New Directions for Strings, Book 1, instrument specific
 - ii. 7th/8th Grade Orchestra
 - 1. New Directions for Strings, Book 2, instrument specific
- b. Instrument Purchase and Rental
 - i. Music Store Rental Programs, Rent-to-Own
 - ii. School Rental Program
 - 1. \$30/school year, based on availability and financial need, payment to SMS main office
- c. 3 ring binder, one-half inch, black
- d. Clear page protectors (at least 25)
- e. Pencil with eraser for completing written assignments and marking rehearsal notes in sheet music
- f. Music stand for home practice
 - i. Fold-up wire stands are inexpensive and convenient for home practice
- g. Tuner/Metronome
 - i. Free mobile apps
 - ii. Korg and other brands available at music stores or online
- h. Instrument-Specific Supplies
 - i. All String Instruments
 - 1. Rosin—Each student needs to have his or her own brick of rosin. This is necessary to keep the bow playing nicely. Bass rosin is a slightly different, stickier consistency.
 - 2. Replacement Strings—Please have one full set of replacement strings in your case or at home. Strings will break, and we don't want to miss rehearsal time because of broken strings. Pay attention to the size and type of the instrument; the strings are not one size fits all. Bass strings break infrequently, in which case the music store or school will assist in replacement.
 - 3. Cloth—Microfiber cloth to wipe rosin, moisture, and oil from strings and body of instrument after each use.

- ii. Violin/Viola
 1. Shoulder Rest—Students **must** have a full shoulder rest. Please ask to have a shoulder rest fitted to your instrument at the rental store. If you own your instrument, please take it to the music store and ask them to help fit a full shoulder rest to your instrument.
- iii. Cello
 1. Endpin anchor—An adjustable strap with a cup at the end to help stabilize cello endpins on hard floors.
 2. If your student is playing cello, I recommend renting an instrument from the store to keep at home, and using a school instrument for rehearsal, to avoid transportation issues. If a student borrows a school instrument to use only at school, they do not have to pay the \$30 rental fee. Students borrowing a school cello during the day will likely be sharing a cello with a student from another class.
- iv. Bass
 1. Endpin Anchor—I recommend the Rock Stop for bass endpin anchoring. It looks like a hockey puck with a metal cup in the middle.
 2. If your student is playing bass, I recommend renting an instrument from the store to keep at home, and using a school instrument for rehearsal, to avoid transportation issues. If a student borrows a school instrument to use only at school, they do not have to pay the \$30 rental fee. Students borrowing a school bass during the day will likely be sharing it with a student from another class.
- v. Music Stores in Tucson
 1. Chicago Music Store
 2. Instrumental Music Center
 3. Metrognome Music
 4. Music & Arts
 5. Southwest Strings
- vi. Music Supply Websites
 1. Southwest Strings: swstrings.com
 2. Musicians Friend: musiciansfriend.com
 3. Amazon.com
 4. SharMusic.com

III. Classroom Procedures

- a. Entering the Classroom
 - i. Place backpack along the wall
 - ii. Set up chair and music stand
 - iii. Place required materials on music stand
 - iv. Assemble instrument
 - v. Read objective, agenda, and announcements
 - vi. Warm up on instrument
- b. During Rehearsal
 - i. Asking a question

1. Raise your hand when there is a break in instruction and wait patiently to be called on
- ii. Restroom
 1. At an appropriate time (break, individual practice, when finished with written assignment), raise hand and ask to use the restroom, sign out, take appropriate color badge, sign in when you return
- iii. Drinking fountain
 1. At appropriate times only (no lines, please)
- iv. Sharpening pencils
 1. At the beginning of class during set-up time only, if pencil breaks in the middle of class, please wait until break in instruction
- c. Exiting the Classroom
 - i. When you are dismissed by the teacher, put away music, disassemble and put away instrument, return chair and music stand to proper place, gather your belongings, and exit the classroom when the teacher dismisses you

IV. Behavior Expectations

- a. All SMS students are expected to demonstrate the Six Pillars of Character/Character Counts:
 - i. Trustworthiness
 - ii. Respect
 - iii. Responsibility
 - iv. Fairness
 - v. Caring
 - vi. Citizenship
- b. SMS Positive Behavior Intervention Strategies
 - i. Get There/Responsibility
 - ii. Respect/Citizenship
 - iii. Own Up/Fairness/Trustworthiness
 - iv. Watch Out/Caring
 - v. Learn

V. Discipline Procedures

- a. Level One
 - i. Written up on discipline tracking form
 - ii. Phone call home
 - iii. 3rd offense, discipline tracking form is sent to administration
- b. Level Two
 - i. Discipline tracking form sent to administration
 - ii. Phone call home
 - iii. Time-Out, sent to another classroom
- c. Level Three
 - i. Immediate removal to the office

VI. Participation Expectations

- a. Daily and After-School Rehearsals
 - i. In rehearsal, students are expected to actively participate through listening, singing, playing, moving, writing, and verbal discussion
 - ii. Collaborative performances with other ensembles or schools may require additional rehearsal time after-school
- b. Home Practice
 - i. In order to achieve personal improvement, satisfaction and achievement, students are expected to practice for 30 minutes per day, 5 days per week
- c. Performances
 - i. Performing individually and with others is an important standard and provides the opportunity to showcase musical growth and achievement. Students are required to participate in all performances. A separate calendar will be provided and a detailed itinerary will be provided one week prior to each event.
 - ii. **Participation in performances is required** and a major part of the grade in the class. Students will be excused from performances only in the event of a serious illness, injury, family emergency, or other arrangement if communicated with the director in a timely manner.
 - iii. **Winter Concert:** December 3, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. in the SUSD Auditorium
 - iv. **Orchestra Day (7/8 only):** February 4, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. in the SUSD Auditorium
 - v. **Spring Concert:** May 1, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. in the SUSD Auditorium
- d. Fundraising
 - i. Fundraisers may be scheduled throughout the year to raise money for travel and festivals

VII. Private Lessons and Extra-Curricular Opportunities

- a. Private Lessons
 - i. See director or website for recommended instructors
- b. Honor Band/Orchestra
 - i. Tucson Junior Strings
 - ii. Southern Arizona Honor Orchestra (selected by instructor)
 - iii. All-State Honor Orchestra (selected by instructor)
 - iv. Financial assistance is available for extra-curricular music activities—please contact Mrs. England for more information
- c. Music Club
 - i. Monthly meetings during lunch on Wednesdays

VIII. Grading Policy

- a. SMS Grading Scale
 - i. A: 90-100, B: 80-89, C: 70-79, D: 60-69, F 0-59
- b. Performance and Assessment (60% of Final Grade)
 - i. Written Assessments (20%)
 - ii. Performance Assessments (20%)
 - iii. Concerts (20%)

- c. Skill and Development (40% of Final Grade)
 - i. Daily Warm Up (10%)
 - ii. Rehearsal Participation (10%)
 - iii. Written Assignments (20%)
- d. Extra Credit
 - i. Extra Credit will be awarded to the respective category for involvement in extra-curricular musical activities such as private lessons and honor ensembles.
- e. Make-Up Assignment Policy
 - i. If you are absent and miss an assignment, please check in upon your return to make up any missing work.
- f. Late Assignment Policy
 - i. Late assignments will lose 10% credit per day late, up to one week. Assignments more than one week late will not be accepted.

IX. Contact Information

- a. Website: Smsjaguarmusic.weebly.com
- b. Facebook pages
 - i. SMS Jaguar Music
 - ii. Sahuarita Unified School District Music Department
- c. Remind 101: receive text message reminders and updates
 - i. Text @musicSMS to 81010