

Wheaton Christian Grammar School

Concert  
Orchestra  
Handbook

2019-2020



# Wheaton Christian Grammar School Concert Orchestra Handbook

2019/2020 School Year

Dear Orchestra Members and Parents,

Welcome to the 2019/2020 Concert Orchestra Program at Wheaton Christian Grammar School. I look forward to being your conductor and teacher this year. In this handbook, you will find all the policies and procedures in order to make your orchestral experience positive, problem-free, and great fun.

## **Parents**

Thank you for allowing your son or daughter to be in orchestra this year. They will have the opportunity to experience the joy of making music and mastering new skills. It is essential that we partner together to encourage each student to reach their potential through effective practice. I believe that students who use effective practice techniques become more enthused about playing music and progress more quickly. Let's work together on this.

Please take the time to read the following information carefully whether you are new to the orchestra here at WCGS or returning to the program. Students and parents must sign the commitment form and return it by **Friday, September 6**.

I am looking forward to having a wonderful year together. Please feel free to contact me at school.

Sincerely,

Mr. David Petersons

630.668.1385 ext. 262

[dpetersons@wheatonchristian.org](mailto:dpetersons@wheatonchristian.org)

## Daily Rules and Procedures

The following rules are set in place to create an atmosphere of learning and success. Students who violate these rules are responsible for reducing the amount of time for rehearsal and consequently hurting the entire orchestra.

1. Enter the orchestra room in a quiet, courteous, and orderly manner.
2. Quickly get your instrument and music and take your seat.
3. Students that are late to rehearsal must bring a pass from the teacher of their previous class in order to be excused from receiving a detention. The junior high teachers know that orchestra rehearsal is not an acceptable time to be finishing projects/tests.
4. Students are to tune as soon as they have prepared their instrument. Any tuning help should be addressed before class begins.
5. Concert attention will be observed when the director steps on the podium and no further talking will be permitted.
6. Students will not play other students' instruments. **This includes percussion instruments and keyboards.**
7. Orchestra members will have the following at every rehearsal:
  - a. INSTRUMENT (with necessary accessories)
  - b. ALL MUSIC
  - c. PENCIL (you supply your own)
8. Good posture is of great importance at all times.
9. Instruments **MUST** be stored in instrument lockers when not being played at school.  
**DO NOT LEAVE YOUR INSTRUMENT IN HALLWAYS.**
10. Practicing is very important. More is accomplished in rehearsal when you have learned your music at home. Leaving your instrument at school overnight should be the exception rather than the rule. Practice logs will be checked weekly.
11. Students who do not have their instrument or music for rehearsals or sectionals will have points deducted from their grade.
12. Absolutely no gum, food, or drink in rehearsal (water is OK).
13. Respect the rights, safety, and property of others.
14. Accept responsibility for yourself and your learning.

## Grades/Points

Grades are based on an average of Student participation and preparedness in Class and Sectionals, Concerts, and SmartMusic assignments.

This is the percentage break down of the students' orchestra grades:

40% - Playing in rehearsals

20% - Playing in sectionals

15% - Playing in concerts

25% - SmartMusic assignments

## Beneficial Experiences

**Concerts/Recitals** – Students are encouraged to attend concerts or recitals featuring their instrument. Concerts and recitals can be very inspirational.

**Private Lessons** – Every instrumentalist should consider taking private lessons on his/her instrument. Although not a requirement, private lessons can be extremely beneficial.

**IGSMA Solo and Ensemble Contest** – Solo and ensemble contest will be coming up in February. Now is a good time to begin thinking about your involvement in this contest. Information will be sent home when it is available.

**ILMEA District Honors Orchestra** – *The ILMEA Orchestra is an extra challenge for students who prepare and audition on the pieces selected by the district.*

## Sectionals

All students in Concert Orchestra have a scheduled weekly sectional during the regular school day. Since academic classes will be missed for sectionals, **IT IS THE STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO MAKE UP MISSED WORK!** The only exception for missing a sectional is if a teacher is giving a test during that period in class and it cannot be made up at another time. In cases such as this, students must communicate this to Mr. Petersons or else their sectional grade will be lowered. **It is critical that every orchestra student attend these sectionals. They are vital to the progress of our orchestra's success.**

## SmartMusic Practicing System

All students are required to practice at home several times a week. Consistent, daily work is essential to improvement on your instrument. This year, we will again use SmartMusic computer program. Each student is **required** to purchase a subscription and enroll in the SmartMusic program. The cost for a one-year subscription is \$40.00. Periodic assignments and playing tests will need to be completed and submitted throughout the year. We have several SmartMusic stations in the music department that are available for student use. Students who do not have access to a computer at home may submit their assignments at school either during orchestra rehearsal, during study hall, before school, or after school. If you already have a SmartMusic subscription, make sure that you renew your license and enroll in Concert Orchestra online. If you are new to WCGS, or do not have a previous subscription, Google SmartMusic for information.

## Practicing

All students are required to practice at home. 100 minutes per week is suggested, but not required. Consistent, daily work is essential to improvement on your instrument. Practice is most effective when it is broken into smaller practice sessions. For instance, practicing 20 minutes, 5 days a week, or 25 minutes, 4 times a week is much more beneficial than 100 minutes at one time. However, instead of recording amounts of time on the practice sheet, students will be demonstrating their practice effectiveness on Smart Music tests. The goal is not quantity of practice, but quality of practice. Time will be spent in class discussing effective and efficient practice strategies.

## **ParentsWeb**

Assignments and progress will be posted on ParentsWeb. Students will be graded on their participation and preparedness in Class and Sectionals, Concerts, and SmartMusic Assignments. **Students and parents can access the exact assignments, as well as grades for submitted assignments by checking ParentsWeb. ParentsWeb is the best way to check a student's progress.**

## **Class Materials/Curriculum**

Each student will be issued a new binder with copies of the music the orchestra will be playing. It is the student's responsibility to take good care of this binder and have it present at every rehearsal and sectional. Music and binders that are lost are subject to replacement fees.

## **Instrument Care and Maintenance**

All students must have instruments in good playing condition. Students are expected to maintain proper care of their instruments throughout the school year. This year, Quinlan and Fabish and Music and Arts, Inc. will visit our school weekly and can be utilized for repairs.

## **Rehearsal Schedule**

Concert Orchestra rehearses twice a week on Tuesdays and Fridays during last period. Always be on time. Rehearsals are mandatory and may not be missed for any reason other than absence from school. Attendance and punctuality are a part of your grading period average. A pass will be required if a student is late.

## **Seating Auditions**

In an effort to assign a part to each student that is within his or her range and technical ability, each student will play a private audition. Each student will be assigned an audition time at the beginning of the school year.

On the basis of the results of the auditions in August, students will be assigned seats within the section. Playing test scores, as well as bowings, attitude and responsibility will determine any changes for concert seating.

## Concert Uniforms

Since we will be performing at a number of different venues throughout the year, the band will utilize the following uniforms for performances:

1. A WCGS issued polo shirt for all music ensembles. The details about cost and ordering will be available in the next few weeks.
2. Khaki (tan) colored pants and dress shoes.

Please do not add your own “personal” touches to these uniform requirements. The purpose of a uniform is just that, that we are all “uniform” in our appearance. Our uniforms will be mandatory of all concert orchestra students and will be worn for all performances.

## Parent Volunteers

We are in need of volunteers for our concerts. We need parents to sit with the students at our concerts when they are not on stage performing as well as help with tuning and supervision before the concerts. Mrs. Beth Wright will be contacting all parents shortly before each concert to line up volunteers.

## Concerts and Important Dates

The concerts and events listed below are mandatory. These events are summative assessments.

Veteran’s Day Assembly .... (during school day) 9:00am, Monday, November 11, 2019  
Christmas Orchestra Concert..... 7:00pm, Thursday, December 12, 2019  
Music Ministry Day ..... Friday, March 13, 2020  
Spring Orchestra Concert..... 7:00pm, Thursday, May 7, 2020  
Music Field Trip ..... May TBD  
Graduation (8<sup>th</sup> grade only)..... 7:00pm, Tuesday, May 26, 2020

In addition to the above concerts, students may choose to be involved in the following events:

ILMEA Concert Orchestra Auditions..... Saturday, September 28, 2019  
ILMEA Music Festival..... Saturday, November 9, 2019  
IGSMA Solo and Ensemble Contest..... Saturday, February 29, 2020





## Concert Orchestra Commitment Form

I have read the preceding information. I understand and accept the commitment and expectations of becoming a member of the Concert Orchestra. I also realize that I am making a one-year commitment for the 2019-2020 school year to the WCGS Concert Orchestra.

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Printed Student's Name

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Student's Signature

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Parent's Signature

Please detach this form, sign and return to Mr. Petersons by **Friday, September 6.**