**Cedar Middle School Orchestra**

**Course Disclosure**

The orchestra curriculum is based on the **The Utah Core Music Standards** which can be found online.

**Grading Policy**

Grades will be calculated by totaling the points earned by the student in each of the following areas: performances, rehearsal skills, playing tests, pass-offs, projects, concert attendance, written assignments, and tests. Parents are encouraged to check student grades online via PowerSchool.

**Rehearsal Skills:**

Punctuality, focus, only talking at appropriate times, marking the part, having all required materials (students are expected to have their music folder, sheet music, method book, instrument, pencil, and music notebook every day of class). Students are not to **eat**, **drink** (other than water), or **chew gum** in class.

**Written Assignments:**

Students will have frequent written assignments during class and sometimes outside of class. Students will have rhythm and note name quizzes nearly every week. Students should keep their music notebooks IN the classroom so they are always ready for use. Students should always have a pencil handy. Graded work will be returned to the students’ assigned slots.

**Playing Tests**

Students will be given both announced and unannounced playing tests to check their proficiency on our in-class music. Students earning poor grades may retake playing tests before the next concert. We will aim for at least every other week playing tests.

**Concert Attendance Project:**

It is important for music students to experience the thrill of live performance from the perspective of the audience. For this reason, students are expected to attend ONE (1) concert per QUARTER (four a year) and to write a concert evaluation. The concert evaluation form is available on the website or in class. While at the concert, students should demonstrate good concert etiquette and stay for the whole performance, not play on their phones, and be quietly attentive other than writing down their observations for the observation form.

**Concert Performances:**

Students are expected to attend every concert that our orchestra puts on. Each person is important to the success of the orchestra. Everyone depends on each student who rehearses with us to be present at concerts. An absence leaves a hole in time which can never be filled. Therefore, attendance at all scheduled concerts is **mandatory.** Absences can only be excused for emergencies beyond the student’s control such as an illness (hospitalization) or death in the family. Unexcused absences (games, relatives in town, parties) from concerts will result in a zero for the performance (which can impact the grade up to two grades lower). Please understand that nothing can make up for a missed performance and for not having all of our students present on concert days. We need everyone in order to perform at our best! In addition, students are expected to wear the concert **uniform** of **Orchestra Polo Shirt, Khaki Pants, Black Shoes, and Black Socks. Short shorts/skirts are not appropriate for concerts. Students not in uniform will not earn full credit. Concerts are worth 200 points each.**

Students with excused absences can make up the missed concert points by playing the concert music as a playing test (to be graded using the playing test rubric).

**Practice**

Playing a string instrument is a very physical endeavor. Just as a student who wishes to be good at basketball must spend hours practicing the movements and building the muscles needed to make free throws accurately, string student must practice diligently in order to build the muscle memory needed to be successful in music. Students should practice between **20-45 minutes daily**. Each practice session should have a **goal** to improve something specific about the string playing and should include working on small sections of the music that are difficult. Playing through easy music one time is NOT practicing. We will discuss **practice strategies** during class – counting and clapping rhythms, saying the note names, pizzing and saying the note names, counting and airbowing, saying the note names and airbowing, isolating small sections (sometimes as small as only 2-4 notes!), linking small practiced sections together, etc. Students are encouraged to practice until they have played the selection more times correctly than incorrectly – “practice until you can’t get it wrong, not until you get it right once.”

I encourage students to practice in several small chunks of time instead of in one long chunk if possible (10 minutes, do something else, 10 minutes, do something else, 10 minutes, do something else, 10 minutes).

While we do not usually do “practice records” in orchestra, we do frequent playing assessments. Students should plan to practice for however long it takes them to learn the music – just as in math some students can complete a math assignment in 5 minutes and others take 3 hours, some students can master the material we cover in just a few minutes of practice while others will require quite a bit more time. Ms. Carrigan will be staying after school daily for students who would like to practice with help or just practice in the orchestra room.

**Practice is not optional. Every student needs to practice and improve in order to best learn and contribute to the orchestra.**

**Extra Credit:**

Students may earn extra credit by two means:

1. Attend an additional concert per quarter. Unlike the Concert Attendance Project which must be a string concert, the additional concert may be any type of performing group (strings, band, percussion, choral, etc.) Use the same form as the Concert Attendance Project to complete the assignment. Students should be certain to write EXTRA CREDIT across the top of their paper when they turn it in.
2. Take private lessons. Students who wish to earn extra credit for their private lessons must keep a list of the pieces/exercises they have been working on during private lessons (very easy since most lesson teachers require students to keep a notebook of assignments). Students must also write a paragraph stating what they have learned and improved upon during each quarter of private lessons. Finally, students must include the name of their teacher and the frequency of their lessons. There is an easy-to-complete form on the CMS Orchestra webpage.

Each extra credit assignment is worth 25 points. Maximum of 50 extra credit points per quarter.

**Supplies - Required**

1. **Instrument and bow.** All instruments must have at least four (4) working fine tuners. Exceptions will be made for students who demonstrate the ability to tune their instruments without help. All violin and viola players must have a **SHOULDER REST**. Cellists/bassists need a **ROCK STOP.**
2. **Blank Notebook.** Students will be need a blank notebook. Students may leave their notebooks in their assigned slots in the orchestra room.
3. **Two pencils with erasers.**Bring these to class (or leave them in your folder) EVERY day!
4. **Method Book.** All students are required to purchase a method book (available in both local music stores). Be sure to check that the correct instrument is labeled on the book!

**Beginning** orchestra will be using *Essential Elements for Strings, vol. 1 (orange)*

**Intermediate** orchestra will be using *Essential Elements for Strings, vol. 2 (purple)*

**Advanced** orchestra will be using *Essential Technique for Strings, vol. 3 (green)*

1. **Orchestra Shirt.** All students will purchase a beautiful CMS orchestra shirt to be worn at all concerts. The purchase price of the CMS orchestra polo shirt is $20. Students will also need khaki pants or skirts to complete their concert uniform.
2. **Rosin.** Every student should have their own rosin. Please label the rosin case with name.

**Supplies - Recommended**

1. **Digital tuner.** This can be used for at-home tuning with help from a parent. Apps work too.
2. **Metronome.** This helps students practice at a steady tempo at home. Apps work too.
3. **Music Stand.** Music stands allow for easier at-home practice. Students play with better posture when they can see their music on a stand instead of a table or chair.
4. **Extra set of strings.** Strings sometimes break because of age, tuning, or accidents. If you do not keep an extra set on hand, please be ready to purchase additional strings should one break.

**Sheet Music**

Sheet music is like a library book. It is checked out to each student for the duration of use at home and at school between concerts. It is loaned to the student and must be returned to the school in the same condition in which it was received. Students will be provided with a music folder to keep the music safe. Please use the folder provided. Each student is responsible for keeping this music safe, wrinkle-free, and tear-free. Music is NOT to be CUT or FOLDED to fit into binders. Students should use ONLY pencil when marking music so that it can be easily erased before being turned in. Students are also responsible for bringing their own music to class every day. This is part of being prepared for class.

**If a student loses, damages, or destroys a piece of music, the student will owe the orchestra and school the replacement cost of the music**

**School Instruments**

There are a limited number of school instruments available for use. Students who choose to rent a school instrument ($50/year) will be responsible for maintaining it. This includes replacement of broken strings and any repairs due to student negligence. Parents, please note that these repairs can run anywhere from $45 to rehair a bow to $300 to seal cracks and replace broken bridges. If an instrument should become damaged beyond repair while in the student’s custody, providing an approved replacement instrument is the responsibility of the students and his/her legal guardians. Students must be careful!

Cellists and bassists with instruments at home will be able to rent a school cello just for use at school so that an instrument does not need to be transported each day. Violinists and violists should bring their instrument to and from school each day.

**Music Stores**

Whittlesticks The Music Store

535 South Main, Suite 5 558 E Riverside Dr

Cedar City St. George

867-4424 435-817-5357

Whittlesticks has everything you need for your string instrument, including the required book. Whittlesticks sells instruments and has partnered with The Music Store to rent high-quality string instruments. Luke Heaton is a professionally-trained, licensed luthier (the only one in the area) and is the best at what he does. He will **repair** your stringed instrument for very fair prices, and will often finish the repair in less than two days. Common repairs are for broken bridges, strings, and bows; loose pegs; and cracks in the instrument. Please note that Ms. Carrigan will often adjust students’ instruments at school at their request, which sometimes causes a string or bridge to break (a normal occurrence). Ms. Carrigan will **not** be held responsible in such instances. ☺

Cedar Music Store

602 South Main St

Cedar City

586-8742

Music Works

188 East 300 South

St. George

435-673-5552

All of these stores have rent-to-own policies and provide affordable high-quality instruments. They also will be selling the book we’ll be using in class in addition to extra items such as metronomes, tuners, and music stands.

Additional stores are: Summerhayes, MusicArts.com, SharMusic.com

Each of the physical music stores also offer private lessons. If wish to see a longer list of private lesson teachers, please contact Ms. Carrigan and she will be happy to help. Private lessons are a great way to help your student get individual feedback and instruction tailored to his or her specific needs on a weekly basis.

**Please Put this on your Fridge!!!**

**Concert Dates for 2017-2018 CMS Orchestras**

October 9, 2018 6:00pm in the CMS Gym – All Orchestras

November 10, 2018 Intermediate/Advanced trip to the Southern Utah

String Festival @Fossil Ridge Int. School – All day, load buses at 7:30am, return around 3:00pm.

December 11, 2018 6:00pm in the CMS Gym – All Orchestras

January 28, 2019 Advanced Orchestra to tour the elementary

schools – during school all day.

March 5, 2019 6:00pm in the CMS Gym – All Orchestras

March 12 or 13 2019 State Middle School Orchestra (if we qualify)

April ? 2019 SUU MS Music Festival - maybe

May 7, 2019 6:00pm in the CMS Gym – All Orchestras

May 15, 2019 Advanced performs for CMS Open House

**Please put these concerts on your calendar TODAY (in your phone, your planner, your computer, your google calendar, etc.) We need ALL of the students present to be a successful group! Thank you!!**

You can contact Ms. Carrigan at Christina.Carrigan@ironmail.org

You can also find orchestra info at cmsorch.weebly.com

Sign up for Orchestra Text Reminders by texting @cmsorch6 to 81010

**Cedar Middle School Orchestra Course Disclosure**

I understand that my child’s grades are based on the points they earn from Rehearsal Skills, Written Assignments/Quizzes, Playing Tests, Pass-offs, Attending Outside Concerts, and Attending the CMS Orchestra concerts. Parents are encouraged to check their student’s progress on PowerSchool.

I understand that concert attendance is mandatory and have taken steps to ensure my child’s attendance for the October 9, November 10 (Int. and Adv. only), December 11, January 28 (Adv. only), March 5, March ? (Adv only, maybe), April ?, and May 7 performances.

I have read the Orchestra Course Disclosure.

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Parent’s Name (printed) Parent’s Signature Date

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Student’s Name (printed) Student’s Signature Date

**Orchestra updates, information about assignments and concerts, and more will be sent via E-mail. Please make sure your email address is correct in PowerSchool.**

**Parent/Guardian Information**

Parents and guardians, I especially thank **you** for taking the time to fill out this section!

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to student: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Preferred contact number \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Name of contact \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Are there any special skills you’d be willing to share with our class?

If you know right now that your student will be unable to attend one of the concerts, please let me know now so that he or she can be excused.

Please share any special information about your child that will help me to better meet his or her needs.