



"A Tradition of Excellence"
2007-2008 Handbook

Martin High School Orchestras

Directors:

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The administration, faculty, and staff at Martin High School take pride in being able to offer a full and varied instrumental music program. The orchestra courses offered include the Concert I & II, the Philharmonia, Philharmonic and the Symphony Orchestras. All students, regardless of ability, are welcomed and encouraged to participate in these ensembles.

Though we consider participation in instrumental music programs a basic right of all students enrolled at Martin High School, it is understood by the directors and the administration, that selection to and participation in the orchestra is a “privilege” and not an automatic right. This privilege is earned by the student showing:

- 1) Responsible behavior
- 2) Dependability
- 3) Musical excellence
- 4) Dedication

It is the goal of the directors to produce an outstanding orchestra. It is also the belief of the directors that students learn more and develop better self-discipline and responsibility, and take more pride in outstanding orchestras than in poor ones. To produce an outstanding orchestra requires that each student accept certain responsibilities.

The following pages will outline the basic requirements for the Concert, Philharmonia, Philharmonic and Symphony Orchestras. Please return the last page of this handbook to the school with the requested information completed. This will indicate your notification and acceptance of the policies of the Martin High School Orchestras. Please retain the remainder of the handbook at home so that you may refer to it when necessary. If the student does not return the signed page, this will be considered an indication that the student and/or family, finds the responsibilities contained herein unacceptable. In this case, the student will be placed willingly, and without prejudice, in another class.

PURPOSE

The orchestras at Martin High School are legitimate classes that meet regularly during the school day. The nature of each class requires the development of skills, concepts, and attitudes to be learned in class. These must, however, often be demonstrated outside of class by many and varied forms in public performance.

MEMBER SELECTION

Placement in the Concert, Philharmonia, Philharmonic and the Symphony Orchestras will be based on the following criteria:

- 1) Enrollment in the daily scheduled class (for string members)
- 2) Band Director's recommendation (for wind and percussion members)
- 3) The orchestra's instrumentation needs
- 4) The playing ability, attitude, and dedication of each individual student

CONTINUING ENROLLMENT

The continuance of each student in the orchestra program will be evaluated on a year to year basis by the director. Selection for one year does not guarantee the same for the next. Students must meet the following requirements to maintain their membership in the orchestra program:

- 1) Maintain a "C" average or higher in orchestra
- 2) Demonstrate mature conduct in class, at performances, and on trips
- 3) Demonstrate loyalty and dedication to the group at all times
- 4) Receive **no** Unexcused Absences from rehearsals and/or concerts
- 5) Display increased proficiency on their individual instrument during the previous year

CONDUCT

Being that the conduct of the Martin Orchestra student reflects not only on himself, but all other orchestra students as well as the school, each student is required to follow these rules:

- 1) Common courtesy
- 2) Mature conduct
- 3) Rules as outlined by the orchestra director (Written and Verbal)
- 4) School rules and policies as outlined by the Martin Student Handbook

Students guilty of improper conduct will be dropped from the class.

ATTENDANCE

An orchestra cannot perform at optimum with members missing. Therefore, students are required to participate in all rehearsals and performances unless excused by the director (see excused absences). It is understood by the director that these performance dates will be announced as far in advance as possible. A list of confirmed dates will be given to all students at the beginning of the school year. This list is not meant to be complete, but to give you as many dates in advance as possible. All other dates will be posted in the orchestra room as they are arranged. No further written notice will be given! It is the responsibility of each student to convey this information to his/her parents. Please check calendars carefully to avoid any problems.

EXTRA REHEARSALS

Rehearsals outside of school time will be called only when absolutely necessary. If string sectionals are needed, these will be held after school hours. There should be no need for these if each student practices their part at home. However, sometimes this does not happen and the quality of the group cannot be sacrificed. Sectional rehearsals are required of all sections who have not mastered the required music.

Full orchestra rehearsals, with the winds and percussion, will be held after school during the winter, contest, and spring performance seasons. All students in the Symphony Orchestra will be required to attend these rehearsals in order to maintain their membership in the Symphony Orchestra!

EXTRA PERFORMANCES

On occasion, requests are made to have only part of the orchestra perform at a certain event. Rules of attendance apply the same for these events.

EXTRA HELP

If extra help is needed to master the necessary skills required, the director is available after school to help students free of charge. It is the student's responsibility to contact the director and make this arrangement.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

The following qualify as excused absences:

- 1) Illness
- 2) Death in the family
- 3) Family emergency
- 4) A previously scheduled conflict which the director **has approved in writing** no later than 7 days before the announced date. All absences will be considered unexcused until approved by the director.

IMPORTANT: In the event of a conflict, **the student** has the responsibility of **submitting a signed form** from a parent or the appropriate teacher of sponsor stating the reason for the conflict. These forms are available from the orchestra office. Forms that have not been submitted prior to two weeks before the orchestra event may not be considered. This form does not automatically excuse an absence. Each case is considered individually and privately according to its circumstances.

In the case a rehearsal or performance is missed with an excused absence it will be the **student's responsibility** to obtain the make up assignment from the orchestra director. This assignment will be due ONE WEEK from the date of the missed rehearsal or performance. Full credit can be earned for an excused absence.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

Never assume an absence will be excused! Although it would be impossible to include a complete list, the following identifies examples of unexcused absences:

- 1) Homework
- 2) Transportation problem
- 3) Working at a job
- 4) Birthday celebrations
- 5) Oversleeping
- 6) Forgetting instrument and/or music

*An unexcused absence from a rehearsal will result in 5 points being deducted from the students six weeks average. An unexcused absence from a **performance** will result in the student failing the six weeks in which the performance occurred!

CARE OF MUSIC

Students are responsible for all music they receive. Missing or damaged music must be replaced or a \$5.00 fine, per sheet, must be paid. A missing folder will result in a fine of \$10.00. Whenever seating is changed, each student is responsible for checking the new folder. Any missing or damaged music must be reported at that time. The following will be considered damage:

- 1) Torn pages
- 2) Extraneous markings
- 3) Writing in ink or magic marker
- 4) Any other markings or damages which might hamper future use of the music

EQUIPMENT

The following will be expected of all orchestra members:

- 1) All instruments are to be in good playing condition. Proper maintenance is **REQUIRED!**
- 2) Students are expected to have shoulder pads, rock stops, etc. at each rehearsal and performance.
- 3) All students are required to have an extra set of strings. A student will be allowed one day of class time because of a broken string. After that time, each day of class time missed will result in 5 points being deducted from the six weeks grade.
- 4) All instruments at one time or another will need to be repaired at a music shop. Whenever a student is unable to participate because of a broken instrument, a note is required from his/her parent. Only a reasonable amount of time for repair will be allowed.
- 5) Students are required to have a pencil on their stand at every rehearsal.

UNIFORMS

The Concert, Philharmonia, Philharmonic & Symphony Orchestras all wear professional black for performance. This includes a long black dress for the girls and a tuxedo for the boys. Students may use their own dresses and tuxes or they may rent one from the school, however, all uniforms must be consistent with the school uniform. A rental fee of \$15.00 is required for all school uniforms. All uniforms must be dry cleaned before being returned to the school.

ORCHESTRA TRIPS

On selected years, the Martin Orchestras will participate in some form of extra-curricular trip. The destination of the trip, and the contest entered, will be decided on by the director. Students will be responsible for all cost pertaining to this trip. Since not all students are financially able to handle the cost, some form of fund raising project will be offered to help defray some of the expenses.

Since the trip involves the representation of the school during some form of performance; should any factor become involved that would result in a poor reflection on the students and the school, the director retains the right to cancel the trip. (Example - Too many students not able to make the trip due to cost or grades.)

More information will be given to you concerning the trip as it is confirmed. (Cost, time, place, etc.)

GRADES

Grades will be determined by the following criteria:

- 1) Quality of performance
- 2) Knowledge of music
- 3) Daily preparation
- 4) Daily participation
- 5) Conduct and attitude
- 6) Attendance at rehearsals & concerts
(Students are expected to be present for the entire concert, not just their individual performance.)
- 7) Written examinations
- 8) Playing examinations (live & taped)

Students desiring an “A” grade should do the following:

- 1) Demonstrate good posture and position at all times
- 2) Master the required music
- 3) Make an effort to improve deficient areas
- 4) Have all music properly marked
- 5) Have proper equipment and music for each class
- 6) Pay attention during class
- 7) Demonstrate proper conduct during class (no gum, no talking while tuning and rehearsing, etc.)
- 8) Be on time for all classes, rehearsals and concerts
- 9) Prepare for playing and written tests

Students are encouraged to check with the director at any time regarding the status of his/her grade.

All students who fulfill the criteria for making the grade of “A” as outlined in this handbook will receive the numerical grade of “93”. Extra points can be earned or lost through any or all of the following methods:

Extra Credit

- 1) One point will be added to the six weeks average of any student who practices at least 2 1/2 hours for any one week period on the instrument they play in orchestra. A total of one point per week can be earned. (6 weeks = 6 points)
- 2) Five points will be added to the six weeks average of any student who auditions for either All-Region or All-State Orchestra.
- 3) Five points will be added to the six weeks average of any student who performs a solo and/or ensemble at either the UIL or UTA Solo & Ensemble Contest
- 4) One point will be added to the six weeks average of any student who attends an approved performance by another orchestra. The director’s approval is required!
- 5) Two points will be added to the six weeks average for a performance given by any student as a member of a performing ensemble approved by the director.
- 6) Other extra credit as approved by the director.

Point Reduction Examples

- 1) Five points will be deducted from the six weeks average of any student who fails to turn in their tryout tape on time. (Tapes may not be turned in after the appointed time.)
- 2) Five points will be deducted from the six weeks average of any student who does not have their instrument in class. (One day allowed to get new strings)

****All extra credit points must be turned in to the director in writing by two days prior to the end of the six weeks grading period in which the extra credit took place.**

****It is the student’s responsibility to check with the director regarding any item that may result in the lose of points.**

****AN UNEXCUSED ABSENCE FROM A PERFORMANCE WILL RESULT IN THE STUDENT FAILING THE SIX WEEKS IN WHICH THE PERFORMANCE OCCURRED!**

DISCIPLINE PLAN

- 1) A student must follow instructions the first time they are given.
- 2) Students must have their instruments and music in class every day.
- 3) Students must be in the rehearsal room before the bell rings. Each student will have one minute to get their instruments out and be seated in their chairs ready to play. Students late in the room or not ready to play on time will be counted tardy
- 4) Students are not to leave the rehearsal room without permission from the director. This includes during and after daily rehearsals.
- 5) No talking, whispering, throwing objects, etc. during the instruction period.
- 6) No gum is allowed in the orchestra room at any time!
- 7) No student will be allowed to laugh at, attempt to embarrass, or ridicule any other student.

If a student chooses to break a rule:

- 1) 1st infraction - 5 points off citizenship grade
- 2) 2nd infraction - 5 points off citizenship grade and notify parents
- 3) 3rd infraction - 10 points off citizenship grade and refer to the office for further action
- 4) 4th infraction - a citizenship grade of F be assigned

DIRECTOR'S PHILOSOPHY

The directors of the Martin High School Orchestra believe that each student is capable of making a contribution to the group and growing in knowledge and appreciation. The policies and procedures, outlined in this handbook, provide an accurate method of assessing each student's progress. The personal and musical progress of each student is the ultimate goal of this organization.

Martin High School Orchestra Handbook Form

I have read and understand the rules and obligations of being a member of the Martin High School orchestra program and am willing to fulfill the responsibilities of membership in that organization.

(Student Signature)

(Parent Signature)

(Date)

**THIS PAGE MUST BE RETURNED TO THE DIRECTOR BY
FRIDAY, AUGUST 31, 2007**