

PLANO WEST ORCHESTRA

HANDBOOK

Ryan Ross, Director
Amy Gross, Associate Director

planowestorchestra.com

Welcome to the Plano West Senior High Orchestra Program!!

Please **READ and RETAIN** this handbook as a future reference. You will provide consent to this handbook using an online form found at planowestorchestra.com

We are asking **ALL** parents to PLEASE become involved in your son's or daughter's orchestra activities this year by helping with our special events, concerts, trips, and fundraisers—it really takes the help of all parents to run a large organization as successful as the Plano West Orchestra.

In the years Plano West has been open, our orchestra has become THE standard for achievements by a high school orchestra in state and national honors. These include consistent UIL Sweepstakes awards, being named Texas State Honor Orchestra for 2002, 2004, 2006 2008, 2010, 2016, 2018, 2019, and 2023, an appearance on the Disney Channel, and numerous Best in Class and Best in festival awards. The Symphony and Chamber Orchestra has also performed to standing ovations at the prestigious Midwest Clinic in Chicago and received rave reviews from music professionals all over the world!

In addition to experiencing the very finest in orchestral experiences by performing in the Plano West orchestras, students who meet the requirements are also given the opportunity to earn Honors credit by completing assignments outside the scope of the normal curriculum. The success of this orchestra program is dependent upon the dedication and support of you, the parents of these wonderful and talented students. Please continue to help us grow and flourish!

The rules and procedures outlined in this handbook have been developed to accomplish these goals in the most efficient and productive manner, and to provide an accurate method of assessing each student's progress. It is the personal and musical progress of each student which is the ultimate goal of this organization. The success of the *Plano West Senior High School Orchestra* is based on the concept of each student performing his or her assigned tasks to the best of their ability. Each student is capable of making a contribution to the group and growing in knowledge and appreciation.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call (469-752-9842) or email either of us at: ryan.ross@pisd.edu or amy.gross@pisd.edu

Ryan Ross, Director
469-752-9842 office

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UNIFORMS

Each Orchestra member will be issued a formal uniform and protective bag. Dress wearers need to provide black, **closed toed shoes and black leggings/hose**. Tuxedo wearers must provide their own **tuxedo shirt, black socks, and black dress shoes** (No sneakers permitted). Do not wear jeans or other clothes under your uniform. Uniforms need to be returned by the assigned date in order for it to be dry cleaned by the Plano West Orchestra. If you do not turn in the uniform by the deadline date, you will be required to have it dry cleaned on your own and provide the receipt. If any part of the uniform is missing, you will be required to pay the district determined amount to replace the lost item.

VOLUNTARY STUDENT INSTRUMENT INSURANCE

Musical instrument insurance should be purchased by each student to cover damage and/or loss of instruments. Parents are encouraged to look for coverage through a homeowner's policy or through an outside company. There are many that advertise online.

VOLUNTARY STUDENT INJURY INSURANCE

Voluntary accident insurance for injuries which may be sustained during practices and/or performances of the music program is available from many independent carriers. For example:

<http://markel.sevencorners.com>.

1-877-444-5014

The information is also available to all parents, staff and students by visiting

<http://www.pisd.edu/parents>

USING A SCHOOL-OWNED INSTRUMENT

PISD assesses a **\$85.00 per year, non-refundable, usage fee** to use all school owned instruments. This is to help the district defray repair and upkeep expenses. **If your child intends to use any district-owned instrument, this money is due the first few weeks of the school year. The preferred payment method is through the parent portal, although checks or money orders (made out to PISD) will also be accepted. No cash should be sent.** If there are financial concerns, please contact an orchestra teacher privately.

GENERAL ORCHESTRA ESSENTIALS

All students are asked to pay for orchestra essentials of \$75.00. Checks should be made out to Plano West Orchestra Boosters. Alternatively, online payment may be made on the "Forms" section of planowestorchestra.com in Step 4. This covers uniform costs, t-shirts, social events, sheet music, performance venues, and other expenses the district cannot cover.

GRADING POLICY

The Plano Independent School District Secondary Music Program offers a comprehensive music education through the study of music theory, history, form, analysis, and performance of music literature from all style periods and varied cultures. Students will:

- Display sound fundamental concepts of tone, rhythm, sight-reading, performance technique, and musical expression.
- Develop music notation skills and be able to create music via written composition and improvisational techniques.
- Acquire listening skills in order to critically evaluate musical performances of individuals and groups.
- Understand the relationships between music and other arts and disciplines, and appreciate the historical and cultural significance of music in our society.
- Appreciate music as an avocation and/or vocation.
- Exhibit informed concert etiquette during live performances in a variety of settings.

60% -- Major Grades (i.e. playing tests, concerts, extra rehearsals, honors credit work, etc...)

40% - Minor Grades (i.e. rehearsal grades, spot checks, supply checks, etc...)

Students will receive a 0 on their daily rehearsal grade if they forget supplies, such as their instrument or personal music binder, or if they are distracted in class by their phones or other activities.

HONORS CREDIT

To participate in honors credit, you will need to make the change with your counselor by the end of August. The requirements will be reviewed in class the first week of school so students can make an informed decision one way or another.

ATTENDANCE / EXTRA REHEARSALS

Extra rehearsals are necessary from time to time as performance pressures dictate. Every effort will be made to keep these to an absolute minimum. They will be scheduled as conveniently as possible but students are expected to make every effort to accommodate them. Missing a required rehearsal due to work or other unapproved reason is considered unexcused. **Unavoidable conflicts must be discussed and resolved with the director PRIOR to the event.** Notification does not automatically excuse you.

It is YOUR responsibility to check your personal schedule once you receive the rehearsal schedule. This includes work schedules, SAT prep classes, private lessons, etc.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

The following will be accepted as excused absences:

- Unavoidable conflict with an official SCHOOL function
- Illness certified through a parent or doctor IN WRITING
- Medical appointments made before a rehearsal was announced
- Serious illness or death in the family

As stated in the PISD course selection guide, attendance is required at all performances. An unexcused absence from a performance could result in a failing grade for the grading period and is sufficient reason for dismissal from Orchestra.

TRAVEL

In addition to local performances the Plano West Senior High Orchestra may make appearances away from school each year. There is one overnight trip taken every year alternating between in-state and out of state. All members of the orchestra are invited to travel with the group. Requirements for these trips are:

- Students must meet all local and state eligibility requirements to participate in travel or competitions.
- Students must have attended scheduled rehearsals necessary for the preparation for the performance.
- Students must fulfill their financial obligations to the organization.

PRIVATE LESSON PROGRAM

Supplemental music lessons are offered as enrichment to classroom instruction. These lessons are designed to utilize the characteristic literature of the instrument or voice, rather than to rehearse the music a student will be performing in his or her school organization. Participation in these supplemental lessons is optional. Students who elect to not participate in supplemental lessons will not be penalized grade wise or otherwise in their class activities. All students will have access to supplemental lessons.

Student's Responsibility to the Supplemental Music Teacher:

1. Be fully prepared for each lesson.
2. Follow guidelines pertaining to absenteeism.
3. Provide documentation of required practice time each week.
4. Supply method books and other materials as required by the private teacher.
5. Participate in all activities required as a condition of private study.

Lesson Location and Scheduling:

Lessons during the day will be taught in the school the student attends.

The supplemental music instructor will schedule lessons for the students in the program who desire to participate. Lessons will be twenty-five minutes in length.

These lessons may be scheduled during the student's band/choir/orchestra class, lunch hour, and before or after school. No lessons will be scheduled during non-music classes.

It will be the responsibility of the student to notify his/her supplemental music instructor at least twenty-four hours in advance if a lesson is to be cancelled unless, of course, a serious emergency arises. This courtesy is also the responsibility of the supplemental music instructor if he/she must cancel a lesson.

The school directors will aid the student in advising the supplemental music teacher of concerts, programs, holidays, etc., which would result in any interruption of the regular lesson schedule.

Financial Implications:

The Supplemental Music Teacher will be responsible for all billing, collection, and accounting for funds related to lessons. Checks will be made payable directly to the Supplemental Music Teacher. **LESSONS WILL BE \$25.00 PER 25 MINUTE LESSON.**

Enrollment:

Enrollment by the students in the supplemental music lesson program is on a completely voluntary basis. School music directors will not put any undue pressure on students to take supplemental music lessons. Termination of lessons by the student, supplemental music teacher, or organization director will be accomplished by written notice to the student or teacher and the campus director.

Supplemental music teachers are assigned as requested by the student, if possible. In some cases, individual schedules will not allow the requested teacher. Questions concerning assignment of supplemental music teachers should be directed to your student's band, choir, or orchestra director. Questions concerning lesson dates and times, or number of lessons taught, should be directed to your student's supplemental music teacher.