

Battlefield High School – Orchestra Handbook

2018 – 2019 Academic Year

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Section 1: Introduction

I am excited to welcome you to orchestra at Battlefield High School. We are entering the fifteenth year of our award-winning program. Last year, our accolades included on-stage superior ratings at district assessment from all three of our orchestras, winning Grand Prize at the Music in the Parks Competition in Williamsburg, and a performance at the VA Music Educators Assoc. State Conference, among other honors.

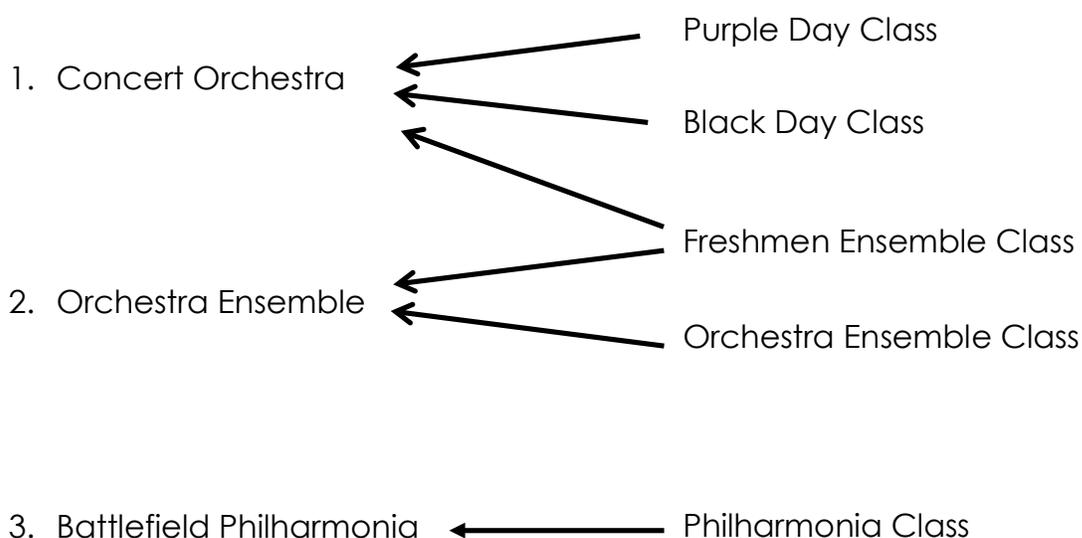


The purpose of this handbook is to provide information you need to know about the day-to-day operations of our orchestra program. This handbook is required reading!

Section 2: About our Orchestra Classes

Overview

Battlefield High School has three orchestras that are split into five classes. Classes that are a part of the same orchestra learn the same music and perform together in concerts.



How was my class level determined?

Class placement occurs by audition at the end of the preceding academic year. Therefore, most students performed an audition to determine their class placement for the current school year in April of 2018. Your placement is based upon your live performance audition and upon what is seen on a daily basis during class (participation, behavior, commitment, and orchestra "citizenship").

Entrance Requirements

Concert Orchestra: This course is open to all Battlefield students. At least one year of experience in a middle school strings class is strongly recommended, but not required. Instruction is geared primarily toward incoming freshmen, with some sophomores, juniors, and seniors also enrolling. There are two classes, one meeting on “black days” and one meeting on “purple days”, but they follow identical curriculums and study the same music for each concert.

Freshmen Ensemble: Entrance requirements are the same as Orchestra Ensemble (below), except that this class is only open to freshmen. It is designed to provide additional and necessary instructional supports to younger students while allowing them to pursue more advanced repertoire. This class performs with both Orchestra Ensemble and Concert Orchestra and all concerts.

Orchestra Ensemble: The student exhibits perfect playing position. Students are able to play a two-octave scale perfectly in tune. Students are able to produce a beautiful tone across multiple dynamic levels. Students are able to sight-read basic passages in third position (violins, violas, and basses) or fourth position (cellos) with attention to key signature and accidentals. The student displays impeccable commitment to achieving the highest standards of musical performance. The student is committed to the success of his/her peers and the orchestra as a whole. This class is open to sophomores, juniors, and seniors.

Battlefield Philharmonia: The student exhibits perfect playing position. Students are able to play a three-octave scale perfectly in tune. Students are able to produce a beautiful, confident, and leading sound across multiple dynamic levels. Students are able to sight-read VBODA grade 3 literature. Students display exemplary character, commitment to individual and group success, and the unrelenting desire to achieve a world-class performance standard. Instruction is geared primarily toward sophomores, juniors, and seniors.

The Battlefield Philharmonia is an honors class with a significant number of required activities that take place outside of the regular school day.

Section 3: Grading

All students earn a grade in orchestra. The time spent preparing for each concert is considered a “unit” and equates to your quarter grade (i.e. the fall concert unit is your 1st quarter grade, the winter concert unit is your 2nd quarter grade, etc.). The grading criteria for each unit is released when the unit begins.

Students may retake most assignments for a better grade. If you are interested in retaking an assignment, let the teacher know in order to set up a time to do it.

All retakes must be completed by the concert date.

From time to time, a retake may be required. If a retake is required, it must be completed before the concert or the score will convert to a “zero”.

Section 4: Concert Attendance

Concerts are critical in the learning process and **attendance is graded**. Division policy mandates students must be present for all concerts. There are no excused absences except in the most extreme circumstances.



An excused absence from school **does not** automatically excuse a student from the concert. In the unusual event that a student must request an excused absence from a concert, the following guidelines must be adhered to:

1. Your request must come from your parent/guardian as a signed note.
2. **Your request must precede the concert.** Except in emergency situations, requests made after the concert will not be considered.
3. A make-up assignment will be required if an excused absence is granted.

An unexcused absence from a concert is a serious infraction. In the event of an unexcused absence, a parent/guardian conference is required in order for the student to continue performing with the class. The concert grade is additionally recorded as a “zero”. Finally, students in Philharmonia will receive an automatic one-concert suspension.

Section 5: After-School Rehearsals

After-school rehearsals are mandatory and graded. A complete listing of after school rehearsals is attached to this handbook and available online. Students will receive a minimum of two-weeks notice on any changes to these dates.

Excused absences can be requested if a major conflict presents itself. To request an excused absence from an after school rehearsal:



1. **Email** the orchestra director (saundez@pwcs.edu) as soon as you are aware of the conflict. Your request must be submitted via email at least 24 hours before the beginning of the rehearsal (except in cases of illness/family emergency).
2. The orchestra director will reply to your email to approve your request. Your request is not approved until you have received confirmation from the orchestra director. Documentation may be required.
3. In the event of illness, you must have an excused absence or early dismissal from school on the day of the rehearsal.
4. The director reserves the right to deny a request for an excused absence.

Section 6: Materials

Materials you must bring to every class:

1. A pencil (on your music stand)
2. All of your music in a 2-pocket folder
3. Your instrument and bow*
4. A shoulder rest (violin/viola only)
5. Rosin and a polishing cloth
6. A tuner and metronome**



*Cellos/Basses may use a school owned instrument during class.

**There is a free app available on most smartphones. A metronome and tuner can be borrowed from the school if you do not have access to a smartphone.

Materials you will need for concerts:

1. Specific formal attire (available for rent through the school)
2. A rock stop (cellists and bassists)

***NOTE:** WHILE CELLOS AND BASSES CAN USE SCHOOL INSTRUMENTS DURING CLASS, STUDENTS MUST STILL HAVE AN INSTRUMENT AT HOME FOR PRACTICE ASSIGNMENTS AND TO BRING TO CONCERTS.

If you have trouble obtaining these items, please do not hesitate to contact me at saundez@pwcs.edu. **Financial assistance is available for students in need.**

Section 7: Instrument Rental and Storage

Instrument Rentals

Cellos and basses are provided to all students for in-class use (rental fee applies). However, students must obtain a cello/bass for home and concert use. A small quantity can be rented through the school on a first-come, first-serve basis. Instruments are also available for rent through local shops.

Violins and violas are only available to rent for students with an exceptional financial need. They can also be borrowed for short term use (one month or less). Please contact me at saundez@pwcs.edu for more information.

Storage

Instrument storage is provided in room 1416 (attached to the orchestra room). This allows students a place to leave their instrument during the school day so they do not have to carry it from class to class. While we do everything we can to ensure the safety of these instruments, **please understand that this storage is provided at your own risk.** We cannot accept responsibility for lost, stolen, or damaged instruments.

Violins and violas **must** have a name clearly labeled on the case in order to use the storage room. This helps prevent instrument mix-ups.

It is strongly recommended that student use instrument cases equipped with a lock as secured storage is not available given the equipment available.

Section 8: Class Conduct

Students are expected to adhere to the student code of conduct and uphold all classroom expectations. Failure to comply with any given instruction can result in a reduction of the participation grade, contact with the parent/guardian, and/or permanent removal from the performing ensemble.

*****Students are required to check the class SLMS page daily! You are responsible for all information posted to that page!*****

Section 9: Required Dates

A list of required dates (concerts, rehearsals, etc.) is included at the end of this packet. Please mark these dates in your calendar as they are mandatory and graded.



Section 10: Financial Assistance

Each year, we reserve a percentage of our funds to assist families who need assistance in covering required orchestra expenses. Our goal is to ensure all students can participate, regardless of how much they can afford. To learn more, please contact me at saundez@pwcs.edu.

Section 11: Orchestra Cords

Graduating seniors are eligible to earn a cord in orchestra when the following criteria have been met*:

1. Student has enrolled in orchestra in high school for three years.
2. Student has logged a total of 3 orchestra service hours each year for both their junior and senior years (6 hours total) OR a total of 8 service hours their senior year.
3. Student has earned an overall grade of "B" or higher each year in orchestra.
4. Student participated in Solo and Ensemble festival their senior year.



*****IMPORTANT***:** Students are required to submit a documentation form for all service hours within one week of the activity. Students who fail to submit a documentation form within the specified time frame are not eligible to receive service hours for the activity.

2018-19 Orchestra Commitment Agreement

Due Date: _____

1.) I verify that I have read all sections of the orchestra handbook and agree to follow the policies set forth.

2.) I understand that all concerts and after-school rehearsals are required, graded events. I have marked all of the concert dates in my personal calendar/agenda.



3.) I understand that the instrument storage area is provided as a convenience to students at their own risk. While it is our priority to keep the room secure, Battlefield High School cannot accept liability for lost or stolen instruments.

4.) I understand the retake policy (see "Section 3: Grading").

5.) I understand performing my instrument in class is a privilege and that I can be removed at the teacher's discretion if my behavior warrants.

If you have any questions or concerns about the information in this handbook, please reach out to me at saundez@pwcs.edu before submitting your commitment agreement. I am happy to help in any way I can.

Student Name (PLEASE PRINT): _____

Student Signature: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Required Dates

*Rehearsals may be added to this schedule if needed, however there will always be two weeks notice via SLMS.

Concert Orchestra (Blocks 3, 4, and 7)

Tuesday, October 2nd: After School Rehearsal, 2:25-3:30PM (ON STAGE)
Thursday, October 11th: Fall Concert, 7PM start/students report at 5PM
Monday, December 10th: After School Rehearsal, 2:25-4PM (ON STAGE)
Tuesday, December 11th: Winter Concert, 7PM start /students report at 5PM
Tuesday, February 19th: After School Rehearsal, 2:25-4PM (ON STAGE)
Tuesday, February 26th: Pre-Assessment Concert, 7PM start/students report at 5PM
Thursday, February 28th: After School Rehearsal, 2:25-4PM (BAND ROOM)
Thursday, March 7th: DISTRICT ASSESSMENT AT SJHS, TIMES TO BE ANNOUNCED
Tuesday, May 7th: After School Rehearsal, 2:25-4PM (BAND ROOM)
Tuesday, May 21st: After School Rehearsal, 2:25-4PM (BAND ROOM)
Thursday, May 30th: Spring Concert, 7PM start/students report at 5PM

Orchestra Ensemble (Blocks 1 and 3)

Thursday, October 4th: After School Rehearsal, 2:25-3:30PM (ON STAGE)
Thursday, October 11th: Fall Concert, 7PM start/students report at 5PM
Thursday, December 6th: After School Rehearsal, 2:25-4PM (Band Room)
Tuesday, December 11th: Winter Concert, 7PM start /students report at 5PM
Thursday, February 14th: After School Rehearsal, 2:25-4PM (Band Room)
Thursday, February 21st: After School Rehearsal, 2:25-4PM (Stage)
Tuesday, February 26th: Pre-Assessment Concert, 7PM start/students report at 5PM
Tuesday, March 5th: After School Rehearsal, 2:25-4PM (BAND ROOM)
Thursday, March 7th: DISTRICT ASSESSMENT AT SJHS, TIMES TO BE ANNOUNCED
Thursday, May 9th: After School Rehearsal, 2:25-4PM (BAND ROOM)
Thursday, May 23rd: After School Rehearsal, 2:25-4PM (BAND ROOM)
Thursday, May 30th: Spring Concert, 7PM start/students report at 5PM

*Philharmonia dates are available as a separate attachment.



Battlefield Philharmonia Rehearsal Schedule 2018-2019 Concert Season

Fall Concert Rehearsals

Philharmonia Boot Camp

Monday, Aug. 20th, Times TBA

Tuesday, Aug. 21st, Times TBA

Thursday, Aug. 23rd, Times TBA

Friday, Aug. 24th, Times TBA

Sectionals

Cellos: Thursday, Sept. 6th, 2:30-3:30PM (Orch. Room)

Violins/Violas: Friday, Sept. 7th, 2:30-3:30PM (Orch. Room)

Cellos: Wednesday, Sept. 12th, 2:30-3:30PM (Orch. Room)

Violins/Violas: Thursday, Sept. 13th, 2:30-3:30PM (Orch. Room)

Full Rehearsal

Friday, Oct. 5th, 2:30-4PM (Stage)

Fall Concert – Thursday, Oct. 11th, 7PM

Winter Concert Rehearsals

Sectionals

Cellos: Thursday, Oct. 25th, 2:30-3:30PM (Orch. Room)

Vlins/Vlas: Friday, Oct. 26th, 2:30-3:30PM (Orch. Room)

Cellos: Thursday, Nov. 1st, 2:30-3:30PM (Orch. Room)

Vlins/Vlas: Friday, Nov. 2nd, 2:30-3:30PM (Orch. Room)

Full Rehearsal

Friday, Dec. 7th, 2:30-4PM (Band Room)

Winter Concert – Thursday, Dec. 11th, 7PM

Assessment Season Rehearsals

Sectionals

Cellos: Thursday, Jan. 3rd, 2:30-3:30PM (Orch. Room)

Vlins/Vlas: Friday, Jan. 4th, 2:30-3:30PM (Orch. Room)

Cellos: Thursday, Jan. 10th, 2:30-3:30PM (Orch. Room)

Vlins/Vlas: Friday, Jan. 11th, 2:30-3:30PM (Orch. Room)

(Backup) Cellos: Thursday, Jan. 17th, 2:30-3:30PM (Orch. Room)

(Backup) Vlins/Vlas: Friday, Jan. 18th, 2:30-3:30PM (Orch. Room)

Full Rehearsal

Friday, Feb. 1st, 2:30-4PM (Band Room)

Friday, Feb. 8th, 2:30-4PM (Band Room)

(Backup) Friday, Feb. 15th, 2:30-4PM (Band Room)

Friday, Feb. 22nd, 2:30-4PM (Stage)

Friday, Mar. 1st, 2:30-4PM (Stage)

Pre-Assessment Concert – Tuesday, Feb. 26th, 7PM

Elementary Pyramid Concerts – Monday, Mar. 4th, Times TBA

Assessment Performance – Friday, March 8th

Carnegie Hall Performance – March 30th – April 2nd

Spring Concert Rehearsals

Sectionals

Cellos: Thursday, Apr. 4th, 2:30-3:30PM (Orch. Room)

Vlins/Vlas: Friday, Apr. 5th, 2:30-3:30PM (Orch. Room)

Cellos: Thursday, Apr. 11th, 2:30-3:30PM (Orch. Room)

Vlins/Vlas: Friday, Apr. 12th, 2:30-3:30PM (Orch. Room)

Full Rehearsal

Friday, May 24th, 2:30-4PM (Stage)

Wednesday, May 29th, 2:30-4PM (Band Room)

Spring Concert – Thursday, May 30th, 7PM