



Handbook 2020-2021

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Administration:

Principal - Dr. Chris Povich

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STUDENT NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

The Conroe Independent School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, gender, or disability in providing education services, activities, and programs, including vocational programs, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

DECLARACIÓN CONTRA LA DISCRIMINACIÓN DE ALUMNOS

El Distrito Escolar Independiente de Conroe no discrimina por motivos de raza, color, lugar de procedencia, sexo, religión, edad o discapacidad en cuanto al ofrecimiento de servicios educativos, actividades y programas, incluyendo programas vocacionales, de conformidad con el Título VI del Acta de Derechos Civiles de 1964, según enmiendas; Título IX de las Enmiendas Educativas de 1972; y la Sección 504 del Acta de Rehabilitación de 1973, según enmiendas.

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to the Grand Oaks High School Orchestra Program! My name is Colin Larsen and it is our great honor to be your Orchestra Director.

I want to congratulate and thank you for your commitment to orchestra and the study of music. The information in this handbook will help you understand your role in making the orchestra program a successful and positive experience, and the expectations required regarding behavior and performance. It is my goal to help grow, steer, and shape this program into one of the best orchestra programs in the state, if not the country. This may be accomplished with hard work, dedication, and communication from us all. Please read this handbook carefully to better understand the framework of this program.

As part of the CISD Fine Arts Curriculum, orchestra offers students several opportunities to showcase their individual musical talents, and further develop the skills needed to perform orchestra literature at the highest level. In order to be successful, orchestra students must be self-disciplined and organized to schedule sufficient time for daily practice. An ensemble is only as good as the sum of its parts, therefore, everyone must depend on each other to attend required rehearsal with their music prepared. A positive attitude and teamwork are also expected in order to promote pride in the organization, and produce a well respected and recognized program. This can only be achieved with the hard work and dedication of the students, parents, and directors. Students, come ready to work hard, learn a lot, and have fun while doing it! Parents, to support your students, I ask that each of you help at least once with the concerts and events during the year.

I am looking forward to getting to know you and working with you this school year and into the future. With your effort and participation we can make the Grand Oaks Orchestra Program one of the finest in Texas!

Sincerely,

Colin Larsen

Director of Orchestras

COMMUNICATION:

The GOHS Orchestra program has a website which functions as the central home to all that is Grand Oaks Orchestra. There is a newsletter where current information will be posted in a blog format, as well as descriptions of each of the orchestras and their requirements. In addition, a link to the complete GOHS Orchestra calendar can be found on a drop down tab.

Beyond Canvas and the website, the district provides an online program to facilitate communication between students, parents, and the director. This program, Charms Office Assistant found at www.charmsoffice.com, will be where much of the information about the program will be housed, in addition to the Canvas page. Once a student or parent logs in, they will be able to record/review playing tests, update student information, and email the director. Please be sure to input your information as soon as possible, and update it if anything changes. Most email communication will happen through Charms, **AS WELL AS MANY PLAYING TESTS** so it is important that everyone be familiar with it, update it, and check it often. Please see the Charms Handout (last page) for more information. I may also be reached at:

281-939-0318 (Orch office)

clarsen@conroeisd.net

RULES/PROCEDURES:

A high Standard of conduct is expected from students at all times as members of the Orchestra. All rules, as set forth by the GOHS Student Handbook and this Orchestra Handbook, must be followed at all times on (and off) campus. Productive rehearsals produce successful performances. Proper rehearsal etiquette and a disciplined working attitude are crucial for the success of any orchestra program. Rehearsal procedures should reflect the professional-like standards of the All-State Orchestras.

- Disruptive behavior of any kind is unacceptable. Talking is not permitted while the director is giving instruction. Students must raise their hands to ask a question during instruction. Be respectful of everyone in the room.
- When the bell rings, be ready to play with necessary supplies (pg. 10) at your stand; class begins immediately. **Always have your pencil, black Orchestra binder, and instrument supplies at your seat!**
- Instruction will typically end 5 minutes before the bell to allow for packing instruments. *However, in the event of disruption, this pack up time could shrink to allow for a full and effective rehearsal.*
- Demonstration of correct instrument and body posture are expected while rehearsing (active participation) AND practicing at home.
- Use only your own instrument, or (for cello/bass/harp) the instrument assigned to you.

- **INSTRUMENTS AND SUPPLIES ARE REQUIRED EVERY DAY, unless specified otherwise.**
- Minor infractions will be handled as follows: Violations that effect rehearsal will result in a reduction in the student's participation grade. Repeated violations will result in parent emails and/or referrals to the student's assistant principal. Students may be removed from the performing ensemble, and/or be removed fully from the program, at the discretion of the director and school administration. Chamber students are held to the highest standard and will be removed from the group for repeated disciplinary infractions.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES (SUMMARY):

It takes everyone's best effort to make the orchestra team powerful and exciting. Your loyalty and cooperation will reflect as you:

1. Follow rules as stated in the Student and Orchestra Handbooks.
2. Honor your commitment to Grand Oaks Orchestra.
3. Attend all rehearsals and performances and be on time.
4. Practice daily so you can do your best in class and on playing tests.
5. Be prepared to give your best in class. Be attentive and ready to play. Have your music, instrument, and a pencil in class daily. Good playing positions are a "must".
6. Refrain from socializing during rehearsal. Sections may not visit when the director is working with another section. Shadow bowing and fingering of parts is recommended for this "down time".
7. Keep your nails short and neatly trimmed. This is required to play well.
8. Respect your fellow orchestra members.
9. Do your part to keep our rehearsal hall in good condition. NEVER BRING FOOD OR DRINK INTO THE ORCHESTRA ROOM (unless specified otherwise)! Water is permitted.

FEES:

Orchestra students are responsible for the following fees:

- **Activity Fee (\$100)** - This fee is due from ALL students and is required. This replaces most time-consuming fundraisers. Funds raised will be used to help pay for the increased costs associated with the program that benefit all students, such as guest clinicians, special events and activities, new music, new technology, etc. This fee also covers the entrance fees to all contests that students participate in, such as Solo and Ensemble Contest, Region Orchestra auditions, and Renaissance Festival. The Activity Fee is paid through the Grand Oaks financial office (checks made out to Grand Oaks Orchestra) or online through School Cash.
- **CISD Maintenance Fee (\$75)** - This fee is due from cello, bass, harp, and piano students, in order to use the school instruments during class, in place of transporting their

personal instrument each day. The Maintenance Fee covers all school-owned instrument repairs. It is a CISD policy, and paid through the Grand Oaks financial office or School Cash. *If a student elects to bring their home instrument to school, it is expected that they have appropriate transportation for their instrument, as well as continue to take it home for practice outside of school.*

- **Grand Oaks Orchestra Polo shirt (\$30)** - The Polo is purchased through the Grand Oaks financial office (checks made out to Grand Oaks Orchestra, “Polo shirt” on memo line) or online through School Cash. This is the general concert uniform for ALL students. It is the same from year to year, so it only needs to be purchased once (unless the student grows!).

If you have any financial issues or concerns, please contact your director ASAP so we can make arrangements. Students on free or reduced lunch will have these fees altered or waived, and any other issues or concerns can be worked around. Everyone can participate in GOHS Orchestra; finances are not a barrier to participation!

THE ORCHESTRAS:

Within the Grand Oaks orchestra program, we currently have five performing ensembles: Chamber Orchestra, Symphony Orchestra, Philharmonic Orchestra, and Sinfonietta. Chamber and Symphony will have the distinction of competing in the UIL Concert/Sight-Reading Evaluation. All placement is determined by audition.

Chamber Orchestra:

This is the most advanced orchestra and the Varsity Orchestra. Students will have the opportunity to continue their development at the highest level. As a member of this orchestra, each student is expected to maintain the highest level of responsibility and musical preparation. Attendance at **ALL** Chamber performances and rehearsals is required. In addition, Chamber students are required to either audition for the Region IX Orchestras OR participate in UIL Solo/Ensemble, as well as perform in any performances that GOHS Orchestra is requested to play in, including community performances and guest appearances at other schools. *Some students may also be selected to be members of the Chamber Ensemble, a student-led group that will play advanced chamber music and perform at events beyond the core concerts. Additional rehearsals will be required for these students.*

Chamber Orchestra will have **WEEKLY** sectional rehearsals (required), after school, on the following days, starting on the 2nd week of the school year:

- **Violin: Mondays, 3:00-4:30PM**
- **Viola/Cello/Bass: Tuesdays, 3:00-4:30PM**

In addition, Chamber Orchestra will rehearse after school as scheduled in the weeks leading up to a concert.

Symphony Orchestra:

This orchestra is the Non-Varsity Orchestra. Students will have the opportunity to continue their development in a challenging environment while participating in other school activities. Additional before/after school rehearsals leading up to concerts will be on an as-needed basis, with notification at least one week in advance. Attendance at **ALL** Symphony performances and rehearsals is required.

Symphony Orchestra will have **WEEKLY** sectional rehearsals (required), after school, on the following days:

Early Fall Semester

- **Cello/Bass (ONLY): Thursday, 3:00-4:30PM**

Late Fall Semester & Spring Semester

- **Violin: Wednesday, 3:00-4:30PM**
- **Viola/Cello/Bass: Thursday, 3:00-4:30PM**

Symphony cello students will have sectionals in the fall to cross-train in playing bass. Performances on bass will be rotated throughout the cello section during the fall. In addition to the scheduled sectionals, Symphony Orchestra will rehearse after school as scheduled in the weeks leading up to a concert.

Philharmonic Orchestra:

This orchestra gives students an opportunity to maintain their string music connection while participating in other school activities. Additional before/after school rehearsals leading up to concerts will be on an as-needed basis, with notification at least one week in advance. Attendance at **ALL** Philharmonic performances and rehearsals is required.

Philharmonic Orchestra will rehearse after school as scheduled in the weeks leading up to a concert.

Camerata:

This orchestra gives students an opportunity to maintain their string music connection while participating in other school activities. Additional before/after school rehearsals leading up to concerts will be on an as-needed basis, with notification at least one week in advance. Attendance at **ALL** Camerata performances and rehearsals is required.

Camerata will rehearse after school as scheduled in the weeks leading up to a concert.

Sinfonietta:

This orchestra is the developmental orchestra. It gives students an opportunity to maintain their string music connection while participating in other school activities. Additional before/after school rehearsals leading up to concerts will be on an as-needed basis, with notification at least one week in advance. Attendance at **ALL** Sinfonietta performances and rehearsals is required.

Sinfonietta will rehearse after school as scheduled in the weeks leading up to a concert.

*For sectionals and rehearsals, students are expected to be in their chairs with instrument out and ready to play **NO LATER THAN 3:00 p.m.** Any additional rehearsals preceding concerts or UIL will be on an as-need basis, with written notification at least a week in advance. **Routine appointments that have other available times DO NOT qualify as excused absences from rehearsals.** If you are unsure whether or not your situation is excused, come see me. Students with a school conflict are required to fill out the form no later than the previous Friday and should avoid scheduling make up work and tutorials for that time.*

Orchestra students will learn to speak the language of music in a comprehensive manner that will include reading the language, understanding critical notational symbols and words, and the historical nature of composers and works being prepared for performance. During the year, students will form ensembles and perform an approved piece of music in the Ensemble Recital Series. For students who elect not to participate in Solo & Ensemble, this will give them the chance to learn the techniques and music associated with small ensemble performance, as well as give students who are participating the chance to hone their performance skills in front of an audience.

Each orchestra is a team. A superior ensemble will produce more enjoyable experiences for the members of that team. Therefore, a "teamwork" philosophy needs to be nurtured for the good of every student. Students with a successful teamwork philosophy exhibit a willingness to improve their musical skills, a work ethic that will improve the orchestra team, and a positive spirit that promotes the orchestra program.

AUDITIONS & ELIGIBILITY:

Placement in the Grand Oaks High School Orchestras is determined by audition. The audition materials may include etudes, excerpts, scales, cheese, and sight-reading. In addition to the audition, effort, conduct, and academic success are important factors in the final decision. Returning students will audition at the end of each school year for determination of orchestra placement.

Important: The director may find it necessary upon occasion to alter the orchestra's instrumentation to achieve a balanced sound.

In addition, students must maintain passing grades in all classes to perform at functions (previously subject to UIL “no pass, no play” rules). When a student cannot perform due to failing grades, the entire orchestra suffers. Because of the standard of excellence expected from members of the Chamber Orchestra, students in this group who fail one or more classes during the year for a nine weeks grading period **are not guaranteed a returning position the following semester.**

GRADES:

Activity	%
Major- performances and concerts include proper concert attire and promptness; online playing tests on Charms	60%
Minor- unscheduled playing tests in class, some online playing quizzes through video, participation (includes teamwork within the orchestra, having required supplies, and focus on the class goals)	40%

ATTENDANCE:

All absences must be made up. It is the student’s responsibility to obtain the assignment, but only excused absences receive full credit. An unexcused absence from a performance usually results in a zero. Last minute excuses may not be accepted unless they involve serious student illness (not just a cold) or death in the family. Each absence will be considered on an individual basis. Schedule conflicts **DO NOT** constitute an emergency and will **ONLY** be considered with two weeks prior written notice signed by a parent or guardian stating the reason for the conflict **AND** director’s approval. Again, students with emergency circumstances are required to contact the director via telephone or email prior to the performance report time. Submission of written notice for consideration does not automatically cause the absence to be excused. A daily participation grade is taken each time class meets or an ensemble has a required rehearsal outside of the school day. For unexcused absences, that grade is 0.

All performances/concerts are MAJOR-GRADE assignments.

MULTIPLE ACTIVITIES POLICY:

CISD *encourages* student participation in multiple activities. In the event of conflict with two activities the following chart will be used to determine where a child will perform. This is the [official] policy on event conflicts. If you have questions, please let me know as soon as possible. Should a conflict arise, I must know immediately.

1. Students involved in a conflict must take responsibility for notifying the sponsors involved.
2. For participation purposes, academic classes (or academic related activities) come first.
For example: Science Fair, Regional Science Fair, Rodeo Art Show, Houston Spelling Bee
3. Interscholastic contests take precedence over non-UIL events.
Interscholastic events are: UIL rating concerts, District athletic contests, etc
Non-UIL events would be: Strength Show, dances not in competition, standard concert
4. Contests take precedence over non-contests, exhibitions, or non-competitions.
For example: A festival performance takes precedence over a standard concert
5. Above district events take precedence over district events.
For example: Regional Science Fair over quad track meet
6. One-time single events take precedence over series of multiple events.
For example: Rodeo Art Show would take precedence over a basketball tournament
7. Curricular (Orchestra) activities take priority over extracurricular activities (except contests).
For example, an Orchestra student may receive a grade to perform in a concert at school. On the same night, there is a Choir social. The student is expected to be at the concert. If the student has a Science Fair event that night, they would go to the Science Fair.
8. Events, games, competitions, or parent performances take precedence over ANY practice.

PLEASE NOTE: While it is understood that emergencies and illness arise, it is expected that students and their families will plan ahead to be in attendance for all required events. Students with emergency circumstances are required to contact the director via telephone or email prior to the performance report time. Like athletics, orchestra is a "team sport" and we cannot be our best without all members of the team present. All concert and audition dates are given as soon as possible so families have adequate time to plan their schedules.

If a concert absence is excused, the make-up assignment will be at the discretion of the director, and due one week after the concert date. Unexcused absences will result in a zero...

CONCERTS:

Concerts are the product of a team effort. Every student is important to the overall sound of the group. Thus, we all depend on each other not only to practice and play the part well, but also to participate in each performance. When you join an orchestra, you are making a commitment to the others in the orchestra. Finding a suitable substitute is not possible. Concerts produce a grade in the grade book and are impossible to redo. The pressure of performance in front of a live

audience, the opportunity to apply hours of practice, the experience of applause for a job well done, and the pride of knowing you helped contribute to an evening of beautiful music are lost when a student misses a concert.

UNIFORM:

Dress for concerts will depend upon the venue. Dress will be announced in advance, and it is the student's responsibility to know and wear the proper attire. We are a team and this is our uniform. It is also part of the concert grade. All students are expected to arrive and depart from the performance dressed in the appropriate uniform.

CONCERT (all students; formal concerts): Black Orchestra polo shirt, black slacks, black dress shoes (with black socks), and black belt if pants have belt loops. Each student will purchase his/her own Orchestra polo shirt through School Cash.

INFORMAL (all students; non-formal performances and social/parties/events): Orchestra T-shirt, blue jeans, and close-toed shoes. The T-shirt is new each year and included as part of the Activity Fee.

FORMAL (UIL groups and Region-qualifying students): Tuxedo for boys, formal dress for girls; black dress socks (knee-highs or hose for girls), and black dress shoes; the tuxedo/dress must be returned at the end of the year, dry-cleaned; failure to do so will result in a fine!

REQUIRED SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS:

Each student is expected to have **ALL** of the following supplies and materials:

- ***Director-approved*** instrument, bow, and case in good working order (see under Instruments)
- Personal music stand for home (there are events to which each student must bring his/her own stand)
- Rosin and soft cloth for cleaning
- Metronome/Tuner (or a smartphone app that fills this need)
- Black binder, 1”
- Method book:
 - Sound Innovations: Sound Development, Book 3 - Intermediate (Phil/Cam/Sinf)
 - Sound Innovations: Sound Development, Book 4 - Advanced (Chamber/Sym)
- PENCIL for marking music (A musician ALWAYS has a pencil!)
- Music IN THE BINDER (keep all music through the course of the year)
- Extra strings for emergencies (I cannot continuously provide extra strings for personal instruments)
- Cello/Bass rock stop (straps discouraged)
- Violin/Viola shoulder rest (sponges discouraged)

It is very important that all necessary class supplies be brought to class daily. Students who fail to bring instrument and/or materials lose participation points and may result in a referral for lack of supplies or non-participation (see Student Handbook).

MUSIC:

Music performed by the orchestra is provided by CISD. If a student is issued an original part, no markings should be made in the music. Typically, each student is provided practice copies of music for individual home practice. Students without music are unable to rehearse. This results in loss of a daily grade. Do not leave music lying in the rehearsal room. In addition, the student provides music for UIL solos (original part, numbered for judge). **I do not make new copies of lost music. Keep all music neatly in your Orchestra binder!**

INSTRUMENTS:

Each student is expected to have an instrument and bow available for practice at home. This instrument can be purchased or rented. See the director immediately if you do not meet this criteria. String instruments are quite sturdy if well-maintained. A cared-for instrument is much more fun to play; it sounds better and plays more easily. Here are some requirements and guidelines:

1. Bows: must be re-haired yearly, must have an appropriate amount of hair, must be real horse hair (NO PLASTIC ARTIFICIAL HAIR). The stick of the bow is suggested to be made out of carbon fiber or wood (fiberglass is permitted, but it is not of the same quality). The stick must be straight and not warped, and the bow cannot have any structural damage.
2. Strings: many times strings need replacing long before they break. Strings that have worn places on them will play notes that are out of tune; strings that are old and dry will not ring. This can be confusing or discouraging for any student. The cheapest strings will often wear out the quickest. An extra set of strings must be available for emergencies. *VIOLIN minimum requirements are Pro Arte or Dominant (Evah Pirazzi, Obligatos, or a Kaplan Vivo set recommended); VIOLA minimum requirements are Dominant or Helicore (Evah Pirazzi or Kaplan Amo set recommended); CELLO minimum requirements are Helicore set (Larsen or Jargar A/D with Spirocore or Magnacore G/C recommended); BASS minimum requirements are Helicore (Bel Canto is recommended)*
3. Instrument: must be set up properly, consistently hold tuning, be easy to tune, have NO structural damage, and MUST be made of wood (NOT painted, must be varnished); avoid high heat and humidity and serve cold conditions, which can soften glue, cause warping or blistering, allow cracks to develop, and even melt the rosin; NEVER leave your instrument in an un-air conditioned or unheated car!
4. Rosin: Pirastro (Oliv for violin/viola, Goldflex for cello), Kaplan dark, or Jade for violin/viola/cello; Kolstein All-Weather or Pops for bass; cheese is not an acceptable rosin; others must be approved by director
5. Take care of the bridge which supports many pounds of pressure. It needs to stand up straight at all times and to rest centered on the top. A warped bridge needs to be replaced.

6. Keep your instrument clean; wipe fingerprints and dust from the bow and instrument after each use. Cover it with a soft, clean cloth. With this daily effort, polish becomes optional.
7. A yearly check-up at a reputable string repair shop is recommended to keep your instrument in good working order and to catch small problems before they become big ones.

IF YOU HAVE AN INSTRUMENT ISSUE, DO NOT TAKE IT TO THE SHOP FIRST!! BRING IT TO A DIRECTOR IMMEDIATELY! Many issues can be addressed before having to take it to a shop for repairs, saving money.

All instruments are required to be inspected by September 8th.

INSTRUMENT STORAGE:

There are cages in the orchestra room for violin and viola. Each student will be assigned his/her own cage. Cello/bass/harp students that pay the Maintenance Fee use a school instrument. Cello/bass/harp students that bring their own instrument will leave them in designated locations. If the student chooses to bring his/her own lock, the combination must be entered into Charms (under Locker) before the lock is installed. Students may not use another student's instrument without his/her permission. The director is not responsible for misplaced or misused instruments that are not secured in an assigned locker. **ALL INSTRUMENTS MUST BE LABELED WITH THE STUDENTS NAME AND ORCHESTRA CLASS ON A TAG OR DIRECTLY ON THE CASE. UNCLAIMED INSTRUMENTS MAY BE DONATED.**

Facility Care

*The primary function of the orchestra room is to serve as a teaching space for on-campus curricular courses as well as for off-campus guest ensembles. Its condition and appearance must remain orderly and safe. The following guidelines will be **strictly enforced** to ensure the safety and care of our facility:*

1. *All stands, chairs, A/V components, computers, music folios, instruments, and other items in the orchestra room are to be treated properly and with respect.*
2. *Only students enrolled in orchestra are allowed in the orchestra room. Friends are asked to wait outside while orchestra students retrieve instruments or conduct classroom business.*
3. *Food, drink (besides water), or gum of any kind is prohibited in the orchestra room.*
4. *Books, backpacks, athletic equipment, and projects may not be left in any part of the orchestra room during the day without the expressed consent of the director.*

PRIVATE LESSONS:

Orchestra is a wonderful medium to experience music in a public school setting. The "team" of students works together playing intricate rhythmic patterns with contrasting dynamics and blending harmonies. The result can be a rewarding memorable experience when all parts are played well on an individual basis. It is this individual work that forms the infrastructure of an outstanding orchestra; each student strives to reach his/her full potential. Advanced high school music can be difficult. In a typical classroom rehearsal, time does not permit each student to receive large amounts of individual instruction. Techniques such as vibrato, advanced bowing, shifting, and intonation can only be mastered with one-on-one instruction. Sectional rehearsals help with this, but nothing has proven as effective as a private lesson program. In order to prepare the music, in addition to instruction on solo and ensemble work and region audition material, it is recommended that orchestra students retain a private teacher. Unfortunately, the orchestra director cannot arrange private study with every student in spite of the profound results that could be attained. That is why it is essential, foremost for the benefit of the student, and eventually for the welfare of the orchestra, that students seek private study. We live in an area of the state where several good private teachers are available. An extensive list of private instructors will be provided, including CISD-approved teachers who may be able to teach after or during school, including virtually!

INDIVIDUAL PRACTICE:

Success of the group and of each student depends on individual hard work. Daily practice is essential. It helps many students to have a regular time and place to practice. Practice is more than just playing the notes; it needs to have a goal. Good practice is playing in tune, playing correct rhythms as well as playing with a clear tone and playing musically. Most of the time, it is best to work slowly in 4 to 8 measure sections, repeating problem areas many times until each section can be played easily, perfectly, and up to tempo. Students should have a metronome to monitor tempo. 40 minutes is required for an effective practice session, and an hour is suggested. It is difficult for practice sessions to be productive when the instrument is out of tune, **SO KEEP YOUR INSTRUMENT IN TUNE!** Listening to a professional recording of the music the student is currently studying contributes greatly to his/her musical growth. The tone, intonation, rhythmic accuracy, style, and memory are improved almost in direct proportion to the number of times a recording is heard. *UNSCHEDULED PLAYING QUIZZES WILL BE USED TO ASSESS WHETHER OR NOT STUDENTS ARE PRACTICING...SO PRACTICE!* *Charms playing tests also offer the opportunity to practice in preparation for recording a test.*

ORCHESTRA STUDENT COUNCIL:

In addition to the opportunities outside of the orchestra room (Region, Solo/Ensemble) and during class (concertmaster, section leaders), students are encouraged to volunteer to be a member of the Orchestra Student Council. This organization is a student volunteer group and service organization that helps facilitate many of the events and performances that we do. Students involved in this group are responsible for the following:

- 1) Stage/concert set-up *(continued next page)*
- 2) Concert ushering
- 3) Post-concert reception set-up and organization
- 4) Orchestra publicity (poster creation, announcements)
- 5) Library administration (organizing the orchestra music library)
- 6) Updating records on numbers of uniform items
- 7) Volunteering to perform special events (Christmas caroling, etc)
- 8) Brainstorming concert ideas, social/party ideas, etc.
- 9) Running our social events
- 10) Community volunteering as representatives of the GOHS Orchestra

And much more! Applications are out currently and are due by August 21st. We have limited space available in the organization. Participation in this organization can contribute to lettering in orchestra.

TRAVEL:

All students will have the opportunity to travel during the year. Students are expected to represent Grand Oaks High School and the Orchestra program in a professional manner. Violating the Student and/or Orchestra Handbook while on a trip will not be tolerated. Inappropriate behavior may result in a student being sent home **IMMEDIATELY**. Students will ride the bus to and from school sponsored events, **provided a Travel Form is on file**. When students ride a bus to an event, they are expected to return to the school from the event on the same bus. The **only exception** to this rule is the Region Orchestra Concert where the bus will take the students to the event, but they are expected to arrange a ride home.

While the Travel Form will still be required to be completed, it should be noted that as of August 12th, 2020, the Grand Oaks Orchestra will NOT be doing any traveling (UIL as the possible exception), due to the restrictions on travel related to COVID-19.

EVENTS:

All events will be visible on the Orchestra calendar, found on the website. Below is only a PARTIAL list of the concerts and social events. Region audition dates, as well as any sectionals and rehearsals, can be found on the calendar.

Fall Semester

<u>July 27th - Aug 1st</u>	<u>Summer Orchestra</u>
<u>Aug 21st</u>	<u>Beginning of Year Social</u>
<u>Oct 24th</u>	<u>Orch-toberfest</u>
<u>Oct 27th</u>	<u>Fall Concert</u>
<u>Dec 10th</u>	<u>“I’ll Be Home...”: Winter Concert</u>
<u>Dec 12th</u>	<u>Winter Social</u>

Spring Semester

<u>Jan 25-29</u>	<u>Ensemble Recital Series I</u>
<u>Feb 1-5</u>	<u>Ensemble Recital Series II</u>
<u>March 25</u>	<u>Spring Concert</u>
<i>March 30-31</i>	<i>Varsity UIL, Klein Oak HS</i>
<i>Apr 20-21</i>	<i>Non-Varsity UIL, Klein Cain HS</i>
<u>May 18</u>	<u>From Stage to Screen: Final Concert</u>
<u>May 19</u>	<u>Awards Banquet</u>

**All event dates are subject to change, due to unforeseen conflicts. All concerts and orchestra events are scheduled for the GOHS Auditorium or Fine Arts wing, unless indicated otherwise. Events in italics are individual events (see below) or specific to certain orchestras. In addition, for Chamber Orchestra, additional performances are not listed here.*

INDIVIDUAL EVENTS:

Orchestra students are highly encouraged to participate in a variety of extra-curricular competitions during the school year. Every performance experience is a valuable learning opportunity, and students are encouraged to be involved with, or tryout for, as many of these as possible. In some cases, students may be excused from certain playing tests that occur around the same time, as well as earn lettering points! If you need extra help in preparing for an event, please schedule time with the director or seek private lessons. These activities include but are not limited to:

- TMEA Region Orchestra (*must also audition for the CISD Honor Orchestra if a 9th/10th grade student*)
- CISD 9th/10th Grade Honor Orchestra
- UIL Solo and Ensemble Contest
- small ensemble performances
- private lesson recitals

LETTER JACKET POINT SYSTEM:

An academic letter may be earned in orchestra by earning a total of 100 points through volunteering, being an officer in OrchStuCo, playing with one of the TMEA Region IX Orchestras, participating in TMEA Region IX Solo & Ensemble, and other activities as approved by the director. After lettering once, students must reach 250 to letter a 2nd time and reach 400 to letter a third time. Students may also automatically letter (earn 100 pts) by performing with one of the TMEA All-State Orchestras or earning a rating of “1” at Texas State Solo & Ensemble. Point totals will be tracked through Charms. Please see the following page for a breakdown of possible points to be earned.

*All point values listed below are per year.
Other miscellaneous volunteer activities are worth 1-2 pts each.*

- 20 pts - performing in all concerts as required
- 20 pts - performing in one of the Region IX Orchestras (+5 additional pts if ranked 1st chair)
- 10 pts - earning a 1 at UIL Solo & Ensemble (100 for earning a 1 at the state level)
- 10 pts - serving as an officer on the Orchestra Student Council
- 5 pts - auditioning for the Region IX Orchestras
- 5 pts - performing at UIL Solo & Ensemble

If you have a question about any other activities or distinctions not mentioned, let the director know, so it may be reviewed for inclusion into the point system. Students may earn 5 pts per semester for performances outside of cheese school.

BOOSTER CLUB:

Parents: we need all the support we can. The GOHS Orchestra Booster Club functions to facilitate this support. More information will be sent home periodically, but through joining, your family can receive various spirit items such as...a yard sign, decal sticker, bag tag (for instrument case!), additional 2020-2021 T-shirts, and other clothing items as offered! These donations help fund the banquet, socials, event decorations, some student contest fees, scholarships, and more. In addition, we need parent volunteers for many of our events throughout the year, and if every parent or family member can help **just a little bit**, your students can continue to be successful on stage and off.

Please turn in your membership form and fee as directed through communication home!

LOCAL MUSIC STORES:

Listed below are a *FEW* of the area violin shops and music stores where you may find instruments for rental/purchase, strings, method books, sheet music, accessories, supplies, and instrument repair. DO NOT order an instrument via the internet. A fancy European name does not correlate to quality, and many of the local places offer HIGH quality instruments. The right instrument can increase enjoyment of Orchestra build a sense of accomplishment from personal practice, and help a student produce a rewarding sound on tests and performances. **Vendors marked with * visit our school for pick-up/drop-off regularly.**

*Lisle Violin Shop

11550 Louetta Rd
Ste 1400
Houston, TX 77070
346-236-6650

*Fishburn Violin Shop

9420 College Park Dr
The Woodlands, TX 77384
936-447-9061

H&H Music - The Woodlands

1500 Research Forest Dr, 140
Shenandoah, TX 77381
832-791-5880

Music & Arts Centers - Portofino

19075 Interstate 45
Shenandoah, TX 77385
936-273-3602

Amati Violin Shop

2315 University Blvd
Houston, TX 77005
713-666-6461

**REMINDER: DO NOT BUY AN INSTRUMENT ON AMAZON OR
OTHER WEBSITES. Instruments must pass director inspection
and internet purchased instruments vary wildly in quality...**

Grand Oaks High School Orchestra

HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

*Please complete the Google Form survey of the Handbook to sign the acknowledgement no later than **Friday, August 14th, 2020!***

We have read and understand the contents of the 2020-2021 Orchestra Handbook and we agree to all policies and procedures outlined therein, especially those pertaining to absences and grading issues. We also understand that this is not an all-inclusive handbook and that rules and regulations set forth by CISD and GOHS administration apply equally to all members of the Orchestra.

Furthermore, the parent or guardian signing this document expresses a desire and gives consent for his/her child to be allowed to travel to and from the events listed in the Orchestra Calendar provided that said child meets eligibility requirements for those events (i.e. passing all classes at the time of the events, turns in the required forms).

As the parent or guardian of this student, I understand that all students will pay an Activity Fee of \$100 at the outset of the school year. This replaces most (if not all) time-consuming fundraisers. Funds raised will be used to help pay for the costs associated with the growing program that benefit all students, such as guest clinicians, special events and activities, new music, new technology, etc. This fee also covers the entrance fees to all contests that students participate in, such as Solo and Ensemble Contest or Region Orchestra auditions.

As the parent or guardian of this student, I agree to allow my student's photo, sound recording, and/or unidentified photo in a group shot to be submitted to the CISD website, the school electronic newsletter, and local newspapers. I understand that use of electronic information resources is for educational purposes.

All students will have an appropriately sized instrument, bow, and other required supplies available for home practice as required by the Grand Oaks Orchestra program.

Student PRINTED NAME

Student Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

** Please complete the Google Form survey of the Handbook no later than **Friday, August 14th, 2020!** The Activity Fee (and cello/bass/piano/harp Maintenance Fee) must be paid, and all Charms profiles fully updated by end of the*

1st 6 weeks. For students on free or reduced lunch, please notify the director as soon as possible to have your fees reduced or eliminated.

How to access parent/student information in:

CHARMS

- Log on to www.charmsoffice.com, and click the “ENTER/LOG IN” link at upper right.
- Locate the “PARENT/STUDENT/MEMBERS LOGIN” section of the web page.
- Login to your child’s program account using the following School Code:

GOHSOrch

- This will bring up the main parent page. This will allow you to look at the “public” calendar for your organization, event list, handouts and other files.
- Clicking on an event on the calendar brings up the details for that event, such as times, attendance requirements, volunteer opportunities, and other event details. Note that if a calendar event is specifically assigned to your child, it may NOT show up on this calendar – check the “Student” calendar after entering the student’s ID number (see below).
- When you enter your child’s ID NUMBER (provided by your Director) as a **Student Area Password**, another more detailed screen appears with even more options to view your student’s uniform assignments, music assignments, financial records, forms and inventory.
- An area in which you can help the director maintain his/her records:
 - **Update Personal Information** – you may help make changes to your child’s student information page (such as updating phone numbers and email addresses if they change) to help the teacher communicate with you more effectively. Click the *Personal Info* button.
- You will also see links to view *Calendar* and use the *Recording Studio* (for assignments).
- Most importantly, the parent page assists both you and the teacher to communicate with each other. Stay up to date on what’s going on with your student!

Notes on updating information:

- **Instrument (just enter the instrument type; no ID necessary)**
- **Email/cellphone (for newsletter, updates, and concert info); cell carrier is required to get text reminders**
- **Check that the correct orchestra group is marked (this will effect emails)**
- **Enter violin/viola locker number (only if violin or viola) after instrument type in the same blank**
- **T-shirt size can be found by pressing the uniform button (a little marching band icon); this is located to the right of the students name on the Personal Information page.**

- **Charms Blue is the smart phone app. It is very user friendly, especially with recording playing tests!!!**