

# Beckendorff Junior High Orchestra



Handbook  
2023-2024

# Table of Contents

Welcome letter.....	1
Supplies.....	2
Uniform.....	2
Classroom rules.....	3
Tardy policy.....	3
Grading procedures.....	4
Practice guidelines.....	5
Rehearsal and performance policies.....	6
Chair tests.....	6
UIL contest.....	7
Region orchestra/solo ensemble.....	7
Eligibility.....	7
School owned instruments.....	8
Private lessons.....	8
Student pick up procedure.....	9
Important dates.....	10

# **Beckendorff Junior High Orchestra**

Welcome to the Beckendorff Junior High Orchestra! It is wonderful to have you here as part of our team. This handbook is designed to inform you of all aspects of the BDJH Orchestra. You and you parents will need to read the entire handbook and become familiar with the rules and procedures for this class. Please also take a close look at the section marked “Important Dates”. Know when your attendance is required. It is your responsibility to know what is expected of you this year as a member of our orchestra. Orchestra is not just another class; it is a performing group. By joining this group, you have taken on a big responsibility. Every member of the orchestra is important and each person must do his or her part to create a strong group. Being a part of the orchestra is a lot of hard work but it is also a lot of fun. It is a great way to meet new people and make new friends while you improve your playing. This will be a fun and exciting experience for you while you are here at Beckendorff Junior High. With a little hard work and a lot of determination, you will be proud of what you accomplish as a musician in just one year. I look forward to a great year and a great orchestra with you a part of it!

Sincerely,

Ms. Williams  
Orchestra Director

Mr. Vuu  
Assistant Orchestra Director

Mr. Hulipas  
Assistant Orchestra Director



# Supplies

- Correct size instrument in good working condition.
- Method book (see below)
- Pencil every day in class
- Rosin
- Cleaning cloth kept in your case. (An old tee-shirt works great!)
- Name tag on your case
- Shoulder rest (violins and violas) Rock stop (cellos and basses)
- Orchestra uniforms (see the uniform section for information)
- Orchestra activity/course fee \$50 (This includes the orchestra t-shirt and any supplies not listed above)

## Method Books

### FYO (First Year Orchestra)

- Essential Elements for Strings, book 1 and 2 Michael Allen, Hal Leonard Publications

### Camerata

- Get it Together For Strings (provided in class)

### Arietta Orchestras

- Get it Together For Strings (provided in class)
- Essential Techniques for Strings, book 3 Michael Allen, Hal Leonard Publications

### Philharmonia, Lyrica, Sinfonia Orchestras

- Essential Techniques for Strings, Michael Allen, Hal Leonard Publications
- Advanced Techniques for Strings, Michael Allen, Hal Leonard Publications

### Honor Orchestra

- Advanced Techniques for Strings, Michael Allen, Hal Leonard Publications

## Orchestra Uniforms

### Options:

Solid Black dress pants, and long sleeved button down dress shirt  
Solid black skirt and black dressy blouse  
Solid black dress  
Black dress shoes

### Guidelines:

All items should be completely black.  
No jeans material or cargo type pants.  
No tennis shoes, crocs, or casual shoes  
Skirts should be below the knee when

You may purchase your uniform wherever you choose. These are some websites with options.

<https://www.formalwear-outlet.com/>

<https://www.concertattire.com/>

<https://sepapparel.com/ladies/concert-dresses.html>

<https://concertblack.bigcartel.com/>

## Classroom Rules

1. Follow all directions the first time they are given.
2. Be in your seat with ALL materials at the start of class.
3. You may talk only when called upon by the teacher.
4. Respect the people, equipment, and furnishings of the orchestra room.

## If you choose to break a rule...

1. Verbal warning and student/teacher conference
2. Parent contact
3. Student will follow the school wide discipline policy with the grade level assistant principal

**The previous consequences refer to Level I offenses only.**  
**Severe disruptions: student sent immediately to the office**

## Tardy Policy

It is vital to the success of any orchestra that every single member comes to rehearsal prepared and on time. You are considered tardy if you are not in the room when the bell rings. One minute after the bell rings, you need to be in your assigned seat with all your materials and your instrument out, ready to begin the rehearsal. **Consequences will be determined by the school-wide tardy policy established at BDJH.**

## End of Class

The teacher dismisses the orchestra; the bell does not. After being dismissed by the teacher, return ALL music, folders, and instruments to their assigned places. Failure to do so will result in a lowering of your weekly participation grade.



# Grading Procedures

Numeric grades will be issued in accordance with school district guidelines. An average grade will be earned from the following:

## Major grades 50%

This will include all playing tests, written tests, and concerts. **Please note that all concerts are counted as a major grade.** It is part of the curriculum adopted by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) in all music classes that students are required to perform and observe performances. **Students are required to participate and attend concerts in person as part of the class.**

## Minor grades 35%

This includes weekly assessments that are not test grades, sectional attendance (Sinfonia and Honor Orchestra only), weekly participation grades, and after school rehearsals. For the participation grade, all students will start with a 100% each week. Points are deducted if the student does not come to class prepared with all their supplies or does not fully participate.

## Other grades 15%

This includes weekly posture and position grades, quizzes and some written assignments.

## Extra Credit Opportunities:

Extra credit will be added to the final grade for any of the following activities:

Audition for All Region orchestra

Participate in solo/ensemble contest

Participate in Youth Orchestra

Attend any approved concert

You may do any number of these activities. Each activity will add points to your average. The number of points added will depend on the activity and time required.

\*Honor orchestra students are required to participate in two of the following: Region orchestra auditions, ensemble contest, solo contest. Extra credit will be awarded for participating in all three or performing multiple solos or ensembles at contest. Sinfonia orchestra students are required to participate in one of the activities mentioned above.



## **Weekly Assessments**

Weekly assessments will be due in Canvas every Monday (or the first day of the school week.) Each Friday at the end of class, the students will be informed of the assignment that will be due the following Monday. This assignment can also be found in Canvas. Students may choose to complete the assignment over the weekend or on Monday evening of the following week. Weekly Assessments are due in Canvas at 11:59 pm each Monday (or the first day of the school week). Students who do not complete the assignment on time will record the assessment in class on the following day and will receive 10 points off the grade. Late work/absence policies will apply. Some weekly assessments will count as a major grade and some as a minor grade. Students will be informed of the weight of each weekly assessment.

## **Practicing at home:**

Students are expected to practice daily at home. For beginning students, the practice time should be only about 10 minutes a day for the first few weeks. It should gradually increase after that to 30 minutes each day. Students who are in the Honor and Sinfonia orchestras are expected to practice at least 45 minutes each day. Practice time can be used for orchestra music or to practice music from the private lesson teacher.

### **Practice Guidelines for Parents**

Your child's achievements in orchestra will depend greatly on the amount and quality of the practice sessions at home. You can help your child by using the following guidelines.

#### **Schedule**

Have your child set aside a time each day when he or she would prefer to practice. A half hour is the minimum time that should be scheduled. This practice time does not have to be the exact same time each day.

#### **Environment**

Practicing should be done away from any sort of distractions. Your child should practice in a well-lit area to avoid eyestrain. Younger siblings should be informed of the importance of this time and know not to bother big brother or big sister during practice time. Poor playing posture hurts your child physically as well as musically. Therefore, a music stand should be used during practice.

#### **Feedback**

Perhaps the biggest help you can offer your child is encouragement. Listen to your child practice and offer words of encouragement. Ask them to play a song for you occasionally. Learning to play an instrument is incredibly difficult and often frustrating. When you hear improvement, tell them. The best motivation comes from knowing that your hard work has paid off.

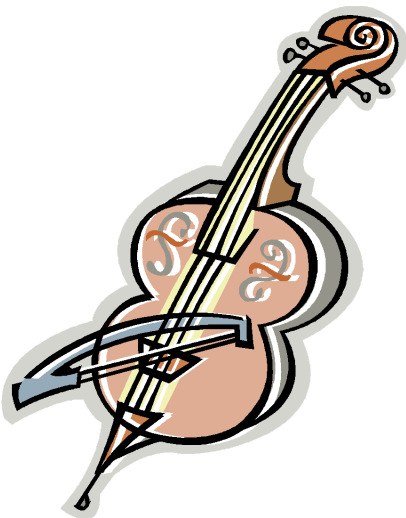
## **Sectionals, rehearsals and performances**

Students will be required to attend all scheduled rehearsals, sectionals and performances scheduled outside of the school day. Sectionals will occur on a weekly basis for the Honor and Sinfonia orchestras. Sectionals and rehearsals will occur on an as needed basis for all other orchestras. Grades will be earned for these events and will contribute to the students' overall average. Before or after school rehearsals will occur occasionally throughout the year. Students and parents will be informed of these rehearsals in advance through letters, email memos, the web site and/or announcements made in class. Please communicate directly with the student's director if there are individual or unusual circumstances that may cause a conflict.

Students will be excused from performances for personal illness, family emergencies, and approved school activities only. In these cases, I will need to be notified by a parent or guardian. For an excused absence, an alternate assignment will be given. An alternative assignment will not be given for unexcused absences and will result in a zero in the grade book. If you have an unexcused absence for a performance, it is unlikely that you will be considered for the Honor or Sinfonia orchestra for the following year.

## **Chair Tests and Competitions**

Auditions for chair placement within a section often bring a great deal of emotion and stress to the life of a student. Please remember that each and every musician is important to the success of the orchestra. Competition should be viewed as an isolated event, not an overall value judgment of the student as a person or musician. A chair test judges a student's performance at one specific time under one specific set of circumstances. Each student responds differently. Some perform easily under stress, others poorly. Each teacher who judges a student's performance has his or her own interpretation of how that student plays at that given moment. Therefore, it is essential that competition be viewed only as a part of the learning process and not as the sole judgment for success. Chair tests will be given to place students for each concert (4-5 times per year). The points earned on the playing portion of the chair test will be combined with the students average in orchestra class to determine their rank.





# UIL Orchestra Concert and Sight-Reading Evaluation:

The Beckendorff Honor, Sinfonia, Lyrica, Philharmonia, Arietta and Camerata orchestras will perform at the annual UIL orchestra evaluation in the spring. This evaluation is the equivalent to the STAAR test the students take for their academic classes. This is not a competition with other orchestras but is a chance to showcase our orchestras and their capabilities. Each group in attendance will prepare and perform three songs at the contest for a panel of judges. Immediately following the concert performance, each orchestra is required to sight-read a piece of music. In each case, a panel of judges will assign the orchestra a rating of “I” to “V” with “I” being the highest. An overall rating will be earned for each category according to the judges’ individual ratings. An orchestra that earns a “I” in both categories is awarded a Sweepstakes trophy. This is of course, the goal of any orchestra.

## Region Orchestra/Solo and Ensemble

Students in the Honor Orchestra are required to participate in one of these events. Extra credit will be earned for participation beyond the requirement. Before committing to an ensemble or region auditions, you must commit to attend all rehearsals and performances. Students are expected to resolve any scheduling conflicts prior to auditioning or joining an ensemble.

## Eligibility

To participate in any extra-curricular activity, students must pass all classes the grading period prior to the event. If a student earns a grade lower than a 70 in any class, state law prohibits participation in any extra-curricular event. **A student who has paid a fee to participate in any of these activities and does not make eligibility, will not receive a refund.**

<b>Extra-curricular events:</b> <u>(Eligibility rules apply)</u>	<b>Curricular events are:</b> <u>(Eligibility does not apply)</u>
Region auditions Region clinic and concert Solo and ensemble contest Field trips Any orchestra contest Spring Festival	Sectionals Before/After school rehearsals Concerts held at BDJH or SLHS Any non-competitive concert UIL concert and sight-reading



## **School Owned Instruments**

The school owns a limited number of cellos, and basses for student rental. There is an annual KISD instrument fee of \$100 for all school owned instruments. This money is used to help cover repair expenses caused by normal wear and tear. It is not designed to cover cost from damage or loss of the instrument due to theft/misplacement or neglect. This type of repair is the responsibility of the student using the instrument. Registration cards (rental agreement) must be completed and returned with student and parent signature. Students are expected to keep the instrument clean and in good working condition. If the instrument is damaged in any way, the student or parent must inform Mrs. Williams immediately.

### **Violin and Violas:**

Violin and viola students are expected to provide their own instruments. For extenuating financial circumstances, talk to your director

### **Cellos:**

All cello students will need to rent one cello from a music store to keep at home. A student who does not wish to transport his or her cello back and forth to school every day may rent one from the school. These cellos are shared between class periods. For example, a student in first period might play the same cello as a student in third period. For this reason, the school cellos that are rented out to the students remain at the school and are not available for home practice.

### **Basses:**

Whenever possible, we try to provide two school instruments: one for the student to keep at home and one to have at school. However, there may not be enough instruments available for each bass player to have one at home and one at school. Much of the availability is determined by the size of bass the student requires. You will need to rent one from a music store to have at home should one not be available through the school.

## **Private Lessons**

Private lessons are one on one lessons taught by professionals who specialize on each particular instrument. Private lessons are strongly encouraged for all students and are a vital ingredient for any successful musician. These lessons are helpful for working on fundamentals of performance, correcting poor playing habits, preparing audition or solo material and for enrichment outside of orchestra class. Most orchestra professionals prefer to teach in their own studios. Depending on experience, expertise and availability, prices will vary greatly.

The KISD Private Lesson Program is another option. Lessons are held once a week, after school in the orchestra rooms at Seven Lakes High School. The cost is set by the school district and is often lower than students taking lessons from a studio teacher. Once students have enrolled in the program, private teachers are contacted with enrollment information. The private teacher will then contact assigned students and schedule convenient lesson times. Parents and students are expected to follow the KISD Private Lesson Program Guidelines, which are sent from the Fine Arts Office after enrollment. If you are interested in private lessons, complete and return the private lesson form given to the students and found on the orchestra webpage.

# Student Pick-up Procedures

Katy ISD's safety guidelines for pick-up procedures affect your students when they have after-school events, practices, rehearsals, and need to be picked up after trips. These procedures include the following rules:

## After school orchestra events:

- Students must be picked up on time. If this is a problem, then arrangements must be made for your child to ride home with another student.
- Students are allowed to walk home.
- All students are to be picked up in the back-parking lot between the portables and tennis courts when involved in orchestra activities, not the front of the building.
- After school events: If you are not on time to pick up your child, he or she will be waiting in the orchestra room. Teachers will be working inside their rehearsal rooms.
- Students who are disruptive while waiting for parent pick up will receive disciplinary consequences (according to KISD policy), as if they were in a classroom.
- When picking up your child from an event off campus, parents will need to come inside and sign their child out.

## Trips

Parents must be on time for pickup as stated on the itinerary. When picking up a student after a trip or rehearsal, use the large parking lot at the back of the school by the portables, not in the front of the school. When the group is traveling by bus, KISD requires all students to travel together on the bus. Parents who wish to take their child home from the event must fill out a "Request for Post-Activity Student Release" one week prior to the event. You may find this on the orchestra webpage.



# BDJH Orchestra Calendar 2023-2024

Thursday, September 7 <sup>th</sup>	Orchestra Pizza Party	BDJH Cafeteria	4:15-5:45 pm
Monday, October 16 <sup>th</sup> :	FYO rehearsal	BDJH LGI	advisory
Tuesday, October 17 <sup>th</sup>	Fall Concert	BDJH Caf�	various times
Friday, October 20 <sup>th</sup>	Orchestra Yearbook Pictures	BDJH	During School
Saturday, October 21 <sup>th</sup>	Region Auditions	Jordan HS	8:00am
Thursday, November 2 <sup>nd</sup> :	Ice Cream Social	BDJH Caf�	4:15pm-5:45pm
Monday, November 13 <sup>th</sup> :	Ensemble Contest (no beginners)	BDJH	4:30pm-7:00pm
Friday, December 1 <sup>st</sup> :	FYO rehearsal	BDJH LGI	advisory
Tuesday, December 5 <sup>th</sup>	Orchestra Winter Concert	BDJH Caf�	various times
Friday, December 8 <sup>th</sup>	Honor Performs for 5th Graders	Elementary Schools	During School
Friday, December 8 <sup>th</sup>	Region Orchestra Clinic	Paetow HS	TBD
Saturday, December 9 <sup>th</sup>	Region Orchestra Clinic and Concert	Paetow HS	TBD
Saturday, January 20 <sup>th</sup> :	Solo Contest (no beginners)	BDJH	8 am-5 pm
Tuesday, February 13 <sup>th</sup>	FYO Solo and Ensemble Contest	BDJH	4:30pm-7:00pm
Monday, February 26 <sup>th</sup> :	Pre-UIL Concert (no beginners)	BDJH Caf�	various times
Friday, March 1 <sup>st</sup> :	FYO rehearsal	BDJH LGI	advisory
Monday, March 4 <sup>th</sup>	FYO Medieval Concert	BDJH Caf�	6:00 pm
March 5 <sup>th</sup> -March 6 <sup>th</sup>	Non Varsity UIL (no beginners)	OTHS	TBD
March 7 <sup>th</sup>	Varsity UIL (no beginners)	SLHS	TBD
Saturday, May 11 <sup>th</sup>	Spring Trip (Optional for All Orchestras)	Typhoon Texas	9:30am-5:30pm
Tuesday, May 14 <sup>th</sup> :	FYO rehearsal	BDJH LGI	advisory
Thursday, May 16 <sup>th</sup> :	Spring Concert	BDJH	various

**Dates are subject to change. Any changes will be communicated through HAC email, Canvas, and will be posted on the BDJH orchestra website.**

FYO= First Year Orchestra (beginners)