

O'CONNOR ORCHESTRAS

The O'Connor Orchestra is divided into four performing orchestras: Varsity Full Orchestra, Varsity String Orchestra, Junior Varsity Orchestra, and Freshman Orchestra. Varsity Full students will combine with band students beginning in November through the UIL season. Placement in the orchestras is based on an audition for all incoming ninth grade students during the spring semester of their eighth grade year. Current O'Connor orchestra students will be placed according to their ability and progress demonstrated during the year. In addition to an audition, citizenship, effort, and conduct are large factors in the conductors' final decision in determining personnel.

STUDENT MUSICIAN EXPECTATIONS

O'Connor orchestra students will:

- Continue to improve in overall performance skills.
- Arrive on time to class and rehearsals.
- Maintain a good attitude toward other students as well as the conductors.
- Display willingness to accept comments that are designed to help.
- Display willingness to help with daily functions of the orchestra.
- Maintain a spirit that is positive toward the image of the orchestra program.

Any member of the Varsity or JV Orchestras who cannot meet the musical expectations or follow the rules of the O'Connor Orchestra and O'Connor High School may be removed or placed in a different group. Freshman, please understand that because of the high-level nature of these groups, students must demonstrate exceptional performance skills to be eligible for membership into Varsity Orchestra.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Orchestra activities are planned so that the least number of activities will conflict. All students are expected to participate in mandatory orchestra rehearsals, performances, and events. Please remember that a grade is given for each event. 2017-2018 calendar dates will be given within the first few weeks of school.

For students in more than one extracurricular activity, please consider the following:

If there is a game and a practice going on the same time, students are expected to be at the game.

If there is a concert and a practice going on at the same time, the student is expected to be at the concert.

If there is a rehearsal and a practice going on at the same time, the student may divide his/her time.

It is the students' responsibility to discuss any scheduling conflicts with both the coach/orchestra director.

Since orchestra is a performance-based class, attendance to all rehearsals and performances is mandatory. Unexcused absences will result in a "zero" for a major grade. Please provide a written excuse or parent email if failure to attend is a result of a family emergency or extreme personal illness. A make-up assignment will be given for all excused absences. Calendar dates will be on the O'Connor Orchestra website (www.och-orchestra.org). In addition, the director will email a monthly newsletter via CHARMS and will post updates in the orchestra room. Be sure to check your schedules carefully. If a conflict occurs, contact me within 2 weeks of a scheduled event.

All absences, whether excused or unexcused, must be made up and it is the student's responsibility to obtain the makeup assignment. Only excused absences will be given full credit. I understand that emergencies may arise, however, please provide a written note or email to the director the following day. Remember that not having a ride to an orchestra function does not qualify as an excused absence. If this occurs, please try to get a ride from another student. As a last resort, call the orchestra office. Please make an effort to pre-arrange reliable transportation to all activities.

REHEARSALS

Since the O'Connor Orchestra meets during four separate class periods each day, it is necessary to have regular before and after school rehearsals. These rehearsals are the only time where we can rehearse as a full group in order to prepare for concerts. Varsity Full Orchestra rehearsals will occur before school on Tuesday and Thursday mornings immediately after fall football season is over. We will also have sectionals when needed. Students will receive communication about upcoming rehearsals/concerts via email. If a rehearsal is missed, *it is the students' responsibility to get the makeup assignment from the conductor.*

In order to make last minute adjustments and preparations for concerts, we must hold dress rehearsals. While it is not necessary to wear uniforms to these rehearsals, a final run-through and final polishing of the music will be the purpose of these rehearsals. Again, these are required functions.

TESTS AND EXAMS

Playing tests and exams, generally assigned every other week, consist of an assigned excerpt from current orchestral repertoire assigned by the conductor. Playing tests may be recorded or live in class. After assigning the test section for recorded tests, the director will give students a week to complete the test. Late points may be assessed if students do not adhere to due dates. If a student, does not have the technology at home to complete the test, they may borrow the teacher's iPad during class. It is the student's responsibility to request the teacher iPad as an option. Students will need the free app **Recap** to submit recorded playing tests. This a completely recording app that only the director and student have access to.



Semester exams are designed to measure the independent musical thought processes and abilities of the student. In other words, class time is not used to specifically review for the final. However, students should always feel free to ask specific questions regarding the exam. This year, we will not have a first semester exam. The second semester final exam will involve the performance of a solo and a scale.

GRADES

Each student will be awarded points based upon the following scale. Daily grades are 50% of overall orchestra grade for the six weeks and Major grades are 50%.

Table of grade points

ACTIVITY	MAX. POINTS	CATEGORY
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Class Performance (This grade includes an assessment of daily performance in class as well as having necessary supplies and equipment, etc.)	100 per week	Daily Grade
Performance Checks	100 per event	Daily Grade
Concerts and performances	100 per event	Major Grade
Rehearsals and sectionals (including promptness)	100 per event	Major Grade
Tests (or other assignments)	100 per event	Major Grade

ELIGIBILITY

It is very important that each student maintain passing grades in all classes in addition to orchestra. Most orchestra activities are *curricular*. However, any student that is not passing all classes may not participate in any *extra-curricular* activity of the orchestra during that nine-weeks grading period. If you are having trouble passing a class, please notify your director. We can get you extra help, if not from a teacher, maybe from a fellow student. We expect each member of the O’Connor Orchestra to do all the work necessary to pass all his or her classes.

CLASSROOM RULES

Classroom rules are designed to be simple and easy to follow. They are effective in keeping order during classes and rehearsals only when each member of the orchestra chooses to follow them. They are:

- 1 When the bell rings, be in your seat with your instrument ready to play and with your orchestra binder, pencil, and any other necessary equipment on your music stand.**
- 2 Everyone must have their music every day.**
- 3 Respect the property of other individuals. This includes instruments as well as music. You do not have the permission to use anyone else’s instrument or materials. Please do not assume that you do.**
- 4 No food, drink or gum is allowed in the orchestra room. Water is allowed.**
- 5 Be respectful to everyone in the room -- that includes when and how you talk.**

Most discipline problems can be handled through the student and director, beginning with a verbal warning or conference with the student. Depending on the situation, the following consequences may be needed: phone call or conference with parent, before/lunch/after school detention, or discipline referral to an assistant principal.

EMERGENCY PLACEMENT OR EXPULSION

Texas Education Code, Section 37.019 states that a student may be removed if the behavior is so unruly, disruptive, or abusive that is seriously interferes with a teacher’s ability to communicate effectively with the students in the class, with the ability of the student’s classmates to learn, or with the operation of a school or school-sponsored activity. In addition, a student may be removed for action that is necessary to protect persons or property from imminent harm.

Acts of hazing will NOT be tolerated in the Northside ISD. The Texas Education Code (TEC)

provides criminal penalties for students and organizations that engage in or have association with acts of hazing, “occurring on or off the campus of an educational institution.” Hazing is defined as: “Any intentional, knowing, or reckless act by one person alone or acting with others, directed against a student, that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student for the purpose of pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, or holding office in an organization.”

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities is a *privilege* extended to the students of NISD. Participation in extracurricular activities places a student in a position of recognition and often bestows the position of role model upon the student participants. Any student who elects to accept the privilege of participating in extracurricular activities must recognize that he/she is a representative of the school and District, and will be held to a higher standard of conduct than that applied to other students. **This applies to both school-related and non-school related activities.** The student is subject to state law, school district policies, school rules and regulations, the organization’s requirements, and University Interscholastic League (UIL) rules (if applicable). Failure to adhere to policy will result in the student being removed from the Orchestra program.

COMPETITIONS

All students are encouraged to participate in competitions outside the scope of the orchestra experience. The O’Connor Orchestra has been represented well in these types of contests, and has enjoyed the successes of individual as well as collective performances.

There are several concerto competitions in the area. Many students elect to participate in UIL (University Interscholastic League) events, such as solo and ensemble and state solo and ensemble contests. TMEA (Texas Music Educators Association) sponsors auditions for the Region XI and All-State Orchestras.

PRACTICE

Individual home practice is an integral part of any musician’s learning process. It is very important to the state of the orchestra that effort is being made by each student to be responsible for learning individual parts outside of the classroom. Class meetings and rehearsals are not to be used as a practice session, but as time to address orchestra ensemble concerns.

The O’Connor Orchestra is a great orchestra because of the quality teaching you have received in the early years of your musical education. It becomes a superior orchestra when all of its members work diligently and consistently in the preparation of parts. Just as in any other class, if there is a problem in the music that you cannot handle, please seek assistance from your director.

We will hold individual playing tests (major grade) about every other week with performance checks (daily grade) in between. Students may heard as a section, in duets, or individually for these daily grades.

PRIVATE LESSONS

Private lessons are highly encouraged, especially at the high school level. With private lessons, participating students can have the luxury of extra help on a one-to-one basis. Each lesson taught on an NISD campus costs \$15.00-20.00 for a half-hour of instruction. Since longer lessons tend

to be more beneficial for students of this level, students may elect to enroll in forty-five minute or sixty minute lessons at a higher fee. For longer lessons, it is recommended to study outside of school. Remember, your growth as a player will be significantly affected by individual study with a specialist on your particular instrument. A sign up form will be given on the second week of school.

MUSIC

All music performed by the OHS Orchestra is provided by the school district. Any music used for private lessons or other purposes is to be provided by the student. Originals are the property of the OHS Orchestra. Students are expected to take good care of the music. Markings should be made in soft lead pencil only. Photocopied music needs to be kept in a black three-ring binder, provided by the student. The school provides only one copy of the music. Any extra copies need to be paid for by the student at \$1 per page! After each performance, all photocopies should be destroyed.

Each student is expected to have his or her own personal copy of the music at every class and/or rehearsal. Even when a stand partner's copy of the music is being used, each student needs their personal copy of the music to make markings. Do not assume that if your stand partner's music is marked, yours is as well. Furthermore, don't assume that you will remember them the next time. Each student needs to mark his/her music. From time to time, there may be an unannounced grade given for your work in marking your music.

OUT-OF-TOWN TRIPS

During the spring, the OHS Orchestra plans a trip to an out-of-town destination. Some of the more popular destinations in the past years have been Corpus Christi, Florida, Colorado, and New York. One of our future goals is to be selected to perform at the Texas Music Educators Association Convention in San Antonio as well as the Midwest Clinic in Chicago. The conductor and the leadership of the O'Connor Orchestra are committed to pursuing more of these trips this year and in the future. We will hold a fundraiser at the beginning of the school that can help fund your trip.

UNIFORMS

For all concerts, students wear a formal uniform with the exception of the spaghetti dinner where students will wear their orchestra polo. Part of each performance grade is based upon how you wear your uniform -- neatness, alterations, cleanliness, etc. If there are any alterations needed to make your uniform look better, you may have them done provided that they are *temporary* alterations and no fabric is cut. Do not wear boots, tennis shoes, or open-toed shoes with the formal uniform. Both uniforms will be issued as part of your orchestra fee.

Informal uniform: Orchestra shirts, solid white undershirts, and blue jeans

Ladies formal uniform: Black dress, black hose and black close-toed shoes

Men's formal uniform: Black tuxedos, bow ties and cummerbunds, white tuxedo shirt, black socks, and black dress shoes

SCHOOL INSTRUMENT LOAN

OHS owns several instruments that can be loaned to students for school use throughout the year. These loan instruments include violas, cellos and basses. There will be a \$30 instrument usage fee to use an instrument from school. Paperwork for this fee will be issued on the second or third

week of school. It is the students' responsibility to provide general upkeep to maintain the instrument in proper playing condition, including bow rehairs and replacement of strings due to misuse. If an instrument is damaged beyond normal wear and tear, it is the student's responsibility to repair it. NISD does not offer an instrument insurance policy, but Anderson Group International, LLC does provide affordable insurance. www.anderson-group.com It is advised that all students have some type of coverage on their instrument, whether it is school owned, privately owned, or owned by a musical instrument dealer.

ORCHESTRA FEE

In order to participate in orchestra at the high school level, each student will need to pay a \$80 fee. This orchestra fee covers the following items:

1. Formal uniform rental and cleaning cost
2. Polo for casual uniform
3. Recording fee for concerts
4. Clinicians for Region, All-State, and UIL
5. Orchestra supplies and equipment
6. UIL fees and related expenses
7. Field trip bus fees

I understand that for freshmen students this is a new concept, however, there are many more activities and events involved at the high school. You may pay the fee outright or use fundraising money to help pay for it. We can also take bi-yearly installments, if needed. Parents, please contact Mrs. Johnson if further installments are needed.

The fees sheet is included in this handbook. Please fill out the form and remit the payment of \$80 payable to OHS Orchestra Boosters.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

You will receive an email soon after the start of school pertaining to parent volunteer needs. We will communicate our needs via SignUpGenius. Please consider volunteering your time if it is available. We do have a Booster Club Executive Board, however, we do not want all the work to fall on them. Thank you in advance for all you help with this year!

COMMUNICATION

CHARMS is an online database that music directors can use to better organize their programs. Students and parents can access information on this website as well. There are two main items to log into CHARMS for: 1) to update student and parent contact information and 2) to check financial balances. We will use your email on file to send out monthly newsletters and other pertinent reminders through CHARMS so please be sure to have this updated.

Our O'Connor Orchestra website is www.och-orchestra.org. Please visit our website to find dates and program information. Pass on this website to anyone interested in our program. This is a great way to recruit students into our program.

Lastly, I will use **REMIND** to text out information about events. Instructions on how to signup for Mrs. Johnson's Remind are below. They will also be posted in the room and emailed out. Please join REMIND to stay connected with the orchestra!

VARSITY FULL ORCHESTRA

VARSITY STRING ORCHESTRA

JUNIOR VARSITY ORCHESTRA

FRESHMAN ORCHESTRA

-OR-

If you DO NOT want to download the app, simply TEXT 81010 with the class code as the message (don't forget the @ sign). Or if you don't have a mobile, go to remind.com on a computer to sign up.

BASIC CONTACT INFORMATION ASSIGNMENT



This is a required assignment for all O'Connor Orchestra members and will be counted as your first daily grade. You will need to enter all of your basic contact information on CHARMS. Please follow instructions below:

- Go to www.charmsoffice.com
- School code is ohsorch (not case sensitive)
- Password for first time users is your 6 digit-ID (without 's')
- It will prompt you to change to a new password. Please do so and use a password you will remember. Mrs. Johnson can only reset passwords, not retrieve them.
- If you have previously logged into CHARMS, enter your password. You may need to email your director to reset your password if forgotten.
- Once you enter the database, click on the 'Update Info' icon
- Enter YOUR personal information on the page where it has your name (example: Brenda's Information). The first page is for student information, not parent information.
- Under the Email box, fill in your personal email, not school email address. If you don't have one, leave blank.
- Enter your nisd email address in the Other Email box.
- Click the green Update button
- Then click the blue Add Adult button to add Parent 1
- Click the gray box entitled Copy Dotted Fields from Student to auto-fill your information
- Be sure to fill in correct emails, cell phone, and work numbers for your parents/guardians.
- Click Add Adult to add Parent 2, if applicable.
- Hit the Update button after you enter information on each screen or it will be lost.

This information will need to be entered/updated by **Monday, September 4th, 2017.**

Thank you for your prompt attention and help.

ORCHESTRA HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We have read and understand the contents of the **OHS Orchestra Handbook**. We wish to assume the obligations of the OHS Orchestra, to

our utmost to accomplish its objectives, and will follow its rules and regulations.

We will submit our basic contact information via CHARMS by **Monday, September 4th, 2017.**

As lower string musicians, we agree to pay a **\$30 maintenance fee** and understand that it is our responsibility to maintain the instrument in good playing condition. If an instrument is broken, we are responsible for the repair or replacement of the instrument.

Regarding area **news publications and/or the school webpage**, I do/do not give permission for NISD, OHS and/or the OHS Orchestra:

- | <u>Do</u> | <u>Do Not</u> | (please check one for each line) |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Publish my student's photograph, when included in a group |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Publish my student's individual photograph or video |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Publish my student's name as a member of the orchestra |

Student Signature: _____

Student Name printed: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____



Please turn this page in by Friday, September 1st, 2017.

Thank you for your time and support! ~ *Mrs. Johnson*

**O'CONNOR HS ORCHESTRA
STUDENT ACTIVITY FEE SHEET
Due Tuesday, September 12th, 2017**

As stated in the handbook, the orchestra fee covers the following items:

1. Formal uniform rental and cleaning cost
2. Polo for casual uniform
3. Recording fee for concerts
4. Clinicians for Region, All-State, and UIL
5. Orchestra supplies and equipment
6. UIL fees and related expenses
7. Field trip bus fees

Please return this sheet with your cash or check payable to OHS Orchestra Boosters.

PAYMENT OPTIONS:

[ALL STUDENTS: Circle One]

Full Year (\$80) / **Half Year (\$40)

YOU OWE (\$0/\$40)

**Second Payment due by Friday, Jan. 12th, 2017

Circle Student T-shirt Size

XS S M L XL 2X 3X

THANK YOU FOR BEING A PART OF THE O'CONNOR ORCHESTRA! WE LOOK TO
A REWARDING AND SUCCESSFUL YEAR!!

Official OHS Booster Use only: CASH _____ CK# _____ Amt. _____