

2015-2016



OMS & SGMS Orchestra Handbook

Richard Ballinger, Director

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www.osloorchestra.org

Indian River County, FL

Oslo and Storm Grove Orchestra

\òr-kes-trə\ a group of musicians including or especially string players organized to perform ensemble music

Dear Students and Parents,

Welcome to the 2015/2016 Oslo & Storm Grove Middle School Orchestra! I am so excited to have the privilege of working with you to make great music and reach for excellence, individually, and as an Orchestra family. To reach these goals, it is essential for us all to work together:

- As the teacher, I must facilitate learning by providing sound instruction, demonstration, and assistance.
- Students must practice the skills learned in class through repetition as well as creative practicing.
- And finally, parents must not forget how vital a role they play as they encourage their children to practice, commend them for their progress, and promote a positive creative learning environment that will lead to success.

We will work together to promote the qualities needed to fulfill our Orchestra motto: Together Everyone Achieves More. Each individual in the organization has abilities and potential, but the sum of the whole is greater than the individual, as in many things. Each member of our Orchestra family contributes by having integrity, a positive attitude, and always reaching for their best as well as bringing out the best in those around them.

Please take special note of the Orchestra Parent Meeting scheduled for **Thursday, September 3 at 6:30 p.m. in the OMS Cafeteria**. All students must have a parent attend one of the meeting regardless of which school they attend. Attendance by at least one parent or guardian counts as the first **MAJOR EVENT GRADE for the year**. This serves many purposes including being the business meeting for our Orchestra Booster (OPUS), facilitating all forms and information to be submitted, and handling the biggest financial concerns for the year.

After going through this packet with your child, please fill out the information and signature page (last page of this document and sent home in hardcopy) and return it for a homework grade.

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact me by email or phone. Thanks again, and I look forward to a tremendous year!

Musically Yours,

Richard Ballinger
OMS & SGMS Orchestra Director

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Storm Grove Middle School Orchestra

Calendar 2015-2016

August 24 – 1st Day of School

August 28 – All State Applications due

September 3 – Parent Meeting at Oslo Middle School – Cafeteria – 6:30 p.m. **

September 9 – Oslo Open House

September 10 – SGMS Open House – 6-8:30 p.m.

September 17 – FOA Solo & Ensemble Applications due (Sign up form posted Sept. 1)

September 28 – All State Auditions – VBHS (TBA) (5:00 to 7:00)

October 10 – FOA Solo & Ensemble Payments due (Sign up form posted Sept. 1)

October 1 – TEAM RETREAT – OMS Advanced 3 PM to 9 PM**

October 3 – TEAM RETREAT – SGMS Advanced 9 AM to 3 PM**

November 3 – Dress Rehearsal Autumn Concert (VBHS PAC) – 6:00 – 9:00 PM**

November 4 – OMS/SGMS Autumn Strings Concert (VBHS PAC) – 7:00 PM **

November 9 – FOA Solo & Ensemble MPA – times TBA – VBHS (Chamber)**

March 14 – Dress Rehearsal for FOA District Concert MPA**

March 16 – FOA District Concert MPA – TBA **

March 17 to 22 – Chamber Orchestra Trip to Atlanta

April 15 or 16 – Orchestra Trip to Florida Orchestra (Firebird)

May 5 – Dress Rehearsal for Spring Concert – VBHS PAC (During School Day if possible)**

May 6 – Spring Concert – VBHS PAC 7 PM **

May 25 – Awards Banquet – SGMS – Cafeteria – 6-8 PM

Indicates events which **Attendance is Mandatory and **Graded** as part of Curriculum.

Additional Rehearsals and Events TBA

Please see the Online Orchestra Calendar at www.charmsoffice.com and www.osloorchestra.com for up to date information throughout the year.

Expectations

Attendance

Whether it is class, rehearsal, or performance, students are expected to be *present, prompt* and *prepared*. Scheduling conflicts must be communicated with the director as far in advance as possible. Remember, “*to be early is to be on time, to be on time is to be late, and to be late is unacceptable.*”

Instruments

Students are responsible for their instrument at all times. When not in use, your instrument should be in its case and stored. There are a limited number of school instruments for a \$75 *instrument maintenance donation*. Checks should be made out to “OPUS”. Please write your phone number on your check and submit at the Orchestra Parent Meeting on September 8 or 11, 2014.

Arrangements may be arranged by the director in cases of financial hardship if parents contact the director before the Orchestra Parent Meeting and qualify. Other materials that you will need:

All Instruments: Rosin, Polishing Cloth, spare set of strings

Violin/Viola: MUST use shoulder rest, for proper technique and to prevent injury.

Cello, Bass: Need a rock stop or chair strap for to prevent slipping on hard floors.

A Metronome and Music Stand are highly recommended for all students.

High Quality Instruments, strings, and ‘Fresh’ Strings: The quality of an instrument has a very high effect on the progress of a student. In view of this, **do not purchase an instrument without consulting your director.** It is highly recommended, as well, to use high quality strings on your instrument. (Thomastic Dominant for example) Also, strings should be changed once per year, as they wear out and lose their pitch and resonance with wear and use. Having good new strings will greatly improve the tone quality of your instrument.

Sheet Music

- Students are responsible for all music distributed to them, originals and practice copies.
- Originals of music must remain in the school folder and will not leave campus. They are to be used for rehearsal and concert only. Practice copies will be given for home use.
- Write on music only with pencil.
- Each student will provide and maintain a personal 3 ring binder for their music.

Facilities

- **No food, drink, or gum** is allowed in the music building, or the PAC
- Due to the fragile nature of so many instruments, absolutely no horseplay is allowed.
- Unacceptable use of the music building or PAC may be turned over to administration for disciplinary action.

Etiquette

Students will be held to the highest standard of attitude, behavior, and etiquette.

Disrespect shown to peers, directors, guests, and audiences will not be tolerated.

Breaking any school rules (dress code, cell phones, etc.) will be dealt with strictly by the director, parents, and if needed, school administration.

Social Networking

Although social networks can be a very useful tool for communication, they can sometimes cast a negative and often inaccurate light on individuals and organizations. Orchestra students are expected to refrain from posting any information on “Facebook”, “Instagram”, or any similar sites or blogs that may cast discredit on the Orchestra or its members. Infractions may result in administrative disciplinary consequences.

Performance Expectations

Orchestra is a performance-based class, and most of what we do culminates in public performance. **Full performance credit will be given only to those students who arrive no later than the assigned call time, perform at the required performance standard, dress under the assigned code, behave in a professional manner, and remain in attendance until the completion of the performance.** As a performance class, some events *outside* of the normal school day are *required* and *graded* according to the Orchestra Grading Policies. The only exception to PERFORMANCE Requirements are for students in the Beginning Orchestra enrolled after 9/29/15. Performances will be additional credit for these students during the 2015-2016 School Year.

Performance Attire

ORCHESTRA PERFORMANCE UNIFORM

Boys: Black pants, assigned tuxedo shirt & tie, black socks, black dress shoes

Girls: Assigned orchestra dress, black stockings or hose, black **closed-toe** dress shoes with a **heel strap** and no more than 1” heel. (No jeans, pants, or flip-flops)

Informal and Beginning Orchestra (Boys and Girls): Black pants, white orchestra polo shirt, black socks, black closed-toe dress shoes.

Acceptable Jewelry: Stud earrings only, fine necklace with single pendent. Only fine or thin metal bracelets may be worn.

Unacceptable Jewelry: Large earrings, hoop earrings, ‘dangly earrings’. Large flashy jewelry. Plastic bracelets. Large chain necklaces or multiple pendants. **Long or Press on fingernails are not permitted (This includes for daily rehearsal and has an impact on the daily rehearsal grade).**

Concert Seating

A student’s seat for performance can become a source of debate, however, all must realize that orchestra is a unified, team effort, and each student, no matter where they sit, are equally important. While we may have auditions for certain seats or privileges, the final decision is left up to the director in the best interests of the orchestra.

Schedule Conflicts

We encourage students to be well rounded and enjoy learning of student success in multiple arenas. We have also done our best to arrange the orchestra schedule around major school activities already on the calendar. However, conflicts do arise, and students must communicate (in writing) scheduling conflicts with me in advance. Concerts and Dress Rehearsals take priority over all extra curricular events. Other graded events will be considered by the director and the coach or teacher of the extra curricular activity.

*PLEASE NOTE: Family plans such as dinners, birthday parties, etc. are not considered excused absences. Please discuss conflicts with the Orchestra Director in advance if you have questions about a particular absence.

Financial Obligations

Each year, the orchestra spends several hundred dollars per student, none of which is currently funded by the school system. The vast majority of the budget comes in the form of fundraising and donations. The expenses include uniform purchases and maintenance, transportation, FOA fees, maintenance of equipment and new equipment. From time to time, parents are asked to donate to cover these costs. **If students are unable to meet these financial obligations, please contact your director in advance to discuss options such as fundraising events to assist in covering these expenses.** **Please note that monies contributed to the orchestra are donations and are not refundable, i.e. uniform and instrument donations.**

*** Students who have not met financial obligations will not be allowed to participate in the Spring Trip, the Spring Awards Banquet, or other events at the Director's discretion.

Orchestra Trips

These are all considered a privilege, and students must have met performance and behavior expectations in order to take part. They must have passing grades in all of their classes as of the previous grading period or progress report, as well as a passing report from their other teachers concerning grades and behavior. Students must behave in the most professional manner and follow all directions set forth by the director and chaperones. The entire trip is a school activity, so all school rules apply and school and classroom discipline will remain in effect.

Private Lessons

While private lessons are not required for participation in orchestra, we highly recommend them for you to fully reach your potential. See your director or the web site for a list of private teachers.

Website and Calendar

The Orchestra Website is regularly updated to provide students and parents important information and tools for success including a calendar. Please refer to the website often for announcements, the calendar, forms, and other useful information.

Grading Policy

Quarterly Grades will be determined from the following criteria:

- Public Performance/Events – practical application – 30%
- Playing Exams – learned skills, accurate application – 25%
- Rehearsal Performance – laboratory activities – 20%
- Class Performance – attendance, preparation, execution, progress – 15%
- Written Work (theory, composition, history) – knowledge, learned skills – 10%

Parents

A few hints for parents to help their child succeed in orchestra:

- **Encourage** your child to practice and commend them for jobs well done
- **Ask questions** about their schoolwork and orchestra
- Make sure their instrument is brought to class and well-maintained
- Expose your child to a **wide variety of music**, including classical concerts
- Encourage your child to **perform for family and friends**
- Help your child **build a personal music library**
- *If at all possible, arrange private lessons for your child*

Please contact your director if you'd like to be involved with our parent boosters!

Classroom Expectations and Discipline Plan

Success in the orchestra program depends heavily on self-discipline. The classroom discipline plan enables every student the opportunity to manage his/her behavior. Your child deserves the most positive educational environment possible for learning, as well as having the privilege and responsibility of representing our Orchestra Program, Oslo & Storm Grove Middle School, and our community.

Respectful

- Be Considerate to Others
- Take care of your instrument
- Raise your hand to be called on

Responsible

- Be seated on time, ready to play with instrument, music, and pencil.
- Keep the aisles clear and store your instrument in your assigned location.
- Listen and follow all instructions

Role-Model

- Always practice good musicianship in all aspects of orchestra including posture, attentiveness, and performance
- Silently practice when your section is not playing
- Stay focused and always give your best effort, 110&!

Behavior Concerns: (According to School Policy) (excessive disruption, food, gum, drink, forgetting materials, general insubordination, etc.) will result in the following:

1st Offense: Verbal Warning, documentation

2nd Offense: Parent Contact, intervention (detention, writing assignment, etc.), documentation

3rd Offense: Office Referral (defiance, other)

Gum, dress code, defiance, and/or other major incidents will result in immediate office referral.

O MS & SGMS Orchestra

2015-2016 Student/Parent Information Sheet Handbook Signature Page

Student Name: _____ Grade: _____
Last First

Parent(s) Name(s): _____
First Last

Address: _____ Apt. _____

City: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Work: _____

Cell: _____

Parent Email: _____

Student Email: _____

In Case of Emergency, Alternate Contact:

Name: _____ Relation: _____

Phone: _____ Cell: _____

Please sign and fill in both sides of this form and return to Mr. Ballinger

Note: Please be sure to print your email address clearly. Most communication is done electronically to save paper as well as time. If you do not have an email address, please contact me for further information.

TURN-IN SHEET

This form must be filled out and returned by October 14, 2015 for a homework grade. To save paper and be more “environmentally green,” the SGMS Orchestra Handbook is available online at www.osloorchestra.org. A printed copy may be requested in writing.

I, _____, have thoroughly read and understand the expectations for Storm Grove Middle School Orchestra in the 2015-2016 school year.

I understand the grading policy: _____ (initials)

I understand the practicing it takes to succeed and will commit to the expectations for my instrument: _____ (initials)

I will promptly attend all rehearsals and concerts on the calendar. If attendance is impossible, I will notify Mr. Ballinger in advance and accept responsibility for any consequences: _____ (initials)

I understand the respect that is to be shown to all instruments: _____ (init)

I understand the procedures for handling sheet music: _____ (initials)

I understand the guidelines for the orchestra facilities: _____ (initials)

I understand the guidelines expected for my behavior: _____ (initials)

We have read and understand the policies for the 2015-2016 Storm Grove Middle School Orchestra and will abide by all guidelines through the extent of the 2015-2016 school year.

Student Signature

Parent Signature