

KIRBY ORCHESTRA HANDBOOK
2023-24



KMS
O r c h e s t r a

Welcome Introduction

Hello Orchestra Students/Parents!

I am glad you chose to participate in Orchestra this year. My name is Giselle Izaguirre, and I am the Kirby Orchestra Director. The Orchestra is a group of people interested in learning to read music and play string instruments, learn more about music and culture, and have a good experience. I strongly believe that participation in the Fine Arts, like orchestra, can be a rewarding experience in a child/young person's life and teach many skills outside of core classes or everyday routines. My main goals are to provide a positive musical experience for every Kirby Orchestra student and make our program extraordinary.

Middle school orchestra is a performance-oriented program that provides opportunities to build self-confidence, problem-solving skills, self-responsibility, group collaboration, and self-discipline in addition to just playing fun music. Being a member of the Orchestra requires a few things from you: hard work, commitment, and a positive attitude. You will be expected to practice your instrument and participate in performances, putting forth your best effort at all times. We will also have fun, not only playing our instruments, but going places and other fun activities as well.

Welcome to Orchestra, and let's have a great year!

Ms. Izaguirre / Ms. I

Rules and Requirements

Rules

1. Be on time and prepared (having all materials*).
2. Follow all school rules (includes dress code).
3. Do not bring gum, candy, or food into the Orchestra space. Must be left inside your backpack. (including before or after school).

4. Respect all teachers and students.
5. No profanity or rude language.
6. Raise your hand and wait your turn to speak.
7. Keep all electronic devices turned off and put away, unless given teacher permission to use them.
8. Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself; if it doesn't belong to you, DON'T TOUCH!
9. Respect the Orchestra room, equipment, and practice areas; clean up after yourselves, and don't make marks on equipment or furniture.
10. You must practice on your own time outside of class. Be responsible and hold yourself accountable.

Consequences

1. Warning
2. Move seat and/or put instrument away
3. Conference after class; parent contact
4. Office referral

*Includes instrument, music binder, your music, and orchestra pencil.

Tardies

If you walk in after the bell and have no pass, you must leave your tardy pass in the tardy bucket. It will be collected by the teacher after-class. The Orchestra follows the school tardy policy, so consequences will be given as they are earned.

Remember, if you're late, you're missing out! We cannot stop class to catch you up.

Grades

Your Kirby Orchestra grade includes the following:

Weekly participation—being in the classroom on time, with all materials, engaged in learning, attending necessary rehearsals before or after school, any written work assigned.

Performances—school concerts and eligible contests; these count as a test grade.

Playing tests/chair tests —performed individually in class.

Practice Logs*—time spent learning your instrument outside of class. Practice at home on your own time.

*Practice logs will be collected regularly, and graded based on students' description of their progress, as well as time practiced.

Region Orchestra. What's That?

The Region orchestra members are selected as the best performers in the Northwest and Northeast San Antonio region through a system of try-outs (or auditions) in October and November. This event presents an opportunity for motivated students to participate with the top students in the region and with an outstanding conductor. Every orchestra student is eligible to try out for Region! The entrance fee will be collected from all auditioning students when entering the contest. Fee cannot be returned if you do not attend the audition on that day or miss it. Interested students may obtain music for Region tryouts from their teacher. The director will rehearse these candidates on a voluntary basis before school at times to be announced. **Students who take private lessons should involve their private-lesson instructors in preparation for the try outs.**

UIL Concert and Sight-reading Contest

The Varsity Kirby Orchestra competes in an annual UIL Evaluation/ "Competition" in March. UIL evaluation is a two-part competition featuring (1) a concert performance based off of selections from the UIL music list, and (2) a sight-reading performance, in which students play music they have not prepared and have never played. Officials judge the orchestras separately in each part of the contest and rate the groups on a scale of 1-5, with 1 being the rating of excellence. Orchestras earning 1 ratings in both parts of the contest are awarded "sweepstakes" designations, indicating exceptional performance in both contest parts. During the weeks leading up to the evaluation date, Kirby orchestra will prepare for the event, maintaining a vigorous rehearsal schedule in class. Extra rehearsals may be required for students. These required rehearsals are announced in advance and held before or after school. The purpose of this event is to provide students with constructive criticism of the concert. You can think about it as the Fine Arts version of the "STAAR" test.

Concert Dress

For formal public performances, we want to look our best, as well as to appear unified. Therefore, everyone will be required to wear the formal Kirby Orchestra uniform, which consists of: Black dress shirt, black pants or skirt (no jeans, please), black shoes & socks (no athletic shoes, crocs, or sandals).

For certain trips and more casual performances, the uniform will be KMS Fine Arts Orchestra Polo and jeans (Polo shirt can be paid on MySchoolBucks.com or cash to orchestra teacher).

Extra Credit and Make-up Work

Auditioning for Region Orchestra is encouraged of all Varsity and 7th/8th grade students, and will add 5 points to your overall grade for that 9 weeks report card!

Also, everyone is encouraged to attend other performances, such as Kirby Band and Choir concerts, as well as the Wagner High School Orchestra concerts. Proof of attendance at these concerts will add 2 points to your report card grade as well.

If you are unable to attend one of our required GRADED performances, you **MUST** have your **parents** contact me (phone, e-mail, written note) as soon as you find out you can't attend, no later than the day you return to school after the missed performance.

Concert absences will be excused for the following reasons: personal illness, family emergency, or religious conflict. If the absence is excused, you will do a makeup performance for that grade assigned by your orchestra teacher.

Eligibility

For extracurricular events such as Region, Solo/Ensemble contest, and trips during school, you **MUST** be passing all your classes. I will check grades each 3 weeks to determine who is passing and eligible.

Miscellaneous

Instruments and Fees

It is recommended that you provide your own instrument if possible (instruments must be **natural wood colors** only). However, if you need to borrow a school instrument, the usage fee for the year is \$60. This money goes toward repairs if needed. The fee, along with the JISD instrument usage form, will be due by Fri. Sept. 1st. (the fee may be split to \$30 per semester); payments may be made in cash or at myschoolbucks.com (will need to create a free account if you haven't already done so).

At least 1st semester instrument fees must be paid before instruments may go home; if no fee is paid, all necessary repairs will be the responsibility of the student who has signed out the instrument. Please treat your instrument with care to avoid unnecessary repair or replacement costs.

Books and Equipment

Our Orchestras use the following books: Essential Elements bk. 1 (Beg.), Essential Elements bk. 2 (Con.), Essential Techniques (Hon.). Please make sure to get the book for the instrument you play if not provided by your orchestra teacher. Students may get their own block of rosin, and a cleaning cloth if they do not want to use the classroom's shared rosin and cleaning cloths. These can be purchased at most local music stores and online sites such as swstrings.com or sharmusic.com. A black music binder or folder will be issued to each student by the teacher. If the binder is lost or destroyed, you will be responsible for replacing it on your own.

Before & Afterschool / Practice Rooms

The Orchestra room is open daily 7:45AM-4:30PM. Students may drop instruments off in the morning but cannot stay to practice in the mornings as that is when the room is assigned for ONLY CHOIR until 12PM, when it's time for orchestra. Students will be issued Orchestra passes to stay after-school and enter the Fine Arts building after school. If there is no rehearsal scheduled after school, you are always

encouraged and welcome to practice in the Orchestra room or practice room as long as the teacher is there. However, you need to remember that using the practice rooms and orchestra space is a PRIVILEGE! You should only be here to retrieve/ drop-off your instrument or practice. You will NOT be allowed in to merely socialize, and non-Orchestra students are not allowed into the Orchestra room during any time, including after-school. You will also need to have your student ID to enter the building.

Video Recording/Photographs

The Kirby Orchestra is part of the local community. In an effort to get the word out about your wonderful students, there will be occasions where videos and photographs of the Orchestra will be shared on websites, TV, and newsletters. Follow our Kirby Orchestra Page on Facebook! Please note on the Handbook Acknowledgement form if you would or would *not* like your student's image to be reproduced.

Contacting Ms. Izaguirre

If you or your parents need to get in touch with me, they may write a note, call my office (950-372-3143 ext. 23143), or e-mail me at gizaguirre@judsonisd.org.

Class information will be updated via Remind App and Orchestra Parent Group Email. Follow our Facebook @KirbyOrchestra for pictures, videos, and all Kirby Orchestra/music related events and announcements!

Kirby Orchestra Event Schedule

2023-24

Concerts

Oct. 18–Fall Concert (All) 6pm, Kirby Cafeteria
Dec. 13–Winter Concert (All), Kirby Cafeteria, 6pm
Feb. 19 - Pre-UIL Evaluation (varsity), Veterans HS, In-Class
Feb. 27- TBD –Pre-UIL Concert LIVESTREAM (Honors), Orch room, In-Class
April 25- Fine Arts Fiesta Performance (all) Kirby Courtyard, 5PM
May 10–Spring Concert & End-of-Year Orchestra Awards (All), Kirby Cafeteria, 6PM

May 15 -TBD- JISD Art Showcase Performance (selected students), Rolling Oaks Mall, 5-7PM

Contests/Auditions (eligible students only)

Nov. 4- Region Orchestra Auditions (all auditioning students) Garcia MS, 9AM-5PM
Mar. 5 - MS UIL Orchestra Concert & Sight-Reading Evaluation, Clemens HS, All School Day
May 18- JISD MS Orchestra Solo & Ensemble Competition, Kitty Hawk MS, 9Am-1PM

Other Events

Sept. 14- Fall Fundraiser (#1)
Sept.16- Region Music Practice-a-thon (anyone interested), Veterans Memorial HS, 10AM-2PM
Nov. 8 - TBD - Orchestra Picture Day
Nov. 16- JISD Orchestra Social, 6-8PM, Judson HS
Dec. 1- Fine Arts Elementary Tours (Honors), 3 feeder schools, All-DAY
Dec. 6- Kirby Winter Festival, (all) Courtyard outside, 5PM
Feb. 7- Spring Fundraiser #2
April 25- Fine Arts Fiesta Performance (all) Kirby Courtyard, 5PM
May 23 - TBD- Orchestra Spring Trip (All Eligible Students), Six Flags, TBD
July - TBD - JISD Orchestra Camp (All JISD MS/HS Students),

For all evening campus performances, you need to be in the Orchestra room, dressed appropriately, 30 minutes before the concert begins. JISD policy requires all audience members to show ID to campus officer/door person. Non-Kirby student volunteers and adult chaperones receive a Visitors Badge from front office.

