

**Haines Middle School**

**Orchestra  
Handbook**

**2007-2008**

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## **Principal's Message**

Music exists in our culture because it provides an aesthetic experience which is unlike any other. No other art form can duplicate the kind of perception which results from expressing oneself through musical performance. The person who plays in a musical organization is paving the way for future musical enjoyment, whether it be listening or performing.

Haines Middle School Instrumental Music members enjoy involvement in a school organization that provides immediate identity and purpose. Orchestra members are involved in concerts, school assemblies, trips and social programs, and are an essential ingredient of school spirit at Haines. Group performances and rehearsals are part of the students' academic responsibilities. The Haines' Instrumental Music Groups promote and encourage academic excellence.

The Haines Middle School music program's reputation for excellence is due to the high level of expectation by the directors, the students, the school administration and the parents. Over 60% of all Haines students are involved in the Haines music program.

Due to the high caliber of music students we all expect excellence, not only in performance musically, but also excellence in character and citizenship. Your support as a parent in your child's music education is encouraged and greatly appreciated.

Mr. Charlie Kyle  
Haines Middle School

## **Forward**

The benefits of orchestra extend far beyond the mastery and understanding of musical technique. The study of music provides students with the opportunity to achieve personal and group goals. Although participation in orchestra provides such non-musical benefits as learning to work together, building a sense of responsibility, and feeling a sense of accomplishment in doing something well, the primary purpose of the instrumental music program is that of making MUSIC together. Therefore, MUSIC will be the most important ingredient of the Haines Middle School instrumental music program. It is important that all members put forth their personal best and see themselves as important contributors to the overall success of the group. The benefits gained by participation are in direct proportion to the effort put into the program.

The following pages contain guidelines for Orchestra members which have been formulated for the purpose of maintaining an instrumental music program in which each member, the entire school, and the community may take pride.

# Contents

- I. General Structure
  - A. Program Structure
  - B. Activities
    - 1. Concerts
    - 2. Solo&Ensemble Contest
    - 3. Additional Playing Opportunities
    - 4. IMEA Orchestra
  - C. Discipline
  - D. Private Lessons
  - E. Instrument Care
    - 1. Fees/Responsibilities
    - 2. Instrument Care
    - 3. Name Tags
    - 4. Upgrades
  - F. Practicing
  - G. Chairs
- II. Performing Groups
  - A. Objectives
  - B. Responsibilities
  - C. Concert Dress
- III. Expectations and Grading Layout- Very Important!!!**
  - A. Performance Attendance
  - B. Daily Class Participation
  - C. Full Orchestra
  - D. Written Homework
  - E. Taped Assessments
  - F. 6th Grade Lessons
  - G. Practice Cards
  - H. Grade Breakdown
  - I. Extra Credit
  - J. Missing Music
- IV. Calendar
- V. Recommended Equipment
- VI. Private Teacher List
- VII. Useful Telephone Numbers
- VIII. Response Form
- IX. Private Teacher Extra Credit Form

## I. General Information

### A. Program Structure

**6th Grade-** Students attend class 4A every day unless they are also in band or choir. They have a lesson scheduled for one half of one period, once a week.

**7th/8th Grade Students** attend class 5A for 7th grade, 6A for 8th grade every day unless they are also in band or choir. They attend a sectional on a rotating basis in which they miss either period 2 or 7 every other Tuesday.

### B. Activities

#### 1. Concerts

Each group will participate in at least 3 major performances per year. Students are expected to stay for the entire concert, as they are assessed for their concert etiquette as well as their performance. Please see attached performance calendar.

#### 2. Solo & Ensemble contest

Orchestra members are encouraged to participate in the district Solo & Ensemble Contest. Contestants perform selected pieces for judges and are awarded medals at the conclusion of the contest. Students may choose to perform solos with piano accompaniment or they may choose to be a part of a small ensemble. It is recommended that contestants who do solos study privately. The private teachers and/or your director can recommend suitable music literature. Students will be given 30 points extra credit PER ORCHESTRA entry. A participation fee will be assessed to Solo & Ensemble contestants. Solo participants are responsible for securing their own accompanist. Solo and Ensemble Contest will be held Friday, March 7, 2008 after school at North High School.

#### 3. Additional Playing Opportunities

Regional orchestras or district extra-curricular groups such as Elgin Youth Symphonies Or Aurora Youth Symphonies may be available for your participation. Enrollment is generally through audition. See Mrs. Pogge for details.

#### 4. IMEA All District Orchestra

Top 6th, 7th and 8th grade Orchestra students are eligible to audition for this district honor group. Our district includes the Western Suburbs south through Bolingbrook. If chosen, the musician participates in the District Music Festival on Saturday, November 3.

## C. Discipline

All large organizations such as band and orchestra can only function properly with well disciplined participants. Orchestra is not a mandatory subject, and it is assumed that all students are **willing participants**. It is the students' responsibility to adhere to all rules set forth by the school as well as the director.

Proper behavior at all rehearsals and performances is also of the uppermost importance. The action of one member is a reflection upon all members of the group and the school community. Only the highest standards of behavior, performance, and appearance are acceptable.

## D. Private lessons

Every student has large group rehearsals each day. However, the great majority of the instruction is with the large group and sectionals and little or no instructional time can be spent giving individual assistance. Consequently, it is extremely important that you consider private lessons for your child. Included in this packet is a current list of recommended teachers in the area.

As many enthusiastic and **successful** music students already know, PRIVATE LESSONS ARE ESSENTIAL and are the way to go to become a better player and get more fun out of playing! One on one attention will allow the student to work on problem areas which may get overlooked in a group situation. Students studying privately should participate in Solo & Ensemble Contest. Students who are receiving private lessons can earn 30 points extra credit per quarter towards their grade. If you need another private teacher list ask your child to get one from me, and I can make a recommendation for a good teacher for your child's specific needs.

## E. Instrument Care

### 1. Fees/Responsibilities

If a student uses a school owned instrument (cello, bass) a form will be handed out at the end of the year to turn in a \$50 rental fee. This is desperately needed for the upkeep on extremely elderly instruments. Students are responsible for the equipment they are assigned and will be billed for any breakage or replacement of items (cello straps, bows) determined not to be due to age and previous frailty of instrument.

### 2. Instrument Repair

Very minor repairs can be done by the director or private teacher; however it is recommended that instruments receive professional treatment by a trained repair technician. An area music company representative visits the school once a week and can pick-up and deliver instruments for repair. Refer to the "useful telephone numbers" page for additional repair company options.

### 3. Name Tags

For security reasons **all instruments** are required to have a name tag on the outside of the case at all times. Identification on the inside of the case is also a good precaution. We also recommend that students record the serial number from their instrument and keep it at home in case of theft. Students are assigned a locker for their violins/violas so they and I may always know where it is. Students who own their own instruments that they bring to school are assigned a locker with a door so that they can put a lock on it to keep it safe. The lock must be a Haines issued lock. Please **LOCK** the locker! Otherwise it does you no good! Due to the large number of students who own instruments some may be asked to share a locked locker.

### 4. Instrument Upgrade

The director or private teacher may suggest that a better instrument will enable the student to do better work. For string players in particular, upgrading your instrument will improve the tone quality. The matter of a step-up instrument should become a subject of family discussion and consideration. The private teacher and director can help in selecting an appropriate instrument and recommending a reputable music company. A Step-Up night for those renting through Quinlan and Fabish, where the company brings nicer instruments for sale, will be during the week of fall conferences. Rental credit can be applied to the purchase of these instruments. Watch for information in the fall. Step-Up nights through other rental companies may be coming soon.

### F. Practicing

In addition to the regularly scheduled school rehearsals it is **crucial** for each student to practice at home. Please be aware that practice rooms are available for student use both before and after school. Just as students need a quiet study area for math homework, an appropriate environment for music practice is needed; a quiet area with a music stand and appropriate equipment is a must for a successful rehearsal. Practice journals organizing and taking notes on practice sessions are due every quarter. See the Expectations/Grading sheets for details.

### G. Chairs

We remind parents and students to keep a healthy perspective on the purpose of our chair system. The emphasis is on overall group performance. Often students who are very accomplished will be placed further back in the section to improve overall group sound and to aid those who may be struggling

with the music. We are a team and must always work together like one. Chairs will be rotated at each concert. Chair placement is solely at the discretion of the director, and **all decisions are final**. We discourage a highly competitive atmosphere at this level of music instruction. Our philosophy for implementing this into the program is a very positive one.

## II. Performing Groups

### A. Objectives

- Proper playing habits
- Instrument care
- Fundamentals of music
- Skill development
- Detailed rehearsal of music for performance

### B. Responsibilities

- Practicing / Music Preparation
- Have necessary equipment in good working order
- Highest standards of behavior
- Attendance

### C. Concert Dress

#### LADIES

black/white dress-  
Pants are acceptable  
Dress shoes with tights/pantyhose

#### GENTLEMEN

Dark pants/white collared shirt  
with optional tie  
Dress shoes with BLACK socks

**NO TENNIS SHOES!!!**

Ladies: if you chose to wear a dress/skirt,  
please make sure it is comfortable to play  
in and appropriate for a public performance.

Sleeveless shirts are allowed provided that  
the top covers the entire upper shoulder- no spaghetti straps!

## III. Haines ORCHESTRA Expectations and Grading

### A. Concert Performance attendance IS ABSOLUTELY REQUIRED

If you have an unavoidable absence, due to a death in the family or a trip that cannot be rescheduled, please call/email at once. A research paper will be assigned and due in one week. If the performance is not attended and a paper is not turned in, the quarter grade will result in an automatic F- NO EXCEPTIONS.

## **B. Daily Class Participation**

Students are expected to be in class each day they are scheduled and to arrive within 2 minutes of the bell and to have their instrument, music and a pencil. 30 points a week are awarded each student for participating fully in the class sessions. Study halls are permitted only:

1. to make up a test missed during a sectional rehearsal\*\*\*
2. if the student is scheduled for one in an IEP

NOTE\*\*\*\* Effort must be made to make up the test before/after school as well  
Focus Study Halls

Focus Study Halls are small groups of students working with teachers to improve their math and reading skills. Students are invited to work in Focus study halls as per their team by their ISAT test scores. These study halls are for students who are struggling on the ISATs, not students who fail to get homework done or are struggling with a specific class. If a student's team decides he or she needs a focus study hall, there are two scheduling options: if the student is only in Orchestra, the student can go to Focus study hall on Tuesdays and/or Thursdays. If these days don't work for the teacher, or the student is in two music classes, the student will have to work in the Focus study hall during his/her lunch on certain days of the week. Regular study halls to work on homework or projects or make up tests there were missed during absences are not available to music students.

## **C. Sectionals- 7th and 8th grades**

Sectional are required every other week and is worth 40 points. Students miss either 2<sup>nd</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> hour every other Tuesday. Students are responsible for making up the work they missed in class. Students are given one "free absence" from rehearsal each quarter- please use it wisely! Exceptions are made ONLY for absences and if science class is doing work that cannot be duplicated outside the school day.

## **D. Written Homework**

Periodically a short written homework assignment will be given. When it is, students have one week to complete it and turn it in. Time spent on the assignment should not exceed 10-15 minutes. Grading scale is as follows:

- 10-9=A
- 8=B
- 7=C
- 6=D
- 5-below=F

## **E. Taped Assessments**

Taped assessments are basically playing tests where students will play for the video camera in a practice room while class is in session. Students will know what is expected in the assessment and will be given adequate time to practice beforehand.

## **F. 6th Grade Lessons**

25 minute group lessons are available to all 6th graders during 1st, 5B, 6B, and 8<sup>th</sup> hours. All 6th graders are required to have a lesson during the first quarter. During 2nd -4th quarters, if a student is taking private lessons, school lessons are optional. If a

student is in lessons with me, each lesson is worth 10 points. Lesson make ups outside of school are limited, so please make every possible effort to attend. All possible attempts will be made to avoid scheduling a lesson during math class.

### **G. Practice Reports**

A practice report will be turned in every Friday. The practice report guides the student through what I would like them to be practicing. Although there is a spot to write down the number of minutes practiced, minutes do not count, the completion of the practice report WITH a parent signature does. The practice report involves either circling the appropriate answer or writing a brief short answer. Each practice report turned in completed and ON TIME is worth 10 points, for a total of 70-80 points per quarter. Practice reports may be turned in late through the end of the quarter for a maximum of 8 points per late report. A copy of the practice report is available on the website to be downloaded and used if the student's is lost.

### **H. Grade Breakdown per week**

• For all 7th and 8th graders, plus 6th graders not taking group lessons, the grading is as follows:

For 6th graders taking group lessons:

- |   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| • Sectional(7/8)- 40 points(every other week) |                                     |
| • Daily Class- 30 points                      | Daily Class- 30 points              |
| • Homework- 10 points (periodic)              | Homework- 10 points (periodic)      |
| • Practice Report-10 points                   | Lessons- 10 points                  |
| • Taped assessments- 40-100 points            | Taped assessments- 40-100 points ea |
|   | Practice Report- 10 points          |

### **I. Extra Credit**

15 points extra credit will be given for each extra concert attended, if a signed program is turned in. Concerts may be at the middle school, high school, or professional level. Concerts where the students also perform do not count. Solo and Ensemble contest is worth 30 points extra credit per STRING entry. Students who are taking private lessons will receive 30 extra credit points per quarter in recognition of the extra time required to study privately. Forms for the private teacher to fill out are included in the back of this handbook. Other extra credit opportunities include playing in the district Fiddle fest and auditioning for IMEA. Extra credit opportunities are often given during playing assessments.

### **J. Music**

Students have been given a home folder, which is to stay home, and assigned a folder with a stand partner that stays at school. This should alleviate any problems with missing music. If a student loses the music for home, the student can buy a new copy for .10 per page.

## IV. Calendar

- October 3                    IMEA Orchestra Auditions @Scullen MS (selected students)
- November 1                Orchestra Concert @ Haines 7:30 pm**
- November 3 IMEA Festival (selected students) Location TBA
- February 28 Orchestra Concert @ North HS 7:30 p.m.**
- March 7                    Solo and Ensemble Contest @ North
- April 4                    District Fiddle Fest at Thompson
- April 16 & 18                7th and 8th grades recruiting concerts at elementary schools
- \*May 20                    Orchestra Concert at Haines 7:30 p.m.**

**\* Denotes REQUIRED Concerts, all other dates except for recruiting concerts are extra credit opportunities**

## V. Recommended Equipment

sponge or shoulder rest (for Violin and Viola)  
cloth (cheesecloth recommended)  
rosin  
metronome  
music stand (folding or black)  
rubber mute  
Rock Stop (cello/Bass)  
PENCIL!

## VII. Useful Telephone Numbers

Mr. Erik Swenson	630-587-7217
Mrs. Sandy Sebolt-Pogge	630-587-7217
Quinlan & Fabish Music Co., Burr Ridge, IL (Instruments, Music, Accessories, and repair)	630-654-4111
Full Staff Music Co., St. Charles, IL	630-513-7117
Michael Becker, Park Ridge, IL (String Instrument repair and purchase)	847-823-5491
Austin's Violin Shop, Sugar Grove, IL (String Instrument repair and purchase)	630-466-7562
PM Music	630-978-9927

## VIII. Response Form

Please sign and return the bottom portion of this page. It is due for 10 points to the student's 1st quarter grade no later than Monday, September 17.

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I have read the Instrumental Music Handbook, and understand the expectations and responsibilities listed above.

signed \_\_\_\_\_  
(Student)

signed \_\_\_\_\_  
(Parent)

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Private Teacher Extra Credit Form

Return the form below at the end of each quarter signed by the student and parent to relieve 30 points extra credit-purely optional.

1st Quarter

I affirm that \_\_\_\_\_ is a private student of good standing, practice and attendance in my studio.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(private teacher's signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(parent's signature)

\*\*\*\*\*

2nd Quarter

I affirm that \_\_\_\_\_ is a private student of good standing, practice and attendance in my studio.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(private teacher's signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(parent's signature)

\*\*\*\*\*

3rd Quarter

I affirm that \_\_\_\_\_ is a private student of good standing, practice and attendance in my studio.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(private teacher's signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(parent's signature)

\*\*\*\*\*

4th Quarter

I affirm that \_\_\_\_\_ is a private student of good standing, practice and attendance in my studio.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(private teacher's signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(parent's signature)