

Rawlinson Patriot Orchestra Handbook

14100 Vance Jackson
San Antonio, TX 78249
(210) 397-4900 X 3133
Vanessa Jackson, Director
Vanessa.Jackson@nisd.net

Rawlinson Patriot Orchestra

Policies and Procedures

Vanessa Jackson, Director

Contact Information:

Address: 14100 Vance Jackson
San Antonio, TX 78249
Phone: (210) 397-4900 X 3133
Email: Vanessa.Jackson@nisd.net
Conference Time: 2:00 – 2:45

Introduction

This handbook is provided in an effort to answer any questions you may have about the orchestra program at Rawlinson Middle School. The handbook also contains procedures and regulations that will help establish and maintain a high quality for this orchestra program. The ultimate goal of this handbook is to ensure the best possible learning experience for our students.

No handbook can cover all eventualities. Students are responsible for informing parents of additional information, whether dispensed by verbal announcement or printed form.

After reading through this handbook, please fill in the information requested on the last page, sign where indicated and return it to your director as soon as possible.

School Expectations

1.) BE PREPARED

- Use planner for agenda and passes
- Go to the restroom before class
- Begin warm-up (tune) immediately
- Get homework ready
- Get materials ready
- Be silent and attentive when the director steps on the podium

2.) BE INVOLVED

- Take responsibility for your own learning
- Listen and ask questions
- Participate

3.) BE RESPECTFUL

- Respect others, their property, and their personal space
- Ask permission to leave the room
- Ask permission to speak
- Respect school property
- Don't disrupt class

- Respect yourself
 - Speak politely
- 4.) BE A GOOD CITIZEN
- Follow school rules and procedures
 - Leave cell phones in lockers
 - No gum. Ever.

Additional classroom expectations:

- 5.) DO NOT TALK OR PLAY OUT OF TURN
- 6.) TREAT PEOPLE AND PROPERTY WITH RESPECT:
- Do not handle property that does not belong to you
 - Do not enter the director's office without permission

The director will keep a discipline book for each class. Infractions will be noted in the book. Consequence will be as follows:

- 1.) After the second infraction noted in the book, the student will be counseled.
- 2.) Following the third mark, parents are notified
- 3.) Any student who receives marks in the discipline notebook after this point will be referred for discipline actions.
- 4.) Any remark or attempt to pursue the subject during class will be regarded as another violation.

Students begin each six weeks with a clear discipline record.

Grading Policies

A grade of "A" or "B" (80 – 100) indicates that a student is participating consistently well in most or all areas of orchestra. A grade which is lower than a "B" indicates that a problem exists in one or more areas of the student's performance. Grades are averaged with the following percentages:

- 1.) Practice Records (10%)
 - a. Students will be asked to maintain a practice record and will require the parent to initial or sign weekly. These are due on Mondays or the first day of the week in the event of a Monday holiday.
- 2.) Rehearsal Fundamentals (35%)
 - a. Your instrument is present
 - b. Your supplies, music and PENCIL are available
 - c. You are actively working to improve your skills in an appropriate manner in class
 - d. You are focused and attentive.
 - e. You follow the beginning of class and the end of class procedures.
- 3.) Concerts/Performances (20%)
 - a. Any time we perform for the public it is a concert or a performance.
 - b. You are dressed appropriately
 - c. You did not leave early
 - d. An unexcused absence from a concert will receive a "zero".
- 4.) Classwork/Tests/Sectionals (35%)
 - a. You are prepared for any playing tests

- b. You take Cornell style notes
- c. You turn in any assignments on time.
- d. You attend sectionals as scheduled.

- Attendance at all concerts, performances, and sectionals as required for the respective groups (please see the attached calendar)

Practice

Practice is essential to improvement. Practice in a music class is the equivalent of homework in a student's other classes. Much of what we are learning to do in orchestra involves muscle memory and it will be imperative that students do some work at home to anchor concepts introduced and studied in class. Practice charts will be goal-centered as opposed to time-centered. Students will learn to set appropriate goals to accomplish in practice as well as teacher goals for the class which will be noted in the students' agenda for parent review. Practice charts will be due with a parent signature on the first day of the school week beginning on September 7th. A grading rubric will be sent home with the practice chart.

Performances/Sectionals

- **All-Region Orchestra** – Students in the orchestra program will be given the opportunity to prepare for one of two all-region orchestras. Extra tutoring sessions will be available at scheduled before school sessions and during FLEX
- **Solo/Ensemble Contest** – All members of the RMS Orchestras will be required to learn a solo. They will also have the option of working on an ensemble. They will have the opportunity (if eligible) to compete for a medal.
- **Rehearsals and Clinics** – There may occasionally be extra rehearsals scheduled after regular school hours in preparation for concerts or contests. Students will be notified in advance so they can make the necessary arrangements. If such a rehearsal is necessary, it will be included in the performance grade. This most often happens when orchestras combine and need the rehearsal opportunity and prior to UIL.
- **Concerts** – Attendance at concerts performances is required for all students and will count as a major test grade. Students are expected to stay throughout the entire concert and help with cleanup at the end of the performance.
- **Eligibility** – Students who are academically ineligible may not participate in extracurricular events (contests, all-region,). Their grades will not be penalized for these events. These students are required to participate in curricular events (concerts) and will be graded accordingly.
- **Sectionals** – Will be available during the year for different things. A sectional is an opportunity for just the students on one instrument part to get to work together without having to wait on the director to work on other parts. These will be scheduled for different things during the year.
- **Excuses** – A written explanation from one of the students' parents or guardians must be provided for an absence or tardy to one of the events listed above in order for it to be excused. These should be submitted to the director before the event, if possible, or the day upon the student's return in the case of an illness or an emergency. Excuses relayed through other students are greatly appreciated, but a written excuse still must be provided in order for it to be considered an excused absence.

Music Lovers:

Rawlinson Middle School Music Lovers is an organization made up of the parents of students in band, choir and orchestra. Music Lovers helps with the volunteer aspects needed for our groups, chaperoning, fundraising, and planning fun events. There is no fee to join and membership is voluntary. While there are group events which require the help of everyone, orchestra parents

work with the orchestra. The stronger our Music Lovers program is, the stronger our orchestra will become. Please consider being a member of this organization and helping as you can.

Uniforms:

Members of the Rawlinson Orchestra will be expected to dress appropriately for concerts.

Uniforms are as follows:

Formal Attire for Chamber and String Orchestra Members:

This attire will be used for all concerts and All-Region Orchestra. All items are issued through the school and a replacement fee will be charged for lost pieces or for serious damage to the uniform. It is the responsibility of the student to keep up with the pieces of the uniform. **This year there will be a dry cleaning fee of \$15.** At the end of the year, all pieces will be turned in and the director will assume the responsibility for the end of the year cleaning.

Casual Attire for All Orchestra Members

The Orchestra Polo and black dress pants will be used. The Polo will be available for \$25 and payment is due by September 15th so that we can have them in time for our first concert. A form will go home. Parents are also welcome to order one of the polo shirts for our organization for the same price. Please just add the information on the shirt form.

Travel Policies:

Students are to ride the bus to which they have been assigned and are not to change busses without the permission of the director.

All music and instruments are the student's responsibility. Always make sure your equipment has been loaded before boarding the bus..

Students are to remain seated while the bus is in motion and are to keep heads and arms inside the bus.

Students are to keep the bus clean and put trash in the trash sacks provided.

Upon arrival at destination, students are to remain seated on the bus until instructed to unload by the director.

Before any student travels on a school sponsored trip, a general release form must be on file with the appropriate organization. NISD policies are strictly enforced in all orchestra activities.

Sponsors are to be obeyed and treated with respect and courtesy.

Students represent their orchestra, school, and city and are to be on their best behavior at all times.

Picking up your Child:

All students are expected to be picked up within 15 minutes after an event. Please make all arrangements necessary so that directors do not have to wait unnecessarily.

Instrument Information

NISD has a \$30 Instrument Retainer fee for the use of school instruments to help with the maintenance of the year. This is one-time payment for the year, and it will be used to supplement the district allocation for music instrument repair. Contact the director if you need to break the retainer into payments. Students will be charged for any damages due to negligence or abuse of the instrument. Students issued a school instrument should examine their instrument and be sure to document any scratches, or other imperfections so that they are not charged for damages at the end of the year. Availability of these instruments is limited and is at the discretion of the director. Students will be expected to purchase necessary supplies for school instruments such as rosin, a shoulder rest or rockstop, and cleaning cloth.

A privately owned instrument is the responsibility of the student who owns it. Students should check with their parents to see that the instrument is included on their homeowner's or renter's insurance policy. Forms for instrument insurance are also available from the director. Students should consult with the orchestra director before purchasing an instrument to ensure that they buy a quality instrument in good working order.

Students will be assigned an instrument locker or space for their band equipment. Students **MUST** provide a lock to use on the locker. The director will be at elementary schools in the afternoon and we want to ensure the safety and security of all instruments.

Students will be expected to have all necessary supplies:

- Violins and Violas are expected to use a shoulder rest. This is a health issue and will prevent pain in the neck from holding it incorrectly.
- Cellos and Basses are expected to have a rock stop or a strap which will keep the instrument from sliding on a slick surface. Sometimes we play in places where there is not carpet to catch the endpins.
- It is strongly encouraged to have an extra set of strings in the event that one breaks – this is especially important for the higher (skinnier) strings. Please avoid the all-metal strings (they are usually the cheapest) since the metal will eventually ruin the bridge. A bridge for a violin can cost \$25 - \$50 and they get more expensive as the instruments get bigger.
- A one-inch black binder for music, notes, and other information. This is separate from the campus binder and can be kept in the orchestra room in their orchestra locker. The large binder is too heavy and tends to fall over in concerts.
- A pencil kept in the case or binder.
- Students are to purchase a copy of book used in class. These books are as follows:
 - Beginning Orchestras – Orchestra Expressions, Book 1
 - All Others – Essential Elements 2000 Book 3

Acknowledgement of Receipt:

*Please sign and return this page to Mrs. Jackson no later than September 7, 2010.
Thank you.*

I have received this handbook, the calendar and website information. I have read and understand the expectations and procedures outlined in it.

Print Student Name: _____

Student Signature: _____

Print Parent Name _____

Parent Signature: _____

Parent Contact number: _____

Parent Contact Email: _____

Date: _____

_____ Please include me in emails about RMS orchestra.

_____ Please do not include me in emails about RMS orchestra.

_____ I would like to be in Music Lovers but I cannot attend the meeting. Please send me information.

Shirt Information: Please Circle the appropriate size(s):

Youth Medium Youth Large

Adult Small Adult Medium Adult Large Adult X-Large

Other: _____