

Rawlinson Middle School ORCHESTRA HANDBOOK 2007-2008

Ramey Goushey, Director
Nancy Pena, Principal
Kim Young, Vice Principal
Jason Schmidt, Assistant Principal



Information Handbook 2007-2008

Table of Contents

- Introduction and Philosophy
- How To Contact the Director
- Calendar
- Grading and Attendance Policy
- Course Objectives
- General Overview
- Classroom Expectations
- Orchestra Room Procedures
- Academic Eligibility
- Rehearsal Etiquette
- Bus and Trip Behavior
- Insurance
- Orchestra Placement, Requirements, Supplies
- Special Announcement
- Private Lesson Information and Sign-up Sheet
- Rawlinson Orchestra Handbook Acknowledgement Form
- Conclusion

The Rawlinson Middle School Orchestra Program

Introduction

Welcome to the Rawlinson Middle School orchestra program. Learning to play an instrument can be a rewarding and enriching experience. The purpose of this handbook is to provide a written policy on the organization and operation of our orchestra program. It contains information of great importance for both students and parents. Please take the time to read each page carefully as a family, and then keep this in your orchestra binder for reference throughout the year. Orchestra is a group activity that depends upon the collaborative work of many individuals. The actions of one person will have an effect, either positive or negative, on the entire group. For this reason, we have guidelines that everyone must follow in order that each student may grow as an individual musician and also make a positive contribution to the entire group. There is a Handbook Acknowledgement Sheet that is necessary to sign and return to school by Friday, August 31.

Philosophy

The study and performance of music is an opportunity that our young people of today truly need. It is not our goal as teachers to make professional musicians of our students, but rather, it is to instill in them a sense of high musical standards, and enable them to fully enjoy the life-long benefits of making music. Recent studies show that students who participate in music programs, such as orchestra, become the strongest students, academically speaking, in their schools. The skills learned in our school orchestra program – self-discipline, increased self-esteem, group cooperation, commitment, responsibility to self and to group, and teamwork – will be reflected in a successful adult life. Knowing that great performances are the fruits of a considerable investment in preparation, hard work, and lessons learned from failure, the opportunity to enjoy a new level of communication and self-expression is the goal for every musician, young or old. Creativity is within us all, and the language of music serves as the perfect vehicle for the journey in personal growth and in the development of knowledge and skills.

Characteristics of a Rawlinson Orchestra Member

- *I am a valued and cherished member of this organization because of the unique and special qualities that only I possess*
- *Each day I will choose to use my talents, abilities, and character qualities to enhance my own growth and to nurture the growth of my fellow classmates*
- *In every moment I will choose to behave in a manner that is consistent with my character*
- *In every situation I have the ability to choose my own response. My response will either conform to or contradict the internal set of values which governs my life*
- *I have the power to create my own environment by the choices I make in each moment. I am not a victim of anyone or anything. I do exactly what I want to do -- no more, no less*



HOW TO CONTACT THE DIRECTOR

With close to 100 students in the orchestra program, the director receives a lot of calls and messages. My goal is to respond to every message in a timely manner. If your call is not returned within 24 hours, please continue to try to get through. In many instances, the phone lines are tied up and your call cannot be returned within our conference period.

YOU MAY E-MAIL ME AT THE FOLLOWING ADDRESS:

Ramey.Goushey@nisd.net

WRITE A NOTE

Send a note with your child. Please include a phone number or email address where you can be reached and the best time to reach you.

CALL DURING MY CONFERENCE TIME

I am not always near a phone during these times, but it is the best time to catch me. In general, I am teaching every period until our conference time and I might miss your call. Please leave a message on my voice mail and I will return your call as soon as I can. Sometimes it is possible to reach me during the 5 minute passing time between classes. The most difficult times to reach me will be before and after school.

Rawlinson Middle School: 210-397-4900

Rawlinson Orchestra

2007-2008 Tentative Calendar

August

- 27- First Day of School
- 30- Fundraiser Kick off(Brochure Sales)
- 31- Handbook Forms Due

September

- 3- Labor Day, Student Holiday
- 4-Orchestra Parent Meeting@ 7:00P.M. in Orchestra Room
- 10- Sectional Rehearsals start
- 14- Money Due for Fundraiser
- 21- Back to School Party@ Peter Piper Pizza 5:00-7:00

October

- 13- Possible Orchestra Picnic

November

- 5- Orchestra Fall Concert 7:00 p.m.
- 19-23 Thanksgiving Holiday
- 30-Region Auditions

December

- 1- Region Auditions
- 10- Region Sectional Rehearsal Times: TBA
- 11- Orchestra Winter Concert 7:00 P.M.
- 21- Deck the Halls (Advanced Group Only)

January

- 11-Back to School Party Times TBA
- 21- Martin Luther King Day (No School)
- 31- Region Dinner 5:30-7:00

February

- 2- UIL Practice Marathon(Chamber and Symphonic Groups)
- 22- UIL Orchestra Clinic 4:00-5:30 in Orchestra Room

March

- 7- UIL Orchestra Clinic 4:30-8:00 Dinner Provided
- 11-12 M.S. Orchestra UIL Times:TBA
- 25- Chamber Performs for PTA
- 29- DC Music Festival/Six Flags

April

- 22- Patri-Arts @ Rawlinson

May

- 13 -Spring Concert/Orchestra Awards
- 23- End Of Year Party

*****Some dates are tentative and subject to change or cancellation. Please try your best to work out any conflicts with any of the above dates in advance.***

GRADING AND ATTENDANCE POLICY

GRADING PROCEDURES:

- 20% TESTS** – 20% of the six weeks grade will be based on major tests including playing tests, tape recorded assignments, written exams, and orchestra notebook grade. Playing tests will be given during sectionals and class time. **IMPORTANT NOTE:** Playing tests will generally occur during section rehearsal for Chamber and Symphonic orchestra; missing a section rehearsal for an unexcused reason could affect two components of the student's grade.
- 30% DAILY** – 30 % of the six weeks grade will be based on daily grades, daily participation, returning signed forms, sectional attendance, concert performance, and bringing equipment and supplies. Participation and attitude in daily rehearsals, sectionals, extra rehearsals and performances is very important. Being in orchestra is like being in a team sport; everyone must participate in order for the group to be successful. A student's daily grade will be based on the following: all music neatly in orchestra binder every day, pencil on music stand, all necessary supplies, good posture, active participation daily, day-to-day improvement.
- 25% QUIZZES** – 25% of the six weeks grade will be based on grades including homework assignments, quizzes, class work, and participation.
- 25% PRACTICE** – 25% of the six weeks grade will be based on work done at home in individual practice. Orchestra is a performance-oriented class. Students that do not display adequate or sufficient effort and preparation will be graded accordingly. Each student will be given a grade that indicates his/her individual effort and performance according to their ability level. Students are required to maintain a weekly practice journal to be turned in for a grade each week. A student may earn extra credit by attending musical performances by professional organizations and those given by our local high schools.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Any activity, which is included in the course objectives, is considered curricular. Sectionals and performances are part of the course requirements and are therefore graded activities.

Unlike other core classes, it is not possible to make-up most of the activities that occur throughout the year in the performing orchestras. Attendance at all rehearsals, clinics, and performances is mandatory. A director must approve all absences in advance. **Advance notice includes at least 24 hours for extra rehearsals and 2 weeks for performances.** Unexcused absences will have an

adverse effect on the student's grade. If you absolutely must miss an activity due to an unavoidable conflict or family emergency, a written request by a parent or guardian will be needed. Please submit requests in a timely manner. Excessive unexcused absences may result in the re-assignment to a different part or role in the rehearsal or performance.

The overall success of our program is directly proportional to the overall attendance rate throughout the year. I can't teach an empty chair. Please make every effort to schedule your medical, dental, or other appointments around orchestra activities and class time.

BEGINNING ORCHESTRA COURSE OBJECTIVES AND GRADING PROCEDURES

Aesthetic experiences are a vital part of student growth. Orchestra, as a musical organization, provides one medium of aesthetic expression for students. Our departmental goal, therefore, is that each student be able to express the aesthetic values of music, through performance skills and theory comprehension.

OBJECTIVES FOR BEGINNERS

1. To learn maintenance of an instrument.
2. To learn and use good posture while playing.
3. To learn and use correct hand position.
4. To learn the proper concept of tone production and tone quality.
5. To know the various articulation markings such as slur, staccato, etc.
6. To be able to clap and count rhythmically.
7. To learn and understand the musical terms necessary for the performing level orchestra.
8. To develop discriminatory listening skills.
9. To develop good home practice routines.
10. To promote social development through large group interaction.
11. To develop personal and social self-discipline.
12. To prepare students to advance to the seventh grade orchestra level.

GRADING PROCEDURES

- 50% of the six weeks grade will be based on major tests including playing tests and written exams.
- 25% of the six weeks grade will be based on daily grades including homework, assignments, daily quizzes, class work, and participation.
- 25% of the six weeks grade will be based on the amount of daily home practice. This will begin the THIRD week of school. Parents will sign a home practice record each week to verify the amount of home practice.

CHAMBER(advanced) AND SYMPHONIC(intermediate) COURSE OBJECTIVES AND GRADING PROCEDURES

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- To develop self- and group-discipline through preparation and practice individual parts.
- To develop leadership skills, responsibility, diligence, and ability to cooperate with others as a team member.
- To develop strength, stamina, endurance and coordination.
- To develop an ability to make musical value judgments through critical listening. The student shall be provided opportunities to recognize quality of sound, pitch, style, tempo, rhythm, blend, balance, phrasing, dynamics, and articulation.
- To further develop skills in using and understanding note values, rests, key signatures, scales, musical terms, signs, and symbols.
- To develop the ability to recognize and tune intervals, unisons, harmony, and train the ear.
- To further develop proper instrumental technique, care for instrument, correct posture and playing position, embouchure, good tone, correct breathing, technical proficiency, and rhythmic skill.
- To further develop instrumental technique in finger coordination, intonation, musical phrasing, dynamic control, rhythmic skills, and articulation.
- To further develop music reading skills. Hand-eye coordination and to interpret in sound, musical symbols and terms from the printed page.
- To develop musical sensitivity through performance of music and listening to music. The student shall be provided opportunities to internalize generally accepted, authentic performance styles and techniques in music played and heard.
- To evaluate the quality of musical performance. The student shall be provided opportunities to evaluate progress toward self-established musical goals, evaluate solo and group rehearsals and performances, and recognize quality of sound, pitch, style, tempo, rhythm, blend, balance, phrasing, dynamics, and articulation.
- To develop creative self-expression in every performance experience and explore careers.

General Overview

This handbook addresses the procedures, policies, and expectations for students in our two levels of orchestra – Performing orchestras and Beginning orchestras. Please read through this entire handbook, and take note of which policies affect which level, as

there are slight differences between the two levels and differences among the performing orchestras (the context will tell you). The two levels are:

1. Students in the **chamber Orchestra, Symphonic Orchestra**
(Performing Orchestras)
2. Students in the **Beginning Orchestra**

BEGINNING ORCHESTRA STUDENTS: If you are a beginning orchestra student, we are pleased that you have chosen to start your musical journey by being a part of the tradition of excellence of the Rawlinson Middle School orchestra program. This tradition of excellence has come about through diligent effort on the part of past Rawlinson orchestra students, directors, and parents. It is important that everyone understands our expectations, and it is important that we as directors understand you so that we may work together to be the best musicians possible. This handbook outlines the guidelines and expectations for making this year a rewarding and memorable experience.

ALL STUDENTS: Music is a performing art. Performance and the preparation for performance are essential to the art. Membership in a performing organization is a privilege. Each member of a performing organization has a responsibility to attend ALL rehearsals and ALL performances of the group. All students are vital to the success of the ensemble as a whole, and their presence is necessary to prepare for and execute a performance. Multiple unexcused absences from rehearsals and/or performances demonstrate a lack of dependability in accepting the responsibility of group membership, and can be grounds for moving a student to a non-performing class, if such a change is possible.

The director will communicate with students and parents in a variety of ways. It will often be verbal, but we will also post everything on the Rawlinson Orchestra Website and occasionally send announcements to you in writing as far in advance of any obligation as possible. That is why I have posted the tentative calendar of events on the website. The calendar has been constructed so that major orchestra events such as concerts that do not fall on school-sponsored athletic events (game days). For the performing orchestras, we will develop a schedule for section rehearsals that will minimize or even eliminate conflicts with before and after school athletic practices, as well as game days. Section rehearsals will begin on Monday, August 31st (second week of school), with a schedule that we will give to students on Friday, August 27th and post on the website. The schedules for the performing orchestras will be different. The orchestra director and athletic staff will work closely together to ensure that students may fully participate in the school activities that they want to be a part of at Rawlinson M.S. If and when conflicts arise, please understand the necessity of informing us of the conflict as soon as possible so that we have time to resolve or work around them in a timely manner. In return, I pledge to you that I will do the same. Below is a list of our expectations in terms of rehearsals and performances.

EXPECTATIONS

- Students in performing orchestras will attend all section rehearsals as well as full ensemble rehearsals. Section rehearsals will be once per week, either before school (7:45 – 8:30) or after school (4:00 – 4:45) depending upon the section. We will work out a schedule that will permit students participating in athletics to not have sectionals on the day of a game.
- Students must attend all rehearsals and all performances of the group in which they are a member. Failure to attend required and/or performances are grounds for removal from the orchestra program.
- An unexcused absence is one that the director has no prior knowledge of and/or is based upon a reason that is unacceptable to the director. An excused absence is one that the director has prior knowledge of and/or is based upon an acceptable reason. Being absent from school and then missing a rehearsal or performance is an example of an excused absence. Students in attendance during the school day are expected to attend their before and after school responsibilities. If you leave school early due to illness, etc., on a day when you have sectionals, it is your responsibility to inform the directors on your way out, so that we will know how to count your absence (excused). You will need to get your instrument, anyway. Basically, if you are in school on the day in which you have an extra responsibility (section rehearsal or full orchestra rehearsal), your attendance is expected at this extra responsibility unless arrangements have been made beforehand.
- All students are to conduct themselves properly at all times. Displays of temper, profanity, flagrant violation of rules, etc., will not be tolerated. Any behavior which is not conducive to good citizenship or which violate the NISD Student Code of Conduct may result in suspension from participation in the extracurricular activities of the organization or dismissal from the organization altogether. If necessary, additional measures may be taken through the school administration.
- All members of performing organizations will put forth the effort and time necessary in practicing their individual parts to be successful. This time will be documented on weekly practice journals. Your instrument should go home every day. Practice only on the days ending in "Y".
- All members of performing organizations represent Rawlinson M.S., Northside ISD, and the community. As such, when traveling to other locations on district transportation, all students are expected to:
 - Be on time
 - Dress as directed (see Uniforms section for a description)
 - Avoid excessive noise on the bus and places we go
 - Travel on the same bus for all segments of the trip
 - Return equipment to its proper storage place upon returning to school

If a student is required to leave from an off-campus event or activity, the student's parent or legal guardian must provide written notification to the director prior to the student leaving, and the student may leave only with his/her parent or legal guardian or appointed responsible adult as stated in the written notification provided to the director. A student may not leave with anyone except his/her own parent or guardian. This is meant to protect the student, not to inconvenience the parent.

CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS

1. The primary use of the orchestra room is for rehearsals. Never do anything that would interrupt a rehearsal. Examples of disruptions are: talking, walking in front of a group that is rehearsing, waving, etc. If no rehearsal is taking place, please consider the orchestra room a very quiet place.
2. You must be in your chair with your instrument fully assembled before the tardy bell starts ringing.
3. Practice rooms are for practicing only.
4. **NEVER** leave your instrument unattended. Students may drop off their instruments immediately when they arrive at school, and pick them up immediately after school. If the Orchestra Room is locked in the morning when you arrive, take your instrument with you and check back later to see if it has been unlocked. **Do not drop off instruments in the hallway outside of the Orchestra Room.**
5. All cases will be stored in their assigned slots. These cases must be clearly labeled with your name with the label visible when placed in your slot.
6. Students are responsible for keeping their individual storage slots clean and neat. Books and papers are not allowed in the instrument slots.
7. It is suggested that all personal instruments have proper insurance coverage. NISD is not responsible for any instrument left overnight. To properly identify your instrument, keep your instrument's serial number and brand name on file at home and on your music folder.
8. For your health and well being, absolutely no gum or candy is allowed in the Orchestra Room. This is also against school policy.
9. **No one shall play, hold, or otherwise operate or handle another person's instrument. If it is not yours, do not touch it!!**
10. Everyone is encouraged to use the Orchestra Room facilities; therefore, it is everyone's job to assist in keeping these rooms neat and clean. Keeping our facilities clean and neat should never be thought of as a punishment. Before leaving the room, give something back to the orchestra by keeping our facilities nice.
11. All students will be required to keep a orchestra notebook. Tests, notes, orchestra rules, music, and handouts will be kept in the orchestra notebook. Other required materials include pencil, paper, and any accessory items needed for the maintenance and use of your instrument.
12. Only orchestra students are allowed in the orchestra room and practice rooms.
13. All instruments will go home every day. Instruments shall be picked up before 4:00 p.m. each day. If you should have to leave school early, be sure to come by and pick up your instrument before you go.
14. All handouts will be signed by the student and the parent, returned to be checked, and placed in your orchestra notebook.
15. Sectional attendance is mandatory for Chamber Orchestra and Symphonic Orchestra. Communicate with the director prior to the sectional if you have an unavoidable conflict.

Students will be successful when they live within these expectations. Whenever problems arise, they can almost always be traced back to not following a procedure. We will follow the school discipline plan.

These "rules" are meant to protect you and your equipment and to insure that the Rawlinson Middle School Patriot Orchestra is the BEST!

Nothing we have done in the past will ever be good enough again!

START-UP FEES

❖ School-Owned Instrument Rental -	\$30.00
------------------------------------	---------

Program Operation Fees

Each student in the Rawlinson Orchestras will be responsible for a program operations fee of \$25.00, which has been established by the Booster Club and Orchestra director. It covers orchestra t-shirts, the handbook, music covers, and assorted supplies.

Supply Fee

❖ Classroom supply fee (Orchestra Polo Shirt)	\$25.00
---	---------

Fundraising

- The philosophy is that each middle school student will share an equal part of the financial responsibility of funding orchestra program expenses not provided by the district. Some of these expenses include special music arrangements, contest entry fees, instruments, equipment and repair not provided by the NISD, clinician fees, field trip, food and drinks for orchestra activities, scholarships and orchestra club administration costs such as printing and postage. Students are encouraged to fundraise for these expenses. The Booster Club sponsors one fundraiser a year in the Fall.

ORCHESTRA ROOM PROCEDURES

There is several thousand dollars worth of equipment in the orchestra room that is the responsibility of each Rawlinson orchestra member.

- **Absolutely** no running or horseplay in the orchestra room.
- **Always** pick up after yourself and others without being asked, give back to the orchestra
- **Never** touch or play another persons instrument
- **Only** orchestra students are allowed in the orchestra room. For safety and security concerns, do not encourage or allow others in your orchestra room.
- **NO food, gum, or drinks at anytime in the orchestra room and practice rooms.**
- **Chairs are for sitting only** – sit properly with all four feet on the floor
- **Music stands are for music only.** Please do not use them as a foot rest or desk
- **Do not** handle stereo, tuners, metronomes, piano, etc. without a directors permission
- **Always** be respectful of your director and private instructors
- **Always** be respectful of your peers. Treat others as you would like to be treated.

The Orchestra Room is your room. Treat it with the highest regard and great pride. Please understand that nearly 120 students will pass through this room on a daily basis, therefore, we must adhere to these rules. Imagine 120 people in your room on a daily basis.

ORCHESTRA OFFICE

Although the orchestra office is meant for business, it is not off limits to students. When the door is open, students are welcome to enter. When the door is closed, **DO NOT ENTER OR INTERRUPT THE WORK OR BUSINESS TAKING PLACE.** If you have an emergency, please knock and use common sense in regard to how important your concern may be.

ORCHESTRA TELEPHONE

The telephone placed in the orchestra room is intended for business use only. Students may use the phone before or after school with the directors permission.

ORCHESTRA LIBRARY

Orchestra Aides are the only students allowed in the orchestra library unless you have permission from the director. Do not remove music from the delicate filing system in place.

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY RULES (NO PASS-NO PLAY)

RESPONSIBILITIES

As most of you are aware, a single grade below 70, on your report card, will deny you competitive performance privileges for a 3 or 6 weeks period. Because of the adverse effect this problem can have on an individual and the group as a whole, we will always monitor this situation very closely, especially around UIL time. PARENTS, we ask that you continue to supervise your child and communicate with their teachers if any grade questions should arise. Students should understand that their grades have a direct influence on other students as well as themselves. Every individual in the orchestra plays a vital role as a link in our chain, consequently, when a link is missing – the chain breaks. Any one individual has the ability to prevent an entire band from performing to its full potential.

Although the content of this section will mainly affect 7th and 8th grade students, it would be a good idea for 6th grade students to be aware of the concept of "Academic Eligibility" so that they will know how it will affect them for their music festival and when they get into 7th grade. House Bill 72, which became law in 1984, mandates that a student be suspended from participation in ALL extracurricular activities (athletics, band, clubs, etc.) sponsored or sanctioned by the school district during the three week period following a six-weeks' grading period in which the student received a grade lower than a 70 in any class. This suspension continues for at least three weeks, and academic eligibility is not regained during the school year until such time as the student's grade in EACH CLASS is 70 or greater at progress report time (in the middle of a grading period) or at the end of a six-week' grading period. A student may continue to practice or rehearse with other students for an extracurricular activity, but he/she may not participate in an extracurricular performance (or game) until the suspension is lifted. A student who receives a grade 70 or lower on a progress report who was not on suspension at the previous six weeks report will not, however, be subject to suspension. A suspended student may regain academic eligibility seven days after the six-week' grading period ends or seven days after the three-week progress report (grace period). The school district maintains a calendar with these dates of loss of eligibility/regain of eligibility. The Rawlinson M.S. faculty has established procedures for checking the academic eligibility status of students.

SOUND ADVICE FOR PASSING GRADES

Each student should develop structure and discipline in their study habits. Here are some common sense ideas to help you maintain good standing in all classes.

1. **PAY ATTENTION:** Do everything you can to try to discover just what it is the teacher is attempting to get across to you. Take notes, follow along in the text, ask pertinent questions, and avoid distractions.
2. **REVIEW DAILY:** Make a habit of reviewing notes on a daily basis to solidify material covered in class. If you do not understand material being taught, make arrangements with the teacher to get one-on-one help.
3. **DO ALL HOMEWORK AND HAND IN ON TIME:** The most frequent reason why students fail a class, is the failure to turn in assigned work. This is the easiest thing to fix. Do not miss deadlines.
4. **FAILING TO PREPARE IS PREPARING TO FAIL:** Prepare for all tests and projects in a timely manner. In comparison, you wouldn't wait until the night before a major performance or audition to begin practicing. By the same token, you shouldn't wait until the night before a test or project deadline to begin the work. Every teacher at McKamy wants to see you succeed.

5. **COURTESY:** Treat all teachers with the same respect that you expect from them. A few simple courtesies will go a long way. Paying attention in class will help your relationship with the teacher. Be careful not to draw negative attention to yourself and follow all classroom rules.
6. Ask for extra help and extra credit work. Make the first move towards this, don't wait.
7. **FOLLOW UP:** If you have a failing grade at the 3 weeks reporting period, make every effort to resolve every grade in question.
8. **COMMUNICATION:** Don't be afraid to ask your teachers about grades in question or when tutorials are held. The teachers are on your side.

REHEARSAL ETIQUETTE

The quality of work that a performing ensemble accomplishes in its rehearsal is the single most important factor in the overall success of the group. Efficient rehearsals produce SUPERIOR orchestras. There are certain factors that will contribute to good rehearsals, on a daily basis.

ALWAYS BE IN THE RIGHT PLACE, AT THE RIGHT TIME, WITH THE RIGHT EQUIPMENT, AND THE RIGHT ATTITUDE

- **A POSITIVE ATTITUDE** will go a long way in helping the orchestra reach its potential. Always enter the orchestra room with a purpose of accomplishing a musical goal. Leave other problems outside of the orchestra room and focus on the rehearsal at hand.
- **THE RIGHT EQUIPMENT** will make the rehearsal go smoother. **HAVE A PENCIL** on your music stand at all times. Marking music will help you remember important information about the piece being prepared. This will be beneficial to you in performance and in home practice. Be well prepared by having all equipment in the proper working condition. If you have a mechanical problem with your instrument, please seek help from the assisting director in your orchestra before class begins. Try to take care of instrument maintenance at home BEFORE you come to a rehearsal.
- **THE RIGHT TIME:** To be early is to be on time, to be on time is to be late! Always give yourself enough time to get set up and warmed up. When in a rush, your focus and concentration are the first things that suffer. Students should be in their seats at ready position when the tardy bell rings. All noise and movement should come to a halt after the tardy bell.
- **GOOD POSTURE AND HAND POSITION:** Every orchestra member should know the importance of good habits in posture and hand position. Please be responsible for maintaining a high level of professionalism in your approach to playing your instrument.
- **SELF-DISCIPLINE:** Rehearsals run smoother when the classroom atmosphere is at an above average focus level. Students can make a big difference in the direction of a rehearsal by following these etiquette guidelines:
 1. No talking during instruction
 2. Eyes on the conductor throughout the rehearsal
 3. Raise your hand if you have a question
 4. Be at ready position unless told otherwise
 5. Be patient with others and listen to progress taking place
 6. Always answer a question with a "yes or no sir/ma'am"
 7. Concentrate: Be ready to move quickly and quietly between tasks.
- Always **CHECK THE BOARD** for the days schedule and announcements. Information for your orchestra will be on the board in the same place each day.
- **RESPECT :** When a large group of people work closely together on a daily basis, it is important to bolster respect for each other and the director in and out of rehearsal. Please be sensitive to the feelings of others in the group. Laughing out loud, name-calling, mimicking are all examples of immature and unrefined behavior. Be polite and treat others as you would want to be treated.

BUS AND TRIP BEHAVIOUR

Rawlinson Orchestra Image and First Impression

In only the fifth year of existence, the Rawlinson Orchestra has already developed a reputation of excellence and quality in both performance and sportsmanship. It is very important to maintain a positive image at all times as you not only represent the orchestra, but also the faculty and student body at Rawlinson Middle School. As ambassadors to our school, always strive to be good ladies and gentleman at all times. You will never get a second chance to make a good first impression.

Bus Procedures and Behavior

Transporting a large orchestra from one place to another is not an easy task. It is imperative that you abide by the following rules in order to make each trip a pleasant experience for everyone involved.

- In most cases, the students will be given the opportunity to select a bus assignment before the trip. Students failing to sign up for a bus of their liking will be assigned a seat by the director. Absolutely no changes after the list are posted.
- Each bus will have a parent or director sponsor. The bus sponsor will be in charge of checking roll, making announcements, and keeping the bus in an orderly fashion.
- It is essential that you respect the obey instructions given by the bus driver, bus sponsor, and directors. Failure to do so will be considered a major disciplinary offense and will be dealt with accordingly by the school principals.
- **FOR YOUR SAFETY:**
 1. Stay in your seat at all times when the bus is in motion.
 2. Do not sit with your knees in the seat. Keep your "bottom" on the seat.
 3. Do not stand in the aisle
 4. Do not throw any objects from the bus
 5. Keep your hands inside the bus at all times
 6. Keep the bus clean.
 7. No food or drinks allowed in the bus.
 8. No "jam boxes". Only equipment with earphones
 9. Be considerate of others around you.
- Keep language clean throughout the entire trip. Please refrain from loud laughter and obnoxious screaming and squealing as it may irritate the bus driver and director.
- No offensive jokes or shady stories. Act as if you were on a trip with your parents.
- When the bus reaches its destination, remain seated and wait for further instructions from the band director or bus sponsor.
- **ALWAYS BE AWARE OF THE DEPARTURE TIME AND DO NOT BE LATE.** The orchestra must leave at the designated departure time in order to arrive at the destination on time. Individuals arriving late may cause the entire orchestra to be late and throw off the entire schedule. Being late to a departure or check in will be considered a major disciplinary offense and will be dealt with accordingly.

ORCHESTRA PLACEMENT AND REQUIREMENTS

Each student's orchestra placement is determined by a live audition and an evaluation of their previous year's performance. All 7th and 8th grade orchestras are full year commitments. Students are expected to remain in orchestra for both semesters.

Chamber Orchestra-

Composed of mostly 7th and 8th grade students. This is Rawlinson's most advanced orchestra official school representative. They will perform often throughout the year and compete in upper level Invitational Festivals.

Activities include:

- Before or after school sectionals
- Fall Concert in October
- All-City and All-Region orchestra auditions (Saturdays)
- Winter Concert (December)
- Solo and Ensemble contest (Saturday in February)
- Occasional evening clinics and rehearsals
- Pre-UIL Concert (Weeknight in April)
- UIL Concert and Sight-reading Contest
- Invitational contests
- Recruiting Concerts (usually during the day)
- Spring Concert (May)
- Practice marathons

OTHER GENERAL REQUIREMENTS:

- Purchase of an informal orchestra polo shirt.
- Daily home practice
- Remain eligible for extra-curricular activities (pass all classes every 6 weeks)
- sectionals
- Maintain a positive attitude and a strong work ethic

THESE ACTIVITIES SHOULD NOT BE CONSIDERED OPTIONAL. THEY ARE REQUIREMENTS FOR MEMBERSHIP IN THE CHAMBER ORCHESTRA. YOU SHOULD NOT ACCEPT A POSITION IN THE CHAMBER ORCHESTRA IF THE COMMITMENT CANNOT BE MADE.

SYMPHONIC ORCHESTRA- Composed of 6th, 7th and 8th grade students. This orchestra will have some of the same responsibilities as chamber. Symphonic orchestra will perform on its own in competition, and concerts.

Activities include:

- Before or after school sectionals
- Fall Concert in October
- All-City and All-Region orchestra auditions (Saturdays in the fall)
- Winter Concert (December)
- Solo and Ensemble Contest (Saturday in February)
- Occasional Evening clinics and rehearsals
- Pre-UIL concert (Weeknight in April)
- UIL Concert and Sight-reading Contest
- Invitational Contests
- Spring Concert (May)
- Practice Marathons

OTHER GENERAL REQUIREMENTS:

- Purchase of an informal orchestra polo shirt (approx. \$20.00)
- Daily home practice
- Remain eligible for extra-curricular activities (pass all classes every 6 weeks)
- Maintain a positive attitude and a strong work ethic

PARTICIPATION IN THESE ACTIVITIES SHOULD NOT BE CONSIDERED OPTIONAL. THEY ARE REQUIREMENTS FOR MEMBERSHIP IN THE SYMPHONIC ORCHESTRA. YOU SHOULD NOT ACCEPT A POSITION IN THE SYMPHONIC ORCHESTRA IF THE COMMITMENT CANNOT BE MADE.

Materials at School Everyday

- Instrument**
- Rosin (Cello and Bass students should have rosin for their school and home instruments.)**
- Soft cloth**
- Pencil (on stand)**
- Music in music binder with book**
- Shoulder Rest for Violin and Viola**

Additional Materials for Home

- Music Stand**
- Metronome**

CONCERT UNIFORMS

Concert uniforms will be issued to each individual student. The uniforms include black tuxedo pants and shirt. The student will also receive a cummerbund and bow tie. **Hose, black socks, black shoes are not provided and are the responsibility of the student.** Students may also choose to buy their own tuxedo shirt. Uniforms that are checked out by the student must be cleaned and returned in a plastic cover with the cleaning receipt within one week after the final concert of the year. Failure to return the uniform will result in an unclear status with the school.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

From the Northside I.S.D. Performing Arts Department

Audience manners are based upon respect for the performers and for others in the audience, and are nothing more than expressions of courtesy. Unfortunately, young people in today's society are seldom exposed to formal concert situations and are often not aware of these standards for appropriate behavior.

By following these guidelines, you can set a proper example for our students and will make the concert more enjoyable for all. Thank you for your assistance.

- Avoid entering or leaving the room during a performance. If you must leave, move only between selections.
- Applause is welcomed, but whistling or cheering is considered inappropriate for a formal concert.
- Talking should be avoided during a performance.
- Attention should be directed to the performer at all times.

Rawlinson Middle School Private Lesson Program

It is the goal of the Rawlinson Middle School Orchestra department to provide the very best learning experiences for each student. One of these learning experiences is the opportunity for a student to study privately with a professional instrumentalist. This enrichment opportunity is available to all orchestra students in grades 6-8.

The private lesson program allows interested students to receive additional individual help in their musical training. This individual attention generally improves the performance level of the individual student and also has a positive effect on the orchestra in which the student participates. One of the greatest contributing factors to the success to the Rawlinson Orchestras is the active involvement of our students in the private lesson program. The key to success with this opportunity is to start early and continue throughout the year.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR PRIVATE LESSONS

- Students normally take one 30-minute lesson each week. The cost of each lesson is \$15.00 for those students studying with our teachers who have a music degree.
- Lessons may be scheduled before school, after school, and during orchestra depending on the schedules of the students and the teachers.
- If a student misses a lesson they will be credited for that lesson only if they contact the lesson teacher in advance. If the teacher misses, the student will be credited for the missed lesson.
- Parents should encourage their child to have a regular practice time each day and to prepare their materials for their private lesson in addition to their assignments for orchestra class.
- Students of all levels can benefit from private instruction.
- Even though the majority of students choose to take private lessons, they are not required and are not a part of the student's grade in orchestra.
- The instructors are specialists on their instruments. Many have advanced degrees in music and perform professionally. These teachers are hand picked by the director to ensure that all of our students will receive quality instruction.

Private Lesson Sign-up Form

STUDENT'S NAME

INSTRUMENT

CHECK ONE:

_____ My child is interested in starting lessons.

PHONE

TIME PREFERENCE

_____ My child is not interested in private instruction at this time.

PARENT'S SIGNATURE

Conclusion and Items to Return

In the introduction to this handbook we stated that we want the best of all possible outcomes for all of our students and our ensembles this year. Adherence to the expectations contained within this handbook and the exercise of common sense will help us to achieve our goal of musical excellence through team effort. The concept of a team is captured in the acronym, T.E.A.M. "Together everyone achieves more". Orchestras are a "team" of a sort – a group of people acting together as one.

We will refer to this handbook periodically throughout the year. Please sign the "Acknowledgement Form" and have your child return it to his/her director by Friday, August 27, 2003. If your child wishes to begin private lessons, fill out that form and return it as well. If you are using a school instrument, please return that form along with the money.

I look forward to working with you and your child during their time here at Rawlinson, and it is our hope to make this a musical experience that will last a lifetime.

SCHOOL-OWNED INSTRUMENT CHECKOUT FORM
Rawlinson Middle School Orchestra

Student Name: _____ **Home Phone:** _____.

Address: _____.

City: _____ **State** _____ **Zip** _____.

Mother's Name _____ **Work Phone:** _____

Father's Name _____ **Work Phone:** _____

This is to certify that I am using a school-owned instrument. I understand and will observe the guidelines concerning the use of my school-owned instrument.

Signed _____ **Date** _____
Rawlinson Orchestra Student

I have read the guidelines for using a school-owned instrument and understand how it applies to my child.

Signed _____ **Date** _____
Rawlinson Orchestra Parent/Guardian

Check for \$30 Should Be Payable to:
Rawlinson Middle School
Attach check to this form

Rawlinson Orchestra Handbook Acknowledgement 2007-2008

Student's Name _____ Instrument _____ Period _____

Expectation or Policy	
	1. ALL STUDENTS: I understand that I must attend all rehearsals and all performance dos my ensemble, and that repeated failures to do so may be grounds for being moved to a non-performing class, if such a change is possible.
	2. ALL STUDENTS: I have received a McKamy Orchestra events calendar, and I have noted these dates on my family calendar.
	3. ALL STUDENTS: I understand that it is my responsibility to inform the directors when conflicts arise that might prevent me from being in attendance at a required event. I also understand that the director will inform me within a reasonable amount of time if additional events beyond the ones listed on the orchestra calendar must be scheduled.
	4. CHAMBER ORCHESTRA, AND SYMPHONIC ORCHESTRAS ONLY: I understand that I must attend my section rehearsal each week, and that repeated failures to do so will negatively affect my grades, and may jeopardize my placement in a performing orchestra.
	5. ALL STUDENTS: I understand what constitutes and excused and unexcused absence from required events.
	6. ALL STUDENTS: I understand that improper behavior at any time will not be tolerated. I understand that any behavior that is not consistent with the LISD Student Code of Conduct or that is not conducive to good citizenship may result in disciplinary measures ranging from suspension from the extracurricular activities of the band up to and including dismissal from the band program altogether, along with any other appropriate measures through the school administration.
	7. ALL STUDENTS: I recognize the necessity of quality, daily practice in order to be successful as a musician and to fulfill my obligation to my peers within my ensemble. I also acknowledge my responsibility in documenting this practice time each week on my weekly practice report.
	8. 7TH & 8TH GRADE STUDENTS ONLY: I understand the implications of "No Pass/No Play" (Academic Eligibility) and the consequences of my failure to maintain passing grades (70% or greater) in all my classes. I understand that being ineligible, even for a short period of time, can have a profoundly negative impact on my ensemble.
	9. ALL STUDENTS: I understand the procedures that will be used for grading my progress in orchestra.
	10. ALL STUDENTS: I will have the materials in class every day that are outlined in the McKamy Orchestra Handbook, and I will take my instrument home daily so that I may practice correctly.
	11. ALL STUDENTS: I understand that I should schedule doctor, dentist, and orthodontist appointments at times when I am not involved in a rehearsal if at all possible.
	12. ALL STUDENTS: I understand that director will always value my input and that they should always be the point of first contact whenever problems or concerns involving the orchestra program arise. I recognize that communication is crucial to my success not only as a musician, but also as a young adult.
	13. ONLY STUDENTS WITH SCHOOL OWNED INSTRUMENTS: I acknowledge that if I have been entrusted with the use and care of a school-owned instrument, I will use it and care for it appropriately. Any damage beyond normal "wear-and-tear" will be my financial responsibility. CELLO and BASS STUDENTS ONLY

I/we have read and understand the Rawlinson Orchestra Handbook, and I/we agree to abide by its expectations and policies.

Student's Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

