

Mission Attendance Area

Beginning Elementary Orchestra

2011-2012

Instructor:

Ms. Sofia Fojas

Phone (Hopkins JHS): 656-3500 ext. 38023

Website: www.musicathopkins.com

Email: slfojas@gmail.com

Hello and welcome to another year of orchestra! This packet will give you important information on attendance and behavior policies, concerts, instrumentation, and other helpful ideas. Please read through the entire packet and sign and return the bottom portion of the last page.

CLASS TIMES AND DAYS

- ◆ **Class Days** – Class will be held on **EVERY Wednesday** except for school holidays.
- ◆ **Class Times** – Class will be from **3:30-4:30 pm or 4:45-5:45 pm**.
- ◆ **I communicate via email often.** I find it a great way to get in touch with the parents directly without the student being the “middle man”. Please make sure that you are able to receive e-mails from the following emails: hopkinsjhsmusic@gmail.com and gconway@musicathopkins.com, as well as slfojas@gmail.com.
- ◆ Please try to have your student here **at least 5 minutes** before the start of class so that they have time to set up their stand, instrument, and music.
- ◆ Students will need to be **picked up promptly at 4:30pm or 5:45 pm**. I appreciate your attention to this matter.

ABSENCES AND TARDIES

- ◆ **Absences** – If your student is going to be absent, then please notify Ms. Fojas by email or phone to notify her of the absence and the reason for it. If your students are absent three or more times, they may be dropped from the class.
- ◆ As we only meet once a week, each rehearsal is extremely important. Please try to schedule doctor, dentist, and other appointments on other days of the week besides Wednesday.
- ◆ **Tardies** – Students entering late are a big disruption to class. They take away the attention of the students from the teacher by entering the room, making noise setting up their instrument, and moving their stand and chair into place. They also are behind on the day’s activities and must be caught up. Students who are consistently tardy will be considered for removal from class.
- ◆ **Sports** – Students with after-school sports conflicts should discuss this with Ms. Fojas as soon as possible so that a schedule for the sports season can be worked out.

CONCERT PARTICIPATION AND DRESS

Students will participate in 2 concerts this school year:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Place</u>
Mon, Jan. 23	7pm	Winter Elementary Strings Concert	Hopkins JHS Gym
Thurs, May 24	7pm	Spring Elementary Strings Concert	Hopkins JHS Gym

Concert attendance is mandatory. Students who miss concerts are missing one of the most fun and rewarding parts of being in band, so please plan other events around these dates. Thank you. Updated concert information can be found at www.musicathopkins.com.

CONCERT ATTIRE

Appropriate attire includes:

- **For Boys:** White dress shirt (tie optional) with dark slacks, black socks and black dress shoes
- **For Girls:** White dressy sweater or shirt and dark skirt or slacks, black dress shoes
- **No caps, jeans, tank tops, shorts, T-shirts or tennis shoes, please. A STUDENT NOT IN PROPER ATTIRE MAY NOT BE ALLOWED TO PERFORM.**

I have chosen this attire because it makes our groups look uniform, neat, and professional. If you have any problems obtaining any of these items, **please talk with Ms. Fojas about it.** Please, do not wait until the week of the concert to ask me about concert attire!!

CLASSROOM RULES AND PROCEDURES

- **Students are expected to be in their seat and ready to play at the start of class. Those who are not ready will be marked as tardy, no exceptions.**
- **ALL STUDENTS must help setup and takedown chairs, stands, and equipment before and after class. Students will not be allowed to leave until everything is put away.**
- **When any teacher or speaker is at the podium, the students will be quiet and attentive “active listeners”.**
- Continuous talking and or playing after the director has stopped the group WILL NOT be tolerated. If you want to speak, RAISE YOUR HAND and wait to be called on. There is to be no continuous playing at the conclusion of each rehearsal.
- Students **must** have a **PENCIL** on their stands AT ALL TIMES during class.
- **Students are to RESPECT all faculty and staff, other students and property.**
- Eating, drinking, or chewing gum is not allowed. Do not bring food/drinks in the music room.
- **Every instrument case must be marked with your name. Students are expected to treat their instrument with care and respect and are never allowed to touch or play another student’s instrument, even if the student believes he/she was given permission.**

HOMEWORK

PRACTICE SHEETS

- ◆ Students will be required to keep track of their practice habits weekly with a practice sheet. Each student must practice for a minimum of 1 hour 30 min. per week. That amounts to less than 15 minutes a day!
- ◆ Parents must verify and sign their students practice sheet.
- ◆ *Practice sheets will be handed out in class, or can be downloaded from www.musicathopkins.com.*

PRACTICE TIP – The best way to practice is to spend 15 minutes each day on your assigned music pages or songs. The WORST way to practice is to cram in your hour in only one day. That has no benefit and actually can make you worse by stressing the muscles in your hands, face, etc. by practicing too long. Think of your instrument as a set of weights: You wouldn’t try to lift 300 pounds on your first day, would you? You would slowly work up to it by doing a little each day, then increasing the amount of time you put into it.

WORKSHEETS

A written worksheet will be assigned on the average about once a month. These worksheets are designed to help students learn more about music and be able to read and play their music at a higher level. Worksheets are designed to take about ½ hour to complete.

METHOD BOOKS AND MUSIC

This class will use the “Müller Rusch String Method” series of books. The cost of the book is included in the registration fee and will be handed out to students. Students will also receive music folders and several songs that they will learn and perform at our concerts.

AFTER SCHOOL SPORTS & ORCHESTRA

Some after-school sports teams at the elementary schools have practices/games on Wednesday afternoons. If your student is involved in one of these, please let Ms. Fojas know so that accommodations can be made for this Beginning Elementary Orchestra class.

INSTRUMENT SELECTION

To have a “balanced instrumentation” in the string orchestra classes, students will be assigned to a specific instrument. The instrument selection process will occur at the first class meeting. Following instrument assignments, students will need to rent/purchase an instrument **before the next class on September 21st**. I strongly recommend renting an instrument first rather than purchasing. **Please do not purchase an instrument over the Internet or at a “non-music” store without talking to Ms. Fojas first! Many of these instruments are of extremely poor quality and will not be possible for students to play successfully!!!**

EQUIPMENT NEEDED FOR CLASS

The following items are needed for each instrument in the Beginning Strings classes:

Violin/Viola:

- Shoulder Rest
- Rosin
- Bow
- Extra Strings

Cello:

- Rosin
- Bow
- End Pin
- Rock Stop
- Extra Strings

Bass:

- Rosin
 - Bow
-

Music Class Sequence: Mission Attendance Area FUSD (For students beginning in 4th Grade)

Orchestra

4th Grade: Elementary Beginning String Orchestra

This class provides an introduction to the instrument and establishes basics, including music reading, tone production, correct playing techniques, and basic performance techniques. The first meeting of this class will involve an instrument selection process to establish a balanced ensemble. There will be a minimum of two concerts, one in the winter and one in the spring. Class meets at Hopkins JHS once per week for 1 hour, and involves students from all Mission Attendance Area elementary schools (Chadbourne, Gomes, Mission San Jose, and Mission Valley).

5th Grade: Elementary Intermediate String Orchestra

This class is a continuation of Orchestra, picking up from the end of Beginning Strings. It continues with more advanced topics related to music reading, playing techniques, and tone production. There is also a focus on harmony and musical independence. There will be a minimum of two concerts, one in the winter and one in the spring. Class meets at Hopkins JHS once per week for 1 hour, and involves students from all Mission Attendance Area elementary schools.

6th Grade: Elementary Advanced String Orchestra

This class is a continuation of Intermediate Orchestra, picking up from the end of Intermediate Strings. It continues more detailed refinement of skills including music reading, tone production, and more advanced playing techniques. There is continuing focus on harmony, musical independence, and musicality. Students in this class are expected to perform at a high elementary level. There will be a minimum of two concerts, one in the winter and one in the spring. Class meets at Hopkins JHS once per week for 1 hour, and involves students from all Mission Attendance Area elementary schools.

7th Grade: Hopkins JHS Intermediate Orchestra

This class represents the first opportunity for students to have music classes as part of their daily school schedule. Classes meet as part of the regular school schedule for 48 minutes per day. Continuation and refinement of skills such as tone production, ensemble balance, blend, and intonation are focused upon. Also, students learn and master an advanced level of music reading, notation, and theory. This ensemble performs at a very high level, and requires a lot of musical growth during the year. **This class is not to be confused with Elementary Intermediate Orchestra, as they are not the same!** Intermediate Orchestra performs in a minimum of 2 evening concerts per year, and travels to the local CMEA Orchestra Festival, and a Music in the Parks Festival at Great America in the spring.

8th Grade: Hopkins JHS Advanced Orchestra & Full Orchestra

This is the second in the comprehensive Orchestra sequence at Hopkins JHS. Classes again meet as part of the regular school schedule for 48 minutes per day. This class continues refinement of all previously learned skills. There is also an introduction of more advanced performance and music reading concepts. This class is designed to prepare students to participate in the orchestra at Mission San Jose High School, and performs at a very high level. Advanced Orchestra performs at a minimum of 3 evening concerts during the year, including the Mission Attendance Area Concert at Ohlone College. This ensemble also participates in the spring CMEA Orchestra Festival, and travels to Anaheim, CA (Disneyland) to participate in the Music in the Parks festival in May. Students in this class are part of the Hopkins Full Orchestra, where members of Symphonic Band are brought in to rehearse with the string players.

Please detach this page from packet and return to Ms. Fojas.

I have read the information in this packet and understand the requirements to participate in the Mission Attendance Area Beginning Elementary Orchestra.

Parent's Name

Student's Name

Parent Signature

Student Signature

E-mail Address: _____

Please return this form now, or on September 21st, our next class meeting – along with \$150 check payable to Hopkins PFA & the “Emergency Contact Info” page.