



# Standard Operating Procedures

## Fine Arts Program Handbook

APPROVED: July 21, 2021

Revised: August 1, 2023

# Fine Arts Program Handbook

## Policy Cross Reference Sheet

This handbook is an administrative procedure of the District and subject to policies adopted by the Board of Trustees. In case of conflict between administrative procedures and Board policy, policy shall prevail.

**Date of Superintendent Approval:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Version Number: (i.e. "2020.1")** 2021.4

The contents of this handbook relate to the following Board policies:

Policy	Title	Page(s)
FM (Local)	STUDENT ACTIVITIES	4*

\* The above listed policies relate to areas in which Student Activities are necessary. This handbook speaks directly to the District's Fine Arts Program.

# Table of Contents

Policy Cross Reference Sheet .....	2
INTRODUCTION .....	5
FINE ARTS DEPARTMENT CORE BELIEFS & COMMITMENTS .....	6
ELEMENTS COMMON TO ALL FINE ARTS PROGRAMS .....	9
ELIGIBILITY .....	12
GRADING .....	14
CLASSROOM MATERIALS .....	15
MEDICAL FORMS .....	17
REQUIRED EXPENSES AND FEES .....	18
PRIVATE LESSONS .....	19
MASTERCLASSES AND GUEST CLINICIANS .....	20
TRANSPORTATION .....	21
TRAVEL .....	22
UNIFORMS .....	23
TECHNOLOGY USE .....	24
SCHOOLOGY .....	25
PRESTO ASSISTANT .....	26
AUDIO/VIDEO RECORDING .....	27

SECTION 1 – HIGH SCHOOL BAND .....	28
SECTION 2 – HIGH SCHOOL CHOIR .....	36
SECTION 3 – HIGH SCHOOL DANCE .....	40
SECTION 4 – HIGH SCHOOL ORCHESTRA.....	43
SECTION 5 – HIGH SCHOOL THEATRE.....	47
SECTION 6 – MIDDLE SCHOOL BAND .....	54
SECTION 7 – MIDDLE SCHOOL CHOIR.....	58
SECTION 8 – MIDDLE SCHOOL ORCHESTRA .....	63
SECTION 9 – MIDDLE SCHOOL THEATRE .....	69
ADDENDA FOR SPECIFIC CAMPUS PROGRAMS.....	73
EXHIBIT A – Handbook Signature Form.....	74
EXHIBIT B – Emergency Contact Form.....	75
EXHIBIT C – Emergency Contact Form Band & Dance.....	76
EXHIBIT D – Preparticipation Physical Evaluation - Medical History.....	77

# INTRODUCTION

## **Philosophy**

The Board believes that student activities provide opportunities for students to practice and demonstrate the attributes of the Profile of a Graduate. As such, the District shall encourage participation in student activities, engage students through inclusive and collaborative experiences, and allow students the opportunity to create and participate in student organizations and student groups.

## **Purpose**

The District's Fine Arts Program Handbook provides procedures and guidelines governing District Fine Arts programs. The basis for these procedures and guidelines includes the Texas Education Code, FBISD Board of Trustee Legal and Local policy, District Administrative Regulations, Texas Education Agency code, University Interscholastic League rules, and the historic practices of the District and Fine Arts Department. This handbook does not supersede the aforementioned documents; rather, it intends to clarify practices for administrators, teachers, parents, and students.

## **Fort Bend ISD Mission**

Fort Bend ISD exists to inspire and equip all students to pursue futures beyond what they can imagine.

## **Fort Bend ISD Vision**

Fort Bend ISD will graduate students who exhibit the attributes of the District's Profile of a Graduate.

## **Fine Arts Department Mission**

The Fort Bend ISD Department of Fine Arts exists to inspire artistry and equip students to reach their full potential, thus creating opportunities without boundaries.

## **Fine Arts Department Vision**

Fort Bend ISD will be the premier school district for Fine Arts education in the nation.

## **Fine Arts Department Values**

Who we are is...the Future of Fine Arts Education:

- A Visionary **A**rtist
- A Responsible **C**ontributor
- A Collaborative **T**eam Member
- A Purposeful **C**ommunicator
- An Impassioned **A**dvocate
- An Accountable **L**eadership
- An Empowering **M**entor

# FINE ARTS DEPARTMENT CORE BELIEFS & COMMITMENTS

**Core Belief 1: All individuals possess innate artistic potential, which is best developed...**

**...through the creative process.**

**Commitment:** FBISD Fine Arts will foster the creative process in all students.

**...in an environment of trust.**

**Commitment:** FBISD Fine Arts will ensure safe learning environments that encourage risk taking and individuality.

**...through opportunities for artistic expression.**

**Commitment:** FBISD Fine Arts will provide artistic opportunities for students to stretch and explore the full range of their abilities.

**Core Belief 2: Teaching a love for the Arts empowers students to develop skills for life, which is best accomplished...**

**...by impassioned Artist-Teachers.**

**Commitment:** FBISD Fine Arts will recruit, develop, and retain teachers who will inspire a love for the Arts.

**...with the appropriate tools.**

**Commitment:** FBISD Fine Arts will provide resources to grow students creatively and artistically.

**...through effective teaching and learning.**

**Commitment:** FBISD Fine Arts will meet the artistic needs of a diverse population through effective instruction.

**...by cultivating the attributes of the Profile of a Graduate.**

**Commitment:** FBISD Fine Arts will nurture skills essential for future success through a rigorous Arts curriculum.

# Fort Bend ISD Profile of a Graduate

A Fort Bend ISD Graduate has a rigorous academic foundation, strong character, and is... ..equipped with skills for life.

...a servant leader.

...an effective communicator.

...a critical thinker.

...a compassionate citizen.

...a collaborative team member.

...a life-long learner.

**The study of the Arts equips students with higher-order thinking skills, fosters character traits, and develops the traits listed in the FBISD Profile of the Graduate...**

## **...equipped with skills for life**

Participation in the performing and visual arts promotes skills such as creativity, collaboration, critical thinking, and communication. Daniel Pink declared in his groundbreaking book, *A Whole New Mind*, the ability to think conceptually and creatively is an indispensable skill for the 21st Century workforce. Studying the Arts develops these cognitive abilities exponentially. The Arts prepare students for careers yet to be invented and removes boundaries for future success.

## **...a servant leader**

Leadership is fostered through all Artistic disciplines. In Band courses, drum majors, drill instructors, and section leaders learn how to assist with limited teaching responsibilities and lead by example during summer leadership training. In Dance Team courses, student officers attend a one-week summer camp alongside their directors to develop their leadership skills and hone their ability to write and teach choreography. Performing Arts programs develop leaders by electing officers, assigning roles such as stage, equipment, and costume/uniform managers, and promoting participation in honor societies such as the National Art Honor Society and Tri-M Music Honor Society.

## **...an effective communicator**

Students communicate both verbally and non-verbally in cooperative communities of Artists. Student-artists evaluate their own and their peers' work, offer descriptive feedback, and revise their performances through collaborative goal setting. Performing Arts student leaders motivate and manage large groups of their peers through public speaking and other effective communication skills, developing self-confidence.

## **...a critical thinker**

Performing Arts disciplines are skills-based: engaging in the continuous improvement cycle, evaluating one's performances critically, and accepting constructive feedback with a growth mindset in service of improving one's Artistic skills are essential dispositions students acquire through studying the Arts. Performing Arts disciplines are both process- and product-oriented: products flow from the process; therefore, students can learn concepts quickly and apply them flexibly in many contexts. Process skills transfer to all real-world applications. Student-artists can think critically and problem-solve on the spot, making rapid adjustments in new performance spaces or using different media.

### **...a compassionate citizen**

Students enrolled in Performing Arts programs regularly volunteer their time to complete community service projects. Artistic creativity is uniquely human. The sensitivity learned through studying the Arts

generalizes to our citizenry and motivates compassionate action in service to the community. Artists not only observe their current environment, but they also visualize future possibilities. Our student-artists perform nationally and internationally; travel affords a wider perspective on life.

### **...a collaborative team member**

Performing artists work together to create a unified product, whether it is a marching band show, a theatrical production, a dance recital, or a large musical ensemble. Students with diverse backgrounds, abilities, and experiences work together to create a unified performance. Student-artists respond sensitively to their peers by making critical adjustments in the moment such as humoring the pitch during a musical performance, shifting spacing during a dance recital, or altering a theatrical role during a play.

### **...a life-long learner**

Students simultaneously draw from both hemispheres of the brain, joining logical-sequential intelligence with holistic-intuitive thinking to create Artistic products. Studying the Arts instills a wonder for life and a sense of curiosity. The Arts fulfill students' need for creativity and inspire them to see beyond their limited experiences.



# ELEMENTS COMMON TO ALL FINE ARTS PROGRAMS

## About this Handbook

This handbook is a resource of information on the procedures and activities of this District's Fine Arts programs. Program directors issue this handbook to student members and parents to provide basic information regarding the instructional program. All student members and parents are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the contents of this handbook and must complete and return the enclosed Handbook Signature Form and Emergency Contact Form to participate in the program. This handbook functions in harmony with the FBISD Board policies, administrative regulations, and the FBISD Student/Parent Handbook. This handbook is a living document.

## Attendance

Most Fine Arts courses require some rehearsals and performances outside of the school day. Student members are required to attend *all* activities, rehearsals, and performances. Those who must miss a rehearsal, activity, or performance must consult with one of the directors *WELL IN ADVANCE* of the function. In every case, the director will work with the student to see that his/her best interests are met. Keep in mind that a performance has priority over a practice in any activity.

## Absences

Students' absences are categorized as follows:

- An excused absence is one that the director has prior knowledge of and/or is based on an acceptable reason.
- An unexcused absence is one that the director has no prior knowledge of and/or is based on a reason that is unacceptable.

Written communication and documentation are required for absences from required/graded events. Acceptable reasons for an absence include a medical emergency or illness, a death in the family, a religious holiday, or a family emergency. Circumstances *may* justify an excused absence for reasons other than those listed above in accordance with District policy. However, justification is determined at the discretion of the directors and no absence is guaranteed to be excused. Scheduling conflicts are not considered acceptable reasons for an absence.

Failure to notify directors well in advance of an excused absence will constitute an unexcused absence. Multiple unexcused absences from rehearsals and/or performances demonstrate a lack of dependability in accepting the responsibility of group membership. Failure to attend a rehearsal, activity, or performance without prior permission or good cause may result in suspension from future activities or performances, grade deduction, reassignment to a lower performing ensemble, or removal from the course.

## Grade Deductions

Students may have points deducted for unexcused absences as follows:

- Unexcused absence from rehearsals or practices that are extensions of classroom activities such as section rehearsals = two daily grades.
- Unexcused absence from a performance that is an extension of classroom activities, such as school concerts or UIL Concert/Sight-reading Evaluation, which do not meet the definition of extracurricular = two major grades.

### **Rehearsal/Performance Schedules**

Program directors will e-mail or post a calendar of rehearsals, performances, and activities for the upcoming year on a website, Presto Assistant, or Schoology during the summer break. Directors will provide a revised calendar at the beginning of the school year, post it on Presto Assistant, or post it on Schoology. Please check the calendar and report any conflicts to the directors. Attendance at all performances and rehearsals is a requirement of the class. If an excused absence is anticipated, written notification should be submitted as soon as the student/parents are aware of the conflict and no later than two days in advance of a rehearsal or at least two weeks in advance of a performance (see excused absence above).

### **Audition Procedures**

Prior to the academic school year, ALL students will audition for placement in one of the program's performing arts classes. This placement will be determined by an audition on materials selected by the director, consideration of the student's past artistic, musical, theatrical, or dance performance, and/or recommendation from previous director(s) only. Students auditioning for the top performing ensembles or groups may be required to meet additional prerequisites of the organization(s) concerning grade level, audition material, and past artistic, musical, theatrical, or dance performance. No position is guaranteed in any ensemble to any student, regardless of a student's seniority, ability, or other merit. The directors reserve the right to move a student to a different ensemble if they deem it necessary for the student or the ensemble. Any student that does not complete the audition process will be placed in the appropriate entry-level class. Director placement is final and non-negotiable.

The District prohibits discrimination, including harassment, against any student on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, gender, national origin, age, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law. No qualified disabled student shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any District service, program, or activity.

The District takes steps, including the provision of supplementary aids and services determined appropriate and necessary, to provide nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities in the manner necessary to afford children with disabilities an equal opportunity for participation in those services and activities. Any student with a disability requiring reasonable accommodations for participation in any District service, program, or activity should contact their campus to request a meeting of their student's Section 504 committee or ARD Committee. Questions regarding District policies and procedures can be addressed to the Executive Director of Student Support Services at 281-634-1143.

### **Parent Booster Clubs**

The main objectives of the program's parent booster club are to support and enhance the instructional program and to provide program communication to students and parents. The booster club does not take any role in determining program or educational decisions. All parents are encouraged to become members of the booster club. Participation is optional. Attendance at all performances and meetings is encouraged. There are various expenses necessary to run a quality Fine Arts program, which may not be covered by the District. Such expenses include expert clinicians, contest fees and expenses, meals for students, student leadership conferences, student scholarships, etc. Much of the booster club budget is spent on educational activities. We encourage all parents and students to participate in booster club fundraising activities throughout the school year.

## **Conduct and Due Process**

Organizations with high performance standards also must have high disciplinary standards. Students represent themselves, their family, their community, their District, and their school at every activity. All students will always conduct themselves properly. Display of temper, profanity, flagrant violation of rules, possession of or being under the influence of drugs or alcohol, etc. will not be tolerated. Any behavior that is not conducive to good citizenship will subject the student to “Due Process” that may result in *dismissal* from the organization. “Due Process” shall be defined as a student’s right to discuss with the instructor and principal any decision regarding action that would result in the student’s loss of grade, suspension from activities, or expulsion from the organization.

Due Process will be followed precisely as outlined in the FBISD Student/Parent Handbook. Students and/or parents may discuss any item of concern with their respective directors at an appropriate time in the appropriate place. If a satisfactory resolution has not been reached, the students/parents may contact the student’s grade-level principal to discuss the matter further. If the concern has not been resolved either by the directors or by the grade-level principal, the parents may contact the campus principal to address their concern.

## **Online Decorum**

As role models and representatives of the District and Campus, students and parents must maintain a high standard of online conduct regarding the District and District programs. The internet is a worldwide, publicly accessible form of communication. Any communication such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, emailing, texting, or other online forums, etc., appearing on the internet may become public, even if it is marked private. Students are responsible for their personal websites and postings, as well as their activity on other websites or platforms. Student members will not post on social media as official representatives of the instructional program, school, or District.

A student member may not engage in online conduct implicating the District or campus’s programs or operations when the online conduct:

- may reasonably result in a material or substantial disruption to the school environment or program;
- infringes on the rights of others;
- could be interpreted as bullying, harassment, threatening towards District staff or other students;
- demonstrates poor sportsmanship or a disrespectful attitude towards other programs; or
- otherwise violates the Student Code of Conduct.

Any such incident will result in review by the director (or designee) and may lead to probation or dismissal from the program.

# ELIGIBILITY

## **Academic Eligibility Rules**

A student shall be suspended from participation in all extra-curricular activities sponsored or sanctioned by the District during the three-week period following a grade reporting period in which the student received a grade lower than seventy (70) in any class other than an identified eligibility-exempt high school course. This suspension continues for at least three weeks and is not removed during the school year until the student's grade in each class, other than an identified eligibility-exempt high school course, is seventy (70) or greater. A student may continue to practice or rehearse with other students for an extracurricular activity but may not participate in such an activity until the suspension is lifted. A suspended student may regain eligibility seven days after the grading period ends or seven days after a three-week evaluation period.

## **Additional Eligibility Rules for High School**

A student must meet the following requirements to participate in extracurricular activities during the first six weeks of the fall semester.

- NINTH GRADE – PROMOTED from the eighth grade to the ninth grade.
- TENTH GRADE – earned at least five (5) state approved credits toward graduation.
- ELEVENTH GRADE – earned at least ten (10) state approved credits toward graduation, or during the preceding twelve months he/she must have earned five (5) state approved credits.
- TWELFTH GRADE – earned at least fifteen (15) state approved credits toward graduation, or during the preceding twelve months, he/she must have earned five (5) state approved credit.

## **Extracurricular**

An activity is considered extracurricular if any one of the following criteria apply:

1. The activity is competitive;
2. The activity is held in conjunction with another activity that is considered to be extracurricular;
3. The activity is held off campus, except in the case in which adequate facilities do not exist on campus;
4. The general public is invited; or
5. An admission is charged.

## **Co-Curricular**

A student ineligible to participate in an extracurricular activity, but who is enrolled in a state-approved course that requires demonstration of the mastery of the essential knowledge and skills (TEKS) in a public performance, may participate in the performance subject to the following requirements and limitations:

1. Only the extracurricular criterion #4 listed above applies to the performance; and
2. The requirement for student participation in public is stated in the essential knowledge and skills (TEKS) of the course.

A student ineligible to participate in an extracurricular activity, but who is enrolled in a state-approved music course that participates in UIL Concert and Sight-reading Evaluation, may perform with the ensemble during the UIL evaluation performance.

**Eligibility Rules Relating to UIL Competition**

No student may take part in any University Interscholastic League competition who, at the time of the contest, has not been a bona fide regular attendant of the school for fifteen (15) calendar days, or since the sixth day of the current school year. No student shall take part in any UIL contest after the end of the fourth consecutive year following enrollment in the ninth grade, and/or third consecutive year following enrollment in the tenth grade.

No school may issue, and no student may receive an award for participation in interschool competition in excess of \$50.00 (or the equivalent in value) during his/her high school enrollment in the same high school. Additional symbolic awards not to exceed \$8.00 each may be presented for each additional inter school activity each year.

Students must abide by all other rules as set forth by the University Interscholastic League in Austin, Texas.

# GRADING

Learning objectives are based on performance skills, responsibility, and participation. Therefore, students are expected to fulfill individual as well as group responsibilities. Since Fine Arts courses are a performance based, team activities, all students are required to attend all performances, and rehearsals (see Attendance above).

## **Daily Grades (50%)**

Daily grades may include but are not limited to daily class participation, preparation, written quizzes, performance quizzes, material checks, posture checks, as well as before and/or after school rehearsals. All before/after school rehearsal, which are an extension of classroom activities such as section rehearsals, are counted as two daily grades.

## **Major Grades (50%)**

Major grades may include but are not limited to performance tests, written tests, co-curricular performances, and special projects. All performances, which are an extension of classroom activities such as school concerts, are counted as two major grades.

## **Motivational Plan/Reluctant Students/Retesting**

- Students will be encouraged to demonstrate proficiency on core competencies. Students will be given regular graded assessments to provide opportunities for director feedback. Students may be asked to perform in class individually or as a member of a small group to demonstrate proficiency of core competencies.
- Directors or peer tutors will work with reluctant students in a one-on-one tutoring situation to reteach concepts and encourage reluctant students to demonstrate proficiency on core competencies.
- Students may retest as many times as necessary to demonstrate proficiency on assessments. No points on numerical grades will be deducted when retesting. Directors will update grades accordingly upon demonstration of proficiency through re-retesting until the last day of the current nine-week grading term.

## **Conduct Grades**

- A student merits a conduct grade of “E” when he/she consistently fulfills all classroom expectations.
- A student merits a conduct grade of “S” when he/she regularly fulfills most classroom expectations.
- A student merits a conduct grade of “N” when he/she does not fulfill classroom expectations regularly and director feedback is occasionally necessary.
- A student merits a conduct grade of “U” when he/she does not fulfill classroom expectations, is disruptive to the educational process, and director feedback is necessary regularly.

# CLASSROOM MATERIALS

## **Individual Equipment**

For our instructional programs to operate at the highest level, students may be required to purchase some materials, such as instruments, accessories, uniforms, notebooks, method books, scripts, art supplies, computer programs or apps, as well as practice wear including shoes, undergarments, and shirts in order to participate in Fine Arts courses. Students may have purchased some items at the middle school and would not need to “upgrade” in high school unless they no longer are adequate (defective, too small, etc.). Some items are instrument specific. We expect all instrumentalists to have working instruments and equipment. A student cannot be successful in learning an instrument if their instrument or equipment is not working properly. The District does not provide insurance for individually owned equipment.

The District will not deny participation to any student in any Fine Arts program where the cost of individual equipment and/or materials required for the course becomes a financial barrier for the students and parents. Please contact the program director if financial assistance is needed to purchase required equipment and/or supplies for the program.

## **Personal Instruments**

A quality music program requires quality musical instruments. A list of recommended instruments is available from the program directors. If a purchase is required, the staff will be most happy to consult with the student and parents to avoid an inappropriate purchase and to assist in obtaining the best possible price for the instrument. Please consult with the directors before making any purchase of a musical instrument or accessories, as there are countless “knock-off” alternatives to high-quality instruments, which will require frequent maintenance and leave the students dissatisfied with progress. With all personal instruments, it strongly is recommended that the instrument be insured through your homeowner’s policy or a private company. The school district will not assume liability for maintenance, repair, or damage of personal instruments.

## **School-owned Equipment**

The District furnishes school-owned instruments for purposes of avoiding large expenditures to the parent and providing well-rounded instrumentation for the performing organizations. Students must provide some of their own personal accessories such as mouthpiece, various mutes, drumsticks, mallets, and reeds. Each student member is financially responsible for all instrument, equipment, and/or materials checked out to him/her for their personal use. All students using a school-owned instrument are required to pay an Instrument Use Fee of \$80 per year to the District. The student is responsible for damage to the instrument while in his/her possession. Directors will inspect all school-owned instruments at the end of the school year. Student will not be charged for repairs if the instrument becomes damaged due to normal wear and tear. However, damage caused by fire, theft, accidental destruction, abuse, or neglect will be charged to the student. All equipment and materials must be kept in their proper storage location when not in use. Students who use a school-owned instrument will be expected to practice the instrument a reasonable amount of time each day. Failure to do so may result in their instrument being taken up and re-issued to a student who will make better use of it.

## **Instrument Lockers**

All Band and Orchestra students will be assigned a locker for instrument storage during the school day. Students are to keep only their instrument and music in the locker. Students should not keep clothing, shoes, schoolbooks, food, or drinks in their lockers; these items should be kept in school lockers. Directors can/will remove any of these items and/or other belongings from the instrument locker at their discretion.

It is the responsibility of the student to ensure their instrument is secured in their locker with a locked combination lock when not in use. Students must have a lock for their locker – no exceptions. If a lock is misplaced, the student is expected to replace it quickly. Instruments will be taken home daily, over weekends, and school holidays. The District is not responsible for personal items or instruments left in instrument lockers.



# MEDICAL FORMS

All Fine Arts students must complete the *FBISD Emergency Contact Form* each year. This form provides consent to treat students if the director or a medical provider cannot reach the parent or guardian. The *FBISD Emergency Contact Form* must accompany students when traveling. No student will travel or perform with the organization without these forms on file. Head directors will track student compliance in *Presto Assistant*.

All Band and Dance Team students must submit the *UIL Preparticipation Physical Evaluation – Medical History* form each year. The head director will review and sign off at the bottom of this form each year. This form also must accompany students when traveling. Head directors will track student compliance in *Presto Assistant*. This form does not replace the *FBISD Emergency Contact Form* listed above; it accompanies it.

All students participating in the Marching Band activity (including Color Guard students) or Dance Teams must have a physical examination prior to participating in outdoor rehearsals. All students are required to have an annual physical examination. Proof of the physical is the *UIL Preparticipation Physical Evaluation – Physical Examination* form, which must be signed by a physician or certified medical professional with the provider's office stamp or business card affixed to the bottom of the form. The head director will enforce compliance with the UIL Marching Band Physical requirement and track student compliance in *Rank One*.

Physical examinations must be completed by an authorized medical provider on or after April 1 to be valid for the next school year. Many insurance companies pay for one wellness check per year. Students should schedule their wellness check to complete their preparticipation physical examination after April 1 and prior to the first Marching Band or Dance Team rehearsal. This includes any May or June "Mini-Camps", Leadership Camps, Percussion Camps, Freshman Camps, Dance Officer Camps, or Dance Team Camps held prior to August 1. Students can obtain a physical examination either by their physician/authorized medical provider or by Houston Methodist at one of the in-District dates/locations.

The physical examination required is considered a "screening physical." The Houston Methodist physicals require no blood, urine, or genital checks. EKG's may be required if indicated by a review of the Medical History form; however, very few students are required to complete the EKG test.

Students are not allowed to attend any rehearsals or performances without the *UIL Preparticipation Physical Evaluation – Medical History* and the *UIL Preparticipation Physical Evaluation – Physical Examination* forms being completed appropriately and submitted to the head directors.

# REQUIRED EXPENSES AND FEES

Members of the instructional program may have financial obligations for required materials, such as a uniform or t-shirt, software, activity expenses, member dues, and trip expenses. No student will be denied the privilege of membership or participation in the program when the cost of required expenses and fees becomes a financial barrier. Parents should contact the head director to discuss options in meeting financial obligations or if financial assistance is needed.

## **Program Fees**

Fees are non-negotiable and non-refundable. See specific campus program Addenda for a detailed description of required fees. Any student who voluntarily or involuntarily withdraws from the program will forfeit all deposited funds.

## **Fund Raising**

Fundraising is a vital component to the campus instructional program to provide a healthy variety of activities for student members. The money raised is used for program activities, which are not covered by the Fine Arts budget. Families that do not participate in fundraisers strongly should consider donating to the campus instructional program, as all students benefit from the raising of funds.

In compliance with Internal Revenue Service mandates, all monies earned through fund raising activities belong to the organization's general fund and will be dispersed equally among all student members participating in the activities of the instructional program. There are no refunds granted from fund raising activities.

## **Refund of Fees**

Trip funds may be non-refundable depending on the specific trip payment agreement and date of request. Trip Insurance is available; however, insurance does not cover ineligibility due to failing grades. Any student who voluntarily or involuntarily withdraws from the instructional program will forfeit all deposited monies. Any student's parent may appeal in writing the decision of the staff concerning refunds. Any appeal of this nature must be submitted to the Head Principal.

# PRIVATE LESSONS

The District prides itself on having many of the finest private instructors in the Houston area. It is highly encouraged that students take full advantage of the private lesson program. Private lessons are provided for interested students as an enrichment program in all Music and Theatre classes. Private study is encouraged, but not required, to participate in the instructional program. The advantages of a one-on-one experience are overwhelming. Private lesson fees are consistent throughout the District and determined by the Director of Fine Arts. Private lessons are held either during class or after school. Campus program directors hire, supervise, and evaluate their private lesson instructors. Each private lesson instructor must complete a Criminal History Check and pay a Building Use Fee.

# MASTERCLASSES AND GUEST CLINICIANS

As an enrichment to students, masterclass teachers and guest clinicians are scheduled to work with our students during some Fine Arts classes. Masterclasses are offered free of charge to students. Additionally, guest clinicians often travel to work with our students in rehearsals or sectionals. Students are expected to show the utmost respect towards these guest clinicians and masterclass teachers. Any student who acts inappropriately towards a guest clinician or masterclass teacher, whether through poor attitude, disrespectful comments, foul language, or any other inappropriate behavior, maybe subject to immediate removal from the instructional program at director's discretion and subject to due process.

# TRANSPORTATION

If a student is required to leave from an event or activity during a school trip, the parent/legal guardian of the student must provide written notification to the instructor prior to the student leaving on the trip and the student may leave from the activity only with their parent/guardian as stated in the written notification. Students may not leave any activity during a school trip with anyone except a parent or guardian. A telephone call confirming the written notification also may be requested.

# TRAVEL

Parents and students should understand Fine Arts organizations may be involved in out-of-District travel; students who participate in these organizations also must participate in the travel. This may include a limited number of overnight trips for some competitive events. If the parent does not want the student to travel, the student should register for an organization that does travel so extensively.

All members represent the school and community and are expected to conduct themselves in a manner in keeping with the following regulations when traveling within or outside the District:

- Return to the director(s) all completed travel forms by the given deadline;
- Be on time for trips;
- Dress as directed;
- Behave in an appropriate and mannerly fashion in accordance with established Student/Parent Handbook rules while on the bus or in other vehicles, as well as in restaurants and hotels; • Avoid excessive noise on the bus ;
- Travel on the same bus for all segments of the trip;
- Return equipment to its proper storage place upon returning to the school; and
- Promptly obey all instructions given by the director(s) or any chaperone.

Any student who behaves disrespectfully or argues with a parent chaperone while on a trip may be removed from the trip immediately at director's discretion, and parents will be expected to either pick up their student or pay any transportation costs to send the student home.

## **Overnight Travel Requirements**

- Extracurricular trips are not mandatory for any member and will not affect their status or grade in the course in any way. However, students in performing ensembles do have a travel expectation. Additionally, travel to events such as contests, UIL Concert/Sight-reading Evaluation, UIL One-Act Play Contest, Dance competitions, is mandatory. Since participation in our instructional program is a team effort, any student not participating in a trip should advise the directors well in advance of the trip (a minimum of nine weeks). The directors then can initiate alternate arrangements to cover for missing students.
- When traveling, each student must meet all local and state eligibility requirements to participate in the competition. Ineligible students may not travel with the performing group under any circumstances.
- Students must be able to perform the material assigned for the performance(s) satisfactorily.
- Students must attend all scheduled rehearsals in preparation for the trip.
- Students must fulfill their financial obligations.

# UNIFORMS

It may be necessary to purchase some materials for uniformity of dress for performance purposes. The District provides uniforms for high school music groups, which are mandatory for participation in performances. The individual student must provide uniform accessories as appropriate. No student will be denied the privilege of membership or participation in the program when the cost of the uniform becomes a financial barrier. Parents should contact the head director to discuss options in meeting financial obligations or if financial assistance is needed. Students are responsible for repair or replacement of any damaged or unreturned uniform parts.

- Concert uniforms may require minor alterations such as adjusting the hem of the pants or dress. Ensure the hem simply is raised or lowered, and that no material is removed from the garment. Students will provide black dress socks, ties, cummerbunds, and undergarments; however, tuxedos and dresses are provided.
- Marching Band uniforms will be stored at school and issued before each performance. These uniforms will be returned after each performance prior to leaving the school. Students are responsible for providing personal accessories to their uniform. These accessories may include gloves, marching shoes, undershirt, t-shirt, etc.
- Dance Team uniforms may be provided at some schools, while other schools may require student members to purchase their own uniforms or uniform accessories, as well as practice clothing.
- Participation in theatrical productions may require a costume rental fee or fee to cover the costs of building a costume.

# TECHNOLOGY USE

The director will be very clear in letting students know when it is or is not acceptable to be using personal devices during class time. If a device is visible when not allowed, it may be confiscated.



# SCHOOLGY

Schoology (pronounced *skoo-luh-jee*) is the District's learning management system and the primary tool for facilitating blended learning. It is a platform for learning, accessing the curriculum and communicating authentic online learning experiences with parents. It offers students multiple avenues for collaboration, communication, assessment, submitting assignments and discussion boards.

# PRESTO ASSISTANT

Presto Assistant is an online database, which among other things, allows for the tracking of student medical forms and District-owned inventory such as instruments, equipment, and uniforms, sheet music, and play scripts. Additionally, students can make payments for program fees, instrument use fees, and other materials through the Presto Assistant. To access Presto Assistant, you will need an invitation from the program director via email message. Once in Presto Assistant, parents will have access to a variety of information and forms. Within the first few weeks of school, all classes will be trained in the use of Presto Assistant.

# AUDIO/VIDEO RECORDING

Throughout the year, Fine Arts groups will make audio and video recordings of rehearsals and concerts. These recordings will comply with Texas Education Code, Sec 26.009 subsection (b) which states:

- (b) An employee of a school district is not required to obtain the consent of a child's parent before the employee may make a videotape of a child or authorize the recording of a child's voice if the videotape or voice recording is to be used only for:
  - (1) purposes of safety, including the maintenance of order and discipline in common areas of the school or on school buses;
  - (2) a purpose related to a co-curricular or extracurricular activity;
  - (3) (3) a purpose related to regular classroom instruction; or
  - (4) media coverage of the school.

# SECTION 8 – MIDDLE SCHOOL ORCHESTRA

## Introduction

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 and procedures that everyone must follow so that each person may grow as an individual musician and make a positive contribution to the entire group.

*Music happens to be an art form that transcends language.*

-Herbie Hancock

*If I were not a physicist, I would probably be a musician.*

*I often think in music. I live my daydreams in music. I see my life in terms of music.*

-Albert Einstein

*There is no such thing as a difficult piece of music. A piece is either impossible or easy.*

*The process whereby it migrates from one category to the other is known as practicing.*

-Sir Yehudi Menuhin

## Philosophy of Music Education

The study and performance of music is an opportunity that our young people truly need. It is not our goal as teachers to make professional musicians of our students, but rather it is to enable them to enjoy fully the life-long benefits of making music. The skills learned in our school orchestra program — self-discipline, increased self-esteem, group cooperation, commitment, responsibility to self and to a 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 this journey in personal growth and in the development of knowledge and skills.

## What you should expect from the Director

We the directors understand that your time is very valuable; therefore, we will communicate with you as far in advance as possible for any events, rehearsals, performances, and contest. We will communicate this with students and parents in a variety of ways. It will often be verbal; also, there is an online calendar accessible through the District website. We will do our best to construct the calendar so that major orchestra events, such as concerts, do not fall on school-sponsored events. For the varsity, non-varsity, and sub-non-varsity 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. However, please keep in mind that performances take priority over a “practice” of any other activity. The sectional schedules for the varsity, non-varsity, and sub-non-varsity orchestras will be different. If or when conflicts arise, please understand the necessity of informing the directors well in advanced. This will give time to resolve or work around conflicts in a timely manner. In return, the directors pledge to you that we will do the same. We will also attempt to work around other campus activities but cannot guarantee that there will be no conflicts.

### **What the Parent brings to Orchestra**

Parents play an integral role in the success of our orchestral program as well. Parents can be sure that everyone understands the expectations and important dates by reading through the orchestra handbook, discussing it with the orchestra member, and reviewing it during the school year. Concert attendance is key to encouraging a student's success. Children enjoy showing off their musical skills by performing for parents and friends. Parents enjoy listening to improving musical performances where they can notice improvement and admire their child's hard work knowing that their investment in quality instruments and private lessons is beneficial.

### **Parent Responsibilities**

The involvement of orchestra parents is crucial to student success and that of the orchestra program. These suggestions to parents will help students be successful!

- Attend every concert to see your child's progress. (The orchestra loves hearing parent applause!)
- Help your child find a quiet space in the house where they can practice every day for an uninterrupted period (typically 30 minutes a day).
- Help make sure your child has the appropriate concert attire for performances.
- Help your child arrive on time to all orchestra concerts and events.
- Pick up your child at the stated end of all orchestra events.
- Encourage your child with daily at-home practice.
- Volunteer and assist with orchestra activities throughout the year.
- Regularly check our online calendar and reminders for announcements and updates.
- Help your child care for their instrument. Strings may need replacement; a bow may need to be re-haired; etc. Quality instruments make string playing more successful!
- Take time to read this handbook and any orchestra newsletters with your student(s) noting all events.
- Create a personal calendar, along with your child, that will help anticipate future events and avoid schedule problems.

### **What is expected of Orchestra Students**

#### **Behavior and Attitude Expectations**

Participating in District Middle School orchestra programs requires a high level of commitment and dedication from all participants. Orchestra members will follow these guidelines:

- They will show respect for one another by putting others first.
- They will think of themselves as artists and not only as students.
- They will avoid horseplay, gossip, and unnecessary socializing. Inappropriate social media groups regarding the orchestra members and/or directors will not be tolerated.
- They will carry themselves with pride, as representative of the orchestra program, by showing respect for their school and families that they represent and for one another socially and musically.
- They arrive to orchestra with spirits calmed and ready to make music. Low energy and apathy are not allowed in orchestra!
- They think positively and support their fellow orchestra members.
- They do not bring food, candy, gum, or beverages into our classroom to keep the room clean and safe.
- They keep valuable instruments clean and safe.
- They listen and respect the directors/conductors, or whomever is on the podium always.
- They do not use cell phones during rehearsals and/or sectionals.

- They will wear the correct concert attire to performances.  
They do not talk during concerts or use cell phones during concerts.

### **Classroom Rules**

- Follow instructions the first time they are given.
- Follow all learned procedures (see rehearsal procedure below).
- Bring your instrument, music, accessories, and all necessary materials to class.
- Respect yourself and your property, as well as others and their property.
- Non-orchestra students are NOT allowed in the orchestra room(s) or orchestra storage room(s).
- No food, gum, candy, or drink (except water) is allowed in the orchestra room.
- Do not leave valuables, cell phones, tablets, etc., unattended in the orchestra room.
- All students will adhere to the FBISD Code of Conduct.

### **Rehearsal Procedure**

- Be in the orchestra room or storage room before the tardy bell rings.
- Be seated and ready to play with instrument, music, pencil, and supplies one minute after the tardy bell rings.
- Have good rehearsal etiquette by being a good team player – study your part quietly while the director works with other sections.
- Always remain on task; do not talk or interrupt the focus of the rehearsal.
- Maintain proper posture when playing.
- Be intent on improving your performance skills.
- Raise your hand and ask questions when needed.

### **Additional Expectations for Varsity, Non-Varsity and Sub-Non-Varsity Students**

Students will:

- Demonstrate proficiency on region scales.
- Attend weekly sectional rehearsals.
- Attend any before or after school rehearsals.
- Demonstrate comprehension of basic music theory through performance and exams.
- Practice daily.
- Perform at the UIL Concert/Sight-reading Contest.
- Perform at various other festivals and performances.
- Communicate any potential excused absences in a timely manner and well in advance of the event so that conflicts may be resolved. Written communication and documentation is needed for absences at a required event.
- Maintain eligibility by passing all subjects.
- Always maintain instruments in a good working order.

Students are encouraged to:

- Audition for the All-Region orchestra.
- Perform at the UIL Solo and Ensemble Contest.
- Study with a private lesson teacher.
- Participate in the fundraiser.

### **Additional Expectations for Beginner Orchestra Students**

Students will:

- Demonstrate proficiency on scales.
- Attend any after school rehearsal.  
Demonstrate comprehension of basic music theory through performance and written exams.
- Practice daily.
- Perform at various other festivals and performances.
- Communicate any potential excused absences in a timely manner and well in advance of the event so that conflicts may be resolved. Written communication and documentation is needed for absences at a required event.
- Always maintain instruments in a good working order.

Students are encouraged to:

- Study with a private lesson teacher.
- Participate in the fundraiser.
- Perform at the Beginner Solo and Ensemble Contest.

### **Consequences for Not Meeting Expectations**

- Private conversation.
- Parent contact/conference.
- Lowering the grade for an unexcused absence at a required event.
- Suspension from participation in the extracurricular activities of the organization (as stated above).
- Discipline referral.
- Removal from the orchestra program.

### **Practicing Guidelines**

The keys to progress on a musical instrument include teacher instruction and independent practice through repetition of the instruction by the student. The most common hindrances from steady progress are lack of student practice, student practice with improper technique/posture, and insufficient repetitions. It takes some students more repetitions than others to master certain technical skills. Students are expected to take their instrument home each day. Meaningful home practice is essential to the student's continued progress in orchestra. The practice of home practice is so important, that it is a consideration for future orchestra placement.

### **Tips for Successful Home Practice**

- Practice in a quiet place.
- Practice at the same time each day to create a routine.
- Some students may want to break up their practice time into smaller segments to help busy schedules/fatigue.
- Isolate sections of music that are difficult and carefully practice them. Use practice techniques discussed in class for efficient practicing. Playing pieces repeatedly does not accomplish the goals and may in fact be harmful to your growth as a musician. Using a metronome at a slower tempo and gradually increase in speed is very useful in many practice situations.

### **Required Classroom Materials Daily Classroom Materials and Fingernails**

- Instrument and bow, in proper playing condition\*, as well as required accessories (see below).
- Pencil with an eraser.
- Orchestra binder/folder.

- All assigned music, in your binder/folder.
- All students must keep their fingernails trimmed and no artificial nails. This is to allow for proper playing position of the hand and to prevent damage to the instruments.  
\* Proper playing condition also means that strings for Violin and Viola should be changed at least every six months to maintain the instrument's best sound.

### Student-Provided Instrument Accessories

- Rosin
- Tuner and metronome.
- Shoulder rest for violin and viola (required for all students unless permission is obtained).
- Clean, soft cloth to clean off rosin (please leave in case).
- Violin and viola students should always keep a spare set of strings in their case.
- Endpin anchor/rest for cello and bass.

### Instrument Storage

- While at school, all instruments must remain in the orchestra room and in the case with the case securely closed when not in use.
- All students are required to have their name on a nametag attached to their instrument case.

### Recommended Beginner Instrument and Supply List

The quality of a student instrument can adversely affect student success. Poor quality instruments can lead to poor student performance. Therefore, the instruments on this list have proved to be of good quality and durability for beginning orchestra students. Please DO NOT purchase an instrument without consulting your director. Renting is the safest and cheapest option for most beginning students.

Instrument	Recommended Instrument Models	Required Supplies
Violin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any from Lisle Violin Shop</li> <li>• Any from Fishburn Violin Shop</li> <li>• Scherl and Roth/Glaesel Model R101, R200 or higher</li> </ul> <p>Recommend strings: D'Addario Pro-arte, D'Addario Helicore, or Thomastik Dominant</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School specific beginner book(s) for violin</li> <li>• Folding music stand</li> <li>• Shoulder rest</li> <li>• Rosin</li> <li>• Soft lint free cloth</li> <li>• Tuner/metronome</li> </ul>
Viola	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any from Lisle Violin Shop</li> <li>• Any from Fishburn Violin Shop</li> <li>• Eastman String Model VA100 or Higher</li> <li>• Scherl and Roth/Glaesel Model R111, R203 or higher</li> </ul> <p>Recommend strings: D'Addario Pro-arte, D'Addario Helicore or Thomastik Dominant</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School specific beginner book(s) for viola</li> <li>• Folding music stand</li> <li>• Shoulder rest</li> <li>• Rosin</li> <li>• Soft lint free cloth</li> <li>• Tuner/metronome</li> </ul>



<b>Instrument</b>	<b>Recommended Instrument Models</b>	<b>Required Supplies</b>
Cello	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any from Lisle Violin Shop</li> <li>• Any from Fishburn Violin Shop</li> <li>• Scherl and Roth/Glaesel Model R204 or higher</li> </ul> <p>Recommend strings: D'Addario Helicore</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School specific beginner book(s) for cello</li> <li>• Folding music stand</li> <li>• Cello endpin anchor/rest</li> <li>• Rosin</li> <li>• Soft lint free cloth</li> <li>• Tuner/metronome</li> </ul>
Bass	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Christopher Academy, Concert or Professional Bass</li> <li>• Any from Lisle Violin Shop</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School specific beginner book(s) for bass</li> </ul>
with French Bow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any from Fishburn Violin Shop</li> <li>• Any from Quantum Bass Center</li> </ul> <p>Recommend Strings: D'Addario Helicore Orchestral</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Folding music stand</li> <li>• Bass endpin anchor/rest</li> <li>• Bass rosin</li> <li>• Soft lint free cloth</li> <li>• Tuner/metronome</li> </ul>

# **ADDENDA FOR SPECIFIC CAMPUS PROGRAMS**

Campus directors will provide specific information about the following in a campus-specific addendum.

**ADDENDUM – YEARLY CALENDAR**

**ADDENDUM – PROGRAM FEES**

**ADDENDUM – ADDITIONAL GRADING REQUIREMENTS**

**ADDENDUM – SPECIFIC REQUIRED MATERIALS/EQUIPMENT ADDENDUM –  
SPECIFIC UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS**

# ADDENDUM - YEARLY CALENDAR

## Orchestra Season Calendar

The Ronald Thornton Orchestra calendar is available on the Orchestra website. Please use [this link](#) for access. This calendar acts as a living document that will be updated regularly. Each event will contain a description along with additional information and resources embedded in the date, if necessary.

Each calendar event begins with the group of students the event involves. Please see the descriptions below to ensure you have your student's Orchestra events added to your calendar.

Please know the name of your student's Orchestra and their instrument. If your student plays violin, please know if they are a gold or purple violin. Your student must also know this information.

- FBISD: District events
- All Orchestras: Events relevant to all RTMS Orchestra students
- Beginning Orchestra: all students in a beginning Orchestra class
- Concert Orchestra: all students in 2nd period Sub-Non-Varsity Orchestra
- Philharmonic Orchestra: all students in 5th Period Non-Varsity Orchestra
- Symphony Orchestra: all students in 4th period Varsity Orchestra
- Miscellaneous: Events and opportunities that can apply to all students. These events are not always mandatory. Be sure to check for details.

All sectionals, rehearsals, and concerts are included on the calendar. These practices and performances are mandatory and graded. Please refer to pages 9-10 and 14 in the handbook and review the guidelines below:

- Students should be dropped off at the back of the school by the Orchestra door (C20 - by the tennis courts) by 7:20 AM. This will ensure students have adequate time to unpack, tune, and warm-up.
- Coaches are aware that students will miss part or all of one athletic practice, once a week, in order to attend sectionals without penalty.
- All sectionals are required and worth 2 daily grades. If a student misses a sectional, it must be made up before the end of the term. Students can make up sectionals by coming before or after school during another scheduled time and practice on their own.
- Sectionals may only be excused in the instance of an emergency, unexpected illness, or prior commitments such as High School credit classes. All other absences will result in a zero.
- If an absence is excused, the sectional can be made up for full credit. Otherwise, your student can earn up to a 75. If a student is more than 20 minutes late to a sectional, their grade will be dropped to a 75.

# ADDENDUM - PROGRAM FEES

## **Program Fees Due Date and Accepted Forms of Payment**

The annual Orchestra Fees are due the fourth week of school. Payments must be made online through Presto Assistant. This is an online portal to streamline communication, finances, and inventory management. This is how FBISD Fine Arts organizations will collect funds to support their programs. Students can also bring cash or check payment. Please make checks payable to RTMS Orchestra and write your student's first and last name on the note line of the check.

## **Required Fees and Optional Fees**

All students must pay their required fee. The line-item breakdown shows the cost of each required Orchestra item and event. Optional fees are for optional events, such as socials and trips. These fees and events are not required. *Please make a separate payment for required fees and optional fees.* If you need financial assistance, please contact Mr. Petree before the due date. Email: [benjamin.petree@fortbendisd.gov](mailto:benjamin.petree@fortbendisd.gov)

## **Orchestra Fees and Booster Club**

The Ronald Thornton Booster Club is a separate entity. All required Orchestra program fees do NOT go to the Booster Club.

## Required Program Fees Listed by Ensemble

25-26 Beginning Orchestra Fees - Required	
Item/Event	Cost
25-26 Orchestra Shirt	\$10
FBISD String Fling	\$10
Pizza Fee	\$5
Solo Contest Entry Fee	\$10
Solo Contest Accompanist Fee	\$25
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$60</b>

25-26 Concert Orchestra Fees - Required	
Item/Event	Cost
25-26 Orchestra Shirt	\$10
Uniform Rental & Dry Cleaning	\$10
Pizza Fee	\$5
Solo Contest Entry Fee	\$10
Solo Contest Accompanist Fee	\$25
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$60</b>

25-26 Philharmonic Orchestra Fees - Required	
Item/Event	Cost
25-26 Orchestra Shirt	\$10
Uniform Rental & Dry Cleaning	\$10
Pizza Fee	\$5
Solo Contest Entry Fee	\$10
Solo Contest Accompanist Fee	\$25
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$60</b>

25-26 Symphony Orchestra Fees - Required	
Item/Event	Cost
25-26 Orchestra Shirt	\$10
Uniform Rental & Dry Cleaning	\$10
Pizza Fee	\$5
Solo Contest Entry Fee	\$10
Solo Contest Accompanist Fee	\$25
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$60</b>

### Instrument Use Fee (IUF)

The Instrument Use Fee (IUF) is required by the district for all students that use a school-owned cello, bass, and harp. Please refer to page 15 in the handbook. If you student is on free and reduce lunch, or needs financial assistance, please email Mr. Petree on or before September 5th. Email:

[benjamin.petree@fortbendisd.gov](mailto:benjamin.petree@fortbendisd.gov)

### Optional Fees

All events and fees below are optional (with the exception of the TMEA Region XIII Orchestra Audition, which is required only for 8th grade Symphony students). Payment due dates for each event will be posted on the calendar on the Orchestra website. Please make a separate payment for each of these optional fees. Payments should be made online using Presto Assistant. Late payments will not be accepted. Students can also bring cash or check payment. Please make checks payable to RTMS Orchestra and write your student's first and last name on the note line of the check.

25-26 Optional Orchestra Fees	
Optional Event	Cost
7th & 8th Grade Houston Symphony Field Trip	\$20
6th Grade Main Event Social	\$30
7th & 8th Grade Main Event Social	\$30
7th & 8th Grade Spring Trip ( <i>not yet confirmed</i> )	\$54
Ensemble Contest Entry Fee (Chamber Music)	\$10
TMEA Region XIII Orchestra Audition ( <i>Required for 8th grade Symphony Students only</i> )	\$20

# **ADDENDUM - ADDITIONAL GRADING REQUIREMENTS**

## **Sectional and Rehearsal Grading Requirements**

All sectionals and rehearsals are mandatory and graded. If a student must miss a sectional due to a medical or dental appointment, a doctor's note is required. These absences must be communicated at least 72 hours in advance. If a student must miss a sectional due to an illness or family emergency, a parent/guardian email is required. Please email Mr. Petree as soon as possible. Email: [benjamin.petree@fortbendisd.gov](mailto:benjamin.petree@fortbendisd.gov)

Students are required to make up their missed sectional or rehearsal. Students can attend tutorials or come before or after school during another scheduled time and practice on their own.

## **Concert, Contest, and Performance Grading Requirements**

All concerts, contests, and performances are required and worth two major grades. One major grade addresses professionalism, which includes punctuality, attire, required Orchestra supplies, and etiquette. Audience and performer etiquette are part of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for Fine Arts Courses. You can review concert etiquette guidelines by clicking [this link](#).

Please do not schedule routine medical and dental appointments on these dates. Students who miss a concert, contest, or performance will earn two major grade zeroes. Excused illness and family emergencies are the only reason a student should be absent.

Unfortunately, we cannot recreate a concert, contest, or performance experience. Students will not have an opportunity to make up this grade. If your student has an unexcused absence, those two major grade zeroes will remain. If your student has an excused absence, due to illness or a family emergency, they must submit a recording of the concert program in Schoology.

## **Live Playing Assessments**

Students will be regularly asked to prepare chunks of music to be performed individually or as a group. Section playing tests are worth one daily grade. Individual playing tests are worth one major grade. This process allows the Orchestra director to assess all TEKS related to performance practice (including posture, tone production, bow placement, ensemble skills, etc) and provide valuable real-time feedback that will be reflected in the playing test rubric. Students must come prepared to play, as all playing test grades are final.

## **Professionalism Grade**

All students earn a professionalism grade every three weeks. The professionalism grade is a daily grade and assessed throughout the three-week grading period. Students will earn a 100 for modeling audience and performer etiquette TEKS.

## **Audition Grade**

*All students audition at the end of the school year.* Auditions are a major grade. Eighth graders will schedule an audition with their high school directors. All audition information is posted in Schoology. Students are responsible for preparing their audition material, and students are responsible for scheduling their audition. Students who do not schedule an audition, or who miss their scheduled audition, will earn a major grade zero. Students “audition” daily for ensemble placement. The formal audition at the end of the year is not the single determining factor of their ensemble placement.



## ADDENDUM - AUDITION PHILOSOPHY

Every student is important. All ensembles are treated equally. Students are placed in an ensemble that gives them an opportunity to grow technically and musically. All students are expected to perform at a high level of musicianship, put the team first, collaborate, and practice 6 days a week.

The auditions are just one component of ensemble placement. Every day is an audition in Orchestra. The following are monitored daily throughout the entire Orchestra season:

- Focus and attitude during class, sectionals, and rehearsals
- Attendance at sectionals, rehearsals, and performances
- Academic eligibility
- Schoology assignment submissions and quality
- TEKS mastery
- Team mentality
- Collaboration
- Ability to provide quality feedback to peers and receive feedback from peers
- Responsibility and Professionalism: brings supplies daily, makes the correct decisions when no one is watching, consistently represents Ronald Thornton PRIDE in the entire school and Sienna Community
- Treats the Orchestra room with respect: no gum, no food, no rough-housing, and no electronic devices

Please keep in mind that ensembles must be balanced and adhere to proper Orchestral instrumentation. The number of openings in each section and ensemble varies due to the following variables:

- Number of students graduating Ronald Thornton Middle School
- Number of students enrolled in the Ronald Thornton Orchestra
- Ideal instrumentation for each ensemble is as follows:
  - 12-16 violins, 6-8 violas, 6-8 cellos, 2-4 basses, 2-3 harps

# ADDENDUM - ORCHESTRA UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS

## Beginning Orchestra Uniform

The Beginning Orchestra is required to wear the following uniform at all performances.

- Current year Orchestra t-shirt
- Blue jeans without rips
- Belt
- Closed-toe shoes (no crocs or slides)

## Concert, Philharmonic, and Symphony Orchestra Uniform

The Concert, Philharmonic, and Symphony Orchestras are required to wear the following uniform at all performances. Students are required to rent their uniform from the RTMS Orchestra each year. The rental includes the black dress shirt, black vest, and silver tie. The rental fee includes an annual drycleaning service at the end of the school year. Students must return their uniform at the end of each year. Students must pay for all uniform items that are not returned.

### Required Garments

- Black dress shirt
- Black vest
- Silver tie
- Black dress pants or black dress skirt that covers knees when seated *\*NOT PROVIDED*
  - **Leggings, black jeans, black yoga pants, and black sweatpants are unacceptable**
  - If wearing a skirt, black tights are required
- Black belt for any pants or skirts that have belt loops *\*NOT PROVIDED*
- Long black socks or black tights *\*NOT PROVIDED*
  - Bare ankles should not be visible
- Black dress shoes *\*NOT PROVIDED*
  - **Crocs, slides, and athletic shoes are unacceptable**

# ADDENDA - REQUIRED RTMS ORCHESTRA SUPPLIES AND APPROVED VENDORS

## Approved Instrument Vendors

Students in the Ronald Thornton Orchestra are required to rent, or purchase, their instrument from a campus and district approved vendor. *Please do not order an instrument from Amazon, Walmart, eBay, etc.* These instrument-shaped objects are of incredibly poor quality. The instrument will never produce a characteristic tone. The cost to repair these instruments, if they can be repaired, is much more than the instrument is worth.

When a student has an instrument of such poor quality, they become frustrated. Frustration is experienced when students are using the correct technique, but the instrument is unable to produce the characteristic tone that is achieved with that correct technique. **We want our students to be successful and enjoy learning a string instrument.** Obtaining a quality instrument is the first step to achieve that outcome. *If you are in need of financial assistance, please do not hesitate to reach out to Mr. Petree.*

Our vendors will deliver supplies, accessories, and instruments directly to Ronald Thornton! Furthermore, our vendors will pick up your student's instrument if it needs to be repaired, and they will deliver a new instrument when your student is ready to move up to the next size. Our vendors also have rental policies that cover normal "wear and tear" such as broken strings and bow rehairs. Please see the list of approved vendors below. A link to their website and their contact information is provided for your convenience.

**Guarneri House** | violin, viola, cello, bass  
Website: <https://www.guarnerihouse.com>  
Email: [guarnerihousellc@gmail.com](mailto:guarnerihousellc@gmail.com)  
Phone: (616) 451-4960

**Katy Violin Shop** | violin, viola, cello, bass  
Website: <https://www.katyviolinshop.com>  
Email: [katyviolinshop@gmail.com](mailto:katyviolinshop@gmail.com)  
Phone: (281) 755-4169

**Sam's Strings** | violin, viola, cello  
Website: <https://www.samsstrings.com>  
Email: [info@samsstrings.com](mailto:info@samsstrings.com)  
Phone: (713) 257-0459

**Fishburn Violins** | violin, viola, cello, bass  
Website: <https://www.fishburnviolin.com>  
Email: [egauthier@fishburnviolin.com](mailto:egauthier@fishburnviolin.com)  
Phone: (281) 290-4580

**Lisle Violin Shop** | violin, viola, cello, bass  
Website: <https://www.violins.com>  
Email: [lisleviolinshop@gmail.com](mailto:lisleviolinshop@gmail.com)  
Phone: (800) 545-4753

**Lyon and Healy** | harp  
Website: <https://www.lyonhealy.com>  
Email: [musicsales@lyonhealy.com](mailto:musicsales@lyonhealy.com)  
Phone: (1-801) 355-2686

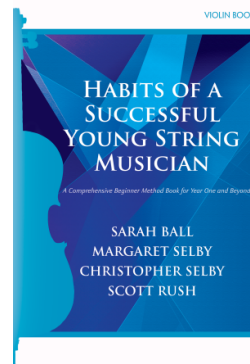
## Violin Supplies

***The following supplies can be purchased from your local grocery store, dollar store, or office supply store. These items must be purchased before the first day of school.***

- Black 1-inch binder with pencil pouch (provided to beginners only)
- 5 labeled dividers
  - Technique
  - Scales & Arpeggios
  - Solo repertoire
  - Current repertoire
  - Past repertoire
- 2 sharpened pencils
- 1 highlighter

***The following supplies must be purchased from your instrument vendor. Our vendors have supply packages.***

- Violin, bow, case
- Cleaning cloth
- Rosin
- Shoulder rest (must match instrument size)
- D'Addario tuner
- Folding music stand for home practice and off-campus performances
- Suzuki Book Volume 1 for Violin, international edition
- Habits of a Successful Young String Musician, Book 1 (for violin)



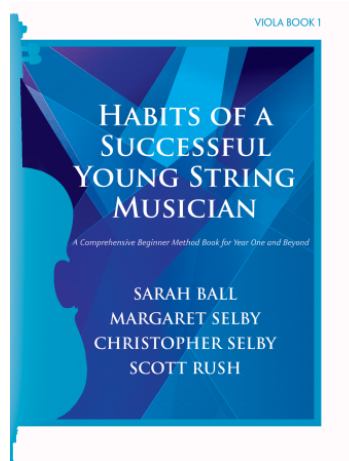
# Viola Supplies

***The following supplies can be purchased from your local grocery store, dollar store, or office supply store. These items must be purchased before the first day of school.***

- Black 1-inch binder with pencil pouch (provided to beginners only)
- 5 labeled dividers
  - Technique
  - Scales & Arpeggios
  - Solo repertoire
  - Current repertoire
  - Past repertoire
- 2 sharpened pencils
- 1 highlighter

***The following supplies must be purchased from your instrument vendor. Our vendors have supply packages.***

- Viola, bow, case
- Cleaning cloth
- Rosin
- Shoulder rest (must match instrument size)
- D'Addario tuner
- Folding music stand for home practice and off-campus performances
- Suzuki Book Volume 1 for Viola, international edition
- Habits of a Successful Young String Musician, Book 1 (for viola)



## Cello Supplies

***The following supplies can be purchased from your local grocery store, dollar store, or office supply store. These items must be purchased before the first day of school.***

- Black 1-inch binder with pencil pouch (provided to beginners only)
- 5 labeled dividers
  - Technique
  - Scales & Arpeggios
  - Solo repertoire
  - Current repertoire
  - Past repertoire
- 2 sharpened pencils
- 1 highlighter

***The following supplies must be purchased from your instrument vendor. Our vendors have supply packages.***

- Cello, bow, case
- Cleaning cloth
- Rosin
- Endpin anchor (must have a strap)
- D'Addario Eclipse Tuner
- Chair without arms
- Folding music stand for home practice and off-campus performances
- Suzuki Book Volume 1 for Cello, international edition
- Habits of a Successful Young String Musician, Book 1 (for cello)



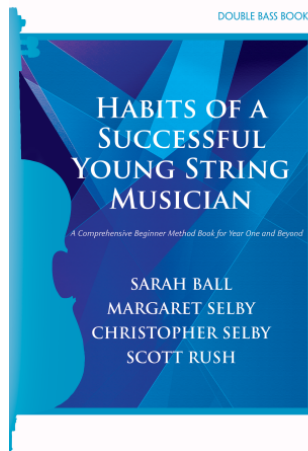
## Bass Supplies

***The following supplies can be purchased from your local grocery store, dollar store, or office supply store. These items must be purchased before the first day of school.***

- Black 1-inch binder with pencil pouch (provided to beginners only)
- 5 labeled dividers
  - Technique
  - Scales & Arpeggios
  - Solo repertoire
  - Current repertoire
  - Past repertoire
- 2 sharpened pencils
- 1 highlighter

***The following supplies must be purchased from your instrument vendor. Our vendors have supply packages.***

- Bass, bow, case
- Cleaning cloth
- Rosin (must be POPS rosin)
- Endpin anchor (must have a strap)
- D'Addario Eclipse Tuner
- Bass chair/stool
- Yoga block
- Folding music stand for home practice and off-campus performances
- Suzuki Book Volume 1 for Bass, REVISED edition
- Habits of a Successful Young String Musician, Book 1 (for bass)





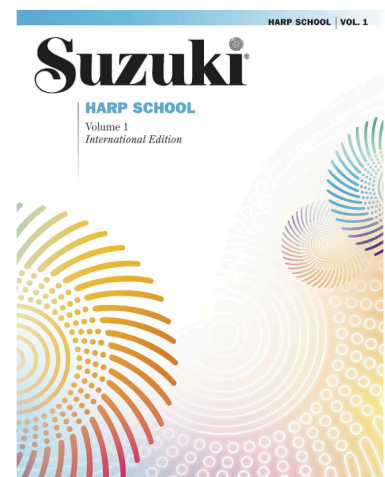
# Harp Supplies

***The following supplies can be purchased from your local grocery store, dollar store, or office supply store. These items must be purchased before the first day of school.***

- Black 1-inch binder with pencil pouch (provided to beginners only)
- 5 labeled dividers
  - Technique
  - Scales & Arpeggios
  - Solo repertoire
  - Current repertoire
  - Past repertoire
- 2 sharpened pencils
- 1 highlighter

***The following supplies must be purchased from your instrument vendor. Our vendors have supply packages. Harp supplies can be purchased from Amazon. The instrument must be purchased/rented from Lyon & Healy.***

- Harp, case
- Harp tuning key
- Korg tuner with pickup
- Adjustable bench
- Folding music stand for home practice and off-campus performances
- First Harp Book by Betty Paret
- Suzuki Book Volume 1 for Harp





# EXHIBIT A – Handbook Signature Form

## HANDBOOK SIGNATURE FORM

*Return this form to your campus program director*

### STUDENT

- I have read the FBISD Fine Arts Program Handbook and Campus Addenda.
- I have read the rules and expectations for the course and I agree to abide by them.
- I realize that my failure to abide by the regulations or to carry out my responsibilities may result in my suspension or immediate dismissal from the course.
- I also understand by not signing the handbook, I am waiving my rights to any and all participation with the instructional program including any after-school activities and may forfeit enrollment in the course.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Print)

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### PARENT/GUARDIAN

I acknowledge receiving and reviewing the rules, regulations, guidelines and procedures governing my student's participation in the Fine Arts instructional program. I also realize that my student consequently will need my assistance in time management and scheduling. I hereby give consent for my student to participate in rehearsals, practices, and performances for this FBISD Fine Arts program, and I realize their behavior will be setting the example for their school, our community, and my family.

Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Print)

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Home/Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Check below if you would like to be a parent volunteer:

\_\_\_\_\_ I would be willing to help chaperone events and trips.

\_\_\_\_\_ I would be willing to help in other ways (e.g., uniform fitting, props, painting, snacks, etc.)

### PERMISSION TO USE PHOTOS FOR PROGRAM SOCIAL MEDIA SITES

Sometimes we like to feature our student members participating in rehearsals, performances, and other activities on Social Media sites for purpose of promoting the program. This may include Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and the program website. Signing this will give us your consent to use your student's photo on those particular sites.

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# EXHIBIT B – Emergency Contact Form

Fort Bend ISD  
Emergency Contact Form  
Fine Arts Department



**PLEASE PRINT**

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Campus: \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First Middle

Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: M F Student ID#: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Circle One)

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone Number: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Physician: \_\_\_\_\_ Physician's Telephone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Allergies:

Yes ☐ No ☐ List: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Medications:

Yes ☐ No ☐ List: \_\_\_\_\_

Medical Health Insurance Coverage:

Yes ☐ No ☐

Insurer: \_\_\_\_\_ Group #: \_\_\_\_\_ ID #: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian 1 Work #: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Guardian 1 Cell #: \_\_\_\_\_

Place of Employment: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian 2 Work #: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Guardian 2 Cell #: \_\_\_\_\_

Place of Employment: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Medical History:**

	Yes	No		Yes	No
Allergies to medication	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	High Blood Pressure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asthma	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hepatitis	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bleeding tendencies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Kidney Disease and/or injury	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bone and/or joint injury or disease	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Neck injury	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Contact Lenses/Glasses/Vision impairment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rheumatic Fever	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Diabetes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Seizures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Eye, Kidney, Lung removed/nonfunctioning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sickle Cell Anemia	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Head injury, concussion, loss of consciousness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Skin Problems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Heart-Related illness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Surgeries	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hernia	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tuberculosis	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hospitalizations in the last year?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is student currently under a physician's care?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Explain all "Yes" answers here: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Attach another sheet if necessary)

Date of your last tetanus shot: \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian Permit Waiver:**

If, in the judgement of any representative of the schools, the said student should need immediate care and treatment as a result of an injury or sickness, I do hereby request, authorize, and consent to such care and treatment as may be given said student by any physician, athletic trainer, nurse, or school representative, and I do hereby agree to indemnify and save harmless the school and any school representative from any claim by any person whomever on account of such care and treatment of said student.

Parent/Guardian Name (Printed): \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please return this form to your child's teacher of record.**

**This form must accompany the student on all school trips.**