

Providence High School Orchestras



Symphonic Orchestra (4A)

Tom LaJoie, Director

thomas.lajoie@cms.k12.nc.us • (980) 343-5390

<http://phsorch.weebly.com>

COURSE OVERVIEW

Students in this class will focus primarily on performing music that addresses specific elements discussed in the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. Specifically, students in this ensemble will:

- ✓ Continuing to develop proficiency on their instrument, specifically addressing intermediate functions such as: shifting to and beyond third position, alternative fingerings, exploring bowing choices and styles, left hand technique (including the development of vibrato), and uniformity of sound.
- ✓ Expand understanding of musical elements such as: key signatures, terms, mature phrasing, and increasingly difficult rhythms. This ensemble will perform Grades IV and V music.
- ✓ Strengthen performance aspects through daily rehearsal and concerts
- ✓ Be encouraged to audition for out-of-school performance ensembles (youth symphonies, regional orchestra, etc.)
- ✓ Exhibit discipline and rigor through fast-paced, focused rehearsals
- ✓ Show appreciation and respect for music and their peers at all times.

MATERIALS/SUPPLIES

Students are expected to provide their own instruments, with the exception of cellos, basses and a few violas. Students using school instruments will complete a Musical Instrument Bond, which will assign them to a specific instrument. All students will be permitted to rent an instrument locker and lock. To use this service, they must return a Musical Instrument Disclaimer. The cost for locks is \$5.00 and is yours to keep during the duration of your tenure in our program. In addition to their instruments, **all students are required to provide the following accessories:**

- ✓ Shoulder rests (violin/viola)
- ✓ Rosin
- ✓ Rock stop (bass) and/or strap (cello). Rock stops do not work well on our stage for cellists.
- ✓ Mute

- ✓ EXTRA strings (meaning that they are **in your case** in the event that a string breaks during school)
- ✓ SmartMusic account (visit www.smartmusic.com to create one)
- ✓ Internet capable device

These items vary greatly in price depending on the quality purchased. I do not specify which brand(s) you must use. If you would like advice or assistance in purchasing/ordering these items, I will be happy to assist.

Please order these items and have them available on a daily basis by Monday, September 15th.

Music, method books, and all other materials will be provided for students.

TUTORING

My Orchestra tutoring hours are on Fridays, from 2:30-3:00 pm. I am also available by appointment. **Peer tutoring for orchestra is also available to all students who desire such help.** Peer tutoring is arranged through Tri-M, our music honor society, and is available to all students in all music classes.

Regular sectionals (i.e., cooperative learning) will be utilized during class time. They may be student-led, or by a guest clinician.

GRADING

The grading scale will comply with CMS requirements (100-90 = A, etc.). Grades will be based on the following criteria:

Informal (<i>Rehearsal Grades</i>)	30%
Formal (<i>Performances, Playing Tests, Portfolio Assignments, Written Work</i>)	70%

Informal Weighting: Daily Rehearsals will be weighted once. After School Rehearsal (ASR's) will be weighted twice.

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Formal Weighting: Performances will be weighted three times. Announced Playing Tests will be weighted twice. Unannounced Playing Tests/Section Checks will be weighted once. Portfolio Assignments will be weighted once. Written work and all other formal assignments will be weighted once.

Daily Grades include: following all classroom rules from the time you enter the room until you exit the room, being to your seat on time, procuring all required and necessary materials BEFORE rehearsal begins, being well-prepared for rehearsal (practicing), and refraining from any disruptive behavior. Grades are given for each rehearsal (class) and points will be deducted from the daily grade for infractions of any of the above elements.

Announced Playing Tests will be held *a minimum of once per quarter*. They will be taken from music performed in class, including etudes, warm-ups, and music for performances. They may or may not affect seating. Tests will either be performed live or videotaped (will only be viewed by the instructor for grading purposes).

Unannounced Playing Tests or Section-Wide "Checks" will be held a *minimum of twice per quarter* and are scheduled at the director's discretion. They may or may not affect seating.

Students are expected to practice consistently to maintain proper technique and proficiency on their instrument. *The instructor reserves the right to require, with advanced notice, "proof of practice" (Practice Logs or other artifacts), as he deems necessary and appropriate.*

Performances: PLEASE READ THIS SECTION CAREFULLY!

All performances are mandatory and non-negotiable.

To receive full credit for each performance, you must arrive on time with all required materials and **stay for the entire duration of the performance.** Chamber Orchestra students have a call time of 5:40 pm for all concerts. This year, we will perform four on campus evening concerts.

All concerts begin at 6:30 pm. They are open to the public, and are free of charge.

Any student who misses any concert will receive a grade of "0". Put these dates on your calendar now and do not schedule other things on concert evenings.

Please refer to the addendum "Important Dates" for all after school rehearsal and concert dates.

Graduation Performance: The Orchestra is scheduled to perform for the 2016 graduation ceremony at the end of this school year. This is a required performance for all orchestra students who are not in the graduating class. The schedule for graduation is published by CMS later in the year. Please plan on being in town at least through Wednesday, June 15. As soon as the schedule is known, you will be notified.

Other Performances: Other required performances are indicated on the "Important Dates" addendum. Our Chamber Orchestra is one of the finest high school ensembles in the state, and is invited to perform in a variety of venues throughout the year. With input from our Student and Parent Executive Boards, the director will schedule these performances as he deems worthwhile and appropriate.

Concert Dress is as follows:

- **Men:** Long sleeved white dress shirt, long solid black tie, black dress pants, dark socks, dark dress shoes.
- **Ladies:** Southeastern Apparel program-wide dress (we will fit you and order these for you), hosiery, black closed toed dress shoes. The cost for dresses is \$67 for a regular and \$70 for a tall (5'8" and above). Please make checks payable to PHS Orchestra Boosters.

North Carolina Contest Festival: March 16, 17 & 18. We will perform on one of those dates. This is the equivalent of our "EOG" and is mandatory for all students. More information will be forthcoming on this performance.

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STUDENT PORTFOLIOS/ANALYSIS OF STUDENT WORK

All students in all orchestras will keep a portfolio for the year. Portfolios will be digitally managed using an educational portfolio management application. All students will have access to their digital portfolio for submissions and to review comments. SmartMusic assessments will be included in the digital portfolios.

The primary purpose and goal of the portfolio is twofold:

1) The portfolio will allow the student, along with assistance from the instructor(s), to pinpoint specific areas of deficiency in their playing, and 2) the portfolio will serve as documentation of the student's progression in those specific deficiencies as the academic year progresses. More specific information regarding student portfolios will be forthcoming.

Music Theory, Concert Critiques and other written assignments will be incorporated into instruction on a regular basis and included in the digital portfolio.

MAKE-UP WORK, LATE WORK, AND ATTENDANCE

(In accordance with CMS Policy and NC Law):

If a student misses orchestra class for *any* reason, excused or unexcused, he/she:

- ✓ is required to complete a Practice Record for ninety (90) minutes to make up the assignment (daily rehearsal). This applies to both excused and unexcused absences. Practice Records are available at <http://phsorch.weebly.com>.
- ✓ Students must complete a Practice Record for each day missed, and have the record signed by a parent or guardian.
- ✓ **Records are due to your class secretary within ten (10) calendar days of the student's return to school (this includes weekends). I will not remind you to turn in the record; I will simply give a reduced grade for late records.**
- ✓ **Incomplete records (including missing parental contact information) will receive a maximum grade of 50.**

- ✓ Students must practice either: music that we are working on in class, music for other orchestral experiences (CSYO/JYO, WRHO, All-State, etc.), or music prepared in private lessons. Other music will not be accepted.
- ✓ **Exceptions:** The only absences that do not require a practice record are: 1) Absences for religious holidays (on which school is in session), and school-approved field trips.
- ✓ In compliance with CMS Policy, students in a year-long course may miss no more than ten (10) days during the school year. On the 11th absence, the student will automatically receive a grade of "F" for the course (unless Recovery is completed).
Attendance in any musical ensemble is crucial to not only the individual student, but the entire group. If at all possible, please do not miss class!

FORGOTTEN/BROKEN INSTRUMENTS

If a student forgets an instrument, he/she will be required to complete a Class Evaluation for that period, and also be required to complete a Practice Record for that rehearsal. The daily grade(s) will stand at a zero (0) until these assignments are completed.

If a student's instrument is in the shop, a note from said shop will be **required** to excuse the missing instrument. As long as a note from the shop is provided, a Practice Record will not be required. If no note from the shop is provided, students will follow the above policy for Forgotten Instruments.

CHARMS AND TEACHER WEBSITE

We use two methods of electronic communication with our orchestras. One is Charms, a booster-purchased program that helps with numerous tasks such as student information, accounts, emailing, etc. **Students will be required to update information in Charms for a grade.** The other form of electronic communication is our website. The website is for you to have access to any and all dates, forms, and information needed pertaining to our orchestra program. The URL is <http://phsorch.weebly.com>.

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The website will be updated frequently. Please take advantage of this resource - check it often!

ORCHESTRA BOOSTER CLUB

We are extremely fortunate to have a wonderfully supportive Orchestra Booster Club that supplements our program. Parents are encouraged and to join and participate. There are numerous ways to contribute to our program. Information on how to join our Orchestra Booster Club will be distributed later.

TRI-M MUSIC HONOR SOCIETY

Tri-M is a nationally sanctioned and recognized honor society for high school musicians. Students who meet criteria are encouraged to apply. Applications and information regarding requirements can be obtained from the Providence Tri-M website at <https://sites.google.com/site/providencehightrim/home>. The application deadline is very early in the school year, so please visit the webpage immediately if you are interested in applying. Questions regarding Tri-M should be directed to Mr. LaJoie, Mrs. Johnson or an officer of the club.

TRIPS

Our Orchestras take a large trip every other year. We are currently in the planning stage for our spring trip to take place in April of 2016.

COMMUNICATION, QUESTIONS, CONCERNS OR COMMENTS

I find great joy in working daily with such outstanding young people. Your children are a true pleasure to teach and I am eager to begin another wonderful year together! Please know that I have an open-door policy: If you or your child ever has a question, comment, or concern, I encourage you to speak with me ASAP. **Email is the quickest and easiest way to reach me**, but also know that I am happy to speak on the phone or meet with you at a mutually convenient time.

Please return the attached Acknowledgement, Musical Instrument Disclaimer and Orchestra Fee Sheets to me by Friday, August 28th, 2015.

IMPORTANT! PLEASE ENTER ALL PARENT AND STUDENT INFORMATION INTO CHARMS BY FRIDAY, AUGUST 28th.
(Instructions attached)

I look forward to working with you this year!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas P. LaJoie".

Tom LaJoie, Director

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