

JGMS BEGINNER ORCHESTRA HANDBOOK

2023-2024



Ms. Hart: 6th and 7/8th Grade Orchestras

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<https://bpsstrings.weebly.com>

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

The JGMS beginner orchestra is a general level performance ensemble which works on beginner level orchestra literature in a wide range of styles. This course is open to any students who are new to the violin, viola, cello, or bass. Skills necessary for ensemble performance will be stressed, which include the development of technical ability, music reading, and musicality. At home practice is expected. Concert participation is mandatory. Grades will be based upon rehearsal preparedness, musicianship, concert attendance, and recorded playing tests.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance at all rehearsals and performances, during and after school, is mandatory.

Personal illness or family emergency is the only excuse for missing a performance. *Personal illness* is defined as being “unable to be up and about”. An orchestra member who is mildly indisposed (headache, upset stomach, etc.) is expected to perform to the best of their ability, because the absence would directly affect the quality of the group’s performance. Any such absence must be confirmed by a parent in writing the first day the student returns to school. An absence due to COVID for any reason would qualify as an excused absence, and students will be asked to complete a written assignment to make up for missing the concert.

If any student misses too many rehearsals, or continuously forgets their instrument, to the degree that the director feels that the student is unable to perform adequately at the concert, that student will be expected to attend the concert, but will not participate in the performance.

All concerts begin at 7:00 PM. Students must be at school by 6:15 PM in order to get tuned, and to warm-up prior to the concert.

CONCERT DRESS

White blouse, black dress pants or skirt (knee-length or longer), black stockings or socks, and black shoes.

-OR-

White button-down shirt, black dress pants, black shoes and black socks, and neck tie or bow tie.

INSTRUMENT STORAGE

Students should store their string instruments in the instrument cages. Under no circumstances should they be left in the hallway or any other part of the school building. ***The use of the cages is only for the school day that a student has rehearsal.*** At the end of the day, students should take instruments home to practice. Leaving the instrument at school creates an inability to practice, and an elevated risk when left unsupervised.

GRADING

Students' grades will be determined as follows:

1. Quarterly Rehearsal Grade 50%

Students will receive a quarterly grade for the development of the skills inherent in becoming a contributing member of an orchestra. For each rehearsal students will be graded on their professionalism, musicianship, intonation, and technique.

2. Playing Tests 25%

Students will complete three playing tests, one for each concert (2nd, 3rd, and 4th quarters). Playing tests will be on excerpts from their required concert repertoire, and will be submitted as a video or audio recording. Playing tests are graded on accuracy of tempo, rhythm, melody, tone, and intonation.

3. Concert Attendance 25%

There will be three instrumental concerts per year. Students' attendance at all concerts is mandatory. An unexcused absence from one performance could significantly lower a student's grade. Please refer to the 'Attendance' section of the handbook should you have any questions regarding the BPS Instrumental attendance policy.

4. Extra Credit

A student may also earn up to 5 points for each item of extra credit, which will then be applied to their point average. Grades above 100% cannot be issued in accordance with JGMS's grading policy. Below are some ways to earn extra credit at JGMS.

Auditioning for the Eastern Junior District Orchestra

Participating in the Eastern Junior District Orchestra

Outside Youth Orchestra Participation

Attendance at Concerts where the student is not participating

JGMS Orchestra Rehearsal Rubric

Students are graded out of 4 points in each of the following categories:

Professionalism:

- Student brought their instrument, bow, and necessary materials
- Student acts respectfully and responsibly throughout class
- Student contributes positively to the class culture

Musicality

- Rhythm reading
- Note reading
- Dynamics
- Tempo
- Articulation

Intonation

- Instrument tuning
- Placement of fingers on the instrument to create in tune notes

Technique

- Bow hold
- Bow arm
- Bowing technique
- Instrument posture
- Left hand position

Student's scores from each rehearsal are averaged each quarter to determine their Quarterly Rehearsal Grade:

> 3.66	A+	Exceeds Standards
>3.33	A	Meets Standards
>3	A-	Approaching Standards
>2.5	B range	Emerging
>2	C Range	Needs Improvement
<2	D Range	Needs Improvement

PARENT SUPPORT

Parental involvement is an important part of a successful music program. Your support means more than you know. Parents are urged to attend performances, encourage students to practice, and become active in the school music program. Parent volunteers are needed to help with concerts, fundraising, and scholarship opportunities for seniors through Bedford's Patrons of Music (POMS). Bedford's POMS is a non-profit 501(c)(3) volunteer organization that has supported music programs in Bedford through fundraising and service to the community for more than 50 years. POMS' fundraising efforts support the students and music faculty of Bedford, with supplementary funds and services to help make Bedford's vibrant music program even better. We encourage your involvement with this organization to whatever degree you are able to participate. As always, a huge thank you to all of you who make Bedford's POMS the amazing support system it is!

INSTRUMENTS AND MATERIALS

All students must have an instrument that fits them properly, the necessary accessories for that instrument, and the Orchestra Expressions Book 1 method book. For information on renting an instrument for your student please see the Instrument Rental document emailed to you and linked [here](#).

PRIVATE LESSONS

We encourage all students to take private lessons upon entering middle school. Students can progress at amazing rates while taking private lessons. All orchestra students are encouraged to seek private instruction to further develop technique, sight-reading ability, and repertoire. POMS sponsors an after school private lesson program where, for a fee, students can study one-on-one with specialists on their instrument. Information can be found at www.bedfordpoms.org/private-lessons.

KEEP UP WITH BPS ORCHESTRA

Want to stay up to date on the Bedford orchestra program or get more information?

Check out our website: <https://bpsstrings.weebly.com/>



Follow our Instagram: @bpsorch

JGMS ROTATING DAY SCHEDULE

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6
A Block			8th Grade Orchestra LGI			8th Grade Orchestra LGI
B Block		6th Grade Orchestra LGI			6th Grade Orchestra LGI	
Advisory						
C Block						
D Block						
E Block	Beginner Orchestra LGI			Beginner Orchestra LGI		
F Block		7th Grade Orchestra LGI			7th Grade Orchestra LGI	
G Block						

JGMS ORCHESTRA CONCERT DATES 2022-2023

December 13 @ 7:00 PM

January 27

March 8-9

March 20 @ 7:00 PM

March 21 @ 7:00 PM

May 29 @ 7:00 PM

June 5 @ 7:00 PM

JGMS Instrumental Winter Concert @ JGMS

Eastern District Junior Auditions Grades 7-9 (optional)

Eastern District Junior Festival (for accepted students)

All-Town Strings Vertical Concert @ **BHS Auditorium**

All-Town Vertical Concert SNOW DATE

JGMS Grade 6 Spring Instrumental Concert @ JGMS

JGMS 7/8 Spring Instrumental Concert @ **BHS Auditorium**

JOHN GLENN MIDDLE SCHOOL ORCHESTRA

STUDENT COMMITMENT FORM 2023-2024

An email will be sent to you with a digital copy of the handbook and a Google Form in lieu of a paper Commitment Form to complete with your child acknowledging that you have read and understand the handbook.

You may also scan the following QR code to access and sign the Commitment Form instead.

