

**Welcome to the
Lake Travis High School Orchestra**



Student Handbook 2023-24

LAKE TRAVIS HIGH SCHOOL ORCHESTRA HANDBOOK

I. Top 10 Responsibilities of the Orchestra Member to the Orchestra Program

1. Be in regular attendance and account for all absences.
2. Make a real effort to learn and improve daily.
3. Be responsible for and expect to assume the consequences of your actions.
4. Have proper respect for those in authority.
5. Follow all classroom rules, school regulations, and travel instructions.
6. Be honest and fair with others concerning equipment and music.
7. Cooperate with fellow orchestra members and share with them the responsibilities and privileges that are a part of the orchestra program.
8. Contribute positively to your music education and that of others by the best use of your talents.
9. Improve your knowledge and understanding of the theory, history, and performance of music as well as develop good listening habits.
10. Read and play music with insight and expression.

II. Top 10 Rules and Guidelines For Our Group's Success

1. Be in your chair with your instrument, music, and equipment as quickly as possible.
2. No food, drinks (except water), and no gum chewing is allowed in the orchestra room.
3. Do not touch another person's instrument or bow.
4. The orchestra room is a welcome place for orchestra members with respect. There is no place in an orchestra for demeaning or derogatory remarks. Behavior that detracts from the group's performance will not be tolerated.
5. Listen carefully to instructions and assignments.
6. Every student must have their music, pencil, and a clean instrument in proper working condition (with rosin and extra strings) for each class.
7. All students are expected to have assignments prepared for class. **PRACTICE!** This is your homework.
8. Take special care of school property in your possession, music as well as instruments. You will be assessed a charge for all lost or damaged school equipment or music.
9. No cell phones or handheld calculator/electronic games are permitted in class.
10. Orchestra members are expected to attend ALL special rehearsals and public performances. The orchestra is a team and it cannot function effectively with missing members.

III. Grades

Every orchestra student must maintain a passing grade (70 or higher) in all subjects in order to participate in orchestra.

60% - playing performances-Concerts

40% - sight reading, playing tests, chair auditions, daily participation grade

- *Fall Semester = 0.5 credits (for most courses)*
 - *1st Grading Period: 40%*
 - *2nd Grading Period: 40%*
 - *Semester Exam: 20%*
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- *Spring Semester = 0.5 credits (for most courses)*
 - *3rd Grading Period: 40%*
 - *4th Grading Period: 40%*
 - *Semester Exam: 20%*

IV. Attendance

A calendar of events will be given to each student at the beginning of the school year. It is vital that all orchestra members be present for all required events. The Orchestra Concert is the musician's "final test" following many hours of preparations and study. It is a **team** effort. In an orchestra, each musician is important to the total sound. When people are missing from the expected total, the group "sound" changes dramatically, with often-disastrous results.

If schedule conflicts occur, notification and a request to miss the event must be submitted in writing by the parents to the Orchestra Director at least two weeks in advance of the scheduled rehearsal or performance. Since a conflict may sometimes involve a large number of students, advance notification is important because the concert or rehearsal may need to be rescheduled or canceled. Of course, absences due to illness or accident will be excused. The director will make final decisions on excused or unexcused absences.

V. Practice

Practice is necessary to learn and maintain skills on any instrument. Daily practice is expected of all orchestra students. Instruments and music should not be left at school, except on rare occasions. Although 30 to 45 minutes of practice each day is desirable, the quality and consistency of the practice is more important. It is helpful to have planned practice sessions with set goals, a daily scheduled time, Kim music stand and comfortable chair, and a specific place conducive to successful learning. Parents can help a good deal with encouragement and helpful criticism.

VI. Private Lessons

One of the advantages of being in the Lake Travis Orchestra Program is the availability of weekly private lessons. This is an enrichment opportunity for the student to excel beyond the regular orchestra class. It also helps the student prepare for solo and ensemble contests, region orchestra tryouts, and chair-placements tests.

Our private teachers have been interviewed and certified by the Orchestra Director as reliable and competent performers/teachers. When possible, lessons are scheduled during the orchestra class. There is a fee for each lesson. If parents are interested in having a private teacher, please request and fill out the appropriate form and return it to me. I strongly urge all students to take advantage of this opportunity.

VII. Orchestra Equipment and Supplies

ALL PLAYERS

- Pencil
- Bow (wooden bow with real horsehair is preferred)
- Soft cloth - for cleaning instrument
- Black Binder for your music

Violin Players

- Violin
- Rosin - Dark rosin. Hill, Thomastik, or Rao
- Four fine tuners - one for each string
- Extra set of strings
- Shoulder rest - there are many varieties. Try many on your instrument to see which one is most comfortable.

Viola Players

- Viola
- Rosin - Dark rosin - Hill, AB, Thomastik, or Rao
- Four fine tuners - one for each string
- Extra set of strings
- Shoulder rest

Cello Players

- Cello (check size and availability of school instruments)
- Rosin - large cake of Hill or AB rosin
- Rock stop - endpin holder

String Bass Players

- Bass (check size and availability of school instruments)
- Rosin - Pops
- Rock stop - endpin holder

VIII. Instruments

All personally owned instruments and school instruments should be kept in perfect working condition. A set of extra strings is recommended so that instructional time will not be lost due to a broken string. Students supply their own accessories: rosin, mutes, rock stops, shoulder rests, etc.

Below are some places you can contact to rent an instrument for the school year. Most have a rent to own program. Call before you shop! These stores are not ranked as to quality of product.

- Strait Music..... (512) 476-6927
- Antonio Strad (SA but owner lives in the area).....1-800-284-9788
- Blackerby (512) 469-9343
- Westbank String Shop(512) 326-4898
- Craig’s Violins (512) 797-9155
- Terra Nova (512) 640-4072

Cellos and basses owned by LTISD are available for use. There will be a usage fee of **\$60.⁰⁰** a year to cover general maintenance costs.

Any student who damages a school-owned instrument will be financially responsible for the repair of that instrument.

IV. Uniforms – Formal & Informal

A pleasing appearance builds pride in an organization, and pride will improve the quality of the performance. The basis for selecting Lake Travis Orchestra uniforms is appearance, availability, and cost. Orchestra students should not deviate from the required clothing as this will defeat the purpose of having a uniform. If this will cause a financial problem, please contact the director privately, as funds are available for assistance.

Informal – T-Shirt

For informal concerts, students will be asked to wear a t-shirt that is designed by the Orchestra student leadership – one t-shirt will be provided to every student and is covered within the cost of the booster membership fee.

Formal – Tuxedo & Gown

Students will have the option to wear a Tuxedo or a Gown. Students and Parents should discuss options and arrive at an agreement prior to fittings. Students will be sized and issued a uniform sometime in September/October. Uniforms will be distributed in garment bags with the student's name on it. It is their responsibility to care for these throughout the year.

The gowns are sized accordingly but will need to be hemmed. The dresses may **NOT** be cut in the hemming process. The tuxedos consist of a jacket, pants, shirt, bowtie and cummerbund. The pants are also **NOT** to be cut in the hemming process. Parents are responsible to have the uniforms hemmed properly. Un-hemmed pants and gowns will not be permitted at the concerts.

It is also the responsibility of the parents and students to maintain a clean uniform throughout the year. Items may need to be washed or dry cleaned between concerts to keep them looking and smelling nice. Please follow instructions on garment labels.

Uniforms will be returned, **In their Bag with Student Name attached**, after the final concert (HS graduation) for all orchestra students. Late return of uniforms may be dropped off at the front office after the close of school.

A portion of the booster club fees paid at the beginning of the year are for the use, repair and cleaning of uniforms at the end of the year so they are ready for the following year. Thus, at the end of this school year, uniforms may be returned, **WITHOUT** dry cleaning, after the last concert. **Inventory is done during June.** NOTE: Items returned at the end of the year in disrepair will incur a replacement fee. Missing dresses will be charged \$100. Missing tuxes will be charged \$200. Additional items such as shirts, cummerbunds and ties will be charged as needed.

X. Orchestra Placement, Concert Competitions, Solo/Ensemble, Concerts, Banquet

Orchestra Selection Process

Students try out for their Fall orchestra group placement with the Orchestra director during the late spring of the previous school year. In addition to this audition, placement within each orchestra will be determined by factors such as Region Audition performances and director based determiners. Students will be informed of these criteria before Fall concert season begins.

Spring - UIL

Regarding our UIL contests, three selections are prepared through concentrated work in class, extra rehearsals, and a “practice” concert. In addition, each orchestra is required to “sight-read” a composition. Both performances are rated on a scale of “I” to “V” with “I” being the highest rating. Trophies are awarded to orchestras receiving the “I” rating in either concert or sight-reading. A Sweepstakes trophy is awarded for a rating of “I” in both areas.

Regional Orchestra

Texas Music Educators Association sponsors this contest, which occurs on a Saturday in October and November. Participation is optional. The school will furnish tryout music and the entry fee is covered by your booster club fees. Our students will be competing against string players from Region 32, which includes Austin and the surrounding area. Those selected for membership in the Region 32 Orchestra will participate in a two-day clinic/concert and receive a patch.

Participation is required for Symphony and Chamber students, and can play a role in chair placement in the spring concert orchestras. These contests typically take place at a local high school on a Friday night and/or Saturday. Transportation to/from Region Orchestra Auditions is not normally provided.

Orchestra students who qualify for Region Orchestra will be eligible for and are encouraged to audition for the State Orchestra. The process includes learning additional music, submitting taped auditions and attending the rehearsals and concert which usually coincide with the TMEA convention in San Antonio in the Spring.

Full Orchestra Selection Process

Students may try out to be a part of the LTHS Full Orchestra group, which will include members of the LTHS Band. Rehearsal takes place before or after school and this is not a class credit. We will compete at UIL.

Solo & Ensemble Competition

Orchestra members must participate in the Solo and Ensemble contest held in the Spring. This involves students learning solos on their own or playing in ensembles with other orchestra students. Solos will need to be accompanied by a pianist – and selecting and paying for an accompanist is the responsibility of the student. Our orchestra students do well, and it is a good way for them to improve their playing skills during the Spring semester.

LT Fiddlers

The Lake Travis Fiddlers is a musical group that is optional to join and open to the entire school. The LT Fiddlers meet 1x/week after school to rehearse and learn new songs covering western swing, country and many other types of tunes perfect for string instruments. The LT Fiddlers have musicians on fiddle, guitar, drums, bass and even wind instruments. This group performs all around town and money is set aside to pay for this group to record their music and support the LTHS Orchestra program.

XII. Orchestra Student PERKS!

Letter Jacket: Orchestra members who are seniors and have been involved in performing in the LTHS Orchestra for all three previous years may be awarded a letter jacket at the beginning of their first semester as a senior. Underclassmen can also qualify for a jacket once they reach 16 points (see Letter Jacket Form for details) and all must meet certain qualifying criteria. Pending budget, the LTOP will apply a payment toward each person's jacket.

Orchestra Banquet/Social: The banquet is a celebration of all that the students have accomplished over the entire year as well as a farewell to the seniors. Orchestra members attend for free (if fundraising has been successful/budgets allow) and family/friends pay for dinner. It typically takes place in mid-May.

Spring Trip: The Spring LTHS Orchestra trip is annual. The trip can be domestic or international and because we do not require a performance element and travel will be outside of school hours, this trip is not a school-sponsored trip. Fees apply for the trip which is the responsibility of the student and his/her family. Fundraising is not guaranteed – but can be considered if we can get a team of parents to identify and manage that process.

Student Leadership: Students desiring to be a part of the orchestra student council may apply for a position in the spring for the role to be served in the coming school year. Please see the orchestra director for details on the application, review and selection process. These student leaders can work with the parent booster organization for budget to do fun events during the year such as movie nights, pizza parties or off campus events.

Booster Club: The Lake Travis Orchestra Parent Booster Club (LTOP) organization was formed in 2013 to provide support for the LTHS Orchestra program. Membership requires a small fee, which pays for the student's performance t-shirt (for informal concerts) and allows LTOP to do things that directly benefit the students. Money is also raised through fundraising efforts of sponsorships and concerts.

LTOP meetings for directors and parents will be published on the orchestra website. LTOP assists the directors in the planning and execution of all fundraisers, and manages the organization's social media.

Lake Travis Orchestra Parents Booster Club
12400 W Hwy 71, Ste 350-363
Austin, TX 78738

Fundraisers: As you can imagine, it takes a tremendous amount of time and money to support an organization as large as the LT Orchestra. We do our part by supporting the main fundraisers: Orchestra Sponsorships – both business and family, Fall concert-based fundraiser, Monster Concert & Spring fundraiser (if needed)

Lake Travis ISD does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex or handicap.

For further information, contact the Title IX/Section 504 Coordinator at 512.533.6000.

Lake Travis ISD de no discriminar por motivos de raza, color, origen nacional, sexo o impedimento.

Para información sobre sus derechos o procedimientos para quejas, comuníquese con el Coordinador del Título IX y el Coordinador de la Sección 504 @ 512.533.6000.

Directions to Lake Travis HS Orchestra Room:

Two options:

- Come to the LTHS Annex and to the front door that faces out to the parking lot and Cavalier drive. Check at the front desk (if during school hours) and follow the hallway map.
- Turn from 620 turn on Spillman Loop. Just past the round basketball stadium is a left hand turn that will say staff & busses only. Turn left there and follow the road around to the back side of the LTHS Annex where the open field is on your left. The Orchestra room is on your right. Look for the grey door next to a single grey garage rolling door. Parking is limited on this side of the annex.

Lost? Call Anna Macias at 512-533-6161

