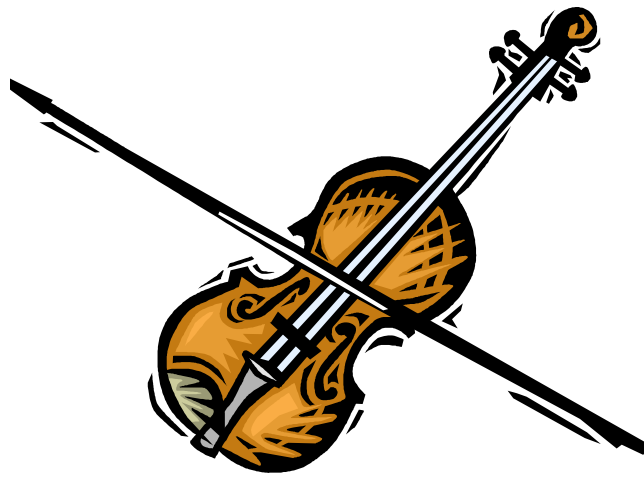


Adkins, Blanton, and E.P. Rayzor Elementary

Fifth Grade Orchestra Handbook 2017-2018



Adkins, Blanton, and E.P. Rayzor Elementary Orchestras

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Dear Fifth Grade Orchestra Parent,

We would like to take this opportunity to sincerely welcome you to the Denton ISD String Program. We are very excited about the number of students enrolled and their level of motivation. We are looking forward to an exceptionally successful year. As your child's teachers, we are committed to creating a rewarding, stimulating learning environment in which your child will feel a sense of accomplishment and high self-esteem.

The Denton String Program develops string players from fifth grade to twelfth grade with the goal of creating knowledgeable, lifelong musicians and music appreciators. Being an orchestra student in Denton ISD is an incredibly rewarding and unique experience for your child. Did you know that Denton ISD is one of only 11 percent of public schools nationwide that offers orchestra at the elementary level?

The Denton Orchestra Program is one of the finest in the state of Texas. Denton was named one of the Best Communities for Music Education in America in 2015, 2016 and 2017. I am excited you and your child have chosen to be a part of this tradition of excellence, and I hope you are both looking forward to many rewarding musical experiences.

The purpose of this handbook is to inform you of the expectations and policies of the orchestra programs at Adkins, Blanton, and E.P. Rayzor elementary schools. The single most important factor to your child's success in orchestra is your committed support for the entire school year. We have listed the ways you can ensure your child's success in the section on "Parent Responsibilities". Make it clear to your child that orchestra is a highly rewarding year-long commitment. When a student receives this message from a parent, he/she will work through a difficult period and emerge with renewed motivation and interest.

Please take time to read through this handbook with your child. Please also complete and return the information form and t-shirt order form by the due dates listed on these forms. Make sure to mark all dates on the orchestra calendar in your family calendar.

Feel free at any time during the year to contact us with any questions or concerns you may have.

We are looking forward to working with you and your child,

Kara Ortiz

Ryan Napier

Why Orchestra?

Benefits for Your Child:

Students develop skills in

- Problem-solving
- Teamwork
- Goal-setting
- Self-expression
- Physical Coordination
- Memory skills
- Self-confidence
- Concentration

Benefits for Your Family:

A child's orchestra study also offers opportunities for shared family experiences, including

- Performing for, and with, family and friends
- Concert attendance as a family
- A sense of accomplishment and pride for the entire family
- Family music-making

Student Responsibilities

1. To attend each orchestra class with required materials
2. To follow all orchestra classroom rules and to not disrupt the orchestra rehearsal
3. To take care of my instrument exactly as I am taught to at the beginning of school

Parent Responsibilities

There is nothing that will assure your child's success and progress in the study of music more than your sincere interest in his/her participation in music. With strong support from you, playing music will become a natural part of your child's life.

Here are some of the things that will help:

1. **Practice** - Help your child develop a regular practice routine at home. Participate with your child in their practice time when you can – ask them what they learned that day in class or have them perform a mini-concert for you. Sign your student's practice record and make sure they accurately (and honestly) record their practice time – this is an important tool in the teacher's assessment of a student's development.
2. **Materials** – Help your student make sure they bring all required materials to school with them on the days they have orchestra class.
3. **Attendance** – Students are expected to attend every orchestra class meeting, even if they have forgotten their instrument, without exception. Your student is making a year-long commitment to the orchestra program. Schedule change requests will not be honored after the start of the year unless a special circumstance arises. There will be at least one point during the year where your child will be frustrated at the difficulty of learning a new task. Continue to encourage your child and they will continue to have a positive experience.

Orchestra Materials:

These are the supplies you will need to participate in 5th grade orchestra:

1. Instrument and Bow. Your teacher will size you for the correct size of instrument
2. Book – Essential Elements 2000 book 1 for your instrument (violin, viola, or cello)
3. Rosin
4. Violin/Viola - Shoulder rest (Everest brand preferred)
5. Cello - Rock Stop
6. Soft cloth used for cleaning rosin dust off your instrument – should be kept in case. Can be an old rag or handkerchief.
7. Proper concert attire (see “concert attire” section below)
8. Optional: Metal folding stand for home practice – this will encourage a correct playing position

Orchestra Instruments

Acquiring an Instrument:

During the first week of school your child will be sized for materials and an instrument if he/she does not have one. Dallas Strings and Music & Arts are the two recommended stores that serve the Denton ISD area. You can order an instrument from either store in person or online during the first week of school to have the instrument delivered directly to your child’s elementary.

Rental vs. Purchase:

It is recommended at the beginning stages to rent an instrument rather than purchase. Most 5th grade students will start on a smaller sized instrument and gradually move up to a full size. Most students wait until they are on a full size instrument to consider purchasing. Many rental companies offer rent-to-own credit programs.

Instrument Selection:

Playing on a poor quality instrument will only cause frustration for you, your child, and the teacher. Low quality instruments are made of inferior materials. They break easily and do not stay in tune for long periods of time. Class time is wasted when the teacher must continually adjust a student’s tuning. **When purchasing, it is highly important to obtain an instrument from a reputable dealer.** Generally, in the world of string instruments, cost reflects quality. If an instrument is significantly cheaper than one of a different brand or at a different store, it is probably a lower quality instrument.

Orchestra Class Schedule:

Adkins: Mondays and Wednesdays 7:50-8:40 on cafeteria stage

E.P. Rayzor: Mondays and Wednesdays 7:50-8:35 on cafeteria stage

Blanton: Tuesdays and Thursdays 7:50-8:40 on cafeteria stage

Calendar:

The combined 5th grade orchestra (Adkins, E.P. Rayzor and Blanton) will perform at the winter concert at Harpool Middle School and the annual String Fling concert at Guyer High School. Depending on the school schedule, they may also go on a fieldtrip to perform at the NRH2O Orchestra Festival. It is very important that all students are able to participate in these performances. Please write these dates in your calendar as soon as possible. The orchestra sometimes also performs at other events during the year, such as Fine Arts Night. We primarily communicate via email, so please send your preferred email address with your child. Email notification will be sent home if any performances are added to the calendar at a later date.

Winter Concert: Tuesday, December 5, Harpool MS cafetorium. 6:00 tuning, 6:30 concert.

Fiddle Camp: January 27, at Harpool MS, 10 am-2 pm

Annual String Fling Concert: Thursday evening, April 12, at Guyer HS Gym. Specific warm-up and performance times will be announced at a later time. Pizza lunch provided and short concert to conclude the camp at 2 pm in the cafeteria.

Fine Arts Night Performances: On your child's campus, TBA

Field Trip: January, TBA. This will be an optional field trip during school hours pending availability in the school's master schedule. In order to be eligible for this festival, students must have attended ALL concerts throughout the year and be passing all of their classes.

Concert Attire:

Winter Concert:

Girls: White blouse, short or long-sleeved, but not sleeveless or with spaghetti-straps. Black long skirt that goes to the floor or black dress pants. Female cellists must wear a floor-length skirt wide enough to accommodate proper playing position or black dress pants. Black dress shoes.

Boys: White long-sleeved dress shirt with collar, tucked in. No tie. Black dress pants (no jeans) and black belt. Black socks and black dress shoes.

String Fling and Field Trip:

Orchestra T-Shirt and jeans. Please wear long jeans at the String Fling concert. Shorts may be worn on the field trip.

Practice Records:

There is no written homework for orchestra. Orchestra homework is practice. Orchestra students are asked to record their practice time on a weekly practice record. Practice records are a factor in the student's overall orchestra grade. Students who show the most practice each 6 weeks will progress at a more successful rate. Students are encouraged to practice 20-30 minutes each day. They may need to start out in 10 minute increments at the beginning of the year.

Caring for your instrument at home:

1. **Never** turn the pegs or try to tune your own instrument, only Ms. Ortiz and Mr. Napier can do this.
2. Put instrument and bow in case when not playing.
3. Wipe rosin dust off instrument after each use.
4. Do not touch the bow hair with your fingers, only touch the stick.
5. Loosen bow after each use.
6. Have a specific place to store your instrument that is away from traffic or young children.
7. Do not store instrument in a location that gets very hot or cold, **do not** leave instrument in a very hot or cold car.
8. **Never attempt to repair or tune the instrument yourself.** Re-case the instrument and bring it to the next orchestra class.

Discipline

Students should consider it a privilege to be able to participate in orchestra. Any disruptive behavior during class will not be tolerated because it can affect the success of the whole orchestra.

Examples of Unacceptable Behavior:

1. Talking during class without permission
2. Asking a question without raising your hand
3. Playing your instrument during class without permission
4. Touching or hitting another person with your bow
5. Running during orchestra time
6. Being careless when handling your instrument
7. Touching another student's instrument without permission

Possible Consequences:

1. Lowered grade
2. "Time out" or early pack-up
3. Re-Seating
4. Referral to classroom teacher for recess detention
5. Parent phone call
6. Referral to principal for severe infraction
7. Removal from the orchestra program



Grading

Students will receive a grade each 6 weeks in orchestra. Their grade will be based on the following criteria:

1. Daily participation grade
2. Performance tests
3. Worksheets done in class
4. Concert attendance

Signature Page

Please sign, date, and return this and the following page during the next orchestra class.

I have read and understand the expectations for orchestra class. I understand that by reserving a spot in the 5th grade orchestra class, it is my intention to continue in orchestra. I agree to practice 15-30 minutes each day, attend orchestra class each day we meet, and have my music book and instrument ready for each class.

Student signature

Date

Parent signature

Date

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I will send almost my entire communication home via email through the orchestra's CHARMS Office Assistant program. **See the last page for instructions to enter your information online into CHARMS.** Please also write down your contact information below. Thank you!

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Parents Names

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Home address

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Phone

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Email

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Additional email

\_\_\_\_\_ I am interested in volunteering for the orchestra program (t-shirt organizing, class parties, etc.). Please contact me with details.

**5<sup>th</sup> Grade Orchestra  
T-shirt Order Form**  
**Cost: \$6.00 – please pay with cash, or  
make checks payable to DENTON ISD**

ORCHESTRA STUDENT INFORMATION

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

This Orchestra t-shirt is used as a uniform at a number of events this year. Students are expected to have one, or to have a similar looking t-shirt so they will blend in at those events. Contact your director if you have questions about this.

Please put the QUANTITY next to each desired size in the blank provided BELOW

***\*Order on the large side...they will grow!***

|               |       |               |       |
|---------------|-------|---------------|-------|
| Youth Small   | _____ | Adult Small   | _____ |
| Youth Medium  | _____ | Adult Medium  | _____ |
| Youth Large   | _____ | Adult Large   | _____ |
| Youth X-Large | _____ | Adult X-Large | _____ |
|               |       | Adult 2X      | _____ |

TOTAL NUMBER OF SHIRTS ORDERED: \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL \$ ENCLOSED: (# of Shirts x \$6.00) \_\_\_\_\_

(Please make checks out to DENTON ISD)



## **CHARMS Office Assistant Instructions**

After reviewing this handbook, please visit the CHARMS website to login and enter your contact information online (see instructions below).

This may be done at home on your personal computer, or at any computer with Internet access. In the event that you forget your password and cannot log into your account, e-mail Ms. Ortiz.

### **To access CHARMS:**

1. Go to the Harpool Middle School Orchestra webpage and click on the "CHARMS" instruction tab **OR** enter   
*www.charmsoffice.com/charms/plogin.asp* in your web browser
2. Enter our school code with no spaces as seen here: HarpoolOrch
3. Enter your student's school ID number where it says "Enter Student Password."
4. Click the "**Update Info**" link.
5. Fill in the blank boxes on the page. Be sure to include *accurate* phone numbers and e-mail addresses.
6. Fill out the field that asks for t-shirt size and add "Y" eg: "YL" if it is a youth size you want on record or add "A" eg: "AL" if it is an adult size you want on record (Consider entering one size larger since students will grow during the year!).
7. Type "YES" in the field that says "handbook" indicating that you and your child have read this handbook.
8. Please ignore the box labeled "Booster Club."
9. If you are a parent who is willing to volunteer for various projects/trips as needed, please click "Volunteer."
10. Click **Update** (top right) when you're finished, *otherwise your information will not be saved* ☺

~Thank you!