

Westport Middle School Orchestra Handbook 2017-2018



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*More information including an up to date
calendar can be found at
www.westportorchestra.com*

2015-2016 ORCHESTRA DATES

The following dates are subject to change
All concerts are MANDATORY!

Thursday, October 12th-----7th+8th All-County auditions 3:00-7:00
Located HERE at Westport!
(I will need volunteers to help)

**Thursday, October 26th -----GLOW CONCERT at Eastern
High School @7:00 PM.**

Mon/Wed., Nov. 13th & 15th-----7th+8th All County rehearsals 6-8p.m.
@Westport

Thursday, November 16th-----7th+8th All County all day rehearsal and
Concert. @Westport

Tuesday, December 5th -----Electric Orchestra Trip to State Capitol

**Tuesday, December 12th -----Winter Concert at 7:00 p.m. at Eastern HS
(SUBJECT TO CHANGE!)**

Thursday, February 15th -----6th Grade All-County Auditions at Westport

February (Date TBD) -----Solo and Ensemble 8a.m. to 5p.m.
At Atherton High School on a Saturday

March 7th-10th-----ORCHESTRA Trip to Atlanta (details to come!)

**3rd week of March-----District Orchestra Performance
assessments during one school day.**

Monday, April 9th-----6th Grade All-County Rehearsal 6-8 @Westport

Wednesday, April 11th-----6th Grade All-County Rehearsal and Concert
@Westport

**April 26th-28th-----Mark Wood, Electrify Your Strings! (3 day
workshop and concert for ALL ORCHESTRA STUDENTS!)**

**You can also join our email list, Facebook,
Twitter by visiting westportorchestra.com**

Required Materials

Some of these materials may be borrowed from the school on a first come first serve basis.

- **Instrument**
- **6th grade- Essential Elements 2000 book 1 (Cost \$9)**
- **7th Grade- Essential Elements 2000 book 2 (9\$ and 8\$)**
And Essential Technique (green book)
- **8th Grade- Essential Elements 2000 book 2 (Cost 8\$)**
And Essential Technique (Green book)
- Music and Binder (provided by school)
- **Pencil**
- **Shoulder rest for violin and viola**
(KUN is the recommended brand of shoulder rest)
- **Rosin**
- Folding music stand for home practice
- Soft cloth (to wipe rosin dust off instrument)
- Black three ring binder (Provided by the school)
- Spare Strings (D'Addario Pro Arte' recommended)

Concert Dress

Girls

- Black, long-sleeved dress blouse or Black, Long-sleeved oxford dress shirt
(No Cleavage)
- Black dress skirt (Below the knee) or black dress pants*
- Black hose, tights, or socks
- Black dress shoes

Boys

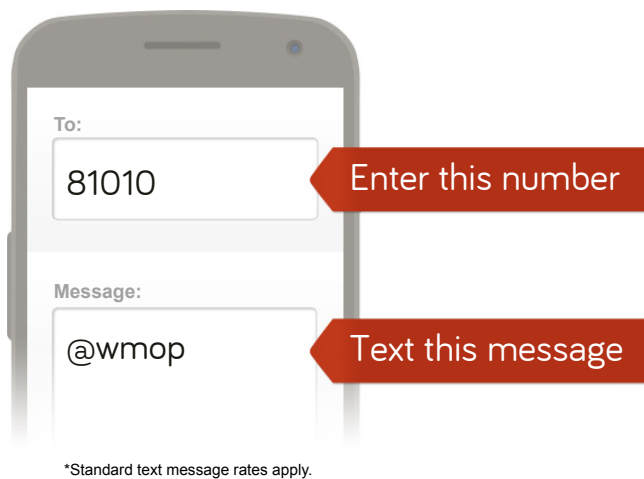
- Black, long-sleeved Oxford dress shirt
 - Black dress pants
 - Black dress shoes and socks
-

Mr. Zilisch would like you to join Westport Orchestra Parents!



To receive messages via text, text **@wmop** to **81010**. You can opt-out of messages at anytime by replying, 'unsubscribe @wmop'.

Trouble using 81010? Try texting **@wmop** to **(270) 872-0478** instead.



*Standard text message rates apply.

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Remind is a free, safe, and simple messaging tool that helps teachers share important updates and reminders with students & parents. Subscribe by text, email or using the Remind app. All personal information is kept private. Teachers will never see your phone number, nor will you see theirs.

Visit remind.com to learn more.

Orchestra Membership Fee

There is a **\$40 orchestra fee** for all students that are participating in orchestra.

This is in addition to any instrument rentals.

We have a lot of expenses that go along with running an orchestra program. This fee will help pay for the following:

- Any music that we playing.
- Field trips and concerts.
- Transportation
- Instrument Repairs and maintenance
- Food for kids on any orchestra trips.
- In-school private instruction from a professional on a weekly basis.
- And various other costs.

This is a separate fee from the instrument rental fee. If you need an instrument from the school, the fee for that is \$40 required by JCPS. You can see the instrument rental section on pages 9-10 for more information.

If you need any assistance with the fees, please feel free to contact me at cory.zilisch@jefferson.kyschools.us . I am more than happy to arrange an alternate payment plan if you need it.

I don't want any kid to miss out on orchestra because of money.

Concert Attendance Policy

ALL ORCHESTRA CONCERTS ARE MANDATORY!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Concerts constitute up to 25% of your grade and they are one of the most fun and rewarding experiences you will have in Orchestra. Performances at the Middle School are a culmination of what is learned in class, just like taking a test at the end of a unit in math or science.

Concert Absences

There are two types of absences for a concert: Unexcused and Excused.

• **Unexcused Absences:**

- An unexcused absence is when Mr. Zilisch does not have at least **four weeks** prior notice. Excuses such as “I had to baby-sit,” “I could not find a ride,” “I lost my white shirt” “I forgot,” etc. will not be tolerated.
- **Points lost due to an unexcused absence cannot be made up.** This loss in points will result in a *significant* reduction in a student’s grade
- It will count as an unexcused absence if you do not stay for the duration of the Orchestra and band concert. Remember it is important that we support each other! Please plan ahead to stay for the entire concert.

• **Excused Absences**

- Excused absences occur when there is an illness, death in the immediate family, or emergency situation. In those cases, please contact your Mr. Zilisch prior to the concert or as soon as possible.
- In the event of an excused absence, points will be made up through a “make-up” assignment or other arrangements will be made on a “case-by-case” basis.

It is the student’s responsibility to see the teacher for make-up work. Work must be turned in one week after the assignment is given. Concert make-up assignment

Please look over the concert dates now for any possible conflicts.

Should there be any conflicts, please let Mr. Zilisch know as least **four weeks** prior to the event.

Grading Policies

Grades will be broken into three Categories:

30% Student Engagement

40% Student Progress

30% Student Mastery

Each of these Categories will be broken into components as shown below

Student Engagement	Student Progress	Student Mastery
Teacher Observation 20%	Class Assignments 10%	Tests 10%
Participation 20%	Quizzes 20%	Performance Assessments 20%
Total: 40%	Total: 30%	Total: 30%

Descriptions of Categories:

Participation/Teacher Observation- 40%

Each day is worth 10 points.

In orchestra class we will be playing almost 90% of the time on our instruments. It is very important that each student come prepared with the correct materials to be able to participate in this class. Students are expected to participate in every activity and have all of their materials for the day. Students are expected to have practiced at home to prepare themselves for class. Each student should be able to play their instrument with good posture and hand positions. Each student should follow all of the procedures set in the handbook and any other given to them by Mr. Zilisch.

Class Assignments/Journal Writing 10%

Each daily journal entry and writing assignment is worth 10 points.
Every day at the start of class, students will have notes to write in their spiral notebook. Students will turn in these journals every Friday. There will also be

other occasional writing assignments that students will be graded on.

Weekly Playing Quizzes 20%

A short playing test worth 50 points each will be given each week. Students are required to complete these on Smart Music. They can complete these either at home or by using the student use computers in the orchestra room. These playing tests will be used to track the progress of each student. By doing this I will be able to see growth in the students and will be able to gauge how much practicing each student is doing. I will start administering these tests on September 7th.

Playing Tests and Performance Assessments(Concerts) 30%

Concerts are the most fun and rewarding experiences you will have in orchestra. Performances are the culmination of all the learning and hard work that happened in class and at home. There will be individual playing tests that will be given with a greater degree of difficulty than the weekly playing quizzes. They will often combine multiple concepts that have been learned in the previous weeks. Some playing tests will determine chair order/ranking in the class within a section.

Practicing

The importance of **daily practice** when playing any instrument cannot be overstated!! Just as athletes train regularly to be successful in a game, musicians also need to practice their instruments regularly to maintain a level of proficiency and to progress to a higher level.

I recommend that each student practice at least 100 minutes a week. **The frequency of practice is more important than the number of minutes practiced.** If each student practice 5 days of the week for 20 minutes that would fulfill the recommended time. It is much more efficient to break up the practice times over a period of days rather than cram them all into one practice session.

Mr. Z will stay after school on most Wednesdays for extra help and practice! We will also have some advanced students from the Ballard orchestra to give students free private lessons!

Mr. Z's Top Ten Ways to Practice!!

1. **Practice more days for less time:** It is better to do 10 minutes several times a week rather than 1 hour once a week
 2. **Practice makes permanent:** The way you practice is the way you will play. So if you make a mistake go back to an earlier spot and fix your mistake. Don't just patch the mistake and continue playing. Once you have made the correction repeat several times to make sure you have learned the correct habit.
 3. **Practice slow:** Start out at a slow tempo using a metronome (<http://www.metronomeonline.com/>). When you can play the music accurately increase the speed. Or download a metronome app on your smartphone/ipod touch.
 4. **Practice with background music:** It is normally better and more engaging to practice with a CD, DVD, like the one that comes with our Essential Elements books.
 5. **Practice with others:** Sometimes the best way to practice is to get together with someone in your class and play with them
 6. **Focus on sections that need the most work:** It is fun to practice easy music, but make sure you focus on those sections that are most difficult
 7. **Play through once:** Once you get better at a piece try to play from beginning to end without stopping no matter what!
 8. **End on a happy note:** End your practice sessions by playing something you enjoy. Go out to the music stores and find some books at your level that have music that you know and like.
 9. **Use a tuner!** Find a tuner on your smartphone/ipod touch. Or buy a tuner from your local music store. Playing in tune is an essential skill on a string instrument. If you are out of tune, it's a wrong note.
 10. **Find a quiet place where your siblings and dog aren't going to bother you**
- *Parents: Student may sometimes need reminders to practice, just as they need reminders to do homework. It is not bad if student needs to be reminded to practice, in fact that is perfectly normal. Hopefully, these strategies will make practicing more productive and engaging.

Renting or purchasing instruments

In general, students are expected to provide their own instrument for class. It is much more beneficial to rent or buy the instrument from a store because the repairs are usually covered in the rental fee, and your child will get a much higher quality instrument than the ones provided by the district.

Please do not purchase instruments from web-sites like E-bay. The quality of the instrument is questionable and there is no support should the instrument break.

Please try to get your child his/her instrument by **Wednesday August 24th**. DO NOT LET THE STUDENT PUT TOGETHER HIS/HER INSTRUMENT BEFORE ORCHESTRA CLASS. THE STUDENT WILL LEARN THE EXACT WAY TO ASSEMBLE THE INSTRUMENT IN CLASS.

Here is a list of several reputable instrument stores in our area that sell/rent instruments and instrument supplies. Some of these even have rent-to-own programs and you can purchase online.

Miles Ahead Music
808 Lyndon Lane Louisville, KY 40222
www.milesaheadmusic.net
(502) 479-3772

Noteworthy Music
4012 Dupont Cir #114, Louisville KY 40207
www.noteworthy.sheetmusic.com
502-893-0448

Mel Owen Music, Inc
4210 Shelbyville Road, Louisville, KY 40207
www.Melowenmusic.com
(502) 893-6624

Layne and Edwards Violins
9706 Fairground Road Fern Creek, KY 40291
www.markedwardsviolins.com
(502) 239-2423

Private owned instruments cannot be repaired by district funds. School owned instruments are repaired through Miles Ahead instruments.

Use of School Instruments

However, there are a certain number of school instruments that are available. There is a fee to use the school instrument, which is \$40 per academic year. If you are on fee-waiver please contact me and we can arrange something. In addition to the fee, all school instruments require a signed rental agreement form. Please make arrangement with Mr. Zilisch before or during the first two weeks of school.

JCPS INSTRUMENT RENTAL AGREEMENT: *This fee is due by the end of the second week of school.*

At the end of the school year, all school owned instruments are turned in for inventory

check, cleaning, and repair.

Parents and students should understand that JCPS does not provide insurance coverage for damage/theft on school instruments **and it is the responsibility of the parents and students for the full replacement value of the instrument should it be lost, stolen or damaged while issued to the student.** It is strongly recommended that the instrument be insured through your homeowner's or renters insurance company.

If a school-owned instrument needs repair, DO NOT take it and get it repaired somewhere. Bring the instrument to Mr. Zilisch.

Mr. Z's (Class) rules for success

1. Absolutely no Food, Gum, or drink in the orchestra room at any time.
2. Stay in your seat unless you are given permission to move around the room.
3. Do not talk or play your instrument unless you are instructed to.
4. Give your best effort and come prepared for class every day.
5. Respect yourself, others, and our instruments/equipment.

Grooming

Students must have short/cut fingernails in order to play in the orchestra. Long nails will damage strings and possibly cause injury. If a student decides to get fake nails for a special occasion, they **MUST** be removed by the following Monday. Fingernail clippers will be provided to a student immediately if seen with long fingernails. A parent note will be needed if fake nails must stay on after Monday.

Private Lessons

Once enrolled in orchestra, parents may wish to also enroll their son or daughter in private lessons.

Private lessons are a valuable part of a music student's education, and help each student by focusing on his or her individual musical needs.

Private lessons are an optional part of the orchestra program, and are strongly recommended for students grades five through eight.

Please ask your director for an updated private teacher list!

Private Teacher List

This list does not include all of the private teachers in Louisville.

These are teachers I recommend for private lessons.

Violin

Becca Neely	(319)-202-1113
Julianne Gunn	759-2810
Stacy Yates	425-5144
Kathie Raymond	263-3490
Heidi Tracy	749-7494
Clara Markham	217-0009
Lorna Larson	899-1591
Gloria Spurlock	245-7002
Tamara Meineke	896-1394
Judy Wilson	458-1281

Viola

Clara Markham	217-0009
Heidi Tracy	749-7494

Cello

Cecelia Huerta	615-417-2110
Robin Chappars	426-3285
Bonnie Avery	741-2333

Bass

Sydney Simpson	544-6122
Bert Witzel	451-5950
Jordan Wright	(859)333-8533
Aaron May	533-6063

Electric Orchestra Class

Westport is leading the future of Orchestra programs with its innovative Electric Orchestra! The group is called “Rock N’ Warhawks”. This is the first middle school in the country to have an electric orchestra class. We are the leaders of this new type of performance ensemble in the country. The group has been invited to perform at many local, state and national events!

The kids in this class must be enrolled in the regular orchestra class to continue learning necessary string playing skills. This class is available to 7th and 8th graders during the school day. 6th graders will get opportunities throughout the year to participate in “Electric Orchestra” songs. We will cap the year off with a full electric concert with Mark Wood (Emmy award winning artist, and founder of the Trans-Siberian Orchestra)

GRADING- There are many outside of school commitments in this class. Students must be at all performances as that is majority of their grade for this class. (Contact me immediately with any known conflicts)

Students in this class will participate in the following:

Improvisation Skills

Composing and creating their own music

Learning a variety of popular and rock music

Learning choreography and movement along with music

Learning about and hands on practice with music technology

Performing in the community

Students in this class must be able to provide:

**AA and 9v Batteries for electric instruments.

**If you can rent an electric instrument, Doo Wop shop and Miles ahead Music rent and sell Mark Wood Electric instruments. The school has a few electrics that we received as a grant from the city of Lyndon.

**One Pair of EARBUDS

There are many community performances that this group is a part of. Many of them might pop up with short notice. It is important that we have all of the students at these performances! Many of the choreography and movements require all the performers to be there to make sense.

Orchestra Acknowledgement Letter

We are going green so we ask that you view this document online and print if you desire.

The handbook can be viewed at www.westportorchestra.com
Click on Documents in the top part of the main page and then click on Handbook. If you need a printed copy, please let Mr. Z know.

Please return the bottom half of this sheet to Mr. Z by Friday, August 25th, 2017.

This is worth an assignment grade, which is 10 points.

I _____ (student's name), have read and understand the contents of the orchestra handbook.

I _____ (Parent's name), have read and understand the contents of the orchestra handbook.

I am aware of the orchestra calendar for the year, the grading policies and expectations of each orchestra student at Westport Middle School.

I am aware that there is a **\$40** orchestra fee (Outlined in the handbook. This is separate from the instrument rental fee) _____

Checks can be written to Westport Middle School

Parent's or Guardian's Signature _____ Date _____

Parent's or Guardian's Home # _____ Cell # _____

Parent's or Guardian's Email address _____

(This is so I can send out information and keep you informed on any changes.)