



# Jenison Junior High School Orchestra Handbook 2020 - 2021



**Carol Johnson & Becky Bush, Junior High Directors**  
**Dan Scott & Josh Zallar, High School Directors**

Dear Junior High Orchestra Students and Parents,

Hello and welcome to another exciting year with the Jenison Orchestras! This year promises to be different than most, but we know it will be an outstanding year with all of our wonderful Junior High Orchestra students! Mrs. Johnson and Mrs. Bush are so excited to see our students and get started with all three orchestras!

This handbook attempts to provide as much information as possible for our upcoming school year. Please understand that this year requires the dates and procedures in this handbook to be somewhat tentative and subject to change. The first two pages outline specific changes to the handbook for this year, and the typical orchestra handbook follows. Read through it and make sure you contact Mrs. Johnson or Mrs. Bush with any questions you may have. For your convenience, this handbook is also posted online on our website [www.JenisonOrchestras.org](http://www.JenisonOrchestras.org). Please bookmark the site and check back frequently, as there will be up-to-date announcements and reminders posted as often as possible.

This year, we are continuing to use the “CHARMS” website to handle all of our program’s technical needs. Charms will be the place where you can check your student’s account balance, get concert info, volunteer to assist our program, make payments online, and much more. It is a very helpful tool for parents and students!

If you have any questions or concerns at any time, please don’t hesitate to contact us. We are very excited that you are joining us for another great year!

Sincerely,

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# Jenison Junior High Orchestra Handbook Changes Due to Covid-19

This year will require flexibility as we adjust procedures for how our junior high orchestra program will run for this school year. These first pages of the handbook will cover changes that we plan to make until we are able to begin holding class “normally” and performing live concerts.

Following these pages of changes, you will see our normal orchestra handbook. It will be helpful to review concert dates, rehearsals, and policies. Our hope is that we will be back to this at some point during the school year.

## Jenison Jr. High Orchestra 20-21 Performance Schedule

During Phase 4 we will not be able to perform live concerts in the JCA. However, it would be good to make note of the concert schedule. Even if we are not able to hold a live concert, we might be able to stream the music (pending copyright laws) that the kids are working on in some way. Hopefully the concerts that are scheduled for the second half of the year will be able to take place. We will do our best to communicate with students and parents information about performances in advance.

## Google Classroom Expectations and Codes

Each week we will create a weekly plan on Google Classroom where students can go to submit practice records, find class activities/assignments, and find the focus areas of practice on our new program Smart Music. Please be sure to check your Google Classroom to stay on top of everything we are doing!

### Class Codes:

2nd Hour, Encore: **7pw4od5**

3rd Hour, Prelude: **ziculsq**

6th Hour, Cadence: **62yfrcx**

## Extended Traditional Expectations

If you are taking orchestra class through the extended traditional option, we are excited to help keep you going strong and being a part of our class! Our plan is to have you join us for at least the first hour of our block of class through Google Meet. We will be taking attendance and then rehearsing and playing music. Due to the sound delay, we will ask you to mute your sound from home, but we would like you to play your instrument along with us.

## **Uniforms and School Instrument Rentals**

We are going to hold off on handing out uniforms and collecting uniform rental fees for the time being. We do not want parents to have extra expenses until we know they will be used. We are also going to wait a few weeks before issuing the maintenance contracts and fees for use of school-owned cellos and basses. More information coming soon!

## **Practice Record Time Charts**

While we are teaching in-person (including extended-traditional), our practice grade chart for home practice will be the same as in past years with 90 minutes per week required for maximum credit. This year instead of turning in your planner at school, you will complete a simple google assignment form that can be found on the Google Classroom site for your class. You must complete this form online by the end of your Friday class period each week. Although only 90 minutes are required to get an A, we highly encourage students to shoot for even more practice time at home if their schedule allows for it. At least 15 or 20 minutes per day is a great goal and should be a great non-screen de-stressor :-). If at some point we must move to a fully virtual model of school this year, we will ask students to slightly increase their time playing at home. If this happens, we will be sure to communicate expectations with students.

## **Folding Music Stands**

All Jr High orchestra students should bring a folding stand with them to class this fall. (Hopefully, you still have the one you were given when you rented your instrument in 5th Grade!) We will not be allowing students to share stands during class this year, and our black metal stands are going to be used elsewhere in the building. You can either store your folding stand in your orchestra locker, or bring it back and forth in your backpack each day. If needed, a student can check out a folding music from us at school, to be returned later this year.

## **Devices**

The Junior High is encouraging students to bring their own learning devices to class (laptop, chromebook, tablet, etc.) These will be used in orchestra as well, particularly in the first week of school.

## **Wrap-Up**

Again, we know that this year will require flexibility and creativity. Ultimately, our goal this year is to make quality music together and build relationships with our students. The handbook that now follows contains our “normal” handbook policies. Please remember the changes we have discussed above as you read this!

# Junior High Orchestra Grading Policy

The marking period grade of each Junior High student will be a compilation of four categories. Each category will represent a percent of the student's final grade. The percentages are as follows:

## **20% - Concert Attendance**

(Some marking periods may not include a concert grade this year, and some concerts may happen in a virtual way this year.) At a typical concert, Orchestra students earn their 100 concert points in five ways:

- 20 Arrive in the warm-up room at or before the scheduled time
- 20 Bring all required materials/supplies
- 20 Wear all required uniform pieces
- 20 Meet behavioral expectations
- 20 Meet musical expectations

## **20% - Practice Records**

Junior High orchestra students are required to practice at home for 90 minutes per week for full credit. Each student is required to record practice minutes in their practice record, and enter it in a Google Form each Friday. Parents will be emailed progress reports randomly during each semester for approval. Total weekly practice minutes will be averaged at the end of each marking period. Any student can make up for weeks with fewer practice minutes (due to illness, vacation, etc.) by practicing MORE in other weeks. If a student fails to turn in any practice records during a marking period, that student will not be able to receive any grade higher than a C in orchestra. **Practice records that are turned in more than two weeks late will receive zero credit.**

## **30% - Daily Rehearsal Skills and Technique**

Maximum credit can be earned in this category by arriving to each class on time, by avoiding any unexcused absences, by being fully prepared for every class (with instrument, music, pencil, and any assignments), and by consistently contributing to class in an active, effective, appropriate, and positive manner. In addition, you must remember that food, drink, gum, talking out of turn, and playing after the director stops all distract from the rehearsal and cannot be allowed. Failure to follow any or all of these guidelines will result in the loss of your three daily points.

## **30% - Assignments and Playing Tests**

Maximum credit can be earned in this category by preparing fully for each assignment and playing test, and by showing steady improvement in one's playing ability. Playing tests and assignments are a chance for each student to play individually and receive specific suggestions. Playing tests are usually done by video tape during class time and you will receive written comments after a few days. Each playing test sheet should be signed by a parent and returned to your teacher within a few days for an additional five points. Some playing tests will also determine chair placement. It will be announced in class whether each playing test counts for chairs or not.

**\*Extra credit opportunities are offered throughout the year and can include:**

- Attendance at concerts that include live musicians. Bring in a program or parent note.
- Extra student performances that are not already getting a grade in school.
- Specific opportunities that will be announced throughout each marking period.

## **\*\* Concert Attendance \*\***

Every member of this orchestra is an extremely valuable contributor to the final musical product. As you read previously, concert attendance is required, and it is a very big part of your grade in orchestra class. Plan ahead so that work, vacations, sports, and other activities do not conflict with our concerts. If a conflict cannot be resolved and a student must miss a concert, a parent must notify a director in writing AT LEAST TWO WEEKS before the concert. This is imperative for the orchestra's sake and no late letters or emails will be accepted. If the absence is excused, we will then work out an assignment that will allow you to make up the concert points.

As always, we understand that emergencies and illnesses will occur. In this case, a simple phone call or email from a parent before the concert will be needed in order for the student to be allowed to make up the points. If a student simply does not show up for a concert, they will lose all concert points, and will not have an opportunity to make them up. Please ask your director if you have questions.



## **Junior High Orchestra Uniform Guidelines**

The look of our orchestra is just as important as our sound. It is the first impression our group makes on an audience and it distinguishes us as mature musicians. All orchestra students at the Junior High will wear a specific uniform for all concerts and festivals throughout the year. Unless otherwise noted, all students should arrive at each activity already in their uniform. Do not expect to have time to change between arriving at the concert and performing. The uniform pieces will be checked out to each orchestra student after the directors receive the student's rental deposit, and it will need to be returned at the end of the school year. You are expected to take VERY good care of your uniform throughout the year. (Don't leave it wadded up in the bottom of your closet between concerts... We want to keep them looking nice!) If there are financial concerns, the Jenison Orchestra Parent's Association can assist in getting an appropriate concert uniform. The uniform regulations are as follows:

### **For the ladies:**

You will rent a pair of black "flowy" pants and green vest from JOPA at a cost of \$10 for the year. (This includes the cost of pants hemming and/or vest alterations.) You will provide your own white long-sleeve button-up dressy blouse, black nylons, and black flat dressy shoes. (Yes, choir girls can wear their choir shoes, if they wish.)

### **For the gentlemen:**

You will rent a green vest from JOPA at a cost of \$5 for the year. (This includes any necessary vest alterations.) You will provide your own BLACK dress pants, BLACK shoes (not sneakers), BLACK socks, and white long-sleeve button-up dress shirt.

## **Be sure to check out the Jenison Orchestras Website!!!**

[www.JenisonOrchestras.org](http://www.JenisonOrchestras.org)

We've included lots of stuff that should be really helpful to you, like:  
Calendars, Handbooks, Announcements, Concert Reminders, Practice Tips, Links to Tuning Notes,  
Rental Store Contact Info, JOPA info, Student Accounts, Photos, Uniform Info, Private Lesson Info,  
Step-Up Instrument Info, Director Contact Info, and much more!

**Please bookmark us, and visit often for the most up-to-date orchestra information!!!**

## **Orchestra Books**

Each orchestra class will be using method books in class to advance our technique and musical skills. Sometimes, these books will be checked out to students for use in class and at home. It is expected that students will take care of their book and return it in excellent condition before the end of the year. Any student that loses their book or returns it in an unusable condition will be charged a replacement fee of \$10.

## **Jenison Orchestra Parent's Association - JOPA**

The Jenison Orchestras are enthusiastically supported by the Jenison Orchestra Parent's Association. This "booster" group provides scholarships, parent support, uniform maintenance, and other extras to our orchestras. They are funded by three main fundraisers during the year. Students may sell Entertainment Books in the fall. The Jenison Orchestra "Smart Card" is our community discount card that is good at many area businesses. The card is sold just before Christmas and is an annual hit. JOPA also sponsors a spring Century Resources sale. Ongoing fundraisers are available for those who wish to participate, including Van Andel concession work and SCRIP card use. Just ask a director if you are interested in getting involved!

A portion of the profits from the JOPA fundraisers is kept in orchestra student accounts. Students can use the money in their accounts to purchase music-related materials throughout the year. Strings, shoulder-rests, rosin, music, trips, medals, lessons, camps, and fees are just some of the things students use their accounts to pay for. All money in students' accounts must be spent on music materials by graduation. The accounts do carry over from year to year.

JOPA holds meetings every other month in the Jenison Junior High Media Center. Please plan to attend as many meetings as you can as we discover new ways to show off our students' hard work.

### **JOPA Meetings: (JJHS Media Center)**

Tuesday, Nov. 10, 2020, 7:30pm - (Virtual?)

Tuesday, Feb. 9, 2021, 7:30pm

Tuesday, Apr. 13, 2021, 7:30pm



JOPA appreciates having any and all of you on board for another wonderful year of the Jenison Orchestras!

# Jenison Jr. High Orchestra Dates 2020-2021 (All TENTATIVE!!!)

## Required Events for JH Orchestra Students:

Oct 14	7:30pm	6th-8 <sup>th</sup> Orchestras	Fall Concert	Virtual?
Dec 9	8:00pm	JH Orchestras (JH Bands@6:30)	Christmas Concert	JCA
Feb 17	6:30pm	JH Orchestras (HS Orchs@8pm)	Pre-Festival Concert	JCA
Feb 24	daytime	JH and HS Orchestras	MSBOA Festival	JCA
Apr 23	daytime	<u>8th</u> Grade Orch & Band	Elementary Concerts	JCA
May 5	7:00pm	<u>8th</u> Grade Orch (+5th+HS Sym)	String Spectacular	JCA
May 19	7:30pm	6th-8th Grade Orchestras	Spring Concert	JCA
May 28?	2nd hour	JH Bands and Orchestras	Assembly for JH	JCA

## Additional Events REQUIRED for Students in ENCORE Strings (2nd hour):

(Dec 5	2:30-8pm	JH Encore Strings	GRSO Holiday Pops	DeVos Hall) ??
Apr 17	all day	JH Orch/Band	Solo and Ensemble Festival	Northpoint Chr.

## OPTIONAL Additional Events: (more info to come as dates get closer...)

(Oct 22&24	TBA	Volunteer JH/HS Orch/Band	MSBOA All-State Auditions	TBA) ??
(Jan 28-30	TBA	Selected JH/HS Orch/Band	MSBOA All-State Orch/Bands	MMC/DeVos Hall) ??
Mar 11	5-7pm	JH Orch/Band/Choir	Student Showcase	JJHS Cafeteria
Apr 17	all day	JH Orch/Band (Encore Required)	Solo and Ensemble Festival	Out-of-district

## Orchestra Booster Meetings (Jenison Orchestra Parents Association):

Nov 10	7:30pm	Orchestra Boosters (JOPA)	JOPA Meeting	Virtual - Zoom?
Feb 9	7:30pm	Orchestra Boosters (JOPA)	JOPA Meeting	JH Media Center
Apr 13	7:30pm	Orchestra Boosters (JOPA)	JOPA Meeting	JH Media Center

