

Brownsburg West Middle School
Orchestra Handbook 2021-2022



Dear Orchestra Members and Parents,

Welcome back to an exciting year with the Brownsburg West Middle School Orchestras! I am so excited that you have chosen to be a part of the orchestra program and look forward to a year filled with educational, musical, and fun experiences.

Your child's participation in orchestra is beneficial in many ways. Orchestra students are engaged daily in a highly creative performing art that stimulates academic and personal growth in ways that no other discipline can. Orchestra students will also develop traits such as teamwork, responsibility, dedication, confidence and leadership. Membership in orchestra gives students a sense of accomplishment and pride as they develop musical and personal skills that will enrich their lives.

The purpose of this handbook is to outline the guidelines and expectations that will make this year a success for all involved. Both students and their parents should take the time to thoroughly read this handbook. Upon completion, the contract on the last page should be signed and returned to school, indicating your understanding of these guidelines and expectations.

I would like to encourage your input! If you have any questions or comments please feel free to contact me at any time.

Sincerely,

Lauren Weirich, BWMS Orchestra Director

lweirich@brownsburg.k12.in.us

317-852-3143 ext. 2534

Brownsburg West Middle School

Orchestra Handbook 2021-2022

CLASSROOM PROCEDURES

Making music is a lot of fun! However, it also involves a lot of hard work. With your help, we can establish the right attitudes and best musical habits. It is important that we understand and practice proper classroom procedures so that *everyone* receives the maximum benefit from rehearsal. Classroom procedures include the following:

1. Come to class ready to participate, and participate.
2. Respect other people and their property.
3. Respect others' right to learn.
4. Follow directions the first time they are given.
5. Play only the instrument you've been assigned.
6. Food/Gum/Candy/Drinks are not allowed.
7. **Keep fingernails short. This is necessary for playing a string instrument.**

INSTRUMENT CARE & STORAGE

INSTRUMENT CARE:

- **Be aware of temperature changes.** Just like you, your string instrument is susceptible to temperature changes. A good way to judge where your instrument should and shouldn't be played or stored is to think about where you would be most comfortable. Avoid areas that are excessively hot, cold, dry or humid. Keep your instrument in its case when traveling, and otherwise kept in a room temperature environment. Avoid storing your instrument in the car on extremely hot days. Do not let your instrument get wet.
- Always treat your instrument with respect. **Your instrument is made of wood and is fragile!** Get your instrument out of its case and put it away properly and safely.
- **DO NOT** attempt to tune your instrument until you've been properly taught to do so.
- **Never use alcohol or solvent-based products to clean your instrument.** This will damage the varnish of your instrument.

INSTRUMENT STORAGE/TRANSPORTATION:

Cello/Bass Students:

- Cellos and basses are too big to transport on the bus. Therefore, all students learning the cello or bass will be assigned a school-owned instrument to use during the school day. These instruments will always stay in the orchestra room. The instrument that you rent will be kept at home.
- Cello and bass students may bring their home instruments to school for tuning any time the instrument needs it. You will need to be a car rider when bringing your home instrument to school and picking it up from school. Parents may also contact the director to make to bring the instrument in for tuning.
- When we have concerts, we will ask you to bring your *home* instrument to the concert.

Violin/Viola Students:

- Your instruments will be transported to and from school, even on the bus.
- There are racks in the orchestra rooms where you may store your instruments during the school day. At the end of the day, come and pick up your instrument before going home.

Brownsburg West Middle School

Orchestra Handbook 2021-2022

GRADES

Grades will consist of the following parts:

Quizzes/written work	10%
Daily contribution points	20%
Assessment (playing tests)	35%
Performance (concerts)	35%

DAILY CONTRIBUTION POINTS: Each student should come to class with all materials and actively participate throughout the rehearsal. Materials include: all orchestra music, instrument (in good playing condition), a pencil, and any other accessories needed to play the instrument (shoulder rest, rosin, etc.). Points will be deducted from the daily contribution points for missing materials and non-participation.

3 points

Student follows expectations and contributes **actively, with leadership.** (100%)

- Student positively and actively engages in classroom tasks: good role model.
- Student **does not disrupt** class climate or talk at inappropriate times.
- Student **participates** with proper instrumental technique, posture, etc.
- Student comes to class with **ALL class materials** and is in seat with instrument at the bell (music, passport, pencil, instrument and all supplies).

2 points

Student follows expectations and actively contributes **most of the time.** (<90%)

- Student partially engages in classroom tasks with **mediocre leadership.**
- Student **does not disrupt** class climate or talk at inappropriate times.
- Student sometimes participates with proper instrumental technique, posture, etc.
- Student needs reminded to have proper class materials, be in seat at the bell.

1 point

Student **does not, or refuses** to contribute with proper behavior. (less than 50%)

- Student does not engage in classroom tasks.
- Student behaves with **some disruption** of class climate or talks at inappropriate times.
- Student does not participate or use proper instrumental technique, posture, etc.
- Student disrupts class to get class materials and/or does not use them correctly.

0 points

Chewing gum, cell phone/electronic device use during class, missing class materials, inappropriate physical contact with others, destroying property, disrespect to teacher and/or peers.

ASSESSMENT (PLAYING TESTS): Playing tests will be given periodically to assess each student's progress. These tests may or may not be announced in advance.

PERFORMANCES: Performing is a very important part of orchestra class. Performances are listed in **bold dates** on the calendar below. Please mark these dates on your calendar! *All dates are tentative and more information will be communicated as we get closer to the event.* If an absence is to be excused, please notify your director through email prior to the event.

Brownsburg West Middle School Orchestra Handbook 2021-2022

CALENDAR/IMPORTANT DATES *(all dates and times are tentative)*

August

16	BBOP Fall Fundraiser begins		
26	BBOP Meeting	7:30 PM	BHS Band Room
31	BBOP Fall Fundraiser orders and money due		

September

16	BBOP Meeting	7:30 PM	BHS Band Room
20	6th Grade Orchestra Open Rehearsal	6:00 PM	BEMS Cafetorium
20	BBOP Fall Fundraiser Pick-up		BEMS Door 20

November

1	BBOP Winter Fundraiser begins		
9	7th-8th Grade Fall Concert	6:30/7:30 PM	BWMS Cafetorium
16	BBOP Winter Fundraiser orders and money due		
18	BBOP Meeting	7:30 PM	BHS Band Room

December

4	BBOP Breakfast with Santa		BWMS Cafetorium
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January

20	BBOP Meeting	7:30 PM	BHS Band Room
24	BBOP Fundraiser begins		
28	Recruitment Concert (6th Grade Only)	TBA	BEMS Main Gym

February

2	Honors Recital	6:30PM	BHS
8	Young Artist Solo Competition	6:00 PM	BEMS Cafetorium
8	BBOP Fundraiser orders and money due		
17	BBOP Meeting	7:30 PM	BHS Band Room
23	BBOP Fundraiser Pick-up		BEMS Door 20
26	BBOP Garage Sale		BHS Cafeteria

March

10	BBOP Meeting	7:30 PM	BHS Band Room
17	7th-8th Grade Contest Concert	6:30/7:30PM	BWMS Cafetorium

April

21	BBOP Meeting	7:30PM	BHS Band Room
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May

11	String Fever Rehearsal (Grades 6-12)	6:00 PM	BHS Varsity Gym
15	String Fever Concert (Grades 6-12)	4:00 PM	BHS Varsity Gym
19	BBOP Meeting	7:30 PM	BHS Band Room

BROWNSBURG BAND AND ORCHESTRA PARENTS (BBOP)

The Brownsburg Band and Orchestra Parents (BBOP) is a volunteer booster organization that supports the Brownsburg bands and orchestras. You are a member of BBOP because your child is a member of the BWMS Orchestra! Your participation would be much appreciated. BBOP meetings are held in the high school band room on the third Thursday of each month.

Brownsburg West Middle School Orchestra Handbook 2021-2022

NEED AN INSTRUMENT OR LARGER SIZE?

If you do not yet have an instrument, please contact **Paige's Music** to order an instrument, starter kit, and book (*Essential Elements Interactive*, Book 1-Orange). Be sure to get the book that matches the instrument you'll be playing. You may order online at www.paigesmusic.com, call them at 1-800-382-1099, or visit the store.

Knapp Music is another local music store that provides instrument rentals. You may also contact them to rent an instrument, but keep in mind that they do not make deliveries to the school (Paige's Music does make weekly deliveries.)

****I highly recommend that you DO NOT purchase an instrument online. If you decide to purchase online, please contact me and we can discuss recommended brands. ****

Ordering a Larger Instrument

Your child will inevitably grow during their time in middle school orchestra. String instruments come in multiple sizes, so it is easy to order a larger size when the time comes. I will send a paper notification home with your child when I notice that they are outgrowing their current instrument size. This will let you know which new size to order from Paige's Music. It is important that you order the instrument as soon as possible, which will be delivered to school the following Thursday.

INSTRUMENT REPAIR INFORMATION

BROKEN STRINGS:

- When you break a string, DO NOT send your instrument to the music store – we can repair this at school. However, you will need to order a replacement string. It is important that orders are placed as soon as you notice the broken string.
- Please call Paige's Music to order a new string immediately (**no charge, if you are renting your instrument from Paige's.**)
- Paige's Music delivers and picks up items/repairs to Brownsburg Schools every Thursday, so the string can be delivered directly to your child's school. Orders must be made by the close of business on Wednesdays. **Paige's Music: 1-800-382-1099 (toll free) or 317-842-2102 (local);**
www.paigesmusic.com
- During your phone conversation, please include:
 - Student first and last name
 - The school they attend
 - Instrument and instrument size
 - Name of the string that is broken (E, A, D, G, or C)
 - Ask them to send the string with Mr. Matt Hicks, our Paige's representative on Thursday.

****If you are not renting from Paige's, you may still order a string from Paige's, but will need to pay for the string. You may also contact an alternate music store for your needs.****

OTHER REPAIRS:

- When something other than a string breaks, loaner instruments can be easily ordered (no charge) by calling Paige's Music at 1-800-382-1099 (toll free) or 317-842-2102 (local). Loaner instruments will also be delivered on Thursdays.
- Additional supplies may be ordered and delivered to the school from Paige's Music for payment. Please visit the Paige's Music website or call Paige's to order supplies.

Brownsburg West Middle School

Orchestra Handbook 2021-2022

PRACTICE

Progress on a musical instrument depends a great deal on what is achieved during **daily** home practice sessions. The rewards of playing a musical instrument increase in direct proportion to the number of hours invested in individual practice. The key is to set aside a designated time and place every day for practice that is free from distractions. Stick to a consistent practice schedule and set goals for each individual practice session. 30 minutes of practice 6 days a week is a good amount of time. The following tips are given to help students practice at home:

HOW TO PRACTICE:

1. Study it.
2. Count it out loud.
3. Name the notes.
4. Finger the notes.
5. Play it! Start each line slowly with a feeling of good rhythm. Tap your foot. Repeat the part of the line that is difficult. Write in the counting on difficult parts. Increase your speed only after you can play it perfectly.

ORCHESTRA PARENTS: YOU CAN HELP!

1. **Help your child in remembering which days are orchestra days.** We are on an alternating purple/white schedule, with orchestra only falling on one of those days. This can make it difficult for beginners to remember what days to bring their instruments/music.
2. Provide your child with a music stand. This aids greatly with home practice and will promote good posture.
3. Be generous, positive, and constructive in your encouragement.
4. Show an interest in your child's practice and study. You could ask your child to play their orchestra music for you, or make music a family activity by taking your child to hear a concert. Show your support by attending all of their performances, if possible.

PRIVATE LESSONS

Brownsburg's private lesson program is a district wide program that provides a high-quality enhancement to classroom instruction. Most of our teachers are professional musicians in the Indianapolis area and have advanced degrees in the performance of their instruments. Lessons are extremely valuable to the individual student. ALL students are highly encouraged to take individualized private instruction.

The teachers listed below with an ** offer lessons **during the school day**. All in-school private lessons are \$20 and are 30 minutes (1/2 of the orchestra class period.) Please contact the individual teacher to set up a lesson time.

Primary Brownsburg School: Middle Schools—these teachers will also travel to the high school

**Candida Wiley	Violin/Viola	didajane54@gmail.com	317-918-0359
**Kathleen Swayze	Violin/Viola	violakeeper@gmail.com	317-459-4304
**Ingrid Pierson	Cello/Bass	catbirdmusicstudio@gmail.com	847-970-0559

Primary Brownsburg School: High School—these teachers also will travel to the middle schools

**Kathy Hershberger	Violin/Viola	kathyhershberger@gmail.com	317-523-2333
**Eric Lakanen	Cello	lakanen.eric@gmail.com	-----
**Jufang Liu	Bass	jufangliu@yahoo.com	-----

Brownsburg West Middle School Orchestra Handbook 2021-2022

The following teachers have had students in the Brownsburg orchestras. They DO NOT come in during the school day to teach. Please contact one of these well-qualified teachers for information on lessons. Prices will vary.

Natalie Gain (Avon, IN)	Violin/Viola/Cello	natalie@gainmusicacademy.com	317-775-1785
Bill Christoff (Brownsburg)	Violin/Viola	wcaptain1@yahoo.com	317-440-0780
Madison Powell (Avon H.S.)	Violin/Viola	madison@powellmusicacademy.com	-----

SOLO AND ENSEMBLE

All orchestra students are encouraged to enter the Indiana State School Music Association (ISSMA) Solo and Ensemble contest. Events include solos, trios, quartets, etc. Soloists play with a piano accompaniment. Students arrange their own practice time after school. The event typically happens in late January/early February. More complete information will be distributed in late October.

BROWNSBURG YOUNG ARTIST CONTEST

Open to all soloists, this local contest is held following the ISSMA Solo & Ensemble Contest. All entrants receive a participation award. The first-place winners in each grade receive a full scholarship (tuition, room and board) to a summer music camp.

ALL-REGION HONOR ORCHESTRA

Each year the Indiana American String Teachers Association (INASTA) sponsors the All-Region Honor Orchestra for exceptional 7th and 8th grade orchestra students in central Indiana. Orchestra members are **selected** from a written application, recorded audition, and director recommendation by the INASTA committee. Recommended students are encouraged to apply. More detailed information will be sent home at a later date.

REWARD TRIPS

There is a possibility of an end-of-year reward trip or event. **The reward trips are open to all orchestra members who have no unexcused absences from any performance.** An excused absence is defined as a personal illness (bring a doctor's note when returning to school.) or a family emergency. **Email your director before the scheduled performance if the absence is to be excused.** The Academic Eligibility Requirements and Behavior Expectations also apply to fun and overnight trips. To meet the behavior expectation, students may have no more than two (2) office discipline referral logs. See the Student Handbook section of the Student Passport for complete details. Additional information about these reward trips will be sent home at a later date.

FUNDRAISING

Each year the boosters sponsor several fundraising events to meet the expenses incurred by the orchestra programs. A list of scheduled fundraisers and their start and end dates can be found in the calendar. Students may earn funds, to be used for trips, for their individual booster accounts. Please do your part in helping meet the orchestra's financial needs.

UNIFORM

We will be wearing a "uniform" for many of the Brownsburg MS orchestra events. This will be used in grades 7-8. Polo shirts will be provided by the school. Orders only happen in the beginning of the school year and the polo will be needed for the entirety of that school year. The rest of the uniform is to be provided by the student.

Uniform: Brownsburg Orchestras polo shirt, black dress pants, black socks, and black dress shoes.

Brownsburg West Middle School
Orchestra Handbook 2021-2022

Acknowledgement of Receipt

We hereby acknowledge that we have received a copy of the 2021 - 2022 Orchestra Handbook for review. We have read the handbook and agree to comply with its provisions. We understand that the dates below are tentative and are an expectation of the class outside the regular school day.

Please return this form by Thursday, August 5th/Friday, August 6th, 2021

9/20 – 6th Grade Orchestra Open Rehearsal	6:00 PM	BEMS Cafetorium
11/9 – 7th-8th Grade Fall Concert	6:30 PM	BWMS Cafetorium
1/29 – Recruitment Concert (6th Grade Only)	TBA	BEMS Main Gym
3/17 – 7th-8th Grade Contest Concert	6:30PM	BWMS Cafetorium
5/11 – String Fever Rehearsal (Grades 6-12)	6:00 PM	BHS Varsity Gym
5/15 – String Fever Performance (Grades 6-12)	4:00 PM	BHS Varsity Gym

Student Name Printed

Student Signature

Parent Name Printed

Parent/Guardian Signature

Parent Name Printed

Parent/Guardian Signature

Parent Phone Number

Parent Email Address

Date: _____ Grade: _____ Period: _____ Purple/White: _____

Student Shirt Size (shirts are in ADULT SIZES, please circle one):

S M L XL 2XL