



Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to the Orchestra program at Paschal High School. We are anticipating an exciting year filled with successful performances and highly successful music education. We believe that participation in the Orchestra will prove to be one of the most rewarding educational experiences in high school. Our goal is to provide a positive and highly successful musical experience for each and every student in orchestra.

In order for the Orchestra to maximize its potential we will follow certain guidelines. It will take all of us working together to build and maintain a quality program. Please take time to review this handbook. You may access it online at [www.charmsoffice.com](http://www.charmsoffice.com) (school code: **PHSOrchestra**) under handouts. Each year there are a few updates made with the full intent of improving your student's orchestra experience.

We have a burning desire to give the orchestra students here at PHS every opportunity to compete and perform at the highest level possible, to make great music together, to have an orchestra and mariachi family and to create a place at school where students feel at home. We have high expectations for ourselves and each student in the orchestra program at Paschal as well. Our hope is for each of you to determine how you will contribute to the program's highest goals. Look to inspire others by your words and actions and you will be remembered by those who've come in contact with you. Each of you is an extension and representation of the Paschal High School Orchestra Program so make sure the legacy you create at Paschal High School is the best! We are here to challenge you and to comfort you, to advise you, enlighten you and even learn from you. Be ready to work, be ready to laugh, and be ready to inspire others with your amazing talents. Look forward to an amazing year in the Paschal High School Panther Orchestra!

Sincerely Yours,

Toby Jones and Dianne Babcock

Directors of Orchestra

Paschal High School

[toby.jones@fwisd.org](mailto:toby.jones@fwisd.org) [sandra.babcock@fwisd.org](mailto:sandra.babcock@fwisd.org) [paschalorchestra@gmail.com](mailto:paschalorchestra@gmail.com)

[www.paschalorchestra.com](http://www.paschalorchestra.com)

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# Orchestra Membership & Placement

We currently have 5 orchestras and 1 Mariachi at Paschal High School:

- 0 Period Chamber Orchestra – Supplemental Advanced orchestra to Symphony & Philharmonic (By audition only) Students must be enrolled concurrently in Symphony or Philharmonic Orchestra.
- Symphony Orchestra - Paschal's most advanced orchestra (By audition only)
- Philharmonic Orchestra - Advanced non-varsity orchestra
- Concert Orchestra - On-Target non-varsity orchestra
- Sinfonia Orchestra - On-Target non-varsity orchestra

Students are placed in a performing group according to their performance ability, academic performance and conduct as determined by the director. All students who wish to be in the Symphony or Chamber Orchestra (Varsity Orchestra) must audition in the spring.

## Parent Organization Policy

Students who are enrolled in orchestra as their parent organization may also be given the opportunity to join additional ensemble groups including such as Mariachi, Choir, Jazz Band, Marching Band etc. However, if a student chooses to terminate his/her membership in their parent orchestra for any reason at any time, their membership in any additional ensemble will be terminated as well. A student may not be allowed to drop their parent organization in order to join another organization during the school year. Violinists who wish to join Mariachi must also be enrolled in orchestra.

## Fort Worth YO and B Sharp Policy

Students who wish to become a part of the Fort Worth Youth Orchestra and/or B Sharp **must** be enrolled in an orchestra class during the time they are involved in FWYO or B Sharp. If a student chooses to terminate his/her membership in an orchestra class at Paschal for any reason, at any time, their membership in FWYO and/or B Sharp will be notified.

## Practice Expectations

As the level of expectations increase in high school, so does the expectation to practice. The student is required to adequately prepare his/her music to the level of expectation expected by the teacher. It is up to the discretion of the director to reevaluate a student's placement at any time during the year based on evidence that the student is not adequately prepared on their instrument for each rehearsal and performance.

# Academic Grade

“The Paschal High School Honor Code policy requires students to acknowledge the Honor Code: “I pledge on my word of honor that I have neither given nor received aid on this work”. Any act that violates academic integrity is considered misconduct. Specific examples include cheating (copying from another student, buying/selling/stealing or soliciting contents of a test, using electronic devices without approval and plagiarism. Violation of the Honor Code will result in a zero for the assignment, a “U” in citizenship, parent notification and a referral to the Honor Code Committee.

A student’s six week grade is determined among two categories, totaling 100 points.

70% TEKS (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills Mastery) found on the TEA Website

30% Testing, Homework. i.e. recorded tests, live tests, written exams

All grades will comply with the FWISD Guide to Grade Reporting. It is the student’s responsibility to see their director for any make up assignments. Make up assignments are assigned at the discretion of the director

**NO EXTRA CREDIT OF ANY KIND WILL BE ACCEPTED**

Adjustments to the academic grade are calculated as follows:

- Failure of daily mastery of TEKS (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills) objectives (-3 pts. per day)

**I.e. demonstrating professional rehearsal decorum, positive attitude, acrylic fingernails etc.**

- Failure to provide evidence of musical improvement either aurally or through executive skill. (-3 pts. per day)
- Failure to turn in recorded tests on time (up to -10 pts. per test)
- Unexcused tardiness from rehearsal or performance (-3 pts.)
- Unexcused absence from required extra rehearsal (-10 pts.)
- Unexcused absence from a required performance (-30 pts.)

## Tests

Students will be tested on a regular basis in one of the following ways as determined by the director.

- Live tests performed in class for the director
- In-class recorded test
- Students will play live using a recording device during class. Students will have one chance to record their test. (“Do overs” are not allowed)
- At-home recorded test
- Students will be required to record tests and submitted by email by the due date indicated at the time of the assignment. (Instructions on how to submit a test will be abundantly available.) No tests will be accepted late.

**Students failing assignments or tests will be given the opportunity to retake the assignment or test under the following parameters:**

- ☑ **The student will be provided an opportunity for tutoring or re-teaching prior to retesting. This may occur during class time, before or after school, or at another time agreed upon by the teacher and student.**
- ☑ **A teacher may require the student to complete missed homework, test corrections, or other items as part of the re-teaching process.**
- ☑ **A student must redo the assignment or retake the test within five school days from the date the assignment or test was returned to the student.**
- ☑ **A teacher may provide longer than five school days if necessary.**
- ☑ **Any retests will be administered on the campus**
- ☑ **The grade the student receives on the redone assignment or retaken test will be no higher than a 70**
- ☑ **A failed semester exam cannot be retaken.**

# Honors Credit

Students may take orchestra and receive honors credit (4.5 GPA credit) each semester. Students earning honors credit for orchestra must be enrolled in the course number designated for Honors Orchestra. Students make this request with their counselor. Requests must be made prior to the deadline for schedule change requests the first week of school. a director let their counselor know

Additional honors requirements in addition to the normal credit requirements include:

- I. Performance Component – 1<sup>st</sup> semester, Students must prepare All Region Music or Developmental Etudes appropriate for their level. Students submit recordings through charms for verification of work completed. 2<sup>nd</sup> semester students prepare and perform a solo for UIL solo & ensemble contest.
- II. Written Component – Students attend a college or professional Orchestra performance and write a 250 word reflection turned in via Turn It In.Com
- III. Leadership Component – Students complete a leadership assignment approved by director. Examples include leading sectionals, peer tutoring

# Attendance

**Absences from concert performances will only be excused in the event of a student's illness or unavoidable family emergency.** The director must be notified ASAP in writing by filling out a "UIL Activities Directive". It is up to the sole discretion of the director to excuse or not excuse an absence.

**\*\*\* Birthday celebrations, quinceaneras, work, transportation problems, non-school related sports/dance etc. will not be excused.**

In order for a student to be excused from any extra rehearsal or performance, he/she must fill out a "UIL Activities Directive" available in the Orchestra office. Failure to do this will result in their academic grade being affected and NO EXTRA CREDIT will be accepted to repair the grade. **A form signed by the director is required for each and every rehearsal missed to avoid loss of credit. Do not assume that the director "already knows" of your conflict.**

## **ABSENCES SUBJECT TO BEING EXCUSED:**

**1.) Other School Sanctioned Activities when notified well in advance** (A "UIL Activities Directive" form is required)

**2.) At School Tutoring with Academic Teachers**

(Only if a session cannot be scheduled at any other time – including LUNCH. (A UIL Activities Directive form is required with the tutoring teacher's signature from that classroom teacher will be required on the form.)

**3.) Student Illness** (Written notification required from parent)

## **UNEXCUSED ABSENCES: Check your calendar and plan ahead!**

**1.) Doctor, Dentist, & Orthodontist appointments which are NOT emergencies.**

**2.) D-Hall** Follow school rules at all times (including tardy policies) and avoid d-hall assignments.

**3.) Transportation arrangement problems** – either yours or someone else's. Plan ahead.

**Do not assume that an absence will or will not be excused. Students are expected to follow the stated guidelines and procedures according to the attendance policy. Failure to follow such guidelines will render any absence inexcusable and the grade will be affected. It is the student's responsibility to communicate with the director to determine if an absence is excused. Any make up assignments will be assigned at the discretion of the director in compliance with the FWISD Guide to Grade Reporting**

## **Tardiness**

Unexcused lateness to a rehearsal or performance is unacceptable and will result in the student's grade being affected. Tardiness occurs when the student is not seated ready to rehearse when the attendance bell rings. On occasion the room may be set up differently making it difficult to know where to sit. Students who make little or no effort to get ready in a timely manner will be counted tardy.

# Orchestra Concert Expectations

There will be 3 concerts that are required of All Students enrolled in orchestra. The Fall, Winter and Spring concerts. Students will be required to attend and/or perform in all of the 3 concerts. Please note that some concerts may be split into 2 dates. Students will be required to attend both.

A message to parents: Please make every effort to attend and support your children in their performances. Orchestra concerts are not designed to be a “come and go” affair. Students are expected to attend each **entire** concert as part of their performance requirement. Parents please make arrangements to attend the **entire** concert. Please do not just attend your child’s portion of the concert and then leave. It is very important that parents model proper concert etiquette along with their child. Cell phones, ipads and ipods are to be turned completely off during performances. Even just the light from the device is very distracting during performances.

## Expectations for Orchestra Students

- Every student is expected to rehearse in a professional and positive manner on a daily basis. Respect for other students and the director is expected at all times. Excessive behavior that disturbs the learning process is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. This includes talking excessively, throwing objects, etc.
- Students must be seated, ready to rehearse when the tardy bell rings. Students who are not prepared at that time shall be marked tardy.
- Students are to remain in the orchestra hall until dismissed by the director.
- Students are expected to maintain their fingernails and keep them short for optimal playing ability. Any synthetic nails **MUST** be kept short and maintained. Nails that extend past the pad (tip) of the finger are too long and must be trimmed for ALL rehearsals. **It is the sole discretion of the director to determine fingernail length and shape as being acceptable for optimal playing condition. Special events will be given consideration for up to 2 days (Friday and Monday).**
- Students are expected to be responsible and meet deadlines as requested by the director. This includes forms that must be turned in, recorded tests, etc.
- Students are expected to proactively communicate with parents, employers, coaches, teachers, and anyone else necessary about upcoming events in order to promote performances and prevent schedule conflict
- Students may use personal telecommunication devices for educational purposes as directed by the teacher. If a student is in violation of this policy, the cell phone may be confiscated and or a referral will be submitted to administration for discipline consequences congruent with the FWISD Student Code of Conduct.

Every effort will be made to have learning conversations with students not meeting behavioral expectations. Our intent is to teach students to be productive global citizens as well as functioning members of their orchestra ensemble.

# Conduct Grades

## Explanation of Letter Grades for Student Conduct

The Letters E, S, N, and U will be used for conduct grades.

Indicators to be used to assess conduct grades are listed below:

- Uses self-control
- Talks at appropriate time
- Plays Instrument at appropriate time
- Obeys school rules
- Obeys classroom rules
- Respects authority
- Works well with others
- Uses acceptable language
- Brings materials to class

Excellent (E)– 0- 2 infractions

Satisfactory (S)– 3- 4 infractions

Needs Improvement (N) – 5-6 infractions

Unsatisfactory (U) – More than 6 infractions

(N) - Parents will be notified before lowering the conduct grade to an N or U (pg.16 GTGR)

(U) - Parent Conference and submission of documentation to the principal.



# Activity Fee

All Orchestra Students

**\$50.00**

(\$25.00 per semester)

This fee covers:

- Uniform usage and final cleaning
- Orchestra t-shirt.
- Orchestra Supplies (music, binders, class rosin and much more)
- Contest Fees such as All Region and Solo & Ensemble.

All students will pay an Activity Fee of \$50.00 (or \$25.00 Per Semester) and will be due at the time of uniform checkout.

***Should any financial requirement made by the PHS Orchestra create a hardship, please contact a director so other options can be explored and discussed. We are more than happy to work with your situation. Our purpose is that we do not want to lose the opportunity for a child to be in orchestra because he/she cannot afford it. Scholarships and payment plans are available upon request. Please notify the director as soon as possible in the event of a financial hardship.***

# School Instrument Usage Fee

**\$80**

**(\$40.00 per semester)**

School owned instruments may be available for rental for students who are unable to rent or purchase their own. Any student who uses a school owned instrument must pay the required usage fee. If a student does not rent from the school, he/she must furnish an instrument comparable to FWISD instrument specifications, equipped with a **name tag**.

**(String Bass Players only):** If you own or rent a stringed bass from a music store, but still wish to use a school instrument for rehearsals, you are required to pay a pro-rated fee of \$40.00 for the year (\$20.00 per semester). School instruments are limited and are reserved for students who do not own or rent from a music store. It is strongly encourage that everyone insure **their** instrument, including school owned instruments, as you are held responsible for any damage incurred.

## **Maintaining Your Instrument**

It is imperative that the instrument and accessories you use in class be of top condition at every rehearsal and every performance. It is your responsibility to maintain your instrument and instrument accessories throughout the year.

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# Suggestions for Purchasing and Instrument

Purchasing a string instrument can be a very intimidating, yet very rewarding experience. If your child begins to show a stronger desire to progress in orchestra, we strongly encourage considering purchasing an instrument from a reputable instrument dealer. Below is a small guide of where to start and what to avoid.

**Do**: Tell your director you want to buy an instrument. We can and want to help!

**Don't**: Surprise your director with that great deal for \$100.00 you found on Ebay.

**Do**: Try out several instruments. Most instrument dealers will let you check one out.

**Don't**: Buy that shiny one you see on the shelf. Looks aren't always everything.

## Step Up Instruments (GOOD FOR HIGH SCHOOL THROUGH COLLEGE)

- \*Range from (Violin/Viola) \$1000-\$3500+
- \*Range from (Cello/Bass) \$2500-\$8000+
- \*Better quality wood and finish (oil varnish and not lacquer)
- \*Assembled by a professional luthier
- \*Retain their value easily.

## Beginner instruments: (NOT FOR HIGH SCHOOL)

- \*Range from (Violin/Viola)\$100-\$1000
- \*Range from (Cello/Bass)\$500-1500
- \*Have a lacquer finish (make them shiny and pretty and hard to break but doesn't sound very good)
- \*Much of what is found on eBay and other online purchasing sites.
- \*Lose value quickly.

# Performance Uniforms

**All Students** - will be issued a concert uniform consisting of pieces listed below for boys and girls. Students will need to provide their own **SOLID BLACK** dress shoes and **BLACK** socks. Shoes must be solid black with no emblems, stripes or designs, no exceptions. Uniforms will be worn for all performances unless otherwise instructed by the director. Uniforms and accessories must be worn properly. Hair accessories such as bows or hair clips must be black.

**Uniforms must be cleaned regularly after each performance in order to maintain the quality of the uniform. Any uniform returned with damage including, tears, burns, or pungent odors will be charged the current replacement cost of the uniform.**

## **Boys are issued:**

- Tuxedo Jacket, Tuxedo Pants
- Cumber Bun and Bow-tie (Symphony Only)
- PANTS MUST BE HEMMED. DO NOT CUT. DO NOT USE TAPE.

## **Boys provide their own:**

- Solid Black dress shoes
- Black Socks
- Symphony - White Tuxedo Shirt (small collar)
- All Other Orchestras – Black Tuxedo Shirt

## **Girls are issued:**

- Concert black dress. DRESSES MUST BE HEMMED. DO NOT CUT. DO NOT USE TAPE.

## **Girls provide their own:**

- Black dress shoes
- Hair clips and bows must be black

## **Returning the Uniform**

**Students will return their uniform at the end of the year ONLY if:**

- **They are graduating, moving, or not returning**
- **Their current uniform does not fit and need to exchange for a different size**
- **Replaced due to irreparable damage. (Students may be subject to the replacement cost if damage is from misuse or lack of cleaning or care.)**

# PHS



# Orchestra

## Acknowledgement of the Panther Way

**Due: Monday, September 11<sup>th</sup> 6:00-8:30 (Open House)**  
**Entire Handbook can be found in your Charms account.**

As a PHS Orchestra member, I understand my responsibilities for participating in Paschal High School's orchestra program. I also understand the consequences for violating any of the expectations outlined in this handbook.

As a student musician, I, \_\_\_\_\_ pledge to:

- Communicate my rehearsal/performance schedule well in advance to my parents and teachers.
- Schedule my personal life so that it does not conflict with orchestra expectations.
- Give my director notice well in advance of any commitments I have that conflict with the orchestra schedule.
- Discuss issues of concern with my director, student leaders and parents before they become problems.
- Not only maintain academic eligibility but strive for academic excellence.
- Be the best I can be.
- Make a commitment to my orchestra and directors to continually strive to contribute to the program and exercise responsible musicianship.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

As a parent/guardian, I, \_\_\_\_\_ pledge to:

- Grant permission for my daughter/son to participate in the program.
- Stay informed about my daughter/son's orchestra schedule to minimize conflicts between our family schedule and the music schedule.
- Support my daughter/sons decision to commit to the orchestra by attending as many concerts, contests and special events as my schedule will permit.
- Work closely with all school personnel to assure an appropriate academic and musical experience for my daughter/son throughout her/his school career.
- Discuss issues of concern with my daughter/son and the director before they become problems.
- Assure that my daughter/son attends all rehearsals, contests, special events and follows all guidelines.
- Affirm that it is the responsibility of the director to determine student placement and performance expectations.
- Work cooperatively with directors, other parents, and school personnel to assure a wholesome and successful music program for the school.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent/Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

# Fee Payment Methods

Please indicate which fees apply to you:

\_\_\_\_\_ \$50.00 Activity Fee – I am not using a School Owned Instrument. Students who own or rent their own instrument are asked to play it in class. We have a serious shortage of instruments.

\_\_\_\_\_ \$130.00 Activity Fee (\$50) and School Instrument Usage Fee (\$80)

\_\_\_\_\_ \$90.00 Activity Fee (\$50) and ½ School Instrument Usage Fee (\$40) – Student is only using a school instrument in class. They have their own instrument at home. This option is for cellos and basses only.

**PAYMENT OPTIONS: This information is confidential. Please indicate how you plan to meet your financial obligation.**

\_\_\_\_\_ I will pay in full by due date Sept.11<sup>th</sup>

\_\_\_\_\_ I will pay ½ each semester (\$65 Sept 11<sup>th</sup> & \$65 Jan 8<sup>th</sup>)

\_\_\_\_\_ I will pay \$15 each month – due the 1<sup>st</sup> week of each month

\_\_\_\_\_ I will pay \$10 each month – (reduced Lunch) requires fee waiver form

\_\_\_\_\_ I will pay \$5 each month – (free lunch) requires fee waiver form

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