



**Waverly Middle School Orchestras**  

 Mrs. Jenny Spurbeck, Conductor  
 East, WMS and WHS Orchestras

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**Course Syllabus  
 And  
 Student Handbook**

**Schedule of Classes (at MS):**

8<sup>th</sup> Grade- 3<sup>rd</sup> Hour  
 7<sup>th</sup> Grade – 4<sup>th</sup> Hour

I teach in 3 buildings each day, but my plan hour is 1<sup>st</sup> hour at the HS. Please call for an appointment.

**This document as well as many of your assignments can be accessed online at [www.waverlyorchestra.org](http://www.waverlyorchestra.org).**

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**Mission Statement**

Waverly Orchestras are dedicated to **Musical excellence, personal enthusiasm, and collective pride**. We believe in **discipline, honesty, and respect** for our leaders and each other. With a **positive attitude, personal dedication, and a unified spirit**, we will develop a **collective responsibility** to one another, our school community, and the world around us.

**Course Description:**

Our orchestra program in Waverly has a rich and strong tradition of music making. It is my goal as your teacher to ensure you the best opportunity to reach your full potential as a musician, and it is my hope that you will continue your musical endeavors well past your high school years. We will have opportunities to learn and grow together as music learners in our class. Please take the time to read this syllabus, as it will help you understand what I expect of you as a music learner and as a member of our orchestra community.

## Course Goals:

In our class, students will:

- Develop their musical and technical skills on their instrument.
- Develop a deeper understanding of music through performance and practice.
- Learn how to express themselves creatively building on skills they have learned.
- Develop lifelong skills, such as personal discipline, goal setting (both group and individual), professionalism, and respect for self and others through this musical venue.

## Rehearsal Etiquette

At each rehearsal our goals are to learn about music, to mature musically as an individual, and to improve together as an ensemble. In order to achieve these goals, consider the following guidelines:

- Be in your seat and ready to play at the downbeat. We will rigorously follow the MS tardy policy.
- Bring your instrument to class.
- Have and use your own music in class.
- Be prepared to rehearse by having a pencil, rosin on your bow, shoulder rest or rock stop, and have those things ready at the downbeat.
- Play your instrument in rehearsal. While we are all learning, it is not necessary to play every note perfectly, but it is essential that you give your best effort.
- Be respectful of your peers and director by being attentive when we stop and start in rehearsal. Some chatter works in rehearsal (“what are the bowings in that line?”), some chatter doesn’t (“what movie do you want to see tonight?”).
- **Leave your cell phones and other media devices in your locker.**
- Please refer to the district’s policy on the use of cell phones.
- Our rehearsal time and space will be an environment of *respect* and *professionalism*, with an emphasis on *improvement*. Any discrepancies or discussions concerning disciplinary action will take place outside of rehearsal.
- Be respectful of school property and the property of others.
- Adhere to our “zero-tolerance policy” for bullying.

**Never settle for less than your personal best!**

### ***The Waverly Way***

Your role as an audience member in the concert experience is nearly as important as that of the performers on stage. Your responses will make a difference to the performers and to the other audience members as well. Please observe the following behaviors as they are customary at all auditorium performances.

The Waverly Way is to:

- Remain seated during the performance.
- Refrain from disturbing others with any conversation.
- Be courteous.
- Turn off your cell phones.
- Clap for individuals only after solo performances.
- Hold any applause to the end and refrain from yelling out, whistling or using any type of noisemaker to draw individual attention to a participant.

*This event is about your child, the other students, their families and guests. Waverly Community Schools is the heart of the community. Let us join together in modeling the Waverly character clusters of respect, responsibility and caring.*

### **Tardy Procedure**

All students are expected to be in the orchestra room at the beginning of class. Failure to do so (without a valid pass) will result in being marked tardy. Students will be marked severely tardy for not being in their seats when tuning begins. We will follow the school-wide tardy policy in our classroom. Please refer to your student handbook for the details of this policy.

### **Cell Phone Use and Consequences**

Waverly Community Schools policy 5136 states the following relevant to our classroom:

#### **5136 - WIRELESS COMMUNICATION DEVICES**

Students may use wireless communication devices (WCDs) before and after school, during their lunch break, in between classes as long as they do not create a distraction, disruption or otherwise interfere with the educational environment during after school activities (e.g. extracurricular activities) at school-related functions. Use of WCDs, except approved laptops and PDAs, at any other time is prohibited and they must be powered completely off and stored out of sight.

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action and/or confiscation of the WCD. Discipline will be imposed on an escalating scale ranging from a warning to an expulsion based on the number of previous violations and/or the nature of or circumstances surrounding a particular violation. If the WCD is confiscated, it will be released/returned to the student's parent/guardian after the student complies with any other disciplinary consequences that are imposed.

I offer the following guidelines to help students  
with responsible cell phone use in our classroom:

- We have a phone in our classroom that may be used **with permission** *in case of an emergency*.
- Parents may call the main office to reach their student. Texting/calling parents on cell phones during class is still a violation of this guideline.
- Cell phones must be stored and out of sight completely during rehearsal. If the phone is out, even to be "powered off", expect the following consequences:
  - 1<sup>st</sup> offense: Confiscation of phone (to be kept in the school office and available to pick up at end of day).
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> offense: Confiscation of phone (to be kept in the school office and available to pick up at end of day). Student after school detention.
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> and subsequent offense: Confiscation of phone (to be kept in the school office and must be **picked up by parent**), possible suspension of student.
- If a student fails to relinquish his/her cell phone when asked, the student will immediately be written up for insubordination.

### Passes

Students are given opportunities to use the restroom and get water between classes. It is important that we have all students participating in class at all times. For emergencies only, you will be able to use 2 passes per semester to the restroom. *Passes not used by the end of each quarter may be redeemed to be exempt on a practice check.*

**"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit."  
Aristotle (384 BC-322 BC), Greek Philosopher**

## ~Grading~

### ***Playing tests:***

Throughout each semester, students will be required to take playing tests. These will include scales, method book exercises, and excerpts from pieces rehearsed in class. Students will be evaluated by the orchestra director.

The goal and purpose of such evaluation is to learn how to identify both personal strengths and areas of needed growth. A student is graded on his/her individual performance, not in comparison to peers. On occasion, students will be taking playing tests in class. We will have an **encouraging, supportive attitude** to ensure the success of all students.

### ***Practice sheets:***

Practicing is essential to success on any instrument, just as it is critical to an athlete's success on the field. One cannot "cram" musical skill into short-term memory (of the mind and hands) and hope to perform well. Practice records will be used primarily to track progress and compare with performance in class and on tests. Practice cards are due each Monday. Please submit your practice cards online at [www.waverlyorchestra.org](http://www.waverlyorchestra.org).

If you do not have online access at home, please keep a written copy of your practicing, and I will allow you to enter it in at the orchestra office computer. ***This accommodation must be pre-arranged, and will only be available to those students who do not have computer access.*** The grading scale is as follows:

Practice at least:	20 minutes each day/ 6 days=A+	20 minutes each day/3 days=C
	20 minutes each day/5 days=A	20 minutes each day/2 days=D
	20 minutes each day/4 days=B	Anything less than 2 days=F

### ***Practice Journals***

We also will be spending time in class learning HOW to practice, and will reflect on that in written practice journals. These will be turned in weekly, and we will develop a grading rubric together.

*"If you're on a team, you're on the team, but you're in the band.  
And in band, there is no bench." -Mr. Dave Martin*

### ***Participation Points:***

Students will receive 10 points **weekly**. You have the choice of keeping your 10 points each week or not. Ways to keep your points include:

- Being in your seat and ready to play at the downbeat. Tardies and unexcused absences deduct from participation points.
- Bringing your instrument to class.
- Having and using your music in class.
- Being prepared to rehearse by having a pencil, rosin on your bow, shoulder rest or rock stop, and having those things ready at the downbeat.
- Playing your instrument in rehearsal. While we are all learning, it is not necessary to play every note perfectly, but it is essential that you give your best effort.
- Being respectful of your peers and director by being attentive when we stop and start in rehearsal. Some chatter works in rehearsal (“what are the bowings in that line?”), some chatter doesn’t (“what movie do you want to see tonight?”). **Using a cell phone in class is a violation of this guideline.**
- Being respectful of school property and the property of others.
- Adhering to our “zero-tolerance policy” for bullying.

### ***Written Homework:***

Students will periodically write about concerts they attend and concerts in which they perform to develop their critical listening skills.

### ***Special Assignments:***

In order to deepen your knowledge of music, I will ask you to compose, arrange, and improvise this year. Each 6-week cycle will include a special project, such as writing your own etude, arranging a warm up, or teach improvisation to the class.

### ***Concert/Event Attendance:***

The music department sets aside funds to pay clinicians, set up workshops, have extra rehearsals, prepare for concerts, and provide extra playing opportunities. To receive full credit, students are required to attend all performances except in the case of illness or family emergency. **Please contact the school if this happens. Every member of an ensemble is important both in class and at a performance!** An unexcused absence from a performance will result in a student receiving a lowered grade. You must fill out a **Conflict Form (signed by parent)** in order to be excused for a concert.

#### *Concert Dress*

- ✓ Ladies: Black bottom, white shirt. Pants are acceptable. Black dress shoes.
- ✓ Gentlemen: Black pants/white top. Dark shoes and socks.
- ✓ Please no sandals, white shoes, shirts with words or pictures, or inappropriate clothing. If in doubt, please ask. Also, if you are unable to get appropriate concert clothing, please ask me. I have orchestra dresses and a limited collection of men’s coats and shirts available to borrow. If you are not appropriately dressed for the performance, I will provide a school uniform for you to change into.

## Grading:

### Grading Scale

A 100-93 = 4.0 A- 92-90 = 3.67 B+ 89-87 = 3.33 B 86-83 = 3.0 B- 82-80 = 2.67 C+ 79-77 = 2.33 C 76-73 = 2.0 C- 72-70 = 1.67  
D+ 69-67 = 1.33

## Grading Breakdown:

### Semester 1:

#### 5% Signed Contract Returned: (due on **Monday, September 12<sup>th</sup>**)

- Contract must have student and parent/guardian signature

#### 20% Concert Attendance

- Student must be on time to receive full credit
- Orchestra is an **academic class**, and we accommodate family schedules by not hosting concerts during the school day. *Sporting events are extra-curricular*. If every effort has been made to resolve a conflict, please fill out a conflict form to be excused. Student must make up the concert by submitting a written report. Of course, absence due to illness or family emergencies will be excused.

#### 15% Weekly Practice Cards

- Please see guidelines above

#### 20% Daily participation Points

- Please see guidelines above

#### 25% Playing tests/written/creativity assignments

- In general, we will have a formal playing test per concert cycle. Some playing tests will be video-recorded, some will be performed in class.

#### 15% Practice Journals

- Students will develop a weekly practice journal. In general this will help students develop better practice skills and they will write about their experience in their journal.

### Semester 2:

#### 20% Concert Attendance

- Student must be on time to receive full credit
- Orchestra is an **academic class**, and we accommodate family schedules by not hosting concerts during the school day. *Sporting events are extra-curricular*. If every effort has been made to resolve a conflict, please fill out a conflict form to be excused. Student must make up the concert by submitting a written report. Of course, absence due to illness or family emergencies will be excused.

#### 15% Weekly Practice Cards

- Please see guidelines above

#### 20% Daily participation Points

- Please see guidelines above

#### 25% Playing tests/written/creativity assignments

- In general, we will have a playing test per concert cycle. Some playing tests will be video-recorded, some will be performed in class.

#### 20% Practice Journals

- Students will develop a weekly practice journal. In general this will help students develop better practice skills and they will write about their experience in their journal.

## **Encore Strings**

We will have an after-school group again this year! If you are looking to do MORE with your instrument, this is the place to be! We will rehearse on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons from 3-4pm. I will notify you of our first meeting.

## **Community Strings**

This **by-audition-only** group, open to WHS and WMS orchestra students will be our chamber orchestra experience this year. We will meet on Monday, Wednesday, and some Friday mornings during zero hour (class begins at 6:40). Students will learn and perform advanced chamber and chamber orchestra music, play for district events, and will represent our orchestra program in the community. We will audition for this group in the second week of school during zero hour (Monday, September 12<sup>th</sup>) and will begin rehearsing on Wednesday the 14<sup>th</sup>.

## **STRING CHEESE!!!!**

Back by popular demand! You will notice in the calendar that we are hosting a clinic for 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> graders in January. String Cheese is a Celtic Fiddling duo, playing on electric instruments. You can learn more about them on [www.stringcheesemusic.com](http://www.stringcheesemusic.com). They will give a clinic during our orchestra class at school and then we will have a performance at the Middle School that evening. This band is committed to helping orchestra students grow as musicians and inspire us all to think outside the box. We are so excited to welcome them back to Waverly!

## **Orchestra Trip 2013 (FYI 8<sup>th</sup> Graders!)**

I am excited to plan for our trip to Washington DC, Spring Break 2013! We have some great ideas (including a possible concert at the Washington Monument), and will be working with Fuller Travel Service and a school orchestra group in the DC area. There will be more details forthcoming, but please plan to participate in this exciting trip! **We are aiming for 100% participation**, and will work hard as a group through fundraising to make this financially possible for every student. You also have time to start saving now.

## **Extra Credit:**

Students can earn extra credit by *playing a solo* in MSBOA solo and ensemble, participating in an outside instrumental or vocal performance, or by helping at an after school concert or activity. To receive credit, please bring a program with your name listed.

## **Private Lessons:**

Students are strongly encouraged to take private lessons. This helps supplement your learning and gives you the opportunity to improve your skills in a way that is difficult to achieve in a large group setting. Please see the website for area schools offering private lessons or talk with me about finding a private teacher.

## **Partnership with Shar:**

This year the orchestra program will again be partnering with Shar Products. They are a string supply, instrument, and sheet music company. Each week there will be a representative to our schools to assist with repairs and other needs. They have an apprentice ensemble that will visit our classroom to perform and energize us with alternative styles (fiddling and electric instruments). I am pleased to introduce you to this well-established company, and hope you choose to support them. You can find more information at [www.sharmusic.com](http://www.sharmusic.com) or by phone 800.248.7427.

## **WOA:**

Our Orchestra program has an active and enthusiastic Parent Group. Please check the website for updates, and find a way you can connect to this group. Our board members and their contact info:

President  
Lynne Fracker  
frackerbear@aol.com

Treasurer  
Carolynn Wright  
carlouwri@yahoo.com

Vice President  
Kristin Pavlik  
kristipavlik@att.net

Secretary  
Shannon Lewis  
Nice2meetU74@aol.com

**This Handbook is designed to help us remember the Waverly Character Clusters of CARING, HONESTY, RESPECT and RESPONSIBILITY.**

## **Contract**

Members of the Waverly Middle School Orchestra Program are expected to uphold the highest moral and behavioral standard. Special trust and responsibility has been given to the students in this program. Please keep this syllabus and calendar for your reference. If you have any questions, please call me at (517) 321-3831 ext. 1334 or email: [jspurbeck@waverlyk12.net](mailto:jspurbeck@waverlyk12.net).

- ✓ Please sign this page (end of the packet) and return it to me by Monday, September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2011 with both signatures for your first graded assignment.
- ✓ We use Facebook, [www.waverlyorchestra.org](http://www.waverlyorchestra.org), and Twitter (username- waverlyorch) to post updates and showcase student achievement. Please indicate on the contract if it is/is not okay to use your student's first name and picture in any of those places. Unanswered responses indicate consent.

**Concert-Event Conflict Form**

*(you may copy this form or also can find it on our website- [www.waverlyorchestra.org](http://www.waverlyorchestra.org))*

Name _____
Date _____
Orchestra. Concert or Event _____
Date of Conflict _____

*Reason for Conflict:*

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Can you attend part of this event?      Time \_\_\_\_\_*

*When did you first learn of this conflict? Date \_\_\_\_\_*

*Have you tried to resolve this conflict? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_*

*Please give name of contact person  
who can support this conflict.*

*Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_*

*Student's signature \_\_\_\_\_*

*Date form is being turned in \_\_\_\_\_  
(Conflict forms are also available in the orchestra room.)*

# Orchestra Events Schedule 11-12

This calendar is the only written reminder you will receive of the concerts.  
It is my intention to help our high school students become responsible for the scheduling of their school activities.

Month	Date	Time	What	Where	Who
September	6	Tuesday	First day of School	All Schools	Everyone
	9	Friday	Wavapalooza	WHS	Everyone
	13	Tuesday	5:00PM East Open House	East	East
	14	Wednesday	6:00PM High School Open House	WHS	HS
October	3	Monday	MSBOA Deadline for All-State Orchestra		HS/MS
	7	Friday	MSBOA Deadline for MS S&E		MS
	12	Wednesday	Data Day- 2 hour delay	All Schools	Everyone
	17	Monday	MSBOA All-State Audition schedule posted		HS/MS
	29-30	Sat-Sun	TBA	MSBOA All-State Auditions	TBA
November	1	Tuesday	6:30 PM MS/HS Orchestra Concert	WHS Auditorium	HS/MS
	9/10	Wed/Thur	afternoon/PM Parent Teacher Conferences (schedule TBA)		Everyone
	15	Tuesday	6:30 PM MS Mock Solo&Ensemble	WMS Little Theater	MS
	16	Wednesday	Data Day- 2 hour delay	All Schools	Everyone
	19	Saturday	all day MSBOA MS S&E	Charlotte MS	MS
	23-26	Wed-Fri	Thanksgiving Break		Everyone
December	8	Wednesday	6:30 PM HS/MS Holiday Concert	WHS Auditorium	HS/MS
	9	Friday	MSBOA HS S&E Deadline		HS
	14	Wednesday	Data Day- 2 hour delay	All Schools	Everyone
	16	Friday	TBA East 6 <sup>th</sup> grade In-School Holiday Concert	East Gym	East 6 <sup>th</sup> Grade
	17-30	Mon-Friday	Holiday Break		
January	2	Monday	School Resumes		
	16	Monday	MLK Day, no school		
	18	Wednesday	6:30 PM Concert With STRING CHEESE	Little Theater	MS-and East

	19	Thursday	am	In-School Concert (6 <sup>th</sup> Grade)	East Gym	6 <sup>th</sup> Grade
	18-20	Wed-Frid		HS Final Exams	WHS	East 6 <sup>th</sup> grade
	19	Thursday	6:30 PM	East 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade Instrument	East Cafeteria	HS
				Investigation Night		East 5 <sup>th</sup> grade
	25	Wednesday		Data Day- 2 hour delay	K-8 Only	
February	4	Saturday	TBA	MSBOA HS S&E	TBD	HS
	14	Tuesday	6:30 PM	HS/MS Orchestra Concert	WHS Auditorium	HS/MS
	17	Friday		No School/Teacher PD	All Schools	Everyone
	20	Monday		President's Day, No School	All Schools	Everyone
	22	Wednesday		Data Day- 2 hour delay	All Schools	Everyone
March	6-8	Tues-Thurs		MME Testing	WHS	HS
	21	Wednesday		Data Day- 2 hour delay	All Schools	Everyone
	21	Wednesday	6:30 PM	East Spring Fling	East Gym	East 6 <sup>th</sup> Grade
				(East 6 <sup>th</sup> grade Band and Orchestra)		
	22	Thursday	6:00 PM	World Language Night	WHS Auditorium	HS
	24	Saturday	TBA	HS State S&E	TBD	HS
	27-28	Tues-Wed	PM	Spring P/T Conferences	All Schools	Everyone
	30	Friday		Spring Break Begins	All Schools	Everyone
April	25	Wednesday		Data Day- 2 hour delay	All Schools	Everyone
	27	Friday	2:30-9PM	String Fling	WHS Auditorium	HS
				(Clinic and Concert with St. John's and Greenville Schools)		
May	3	Wednesday		Data Day- 2 hour delay	All Schools	Everyone
	3	Thursday	6:30 PM	East 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade Instrument	East Cafeteria	East 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade
				Investigation Night		
	22	Tuesday	6:30 PM	6-12 Orch. Spring Showcase	WHS Auditorium	East, MS, HS
	23	Wednesday		Data Day- 2 hour delay	All Schools	Everyone
	28	Monday		Memorial Day, No school		Everyone
June	TBA	TBA	All Day	WMS Cedar Point Trip		MS

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

\_\_\_\_\_ I have read and understand the guidelines of the Waverly Orchestra Program as outlined in this syllabus. My signature on this sheet represents my willingness to adhere to these procedures, attend all performances, and be a productive member of this organization.

(Please Circle One) I **give/do not give** consent to the director/school district to use photos (captioned with first name only) of my orchestra activities on the Waverly Orchestra website and the Waverly Orchestra Facebook site.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that unless I give signed permission, my student will use school transportation to off-campus events (such as festival) when it is provided. By signing this form, I give my permission for my child to ride a Waverly school bus and attend all school sanctioned orchestra concerts and events that require transportation.

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Email \_\_\_\_\_

Student Email \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Evening Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Best time to reach you: \_\_\_\_\_

Is there anything I need to know to better teach your child?