

Lamar Orchestra Handbook

2023-2024

Elena Martell

Director



**THE LAMAR
ORCHESTRA.**



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Welcome Letter

Dear Orchestra Parents and Students,

Welcome to the 2023-2024 school year of the Lamar Middle School Orchestra program! This year your orchestra director will be Elena Martell, I am so excited to be working with all of you this year!

The goal in all of the orchestra classes is to help students learn the basic fundamentals of music along with the technical proficiency to play their instrument. This learning is continued by achieving mastery of these skills in an ensemble setting. Our aim is to create self-sufficient musicians and lifelong learners who appreciate and find joy in making music after they leave our classroom.

This handbook contains all important information about policies, procedures, and expectations for all classes in the orchestra program. Please take time to look through all the sections to be aware of necessary supplies and to make sure you are connected with the orchestra program to continually receive further updates and information via email.

The forms on page 9 must be signed and submitted by August 25th.

Please feel free to contact us with any questions. We look forward to a wonderful, musical year!

Elena Martell

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Schedule

	1st/5th Period	2nd/6th Period	3rd/7th Period	4th/8th Period
A Day	Beginning Lower	Symphony Orch	Conference/Lunch	Piano
B Day	Piano	Conference/Lunch	Philharmonic Orch	Beginning Upper

Lamar Orchestra Supply List

1. **Instrument** – (violin, viola, cello, bass) Sized correctly by a teacher or professional at a string shop. It is highly recommended that you start by renting an instrument from a string shop. **Please do not buy an instrument from Walmart, Craigslist, or an online vendor.** I recommend visiting local String Instrument vendors. There are also a limited number of instruments that can be rented based on financial need for \$25 per semester. Please ask Miss. Martell to rent a school instrument.**
2. **Instrument Accessories** –
 - a. Violin/Viola – [Shoulder rest](#). Adjustable shoulder rest that is the appropriate size for the instrument.
 - b. Cello/Bass – Rockstop. Either a [rubber rockstop](#) or a [strap for cellos](#).
 - c. Everyone - [Rosin](#), (or [Bass Rosin](#)) and cleaning cloth
3. **Black three ring binder 1”& 3 Binder Dividers** – labeled, Warmups, Music, and Handouts
4. **Clip-On Chromatic Tuner**– This clip on tuner is for classroom/home use and must affix to the instrument to be used for personal tuning. You can either purchase a tuner that clips directly to the bridge or scroll (ex. [Snark SN or ST models](#), [D’addario NS micro](#), [Eclipse tuner](#), or similar), or a tuner that has a detachable pick-up clip (ex. [Korg Tuner with Korg CM-200 contact microphone](#), or similar).
5. **Method Book** – See below for the appropriate book for each class, this can be purchased in most music stores or online. Make sure it is the correct book for the specific instrument: violin, viola, cello, bass.
 - a. Beginning & Philharmonic Orchestra – [Essential Elements for Strings Book 1](#) (orange on cover)
 - b. Symphony Orchestra – Essential Elements for Strings Book 2 (Purple on cover)

**Financial limitations should never be a reason that a student cannot participate in orchestra. If your financial situation limits you from obtaining any of the supplies or instruments, please reach out to your Orchestra Director. They will discreetly make sure that students are equipped with what they need to be successful including binders, method books, tuners, or instruments.

Calendar and Events

Please view the Calendar that is handed out separately

- Please mark in your calendars the events for your child's orchestra. Not every event on this calendar is for every student.
- Please let your orchestra teacher know if you have a schedule conflict that you know of now. Absences that have not been communicated by a parent will not be excused.

Sectionals

- Students in Beginner, Philharmonic, and Symphony Orchestra might be asked to attend a few sectionals or rehearsals prior to a performance. These times will be communicated in advance.
- If students have an illness, family emergency, or other reason that results in them being absent for that school day, their sectional absence will be excused.

Grading Policy

A student's grade will be earned through points awarded for the following categories of assignments:

Participation– To receive full credit, the student must:

- Bring all required materials every day
- Be on time to class
- Be attentive and participating appropriately (see behavior expectations)

Performance -All students are required to participate in the performances that pertain to their class as laid out in the performance calendar.

- Attendance is required. If there are conflicts, I need to know as soon as possible and the excuse needs to be approved by me. If there is an emergency email or call me as soon as possible.
- Excused absences include sickness, death in the family, family emergency, etc. Please check with your orchestra teacher if you might have an excusable absence.
- Unexcused absences include avoidable schedule conflicts (soccer game, piano lesson, transportation issues..etc). Please check in with your orchestra teacher if you have a scheduling issue.
- If there is an unexcused absence from the concert, the student will receive a 0 for that grade and it cannot be made up.
- If there is an excused absence from a concert, the student will have to complete a separate assignment to make up for the points missed.

Sectionals-

- Students in Beginner, Philharmonic, and Symphony Orchestra might be asked to attend a few sectionals prior to a performance.
- If students have an illness, family emergency, or other reason that results in them being absent for that school day, their sectional absence will be excused.

Assessment

- Assessment grades come from playing quizzes and tests, chair tests, and any written tests.

Assignments

- Students will have some written work to turn in for a grade either in person or through Blend.

Fees and Finances

Fair Share Fee - \$50

Every orchestra member is encouraged to pay a Fair Share Fee donation of \$50 per year to help with cost of supplies, orchestra shirts, food for events, music, miscellaneous instrument needs, and equipping students who have financial need. This suggested fee mitigates the need for extra fundraisers throughout the year or the selling of extra items. If you are financially unable to pay a fair share fee, your child can still participate like all other students. The Fair Share Fee can be paid by cash, check, or online at School Cash Online. Checks should be made out to Lamar Middle School.

Donations

You are welcome to donate as a kind of “no-hassle fundraiser”. The donations will go into an account that gets spent only on the orchestra students and their needs. If your place of employment does match donations, we gladly accept those too and can provide anyone with a receipt of their donation for tax purposes.

Instrument Usage Fee - \$25

If your child is using a school instrument, we ask that you pay \$25 per semester for the yearly upkeep and repair of the instruments. Along with this fee, school instrument renters will sign a rental agreement that they will turn in before an instrument is loaned to them.

School Cash Online

For the Fair Share Fee, Trip Fees, and other fees you have the option to pay online via School Cash Online through AISD. You will be able to find this link on your Orchestra Blend Page.

Financial Need

Finances should never be a reason a student cannot participate in orchestra or any of the events or trips. If you know you will require financial assistance, please contact your orchestra teacher. There is always something we can do to help!

Practice Expectations

All Orchestra students are expected to practice their instrument at home every day. The following practice recommendations for each group:

<p>Beginners – First Semester 10-20 minutes per day, 5 days per week. Second semester 15-30 minutes per day, 5 days per week.</p>	<p>Philharmonic and Symphony - 30+ minutes a day, 5 days per week.</p>
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A normal practice session should include the following

- Tuning open strings
- Warmup or method book exercises
- Scale practice
- Orchestra Music practice
- Private lesson or other music practice

Expectations and Discipline

<p>Classroom Expectations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Be on time and have all your materials everyday ● Be respectful of your director, other students, and any guests ● Keep the room clean and organized ● Do not play or talk while the director is speaking ● Be respectful of orchestra property and others' personal property ● Do your best and be productive at all times ● Have a positive attitude and be nice – No bad vibes in the orchestra room 	<p>Rehearsal Expectations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Have your music, pencil, and tuner ● Do not talk while anyone is playing ● Keep bags under your chair ● Do not play or talk while the director is speaking ● Listen to your director, section leaders, and other students ● Raise your hand if you have a question ● PRACTICE happens at home – REHEARSAL happens here
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If a student does not comply with any of the classroom, rehearsal, or school expectations, the following steps will be taken:

- 1.) Verbal Warning (up to 3)
- 2.) Lunch Detention & Communication with Parents
- 3.) 15 min ISS Timeout
- 4.) Full Period in ISS/timeout
- 5.) Referral/Meet with administrator. Any physical threats, aggression, or threatening language could result in an immediate referral to an AP

Consent for Use of Photos, Videos, and Student Work for School and School District Sponsored Purposes

Protecting the privacy rights of students is very important to the Austin Independent School District. As part of their educational experience, your child may be photographed or videotaped by the school or school district in the course of school or school district activities. Such photographs or recordings, along with performance, artwork, or other school assignments your child creates, may appear in traditional and online media including social media, TV, newspaper, and radio, school newspapers and magazines, campus or district newsletters and press releases, presentations, and district, campus, teacher, or student-created web pages or other online publication formats.

This form serves the purpose of both informing you and requesting your permission for your child's image and/or work to be used for the school and/or district related purposes such as those described above. Austin ISD will not publish online any personally identifiable information about your student except for first name and last initial, unless we seek additional specific approval to publish your student's full name. Students' full names may appear in publications not posted on the Internet. Choices you make on this Consent will not affect the preference you indicated regarding release of your child's directory information when you registered your child.

Student's images may be used on Lamar Orchestra social media or website. And recordings of the orchestra may be posted online. **Please Note:** While the District will take all precautions to protect the safety and privacy of students, the District is not responsible for any photos or video footage taken by members of the media and free press.

Please initial next to the permission you choose, sign below and return

_____ I grant permission for my child's image and work to be published or used for school and school district related purposes for the Lamar Orchestra such as those described above.

_____ I do NOT grant permission for my child's image or work to be published or used in any manner for the Lamar Orchestra. I understand that the school and school district are not responsible for photos or video footage taken by members of the media and free press.

Signature of parent/guardian

date

Orchestra T Shirt Order Form

Student Name: _____

If your child is NEW to the Orchestra, or needs a new Orchestra T-Shirt (old one is too small or lost) Please indicate the student's size. Student t-shirt costs are included in the Fair Share Fee

<input type="checkbox"/> Unisex Youth L	<input type="checkbox"/> Unisex XL
<input type="checkbox"/> Unisex Small	<input type="checkbox"/> Unisex XXL
<input type="checkbox"/> Unisex Medium	
<input type="checkbox"/> Unisex Large	

Please pay the Fair Share Donation to cover costs for the shirts

Checks can be made payable to Lamar Middle School.

Handbook Acknowledgement Form

I, _____, (student's printed name) as a member of the Lamar Orchestra, as well as the parental guardian whose name is affixed below, do agree that we have read the guidelines set forth in this handbook and will, to the best of our ability, comply with all of the terms and conditions it contains. I agree to uphold all of the requirements and high standards expected of a Lamar Middle School Orchestra Member.

Initial Each

____ I have enclosed the Media Release Form

____ I have enclosed the T Shirt Order Form (if necessary)

____ If I choose, I have enclosed the \$50 Fair Share Fee Donation

____ If I need to rent a Lamar instrument, I have contacted my orchestra teacher, I have filled out the Instrument Usage Contract Form, and arranged the fee of \$25 per semester

Parent(s) Signature _____ Date: _____

Student Signature _____ Date: _____

**Please turn in these forms by August 25th to your orchestra
teacher.**