



Syllabus for
Sinfonia Orchestra
2015-2016

Welcome back to school! It is my pleasure to get to know each of you, and I look forward to a year of exciting musical growth and great music-making! Please review the information below in order to have a successful experience in Orchestra at Normal West.

-Mr. B

CONTACT INFORMATION

Mr. Ryan Budzinski
budzinsr@unit5.org
309.336.6254

Normal West High School Orchestras
www.nworchestras.org

Text @nwsinfonia to 81010 to subscribe to Sinfonia Orchestra text message alerts.

ORCHESTRA WEBSITE

The Orchestra website (www.nworchestras.org) is the definitive resource for information about the Normal West High School Orchestras! Please check here frequently for announcements, event dates and times, and other resources.

MUSIC FOLDERS

Every student will receive a folder that includes music, a warm up/technique book, and additional materials. You should also keep a sharpened pencil in your folder. Please take good care of these materials and store them in your locker or the folder rack when not in use. You are welcome to take them home for practice at any time. If you prefer, small cardboard folders are available from Mr. B. (They may fit in your backpack more easily.)

INSTRUMENT STORAGE

Violinists and violists have been issued a locker where they can store their instrument. You are welcome to keep your locker locked, but it is not required. There should also be enough space to store your folder and shoulder rest. Please refrain from storing large amounts of textbooks in the lockers—the shelves sometimes break under excessive weight. If your locker breaks, please tell Mr. B right away. He will have it fixed as soon as possible.

Cellos and double basses will be provided so that the student's instrument can stay at home for practice outside of the school day. These are to be stored on the racks in the rehearsal room. After a trial period at the beginning of the year, students will be assigned an instrument and a space on the rack that will be consistent for the remainder of the year. For concerts and combined rehearsals, it will be necessary for cellists to play their own instrument. There are not enough instruments at school to provide for each player in all three orchestras simultaneously.

UNIFORMS (“CONCERT BLACK”)

Ladies will be fitted for a machine-washable, black concert dress during class. You are welcome to hem the dress, but please do not cut off any fabric. You are responsible for obtaining black dress shoes. Closed-toe shoes are preferred. (Ballet flats work great!) Flip flops are not permitted.

Gentlemen will be fitted for a tuxedo jacket and tuxedo pants during class. You are responsible for obtaining a white tuxedo shirt, black bowtie, black socks, and black dress shoes. Tuxedo shirts may be purchased at department stores (like Kohl's), online (Amazon, etc.), or at local formalwear stores. Formalwear stores sell new and used shirts—when being sized, explain that you play a string instrument and make sure that allowances are made for bowing while in the shirt.

We will wear **Concert Black** for the first time at the Hauntcert on October 22. Be sure to have everything you need by then! Students are responsible for returning loaned uniform parts or paying the replacement cost at the end of the school year.

EVENTS

The most up-to-date list of dates and events can be found at www.nworchestras.org. Be sure to check your Ensemble's page for an overview of performance dates. All events, including rehearsals, can be found on the calendar page. Dates are subject to change, and changes will be posted immediately on the website and announced in class. Please note that I hope to add a performance or two to the spring semester calendar.

Orchestra is a co-curricular course that includes commitments outside of the school day. Attendance at all rehearsals and performances is a graded expectation. Absences will be excused due to illness (absent from school) or emergencies at the discretion of the director. School-related conflicts or conflicts due to family events (wedding, etc.) must be communicated two weeks in advance. These conflicts will be resolved on a case-by-case basis (often by consulting the other activity's coach or sponsor), and will be excused if approved by the director. Unexcused absences from a rehearsal or performance have a negative effect on the student's grade.

PRIVATE STUDY

Private lessons are the quickest way to improve since one-on-one instruction provides concise and immediate feedback at the student's current skill level. Private lessons are not required, but they are highly encouraged! A list of private teachers is available on the Orchestra website.

INSTRUMENT AND BOW

Each student should have their own instrument and bow in proper working condition (full bow hair, properly fitted bridge, and tuning pegs that do not stick or slip). When replacing strings, ask your private teacher or Mr. B for a recommendation. A higher quality string will improve the quality of sound by quite a bit! It is a good idea to keep an extra set of strings in your case.

ACCESSORIES

In your case, keep your own cake of rosin and a soft cloth to wipe down the instrument after playing. Be sure to have a mute, which fits on the bridge and dampens the sound. These are available for a few dollars at local music dealers.

Violinists and violists need a shoulder rest (Kun or similar). Be sure to try multiple shoulder rests when making a purchase in order to find one that fits you the best.

Cellists and double bassists need a rock stop or similar implement to keep their endpin from sliding. The strap kind that attaches to your chair/stool is highly recommended. (The string bass ones often settle into a V, which might be easier to use than one of the round ones.)

GRADING

Orchestra is a skill-based and performance-based class. Students will earn grades based on their daily demonstration of musical skill and preparation during rehearsal, their performance on individual playing tests, and their attendance at rehearsals and performances outside of the school day. Please review the attendance policy under EVENTS above.

SUPPORTING THE ORCHESTRAS

The strength of the Normal West High School Orchestras is made possible in part by dedicated parental/family support! Thank you for your continued support of the students! Please see the website for opportunities to volunteer and to stay informed of upcoming Orchestra fundraisers.