

Liberty Middle School

Orchestra Handbook

2022 – 2023

Matt Coombs, Director

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Please keep the rest of the handbook for your own reference. The form at the end of the handbook is an assignment and is due by Friday August 26, 2022.

**Philosophy**

The purpose of the Liberty Orchestra is to provide students with a rewarding learning experience in music. Through these experience students will develop…

* Ability to work on a team to accomplish a goal
* Improved mental and physical coordination
* Self-confidence and a sense of accomplishment
* Responsibility and self-discipline
* Ability to express oneself about and through music

With effort and a positive attitude, you will be prepared to be a happy and successful member of the high school orchestra.

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**Letter to Parents**

Welcome to the 2022 – 2023 school year! My name is Matt Coombs and I am looking forward to this my twenty-second year of teaching orchestra with Newark City Schools. I look forward to the opportunity to work with your son / daughter and always welcome the chance to talk with you. Please take the opportunity during open house, parent teacher conferences or at any point during the school year to strike up a conversation.

Middle school is truly an exciting time, and being involved in the orchestra will provide a positive and rewarding experience to help your son or daughter grow. This handbook is to help you know what to expect for this year and answer many of your questions. Students are responsible for the information in this handbook including concert dates, expectations and conduct. Parental involvement is critical for your child’s success and if there is anything I can do to help please do not hesitate to contact me.

**Letter to Students**

Welcome to a new school year! I am very happy that you chose to be a member of the Liberty Orchestra. If this is your first year in orchestra, I hope you get to know me as someone who cares about you and will help you to have fun while making music. Those of you who are returning to orchestra I hope to honor your effort and dedication by providing another year of excellence. Please remember anything worth doing is worth doing well and that pride is in knowing that you have accomplished excellence. A positive attitude and a little bit of effort and I have no doubt you can help make amazing music.

Please take the time to read this handbook and familiarize yourself with what is expected. By signing the contract at the end, you demonstrate to me that you understand rules, policies, and that you will try your best to have a great year.

**Highlights from 2021 – 2022**

* Trip to the Corn Maze
* Winter Concert at Liberty Middle School
* Winter Tour to the Elementary Schools
* Local Solo and Ensemble
  + New Solo Packet
* 1st Annual Fiddle Festival
* Ninja Bread Man Concert
* Spring Tour to the Elementary Schools
* Cedar Point Trip
* Summer Orchestra program and Concert at the Farmer’s Market

**Things to look forward to in the 2022–2023 school year**

* Tour to the elementary schools
* OMEA solo and ensemble
* Fun Trips- Corn Maze / Water Park
* Use of chrome books to make recordings / presentations

**Remind.com**

Clear communication is important and as such, I strive to send home important dates, reminders and written instructions. However, experience has taught me that these papers do not always make it home. I will once again be using Remind.com as an additional way to communicate. This is simply a group texting tool where I can send reminders home to the whole group or specific individuals. You do not need to download the app to use this tool and your phone number and name are never visible to anyone except me. You can also remove yourself from the group at any time. I would strongly encourage all students and parents to sign up by following these directions.

Step 1- As if sending a text to a new person type 81010 in the “To” Space

Step 2- Enter the following code in to the message part of the text

6th grade orchestra @lib6or

7th grade orchestra @lib7or

8th grade orchestra @lib8or

**Daily attendance with materials**

Orchestra being a performance class creates a unique situation. Therefore, the expectation if for every student to be to class on time, with their instrument, music and pencil. Attendance without music or instrument may result in a “0” for that day.

**Daily Procedures**

Beginning of Class:

1. Be in the room before the bells rings
2. Set up your instrument
3. Pull up any music or materials as indicated on the board

During Class:

1. Be quiet and attentive if teacher is on the podium
2. Give your best effort
3. Be responsible for your own instrument and music
4. Be supportive of yourself and others

After Class:

1. Wait until you are dismissed to put materials away
2. Clean the area around your spaces
3. Instrument and music are put away in the proper places every day (no trying to hide your materials under things and around corners)

**Classroom Conduct**

Participation in orchestra is a choice and a privilege. Rules in the orchestra are few but they are necessary to insure a positive and safe learning environment.

**Orchestra Rules**

1. **Be On Time** for class and performances
2. **Be Respectful** of others, the classroom and property
3. **Be a Positive Contributor**, by doing your best
4. **Be Prepared** with your music, instrument and pencil
5. **Be Responsible** for your part and your conduct
6. **All School Rules Apply**

**Trust**

One of the important requirements of orchestra is honesty. Students who are entrusted with valuable instruments and with the opportunity to be involved in fun and rewarding extra opportunities must be able to be trusted. Students are not to touch another student’s instrument or belongings for any reason. Consequences for violating this rule will be severe.

**Discipline**

Poor choices in orchestra affect the progress of the entire class. Students are to adhere to Liberty Middle School’s expectation, rules and consequences. In addition, a conference with the student, parent and administration may be used to develop a student behavior plan. As a last resort and after all measures have been exhausted a student may be removed from orchestra if in the opinion of the principal and orchestra director, that such an action would be in the best interest of the student and the rest of the class.

**Liberty Orchestra Grading Procedures**

Grades are calculated by the use of weighted points.

**25%- Daily Participation**

**25%- Concert / Rehearsal Attendance**

**25%- Weekly Musicianship**

**15%- Practice Charts**

**10%- Instrument, Binder and Cubby Check**

**Daily Participation**

Participation is calculated the following way:

2 points every day for participation and conduct

1 point every day for having a playable instrument

1 point every day for having music folder and or books

1 point every day for having a pencil and marking music

**Concert Attendance** (Be There for the Team)

I cannot emphasize enough the importance of being there for every concert, rehearsal, and event. We are a team and everyone is important. When you are not there, team orchestra misses your sound, we lose confidence, and our performance is weakened.

Missing an event will result in a zero for that portion of your grade (25 %). An absence may be excused for personal illness or a family crisis. To be excused from a performance written notification is required. As an alternative, a student may make up the grade by performing outside of class for their family or community. If something unforeseeable occurs, please contact me immediately so we can work through it together. If you miss an event, it is your responsibility to communicate. Missing an event without an excuse may also disqualify a student from participating in an extra activities such as tours and fun trips.

**Weekly Musicianship:**

Weekly goals are from the orchestra textbook, exercises and activities. These short-term goals will be very brief, specific and will relate directly to one of the, “I can” statements from the course of study.

**Practice Charts**

Twice a quarter, students will have a practice chart that they are require to keep. The expectation is to practice 15 times over the course of the 9 weeks for 30 minutes at a time. To help insure fairness and integrity, parental signatures will be required.

**What do you mean Practice??**

An important part of playing a musical instrument is developing a habit of practicing. LeBron James or Aerod did not wake up in the morning and find themselves the best at their sports, their youths are filled with hard work, practice, and lots of experiences. Research has found the rule of 10,000 hours. A study was taken of individuals considered to be the best or most gifted in many different fields including the arts and sciences, and discovered that they all shared only one thing in common. They all had spent roughly 10,000 hours of time refining their craft and practicing.

**Tips for Good Practicing**

**Isolate** the difficult passages and break them a part into their smallest form; you don’t need to practice the sections you can already play well.

**Analyze** and correct the error using a variety of strategies.

**Reinforce** the correction by repeating it correctly; can you play it correctly five times in a row??

**Reincorporate** the passage, once the error has been fixed, play the passage before and after the error to increase confidence.

**Reward** yourself; once you have corrected something reward yourself. Play through the whole selection or pick a favorite fun piece of music to play through.

**Unhappy with a grade?**

Students are always welcome to repeat or retake any part of their musicianship quizzes. Grades are designed to give feedback to a student about their progress with encouragement to help them improve.

**Extra Practices and Rehearsals**

A couple of extra rehearsals may be needed before concerts and contest. These rehearsals are needed to provide opportunities for combining different group to play together and to help accompanists. I will provide ample notice as well as work to avoid scheduling problems with other activities. I will be flexible and avoid placing the student in the middle. Please contact me if there is any way I can help.

**2022 – 2023 Orchestra Events**

**Corn Maze**

TBA

**Veteran’s Day Assembly**

November 10th, 11th, or 14th

During the School Day (Usually Morning)

**Liberty Orchestra Holiday Concert**

Tuesday December 13th

6th Grade- 6:30 pm

7th & 8th Grade- 7:30 pm

**Local Contest**

Saturday February 25th

Newark High School

**Newark City Schools Fiddle Festival**

Friday March 17th

Time: TBA

Newark High School

**Liberty Orchestra Spring Concert**

Thursday May 11th

7 pm

Liberty Middle School

**Course of Study:**

**6th Graders by the end of the year you will be able to....**

* Hold the instrument correctly
* Hold the bow Correctly
* Make a Pleasing sound both Pizzicato and Arco
* Read Music on the staff on all four strings
* Play a D, G and C Major Scale, and understand their finger patterns
* Play Music in the Keys of D, G and C Major
* Play slurred bowing
* Count and play rhythms including; ¼, ½, whole notes and corresponding rests
* Understand and demonstrate the difference between ½ and whole step
* Play as an ensemble in 3-part harmony with independent lines
* Understand and define the following terms: Allegro, Andante, Arco, Bar Lines, Beat, Bow Lift, Clef, Counting, DC al Fine, Double Bar, Down Bow, Duet, Dynamics, 1st and 2nd endings, Forte, Half Step, Harmony, Hooked Bowing, Key Signature, Ledger Lines, Measures, Moderato, Music Staff, Natural, Piano, Pickup, Pizzicato, Repeat Signs, Scale, Slur, Solo, Staccato, Tempo markings, Tie, Time Signature, Up Bow, Whole Step

**7th Graders by the end of the year you will be able to....**

* Demonstrate understanding of bow speed and distribution on sound are used to get a pleasing sound
* Play Spicatto, Staccato, Detache, Martele, Loure, and Slurred
* Tune your own instrument
* Play with rapid string crossings
* Count and play rhythms expanded to include 1/16 notes, dotted notes and simple syncopation
* Play double stops with 1 finger
* Play using all 4 finger patterns on your instrument
* Play 1 octave scales A,D,G,C,F,Bb,Eb
* Name the music played and history
* Understand and demonstrate how accidentals and key signatures do
* Identify key signature for A,D,G,C,F

**8th Graders by the end of the year you will be able to....**

* Demonstrate use of speed, weight and placement to enhance performance to style and interpretation
* Play Spicatto, Staccato, Detache, Martele, Loure, and Slurred
* Tune your own instrument accurately for a performance
* Shift with good technique
* Play using all 4 finger patterns on your instrument
* Play 1 octave scales E,A,D,G,C,F,Bb,Eb,Ab
* Play 2 octave scales A,D,G,C using third position
* Identify major key signatures
* Play with Vibrato
* Play trills and Tremolo
* Name the music played and history
* Accurately count and play rhythms including 1/16 notes, triplets, and syncopation in 3 or 4 part harmon

**Orchestra Equipment Needed**

* Quality Instrument (please mark case with name)
* Bow and Rosin
* Kuhn or Everest shoulder rest (Violins and Violas)
* Rock stop (Cello or Bass)
* Soft cleaning cloth used to wipe the strings off
* Essential Elements 2000 Book (6th Grade students)
* Pencil to be kept with music folders

Quality music equipment can be acquired from:

**The Loft Violin shop**

[www.the**loftviolinshop**.com](http://www.theloftviolinshop.com)

1-800-728-9440

4604 N High St, Columbus, OH 43214

**Haven String Studios**

<http://www.havenstringstudios.com/>

1-740-683-7158

Newark Commerce Center

195 Union St Suite B2A, Newark, OH 43055

Please avoid acquiring an instrument like object from a nontraditional source like the internet. The number one frustration for any student is struggling with an instrument that is not playable. Ideally, it is in your best interest to use one of the above instrument rental programs. However, if this is a financial hardship the school system owns a limited number of instruments that may be used by students. Attached at the end of the handbook is the agreement form and the cost is $50 per instrument. Please contact me if I can help, and please do not let cost be the reason a student does not participate. Cello and Basses are also provided at school to avoid students from needing to transport them on a daily basis.

**Concert Attire**

The Orchestra uniform will consist of the following and is required at all performances throughout the year:

* Orchestra polo shirts (will be ordered as a group)
* Dress slacks or dress
* Nice looking shoes

**Newark Orchestra Parents Association**

NOPA is the Newark Orchestra Parents Association. Parents are members automatically and are welcome to all the meetings. The group assists with orchestra activities in many ways, including chaperoning events, helping with fund-raisers, planning special events, and helping with orchestra events. Please get involved.

**Private Lessons**

Students are encouraged to study privately to help them develop their playing skills. NOPA has a scholarship program to help students meet the cost of these lessons. Applications will be distributed to interested students in the near future we will also use these forms to help arrange these lessons.

**Welcome to another great year of Orchestra!**

**NEWARK CITY SCHOOLS**

**MUSICAL INSTRUMENT LOAN AGREEMENT**

**INSTRUMENT FEE INVOICE**

Student’s Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Grade\_\_\_\_\_\_School\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Teacher\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Instrument\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Make\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_No.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Total Amount Due: $25.00 - ½ year or $50.00 - full year Fee Due No Later than Dec. 1st**

**STUDENT COMMITMENT**

I understand that using a school owned instrument is a privilege. I agree to purchase such essential items as valve oil, sticks, cork grease, reeds, resin, etc., that are necessary in the daily use and maintenance of the instrument. It is agreed that if the instrument is damaged, I will be held responsible for the cost resulting from such damages and agree to pay for all damages to the instrument while in my possession. I further agree that I will allow no other person to handle or use the instrument without the consent of my instrumental music teacher.

Student’s Signature\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Date\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_

**PARENT PERMISSION**

I understand and support my child’s commitment to the school owned instrument agreement. I am willing to allow them to use said instrument and will assume responsibility for the established fee and any repairs while the instrument is in my child’s possession.

**I understand that if the fee is not paid the instrument will be recalled by the teacher.**

Parent/Guardian Signature\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_

**For Office Use Only**

**Amount Paid $\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** Date\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_

**Cash  Check #\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Money Order #\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Receipt Number\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Liberty Orchestra Handbook Agreement Form**

**As a student I agree to the following:**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_a) I understand that being a member of orchestra is a privilege granted to me by the school and my parent(s).

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_b) I understand that the Liberty Orchestra is fortunate to have a fine facility, music stands and instruments. I will do my best to treat these with care and respect.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_c) I understand that performances are a requirement of this class and unless excused by the director that performances outside of the school day on December 13th, February 25th, March 16th, March 17th, and May 11th are mandatory.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_d) I understand that my fellow musicians are deserving of patience, kindness, respect and encouragement, whether they are from Liberty or not.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_e) I understand that the orchestra strives to demonstrate pride, class, professionalism and musicianship. I understand that I am an important part of creating this tradition.

We, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Student name Parent / guardian name

have completely read the Liberty Orchestra Handbook and understand their contents, including grading policy, behavior and expectations. We have read the calendar of required events and understand the importance or attendance and commitment as a vital part of belonging to a performing organization and we are willing to accept that responsibility.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Student signature Parent / guardian signature Date