

**EAST GREENBUSH CENTRAL
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**HOWARD L. GOFF
MIDDLE SCHOOL**

ORCHESTRA PROGRAM

**STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK
2011-2012**

Please save in your music folder
for future reference.

RULES, PROCEDURES AND GRADING:

LESSON GRADE:

50 POINTS

You cannot pass orchestra without consistent lesson attendance!

Students will be assigned to a lesson group and **are required to attend weekly lessons each marking period**. Music lessons are the core of the music program, so it is of utmost importance that students attend **every** lesson. Students will **not** be paged for lessons: it is their responsibility to come to their lessons. Students will be given a lesson schedule at the beginning of each semester. *This lesson schedule will also be posted on the Goff Orchestra Web Page.* It is expected that the students will write each lesson in their agenda books for the appropriate day/period. **Each lesson is worth approximately ten percent of their quarterly grade. Lesson evaluation will be based on the following:**

1. Having all necessary materials with them at the lesson (instrument in playing condition, lesson book, orchestra music, pencil, etc.) (10%)
2. Lesson assignment preparation: Students will have a playing assignment to prepare every week. They will be graded according to the following categories:
 - Knowing/playing the correct notes (25%)
 - Knowing and playing the correct rhythms (25%)
 - Playing with proper attention to pitch and being in tune (25%)
 - Proper attention to and execution of articulations, dynamics, and musical details (15%)

It is important that students make sure they do not neglect practice of their weekly lesson assignments in favor of orchestra pieces. **Students who have not learned their assignments should not expect a good grade!**

All students are required to attend all of their lessons each marking period. If a student misses more than 1 lesson in a marking period, they will be expected to make up that lesson or they will receive a 0 for that lesson. Due to Mr. Lawrence's schedule, generally only one make-up lesson per student can be scheduled per quarter - usually the last week of the marking period. Students who fail to write their lesson times in their agenda books will *not* be scheduled for makeup lessons. It is up to the student to initiate the scheduling of make-up lessons. **A STUDENT WILL BE EXPECTED TO MAKE UP A LESSON EVEN IN INSTANCES WHEN THEY ARE ABSENT FROM SCHOOL. Please be aware that it is the student's responsibility to get the lesson assignment whenever they are absent for whatever reason.**

Students will work out of an assigned method book that is commensurate with his/her achievement and are expected to complete and practice the given assignment for the week. Students will be evaluated individually based on their preparedness and musical growth.

Students will also be given other assessments (both written and playing) which will be averaged into a final exam grade that will appear on their final report card.

All students are strongly encouraged to take private lessons. For information on private instructors, please ask the orchestra teacher.

PRACTICE GRADE:

15 POINTS

Home practice is required and needs to be validated weekly with a parent signature.

Students are given practice sheets to record their practice times on. These practice sheets will be checked weekly for a practice grade. *Practice times turned in more than two weeks late may not receive any credit.* If a student does not have signed practice minutes at their lesson, it is the responsibility of the student to get their minutes in to Mr. Lawrence at an appropriate time. It is NOT Mr. Lawrence's responsibility to track down unaccounted practice minutes for each student. **A student who does not turn in signed practice sheets will forfeit 15% of their orchestra grade.** Parents, if you are not signing a practice sheet each week, it is an indication that your child's orchestra grade is not as high as it could be.

REHEARSAL GRADE

20 POINTS

Orchestra rehearsals are regularly scheduled classes. All rules in the Code of Conduct concerning prompt reporting to class, class absences, class cutting and class behavior apply to orchestra. Rehearsal evaluation will be based on factors including:

1. Being on time and having your instrument in good playing condition, music, cello/bass-stop (if appropriate), and a pencil. Do not rely on your stand partner to bring your music!
2. Demonstrating a positive attitude, good effort, and cooperation.
3. Rehearsal preparation: students are expected to demonstrate progress and improvement in their orchestra music.

CONCERT GRADE (Q 2, Q3, & Q4)

15 POINTS

Concerts are an integral part of the orchestra program and student attendance is *mandatory*. The concert grade is based on attendance, being on time, being prepared (with instrument and music), and effort & cooperation. Parents, you are encouraged to make every effort to come and listen to your child's hard work. In the event that an **emergency** may prevent your child from attending a concert, please notify your child's teacher as soon as possible with a signed written excuse. The director and the entire ensemble count on your child's participation at each performance. **It is expected that orchestra students will remain at the concert for its entire duration in support of the hard work by other ensemble students.** ***Concert dress: Students will be required to wear appropriate concert dress. Appropriate concert dress is white shirt/blouse and black pants/long skirts.***

PLAYING TEST (Q 1 & [Q3?])

15 POINTS

Specific details about these tests will be announced near the end of quarters 1 and 3. Testing will generally be on material from lesson books, scales, and excerpts from orchestra music.

CLASSROOM RULES

1. When the director is on the "podium," students should not be talking.
2. When the director cuts off, students must stop immediately and listen for directions-- the director always stops for a reason!
3. Absolutely **NO** individual playing unless asked to do so.
4. Do not disrupt the learning environment of those around you.
5. Eating food during rehearsal is **NOT** permitted.
6. **YOU** are responsible for the proper cleanup of your instrument, music, AND STAND. Consequences for failing to follow these rules include detention, office referrals and calls home.

OTHER ACTIVITIES - Include NYSSMA, Empire State Youth Orchestra, and private lessons. Please speak to Mr. Lawrence if you are interested in any of these.

GOFF ORCHESTRA WEB PAGE

This handbook and other documents and announcements will be posted on the Goff Orchestra web page. To get to the Goff Orchestra web page, click on the "Teacher Pages" link on the Goff website (egcsd.org/goff), then click on "Music Department" and then "Orchestra". This site is becoming an increasingly useful place to go. Included are recordings, a web metronome, lesson schedules

Contacting Mr. Lawrence - email is preferred (lawrencena@egcsd.org).

**CONCERT DATES --- PLEASE MARK ALL OF THESE MANDATORY
CONCERT DATES ON YOUR CALENDAR NOW!!!**

(Concerts begin at 7 PM at Columbia High School unless otherwise noted)

Sixth Grade Concerts

Friday - Dec. 2 - Fundraiser for EYS at Barnes & Noble, Colonie Center. Time: TBA

Thursday, December 8, 2011 - Fall Concert

Friday-Saturday, March 9-10, 2012 - EYS with Mark Wood - specific times, TBA

District-Wide String Festival: **Tuesday, April 17, 2012**

Tuesday, May 22, 2012 - Spring Concert

Seventh Grade Concerts

Friday - Dec. 2 - Fundraiser for EYS at Barnes & Noble, Colonie Center. Time: TBA

Tuesday, December 20, 2011 - Fall Concert

Thursday, February 9, 2012 - Winter concert with 8th grade

Friday-Saturday, March 10, 2012 - EYS with Mark Wood

District-Wide String Festival: **Tuesday, April 17, 2012**

Thursday, May 17, 2012 - Spring Concert with 8th grade

Monday, May 21, 2012 - Spring Concert

Eighth Grade Concerts

Tuesday, November 15, 2011 - Fall Concert

Friday - Dec. 2 - Fundraiser for EYS at Barnes & Noble, Colonie Center. Time: TBA

Thursday, February 9, 2012 - Winter Concert

Friday-Saturday, March 10, 2012 - EYS with Mark Wood, specific times TBA

District-Wide String Festival: **Tuesday, April 17, 2012**

Thursday, May 17, 2012 - Spring Concert

Monday, May 21, 2012 - Spring Concert with 7th grade

INSTRUMENT REPAIRS, SUPPLIES, AND SIZE CHANGES

If your child's instrument needs repair and you would like to have the music store pick it up and deliver it back to school, please call the music store in advance to make arrangements. It is expected that all instrument repair situations will be handled promptly so that minimal practice, rehearsal and lesson times are lost.

Also, if a student needs to change instrument sizes, please contact the rental company. They will pick up the smaller instrument and deliver the next size to school. NO instruments will be picked up by the music store without prior notification by a parent. The two music stores Goff deals with for instruments are: John Keal Music, 482-4405 and Northeast Music, 783-1658.

Trip Savers are order forms available at school for John Keal and Northeast Music stores. Trip savers can be used to order various music equipment, supplies, and books that students may need. Students and parents should fill in the order form together and mail it to the appropriate store with a check or money order enclosed. The music store will deliver the supplies directly to the student at school.

Lesson Books

Most students will be continuing in the same lesson book they had last year. They will be notified when it comes time for them to purchase a new book. The cost of most lesson books is \$6.50. If a lesson book is lost or when the student advances to the next book, please send in the full amount in an envelope marked with your child's name. All students must have the lesson book which their lesson group is working with. Please send in cash or a check made out to "cash".