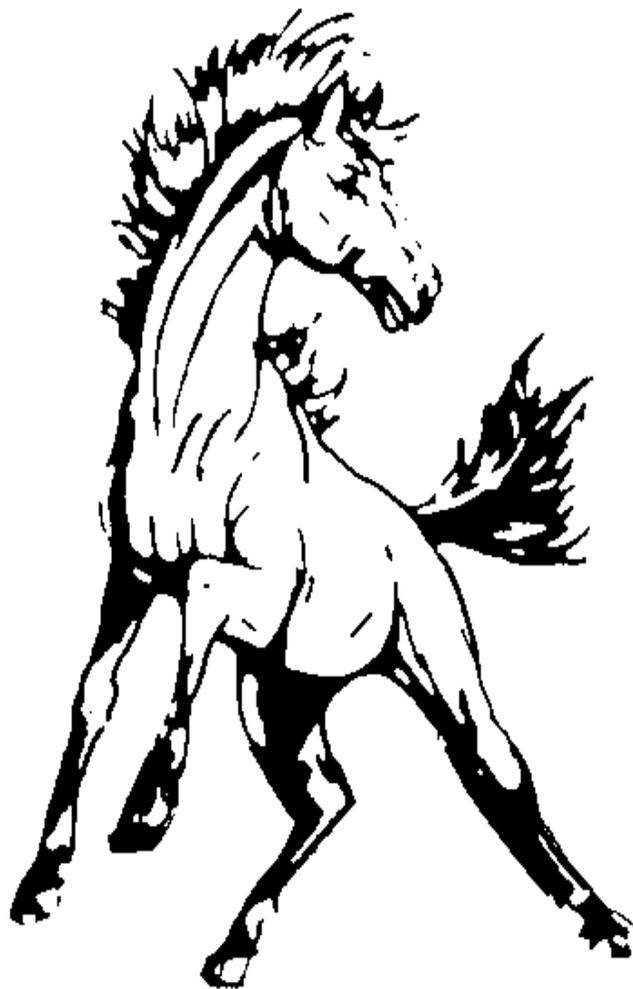


James E. Taylor High School

Orchestra Handbook

2019.2020



# Why is Orchestra Important?

## The Importance of Fine-Arts and the University Admission process

In an educational climate that routinely tends to downplay the importance of the arts it is more important than ever to be aware of the connection between fine-arts, the college admissions process and college success. The following information was collected by Richard Floyd (current TMEA Executive Secretary) in the mid 90's and Sundas Mohi-Truong (current Orchestra Director at Tompkins HS) from 2016-2018 in interviews with active university admissions officers. They offer compelling evidence of the value of participation in band, choir and orchestra as an integral part of the university admissions process. You are encouraged to share these quotes with school counselors, students and parents.

### University Admissions Statements

#### **Harvard University:**

"The ARTS are clearly an integral part of life at Harvard and Radcliffe, important for their value to the college environment and also for the potential they provide for lifelong enrichment. In addition to academic criteria, therefore, we always consider extracurricular talents and personal strengths when we evaluate a candidate's credentials. We look for students whose previous participation in the ARTS shows that they can make a substantial contribution to our community."

#### **Harvard University: Rachel Brown, Houston Area Admissions Officer (2016)**

-“We are looking beyond the academic profile, for students who make an impact in some way and who are flowing their passion when possible. It is too competitive to take students who *just* have good grades. It's not enough to be good at school, there's gotta be something else.”

-“Getting in to college her is just a byproduct of pursuing your passion”

-“Students need to be involved in activities that they are passionate about, and activities they can speak passionately about.”

-It is easy to tell when students are speaking genuinely and when they put something on their resume just to help them get in.”

-“IT IS NOT “If test scores don't reach this threshold we are throwing you away.””

-“The ones who stand out are the ones who are genuine in their applications and interviews.”

#### **Duke University: Sonam Aidasani, Houston Area Admissions Officer (2017)**

“It's not good enough to just be a really good student. At Duke, we believe that in order to solve the world's issues, you need to be able to see things through more than one lens. Involvement in fine arts is a great way to gain a unique perspective on world issues. Students who are successful in their applications do not just have high AP scores. They have leadership skills and demonstrate passion for things that they care about.

-“We are looking for multiple strong themes within a student's application.”

-“We do not look at GPA. We look at the individual transcript to see how students actually did in each course. We can't look at GPA comparatively across the country because there is a wide range in GPA scales from state to state.”

-“Students who are successful in their applications do not just have high AP scores. They have leadership skills and demonstrate passion for things that they care about.”

-“Try to stand out among thousands of students who look the same through the academic lens. Pursue something or multiple things you are passionate about and become a strong leader in these activities.”

**Yale College:**

“Qualifications for admission to Yale College include not only the reasonably well-defined areas of academic achievement and special skill in non-academic areas, but also the less tangible qualities of capacity for involvement, commitment, and personal growth. The ARTS offer remarkable opportunities for the exercise of these qualities. The highly skilled artist, the student whose intellectual interests include close study of the ARTS, and the many applicants who demonstrate motivation and the willingness to extend their reach through participation in the ARTS, all promise to enhance the quality of life at Yale.”

**Carnegie Mellon University: Mike Steidel, Dean of Admissions (2017)**

“Students believe erroneously that it’s all about academics. The richer candidate is not *just* academic. We are looking for students who bring interdisciplinary collaboration and engagement with others to the table. One extra AP class is not going to make the student stronger. Fine arts are a key ingredient to innovation. Without creativity and inspiration that comes from the arts, you can never be successful.”

-“Academic strengths get them to the table-what else does this student bring? We are looking for engagement in the community and engagement in their schools outside of the academic classroom.”

-If a student gives up their passion in favor of academics, they are giving up a great chance at being admitted because this is what makes them interesting”

“Many students overlook non-academic components of the application. When they give this up, they give up their personality.”

**Stanford University:**

“... we believe that exposure to the creative and PERFORMING ARTS enhances a student’s intellectual breadth.”

**John Hopkins University:**

“The real challenge in selective college admission is not to assemble a class capable of negotiating a rigorous academic curriculum, but one that will also enhance the quality of life on our campus. Participation in the PERFORMING ARTS during the pre-college years is a clear indication to our admission committee that a student is dedicated to, excited about and engaged in the educational journey. As such, a background in the ARTS is one factor that helps us choose, among academically qualified students, a class which will avail itself of the many opportunities at Hopkins and will contribute to the life of the University.”

**Rice University: Kate Noonan, Houston Area Admissions Officer (2017)**

“Most people who apply here have excelled in their academic career. What distinguishes students in application pool are the experiences outside of your academic career. High school should be fun and enjoyable.”

-“If you learn to be a leader, work together, and give back in high school, it will put you at an advantage.”

-“If students are solely focusing on academic performance, they will miss out on student experience here and are not the right fit.”

**The University of Michigan:**

“Intellectual leaders from Plato to the present have recognized the importance of the ARTS to a thriving civilization. The University of Michigan joins in recommending the ARTS because of their humanizing influences, their demands for self-discipline, their abilities to evoke idealistic dreams that transcend everyday issues, their effectiveness in reflecting the achievements of diverse peoples, and their capacities to stimulate that most important of all intellectual abilities: creativity. Perhaps in no past era of our increasingly global civilization have these qualities been more sorely needed than they are today.”

**Cornell University:**

“There is no magic formula that assures admission-or forebodes rejection-to Cornell University...the ARTS can play an important role. As we seek students who will make contributions to the Cornell community, where the ARTS are so prevalent, their exposure and experience in high school are highly valued.”

**Columbia University: Naomi Varnis, Houston Area Admissions Officer (2018)**

“We look for students through a holistic evaluation-assessing their academic strengths as well as their engagement and involvement in the community. Students should speak to their specific experiences derived from extra curriculums such as fine arts. These shape the way you see the world differently. We are looking for one passion that students are linking to everything- a passion that they explore extensively.”

**University of Pennsylvania: Kim Lopez, Houston Area Admission Officer (2017)**

“It is extremely important to be involved with something you are passionate about in high school. Each year, we get applicants from over 10,000 high schools. Even if we wanted to accept every valedictorian, we do not have space for them. We are looking beyond academics.”

-“We are looking for students’ impact in school and in community and involvement in things outside of themselves.”

-“We look at GPA, but it doesn’t mean much because we look at each potential student’s curriculum very closely to analyze its rigor and their performance.”

-“I can take someone outside of the top 10% of their class if they are compelling in non-academic areas- we have to dig deeper than GPA.”

**University of Virginia:**

“The founder of this university, Thomas Jefferson, was an avid musician himself and his influence can be seen today in the strength of the offerings in MUSIC, drama, art studio, history of art and also architecture. This university seeks students who have solid backgrounds in English, math, science, history and foreign languages. In addition, we look for students who have well-developed talents in the ARTS, for we know that they add a richness to our student body. They enhance the quality of life for all of our students and faculty at the University of Virginia.”

**Virginia Polytechnic Institute:**

“At Virginia Tech, the ARTS are quite important in our admission policies, and we do pay particular attention to prospective students who have ARTS training or experiences as a part of their secondary school curricular or extra-curricular record...the University has special admissions procedures for students with “exceptional abilities in certain fields of study such as the creative and PERFORMING ARTS.”

# Why is Orchestra Important?

## Extra-Musical “Side Effects” of Participating in Orchestra

“In a study involving over 25,000 middle and high school students, researchers from UCLA found that students with high arts involvement performed better on standardized achievement test than students with low arts involvement.” (Ruppert, *How the Arts Benefit Student Achievement*)

“Four-year musicians achieved a significantly higher mean ACT score (22.26) than the non-four-year participants (20.27).” (Jones, *The Impact of Four-Year Participation in Music and/or Athletic Activities in South Dakota Public High Schools on GPA and ACT scores*)

2013 Average Texas SAT Score: 1434

2013 Average Katy ISD All-State Musician: 2066

**Difference: 629 points ABOVE Texas average**

“Comparisons between *Instrumental* and *No Music* students showed that *Instrumental* students continually exposed higher GPA means in mathematics, English, science and social science:

9.6% higher mathematics GPA

10.3% higher science GPA

9.5% higher English GPA

12.0% higher social science GPA”

(Zanutto, *The Effect of Instrumental Music Instruction on Academic Achievement*)

“Students who had arts-rich experiences in high school showed higher overall GPA’s than did students who lacked those experiences, regardless of socioeconomic status.” (Catterall, Dumais, Hampden-Thompson: *The Arts and Achievement in At-Risk Youth*)

“Students who participated in formal music course were identified as having significantly higher achievement scores in GPA, SAT, and English 10 ECA than students with no music participation.” (Korfhage, *Impact of Music Education on Indiana High School Students*)

“Four-year music students achieved a significantly higher means GPA score (3.28 than non-four-year participants (2.77).” (Jones, *The Impact of Four-Year Participation in Music and/or Athletic Activities in South Dakota Public High Schools on GPA and ACT Scores*)

“An examination of group means indicated that students who participated in music performed significantly higher on GPA (3.08 mean) than did not-music participants (2.69 mean).” (Korfhage, *Impact on Music Education on Indiana High School Students*)

“Learning and performing music actually exercises the brain not merely by developing specific music skills, but by strengthening the synapses (connections) between brain cells. Students with interests in the arts are capable of generating sustained attention and motivation, which strengthens executive networks of the brain. Meaning the arts can help students pay closer attention in school due to the structural changes created when students are practicing their art form.” (Korfhage, *Impact of Music Education on Indiana High School Students*)

“Formal music training is multifaceted and designed to support the development of range of skills, including attention and concentration, reading, fine motor control, emotional expression, abstraction, memorization, and more.” (Ruppert, *How the Arts Benefit Student Achievement*)

Dear Taylor High School Orchestra Students,

My name is Clint Capshaw and I am the orchestra director at Taylor High School. As a 1999 graduate of Taylor High School, 4 year violist in the THS Chamber Orchestra and 8th year Director I have been fortunate to be a part of a lasting legacy of amazing musical performance at Taylor. Tiffany Webb also continues as the Taylor Orchestra Assistant Director. It is a true gift to have her here to help strengthen our wonderful program! On behalf of everyone associated with the orchestra program, we are very excited about our next school year. Last year was a memorable one! The McMeans, Memorial Parkway, and Taylor Orchestras all enjoyed very successful concert seasons. Listed below are the Taylor HS Orchestra highlights from our 2018.2019 school year.

#### ORCHESTRA CONTEST RESULTS

##### Tuesday, March 5, 2019

Taylor High School Symphony Orchestra  
Sweepstakes Award

##### Tuesday, April 16, 2019

Taylor High School Chamber Orchestra  
Sweepstakes Award

##### Wednesday, April 17, 2019

Taylor High School Sinfonia "Blue" Orchestra  
Sweepstakes Award

##### Thursday, April 17, 2019

Taylor High School Sinfonia "White" Orchestra  
Sweepstakes Award

##### Thursday, April 18, 2019

Taylor High School Philharmonic Orchestra  
Sweepstakes Award

Taylor HS has placed in the finals of the TMEA Honor Orchestra Competition 10 times (Strings – 7 times and Full Orchestra 5 times times). **Last year the Chamber orchestra was ranked 11th in the state in this competition and in 1999 and 2016 the Symphony Orchestra ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> in the State.** The Taylor High School Symphony Orchestra also earned national recognition and performed at the Midwest Clinic in Chicago on Wednesday, December 14, 2011. This historic trip to the Midwest Clinic was earned by competitive audition with orchestras from around the country. The Orchestra has also performed on the Main Stage at Carnegie Hall 4 times. 2002, 2006, 2014 and most recently April of 2018. The Orchestra also earned a "Commended" award in 2014 & 2015 and a "National" award in 2016-2018 through the Foundation for Music Education: Mark of Excellence competition.

This reflects the high level of excellence in our performance and the dedicated commitment of Student, Parents, Administrators, District officials, Directors and the Community.

As we consider our history of excellence, we can reflect on the fond memories and the high achievements we have accomplished. I challenge you to carry the torch and continue to do your very best work. You are vital to our continued success!!! Participate to your fullest in Region, All-State, and UIL Solo & Ensemble contest. Your participation identifies you as a success whether or not you make the Region or All-State Orchestra or earn a medal, because the process of preparing and competing for these competitions will greatly raise your level of musicianship and technique. Make a commitment to yourself to exceed your previous individual accomplishments. Set your personal and ensemble goals high. "THE WORST THING THAT COULD HAPPEN IS THAT YOU MIGHT LEARN SOMETHING." Your talent is already evident and with your extra effort, the sky is the limit for the success that lies ahead for you! Be a positive contributor to the orchestra. I look forward to spirited and productive rehearsals and memorable concert and contest performances.

Sincerely,

Clint Capshaw & Tiffany Webb

Taylor High School Orchestra Directors

# *Taylor High School Orchestra Handbook*

**2019.2020**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Katy I.S.D. is proud to offer a comprehensive music program that includes string instruction from grades 6 - 12. The Taylor High School music department is well respected throughout the state, and the THS Orchestra is a vital segment of the music curriculum. It is expected that members of the Taylor High School Orchestra will exhibit the highest possible standards in the following areas:

1. Responsibility
2. Dependability
3. Dedication
4. Music Excellence
5. Leadership

It is the goal of the director to produce an outstanding orchestra. It is also the belief of the director that students learn more and develop better self-discipline, responsibility, and knowledge, and take more pride in superior orchestras than in poor ones. To produce an outstanding orchestra requires that each student accept certain responsibilities.

This handbook will outline the basic requirements for the Taylor High School Orchestra. Please detach and return the permission slip/medical release forms and the last page of this handbook to Mr. Capshaw with all requested information completed and signed, by **Thursday, August 15**. This will indicate your notification and acceptance of the policies of the Taylor High School Orchestra program. Please retain the handbook and calendar at home so that you may refer to it when necessary.

## **PURPOSE**

The Taylor High School Orchestra is a legitimate class that meets regularly during the school day. The nature of this class requires the development of skills, concepts, and attitudes to be learned in class. These must, however, be demonstrated outside of class via many varied forms of rehearsals and performances. Along with your musical growth, I would expect to see development in the areas of leadership, self-discipline, teamwork, and a deeper appreciation for the beauty and joy that music offers to all who partake in it.

## **CONDUCT**

The conduct of an orchestra student reflects not only himself or herself, but also on other students as well as his school and community. At all times each orchestra member is expected to:

1. Display common courtesy to directors, students, and parents.
2. Exhibit mature conduct and dedication to the THS Orchestra.
3. Follow rules as outlined by the orchestra director on the next page.
4. Follow rules and policies of Katy Independent School District and Taylor High School as outlined in the Katy I.S.D. High School Student Handbook & Code of Conduct.

## CLASSROOM RULES:

1. Be in your assigned seat with all materials (i.e. instrument, bow, music notebook and music, pencil) and tuning within 1-minute following the tardy bell . If you are outside the door when the tardy bell rings, you will receive a School Tardy (accumulated tardies will be subject to the schools tardy policy). If you are in the orchestra room, but not in your seat with all materials and tuning one 1-minute after the bell then your daily grade will be lowered 20 points per-day for the week.
2. No candy, gum, food, and drink in all areas within the Fine Arts Department including the **Performing Arts Center and the Orchestra Room**. NO EXCEPTIONS.
3. Show superior orchestra rehearsal etiquette. Speak or play only when invited to and cut-off quickly. Show FULL Respect for the directors and classmates at all times.
4. Absolutely no homework or cell phone use during rehearsal. Cell phones should not be visible at any time during rehearsal. Grade will be lowered and materials may be confiscated and returned at the end of the school day or after-school rehearsal for any students violating this rule. Be Respectful of our time together.
5. Please remove all ear-buds before entering the orchestra room during the school day.
6. During the School Day Enter or exit only through the door which opens into the Fine Arts hallway. **NEVER OPEN** the West wall doors for any reason during the school day. The West wall doors may be used after 2:35pm if a sectional or after-school rehearsal is not in progress. Interruption of sectionals (#knocking) etc will result in loss of priviledges.
7. Bring your instrument, bow, music notebook to class each day unless told otherwise by Mr. Capshaw or Ms. Webb.
8. Practice rooms are for Practice only. Homework and study groups are not permitted in the practice rooms for any reason. If you need a quiet place to study during Enrichment time or before or after-school please make arrangements to use the library or the commons.
9. Students that are NOT enrolled in orchestra are NOT allowed in the orchestra room before or after-school or during enrichment. Band and Choir students are excused from this rule with prior permission from the director.
10. Do not move stands or chairs out of the main orchestra set-up without permission from the director's. failure to reset moved furniture before or after-school will result in consequences.

## ORCHESTRA HOURS

Orchestra hours (Reboot 2018-2019) is a consequence intended to help students understand that infractions to the rules above are detrimental to the working time of the orchestra and the director's and should therefore have a consequence towards the personal time of the student committing the infraction. Students will have an opportunity to work off hours by joining set-up teams for after-school sectionals/rehearsals, helping to strike the stage after concerts and through helping with various approved events/activities during the year. Orchestra Hours must be worked off by the end of Semester or a grade of N will be recorded for conduct. If hours are earned during the last week of the semester then they will roll over to the next semester.

## ATTENDANCE

An orchestra performs at optimum with all members present. Therefore, students are required to participate in all rehearsals and performances unless excused by the director. A comprehensive calendar is given on the first day of classes and is always available at <http://www.taylororchestra.org>. This should be studied closely so as to avoid possible conflicts. Weekly informational emails will also be provided so that students can plan their busy schedules carefully. All rehearsals will be announced as far in advance as possible. Good communication between teacher, student, and/or parents can prevent misunderstandings. Please read the following rules and contact the orchestra director if you have any questions. **If a student has an excused absence he/she must replace the rehearsal missed with a run-through recording (cassette, CD, or flashdrive) of all rehearsed repertoire within 24 hours of the absence.**

## PROMPTNESS

To optimize the after school rehearsal time we have, it is essential that all of the members are early for each rehearsal so that we may start rehearsals on time. Each of us needs to commit to arriving early to unpack your instrument, and place your music on the stand. Promptness insures that no instruction time is lost and that our rehearsals are interruption free! Be considerate of your classmates and ensemble.

**To be early, is to be on time.**

**To be on time, is to be late.**

**To be late, is to be very late.**



## ABSENCE POLICY

*Sectionals* are essential to the continued success of our Orchestra. You will generally have one forty-five to sixty minute sectional per week throughout the year in preparation either after-school or during enrichment for our concerts and contests. It is during your sectional that we will be able to focus on the specific concerns that are unique to your individual part (i.e. intonation, rhythmic precision, bowings, fingerings, and phrasing).

*Full Orchestra* preparation offers us an opportunity to experience music at its grandest level by adding the wonderful tone colors of the winds, brass, and percussion to our already rich string sonority. There is a wealth of literature available for the Full Orchestra. We will have two hour rehearsals starting in mid-November until May (no full orchestra from Spring Break until the end of April). We will perform as a Full Orchestra at UIL Concert and Sight-reading Contest.

Sectionals, full orchestra rehearsals, concerts, and U.I.L. Concert and Sight-reading Contests are considered an extension of the classroom instruction and therefore, co-curricular. ***Every before or after school rehearsal and performance is graded. All full orchestra Rehearsals and All Clinics are Major Test Grades. Promptness is part of the grade as well. Your rehearsal grade will be lowered if you arrive late for rehearsal or concert.***

1. **Written notices from parents (email is acceptable) are required for all absences. ALL written excuses are not accepted (unless it is 48 hours before the rehearsal).**
2. Advance notices are required for all prior commitments. A prior commitment is defined as an event already committed to before the Orchestra time schedule is announced. A notice of such a commitment should be sent to the director the next school day after a scheduled rehearsal or concert date is announced. In the case of work schedules, which may still be

pending, the student should communicate individually with the director about any anticipated concerns. Students are expected to request that their work schedules be arranged to accommodate all rehearsals and concerts. These requests should take priority over social events. Students in Chamber, Philharmonic and THSSO will not be able to participate in those ensembles if they are unable to participate at UIL contest or for honor recordings. Other organizations inability to provide dates for events at the beginning of the year does not constitute an excuse to miss an orchestra event that was scheduled at the beginning of the school year. In the case of an unscheduled or extra rehearsal being called, each student is expected to make every attempt to attend. Conflicts with extra (unscheduled) rehearsals are easily resolved with good communication

3. In the case of illness and/or family emergency, the parents should send a written notice to the orchestra director as soon as they are aware that such a situation exists (email is acceptable). If it is an emergency situation (e.g. something that happens 30 minutes before the rehearsal is to begin), it may be impossible to get in touch with anyone. In this case, please follow up with a written note (email) as soon as possible after the fact. This is the only category where absences will be excused the same day, or after the event.
4. Religious holidays or conflicts with individual religious beliefs are considered excused if the director is notified in writing by a parent.

Please communicate directly with Mr. Capshaw if there are individual, or unusual circumstances which may be a problem. Unexcused absences and tardiness affect the morale of the entire orchestra (including the conductor!) ***Although it would be impossible to include a complete list, the following items are examples of unexcused absences:***

1. Commitments accepted after a rehearsal or concert date is announced.
2. Homework. (Please plan your time in advance so you may do your homework before or after rehearsals. Good time-management is essential to success in the 21st century!)
3. Transportation problems (Last minute mechanical problems will be excused). This refers to a student who repeatedly fails to arrange transportation in advance.)
4. TEST Reviews, Power Reviews or other impromptu tutoring.
5. Make-up tests, labs and quizzes
6. Labs, Quizzes or Tests that were not completed in class.
7. Baby-sitting.
8. Club meetings
9. Watching TV.
10. Falling asleep.
11. Forgetting instrument and/or music.
12. Failure to request the time off from a job.
13. "Forgetting" about a rehearsal or concert.
14. Fatigue because you stayed up the entire night before studying
- 15. Making it through an entire day of school and then deciding you are too sick to come to rehearsal.**
- 16. Please make an effort to schedule College Visits around all THSSO rehearsals.**



In order to encourage regular attendance at scheduled events, the following policies will take place.

1. Any absence from rehearsal without a note from parents will be considered unexcused, unless prior arrangements have been made with the director.
2. Any unexcused absence will result in an immediate loss of chair rank within the section and a zero for the sectional, rehearsal or clinic missed.
3. Two unexcused absences for a series of rehearsals will result in the loss of performance privileges for the next concert and an automatic zero for that performance.
4. Attendance at all scheduled performances for the year is mandatory.

5. Failure to meet the attendance requirements for orchestra can result in a student losing the privilege of traveling with the orchestra on the Spring trip (with no refund).
6. Unexcused absences are grounds for the conductor to deny participation points which count toward earning a letter jacket award.
7. Unexcused tardiness will result in the lowered grade for that rehearsal.

### **Katy ISD High School Orchestras- Grading Guidelines**

Grades earned by High School Orchestra students will fall under the following three categories:

- Major – 50% of the six weeks average
- Minor – 35% of the six weeks average
- Other – 15% of the six weeks average

Student assessment will follow the guidelines outlined below.

#### **Major Grades**

The following activities are examples of criteria which may be assessed as major grades by orchestra directors:

- Performances/Attire and Punctuality
- Tests (performing large sections of music or All-Region/State etudes OR written tests)
- Extended curricular activities – such as master classes, clinics and chamber music coachings
- ALL FULL ORCHESTRA REHEARSALS AND ANY CLINICS
- Dress Rehearsals

#### **Minor Grades**

The following activities are examples of criteria which may be assessed as minor grades by orchestra directors:

- Playing quizzes
- Sectionals/extra rehearsals
- Daily Rehearsal Preparation and participation



#### **Other Grades**

The following activities are examples of criteria which may be assessed in a category other than major or minor grades:

- Daily engagement in rehearsals
- Preparation – materials, music, equipment
- Written homework

### **PERSONAL INSTRUMENT EQUIPMENT**

The following will be expected of all orchestra members:

1. Personal instruments (violins/violas) should be placed in your assigned locker or storage area. After class all instruments should be completely packed (end pins in, bows loosened and in cases) and stored in their assigned areas for safe keeping.
2. All instruments must meet MENC/TMEA standards for playability and construction. Instruments that do not meet these guidelines and therefore cannot be tuned, cannot hold pitch or cannot be efficiently played will not be permitted in the orchestra room. Students will receive a zero for class participation and all rehearsals until this issue is resolved.
3. Students should use premium strings on their instrument. Examples of premium strings are Thomastik Dominant or Thomastik Vision; Pirastro Obligato etc. Examples of non-premium

strings are S-Series, Red-Label or Prelude. For a complete list of premium strings, please contact the directors.

4. Students are expected to have rosin, shoulder rests, roc-stops, cloths, sharpened pencils, functional strings and extra strings etc at each rehearsal. Cellos & basses should have roc-stops at Concerts. (Cello and bass rosin will be provided when school instruments are in use).
5. All instruments kept in the orchestra room during the day **MUST** have the students' name clearly printed on a tag on the outside of the case.
6. Students are to have replacement strings on hand at all times. These should be purchased at a local music store or online. **BASS PLAYERS ARE NOT REQUIRED TO HAVE REPLACEMENT STRINGS.** In an emergency, strings may be bought at school, but must be paid for within 24 hours after receiving them.

**You may purchase strings at any local vendor such as Lisle Violin Shop or Fishburn Violin Shop or via the internet at Southwest String Company at [swstrings.com](http://swstrings.com) or [sharmusic.com](http://sharmusic.com) for very reasonable prices.**

## **ASSESSMENT FEE**

All students are **required** to pay an assessment fee of **\$150.00** for the 2019.2020 school year. You may pay in full on/or before Thursday, October 3, 2019 or two payments (\$75.00 on October 3, 2019 and \$75.00 on Thursday, February 6, 2019. **Make your check payable to TOPA.** These fees will be used for but are not limited to the following:

- 1) TMEA Honor String, Full Orchestra and additional contest tape applications fees.
- 2) Honor tape clinicians, recording costs, facility rental and postage.
- 3) Dry cleaning and hemming costs for our orchestra uniforms.
- 4) **Clinicians:** Sectionals, Fall Concert, Pre-UIL Solo & Ensemble, and Pre- UIL Concert & Sight-reading Contests.
- 5) Region & All-State Clinicians.
- 6) Banquet Costs (a ticket for each orchestra member plus decorations/awards).
- 7) Winter Ball.
- 8) THS Orchestra Spirit Shirts.
- 9) Replacement and/or additional uniforms.
- 10) Recordings and theatre staffing for each concert
- 11) Food for rehearsals or celebrations (periodically not every rehearsal).
- 11) Postage.
- 12) End of the year awards.
- 13) Scheduled social events
- 14) General Supplies and Music
- 15) Additional TOSO sponsored events

Students that have unpaid assessment fees at the end of each semester will be placed on the hold list. Students on the hold list will not be permitted to exempt or take final exams until the hold is resolved. Students will not be permitted to attend the spring trip until the assessment fee is paid in full.

## **REPAIRS**

String instruments are fragile. Keep your instrument in good repair. Carry extra strings in your case. Have your bow re-haired at least once a year. Instruments should not be put in repair without first being inspected by the director. Many times minor adjustments can be made by the director which may eliminate a trip to the repair shop. The choice of repairman for school owned instruments is at the

discretion of the director. Please do not attempt to repair the instrument yourself. Realize that neglecting a repair may lead to long term damage and depreciation in the value of your instrument.

## **TAYLOR ORCHESTRA SUPPLY LIST: 1-4 due August 16th for an equipment check grade**

- 1) Personal instrument.
- 2) 1 inch thick black, ring binder with a clear plastic shield cover to hold and safe guard your music. (please place your name, instrument and orchestra on a sheet of paper in the plastic shield cover.
- 4) Plastic, three-hole, re-sealable pencil bag for your black binder.
- 5) Sharpened pencils (keep 2-3 pencils in your pencil bag).
- 6) Violins/Violas- shoulder rest, set of replacement strings for your personal instrument, rosin.
- 7) Cello/Bass - roc stop, set of replacement strings for your personal instrument rosin.

Notebooks will be checked for completeness for a preparedness grade each six weeks.

## **INSTRUMENT INFORMATION**

**PERSONAL INSTRUMENTS:** It is highly recommended that all instruments be covered by the parent's homeowner's or renter's insurance.

**SCHOOL-OWNED INSTRUMENTS:** All students using Katy ISD owned cellos and basses must pay a \$80.00 maintenance fee. Full payment is due on Thursday, August 15, 2019. This fee is minimal, but necessary for the upkeep of the instruments. (If you were to rent/purchase a second instrument for school use, it would run you a minimum of a \$50.00 deposit plus a \$35.00 per monthly payment.) This fee covers the cost of annual replacement of a bridge (\$86.00-cello or \$175.00-bass) and a bow re-hair (\$35.0-cello or \$40.00-bass).

Instruments will be assigned on a first come, first served basis. Students will not be issued an instrument for school use for the 2019.2020 concert season until all outstanding repair bills from 2018.2019 are paid. This maintenance fee is not an insurance fee and therefore the student and/or parent are responsible for any damage to an instrument due to student neglect or recklessness.

## **INDIVIDUAL COMPETITIONS**

**ALL-REGION HIGH SCHOOL ORCHESTRAS** are made up of the finest high school students in the Houston area. Students audition for this each Fall. There are two orchestras that one may be chosen to perform within. Those who are selected rehearse and perform on a specified weekend of November and are featured in a special concert. This is an honor and an exciting experience for those participating. Even the students not selected will experience musical growth in preparing for, and participating in, a competitive audition. Your technique and musicianship will grow tremendously! **The Region 23 Orchestra audition date is Saturday, October 12, 2019 at Kerr HS in Alief ISD**

**TEXAS ALL-STATE ORCHESTRAS:** Each year students are selected to perform in one of two full orchestras or a string ensemble. Students may audition for area selection with their region etude

and All-State Orchestral excerpts, and if selected to record for state, they will record all of the All-State Audition Material. (See Mr. Capshaw if you need music for the Region etudes or State Orchestral Excerpts). On November 5th, you will be given notice if you made one of the ensembles. If you make a group, the district will provide hotel accommodations and meal money for your stay in San Antonio when you perform at the Texas Educators Association Convention in February. It is the ultimate music experience. It is well worth your extra effort! **The Area Auditions will be on Friday, October 25 @ Elsie HS & All-State Recording Auditions will be on October 26 @ Elsie.**

**UIL SOLO AND ENSEMBLE CONTEST** is held annually each February. It provides an opportunity for each student to perform a solo and/or ensemble and receive a rating and an evaluation of their performance. Every student is encouraged to enter this event. Those students earning a "Superior" performance ratings will receive medals. Those students who earn a "Superior Rating" on a grade one ensemble or on a memorized grade one solo will be eligible to advance to the Katy Young Artist Competition in late May. **The Region 23 UIL Solo and Ensemble Contest date is Saturday, February 22, 2020 at TBA.**

### **STUDENT FUNDRAISING:**

The Taylor Orchestra will organize two student fundraisers for the 2019.2020 school year (Taylor Orchestra Concert Program AD Sales/Email fundraiser and another one To Be announced

**STUDENTS ONLY:** The estimated cost for our Spring Trip to New Orleans is around \$600

Participation in fundraising is optional. You may choose to raise money through our fund-raisers or other jobs that you are able to secure on your own (i.e. baby-sitting, lawn mowing, or after-school jobs). You may choose to pay for your spring trip in full at the beginning of the school year (or make payments set-up by the tour company. Payments need to be prompt to insure our group payments for deposits and fees will be made on-time.

### **PRIVATE LESSONS:**

We are very pleased to offer a high caliber private lesson program for students at Taylor H.S. Our private teachers are highly skilled performers and respected teachers in the Houston area. Their dedication and service to our orchestra program is exemplary and worthy of your consideration. I highly recommend private lessons for all students. The Katy ISD private lesson rate is \$19.50\*+ \*amount increases per degree held by instructor) per half hour to be paid directly to their teacher. They pay \$.50 per half hour taught for studio use fee. All monies will be handled by the private teacher directly.

If you have not done so already, please complete a private lesson registration form. Your private lesson teacher will inform you of the payment schedule for lessons. In most cases, the expectation will be that you will need to pay for all of the lessons for a month on the first lesson of the month.

Although your child receives valuable instruction in our classes and receives further instruction in weekly sectional rehearsals, private lessons provide:

- 1) Him/her with an opportunity to deal with the unique challenges of his/her particular instrument one on one with an expert teacher. This will allow his/her to progress at their own level at all times rather than at the rate of the class.
- 2) Review and reinforcement of class assignments when necessary.
- 3) Earlier exposure to techniques such as vibrato, advanced bowing, shifting, and intonation.

- 4) Expanded opportunities for advanced solo and ensemble instruction.
- 5) Greater confidence in their individual performing because of the individual attention a private lesson provides.
- 6) Enhanced opportunity for success at individual competitions such as All-Region Orchestra, and Solo & Ensemble contest.
- 7) Heightened standard for group endeavors such as concerts and contests.

Private lessons are not required but are one of the best investments in a student's success!

**We ask each of our private teachers to make a commitment to teach our students for the entire school year. In addition, our staff will communicate with you when schedule changes and/or cancellations arise. Our teachers deserve the same consideration on your behalf. Make a full year commitment to lessons and communicate potential calendar conflicts. Arrive early - so that our teachers know that you value them and respect their time.**



**OFFICER**

**QUALIFICATIONS**

**AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Those students willing to offer extra help and demonstrate leadership to the Orchestra are encouraged to run for an office. Officers are important to the Orchestra. The leaders are asked to help organize the logistical concerns for music performances and social events for the Taylor HS Orchestra.

**Officer Qualifications:**

- 1) Any student with one year of experience in the Taylor Orchestra may run for any executive officer position in May for the next school year. Students must be enrolled in orchestra for the next year to run. Any student can run for a Class officer position at the beginning of the school year.
- 2) Officers must maintain academic eligibility throughout the year or they will forfeit their office.
- 3) Officers must maintain regular attendance and promptness for rehearsals, performances, and officer meetings.
- 4) Officers may not receive an N or lower in conduct.

**Consequences:** A student officer who fails to maintain these standards would forfeit their office. A suitable replacement will be appointed by the director.

**Executive Officer Board Job Descriptions**

Executive board positions are earned via election in May of the previous school year. All returning orchestra members are eligible to run for election at the end of each school year. **President:** The President is the executive officer of the student board. He/She will assist the director with planning social functions for students, coordinating receptions with parents, and communicating the needs of the student body to

the director and board. The President will be called on to assist all the Orchestra and Class officers in performing their duties. In addition, the president may be required to handle special duties as requested by the director. They will also help create the large orchestra room calendar with important dates, orchestra sectionals/rehearsals/events and birthdays.

**Vice-President:** He/She assists the president in his/her duties and will preside over the student board meeting if the president is absent. They will also maintain the officer board.

**Secretary:** The Secretary will assist the President with most functions. He/She will help collate and distribute forms (i.e. permission slips) and graded paperwork. He/She will also take notes during each student meeting and post the minutes after meeting. They will also help create the large orchestra room calendar with important dates, orchestra sectionals/rehearsals/events and birthdays.

**Treasurer:** The Treasurer will assist the President with most functions. Will collect all orchestra officer expense receipts and present them to the director for reimbursement. The Treasurer will assist the director in collecting and accounting of funds when needed. The treasurer liaison will deliver these funds to the TOPA Treasurer. They will also help create the large orchestra room calendar with important dates, orchestra sectionals/rehearsals/events and birthdays.

**Photographer/Historian(s):** The historian(s) will be responsible for keeping records (i.e. photos, videos, and brief written summaries) of each event throughout the year and coordinating with the yearbook and newspaper staff. Historian(s) will update the Activity Bulletin Board just outside the orchestra room with pictures from the most recent event(s). This individual will help organize birthday announcements and make spirit posters for events throughout the year (contests and parties!) At the end of the year banquet, they will display the photos taken during the 2014.2015 concert season in a photo album and help create our video slide show.

## **GPA EXEMPTION – SOPHOMORES, JUNIORS & SENIORS ONLY!**

Katy Independent School District wants to encourage students to pursue their areas of special talents and interests to enrich their academic achievement. Academically able and talented students frequently forfeit opportunities to study in their areas of talent and interest. To encourage this group of students to maintain their participation in these classes, the District is offering to juniors and seniors the third and fourth years of the following courses on a pass/fail basis:

Advanced Journalism; Newspaper; Yearbook; Athletics; Band; Cheerleading; Choir; Debate; Drill Team; FFA; Oral Interpretation; **Orchestra**; Public Speaking; Theatre; Technical Theatre; Theatre Arts ; Theatre Production.

### **Who is eligible to take a course on a Pass/Fail basis?**

This option is available to sophomores, juniors and seniors who wish to take one or two course from the above list that are beyond the requirements for graduation. To take a third or fourth year course in these four-year elective programs, the students should have an overall B average for all other courses completed in the field of study with an A average preferred. ***They also must have already taken the first year of this particular course.*** A student must have been enrolled in Cheerleading or Drill Team as a Freshman in order to be able to waive these courses. All students must meet the prerequisites of each course and have parent, teacher, and counselor approval.

**How are grades handled in a Pass / Fail course?** Students who are eligible and choose to take one of these course for a pass/fail grade:

- 1) Will receive a numerical grade all year on their report card

- 2) Will receive the actual numeric grade with a comment or label indicating “GPA exempt” on the Academic Achievement Record (transcript)
- 3) Will have these courses excluded from the computation of GPA and class rank.

### **What are the performance standards for these courses?**

- 1) Students must complete all of the assigned work just as if they were enrolled in the course for a numerical grade. In fact, the numerical grade will be reported on the report card.
- 2) Students must take tests and final exam for the course unless exempt from finals.
- 3) Students must maintain eligibility to stay in the pass/fail course by having a passing semester grade average.

### **How will grades in a Pass/Fail course affect eligibility for extracurricular activities?**

The numerical grades earned in a pass/fail course will be used to determine eligibility for participation in all UIL or school-sponsored activities. In addition, numerical grades will also be used to determine honor roll each six weeks; for qualifying criteria used in selection of students for various positions such as drill team officers, class officers, exam exemptions, etc; for eligibility for academic awards, including admission to organizations such as National Honors Society; etc.

### **How do students enroll in a Pass/Fail course?**

Students interested in taking one of the pass/fail course must discuss this option with the teacher of the course on the first day the class meets. If the student meets all of the criteria he/she must:

- 1) Complete the appropriate forms;
- 2) Have the form signed by the parent and teacher; and
- 3) Return the form to the counselor no later than the end of the third week of each semester. At this time, if all criteria are met, it will be approved and a schedule will be made to reflect enrollment in a pass/fail course.

**Would this year’s Seniors be able to waive a course from their Junior year?** Seniors affected by this policy, will **NOT** be allowed to retroactively waive a course from the junior year. Only one full year exemption is allowed during their senior year.

**If a student waives a course during his/her Junior year but does not enroll in the course during his/her Senior year does he/she lose the waived status for the Junior year?** No. Each year will stand alone. The student does not forfeit the option of being able to waive the fourth year of that same course since he/she is not taking it.

**What if a student drops the waived course?** The waiver is a full course commitment for it to be implemented on the student’s GPA. If the student drops a one semester course or a full year course before completion, **NO** waiver will be applied. The student receives the earned grade for the course and it **WILL** count toward the student’s GPA.

**When does the waiver need to be turned in to the counselor?** Waivers, will all signatures affixed, have to be turned in to the counselor by the end of the third week of each semester.

# Taylor High School Orchestra Uniform Guidelines

**Uniform Policy:** Like all of our other high quality performance groups at Taylor High School, the Orchestra requires a uniform outfit to be worn at each performance (concert or contest) unless otherwise specified. It is expected that every student will fully comply with the uniform described below. Non-compliance will result in a lowered concert grade (50% of the concert attire and 50% performance). Every student will be inspected prior to each performance by members of the TOPA board to make sure the dress code is followed.

**Uniform Sizing:** TOPA volunteers will size and fit the students for their uniforms. It is very helpful, and greatly speeds the process if the students know their size ahead of time. For girls, the dresses are sized on bust/bra size (32-46). Boys need to know jacket size (Youth 16/18, or 36-46) as well as pant waist size (28-42)

**Uniform Dress Shoes:** **Orchestra members will be responsible for purchasing their own shoes.** All shoes should be black – not patent leather. Girls shoes should be closed toed with 1 ½ to 2 ½ inch heels. No ornaments please. Boys should purchase black dress shoes of their choice. A typical Oxford dress shoe is always good choice. Please be sure to purchase a shoe that has room for growth so that it will be useable for the entire school year.

## Taylor High School Girl's Uniforms

- Uniform dress (provided)
- Black nylon hosiery
- Black shoes (see guidelines above)
- Minimal Jewelry (i.e. no hanging items)

## Girl's Uniform Care Guidelines

**Please follow these guidelines to increase the longevity of these uniforms.**

- The uniform dresses will be measured and hemmed for you. **Bring your uniform shoes to class during uniform week.** The dresses will be sized and hemmed with the shoe on. No further alterations are allowed. You will be charged for a new dress if you alter the original size of the dress in any way.
- The dress may be machine washed, by itself, INSIDE OUT in cold water, on gentle cycle, to avoid pilling and snagging. The dress may be tumble dried on low temperature, but it is preferred to hang dry. Promptly remove from dryer and hand, if this is done properly, pressing should not be necessary. You may press the dress with a WARM iron on a polyester setting, if necessary. Please use a pressing cloth and do not press in bottom of the hem.
- You are not required to launder the garment at the end of the year because the Taylor Orchestra Parent Association will ensure that each garment is cleaned properly for summer storage.
- You are responsible for the replacement or repair of the garment. If you are unable to repair the garment, local cleaners often can perform repairs for you. If the dress is unable to be repaired then you will be charged for a replacement.
- You are responsible for returning the dress to its original condition at the end of the school year.
- **DO NOT REMOVE ANY LABELS FROM YOUR UNIFORM CONCERT DRESS.**

## Taylor High School Boy's Uniforms.

- Full tuxedo (provided).
- Individually purchased ¼" Pleat Wing-Tipped White Tuxedo Shirt purchased through TOPA
- Black socks
- Black shoes (see above guidelines)

**For personal hygiene reasons, KISD has mandated that each boy will be required to purchase his own personal tuxedo shirt.** The boys will be measured during their orchestra classes and shirts will be ordered through TOPA. TOPA has negotiated a discount price with Al's Formal Wear for a new tuxedo shirt. These tuxedo shirts will be ordered in bulk quantity for the convenience of the students and delivered to school. The tuxedo shirts must be prepaid before ordering. The ordering deadline will be announced in class.

### Boy's Uniform Care Guidelines

**Please follow these guidelines to increase the longevity of these uniforms.**

- Tuxedo pants **MUST** be hemmed. Pants will be measured and hemmed for you. No further alterations are allowed. **Do not cut the garment in any way.**
- **DO NOT** use fuseable hem tape to hem your slacks.
- **DO NOT REMOVE ANY LABELS FROM THE UNIFORM.**
- Tuxedo shirts should be dry-cleaned or machine-washed AFTER EACH PERFORMANCE to keep them looking nice.
- Tuxedo jackets and pants **MUST** also be dry cleaned periodically. Usually one time half way through the school year is sufficient unless it becomes heavily soiled.
- You are not required to clean the tuxedo at the end of the year because the Taylor Orchestra Parent Association will ensure that each garment is cleaned and laundered properly for summer storage.
- You are responsible for the replacement or repair of the tuxedo pieces. If you are unable to repair the garment, local cleaners often can perform the repairs for you. If you are unable to repair the garment, you will be charged for a replacement. If you lose a button, replacement buttons can be purchased at local sewing centers or formal wear shop for a nominal price.

**REMINDER TO ALL THS ORCHESTRA STUDENTS:** The Taylor High School Orchestra Uniform may only be worn to THS Orchestra events. Boys may not use the tuxes for other formal occasions (i.e. Speech and Debate tournaments, to school, parties etc.) nor are they allowed to loan their assigned tux to other individuals.

**REPLACEMENT COSTS:** In the event that a given item listed below is lost or damaged, the student/parent must reimburse the Taylor Orchestra at the listed price. All prices are subject to change during the year

#### **BOYS**

Tux Jacket	\$90.00
Tux Slacks	\$45.00
Cummerbund	\$15.00
Bow Tie	\$10.00
4 Tux Studs (Buttons)	\$ 5.00
Wooden Hanger w/ Pant Bar	\$ 5.00
Missing Buttons-Each	\$ 2.00

#### **GIRLS**

Dress	\$95.00
Wooden Hanger w/ (foam cover)	\$ 5.00
Garment Bag (Long)	\$35.00
Missing tags	\$25.00
Garment Bag (Short)	\$25.00