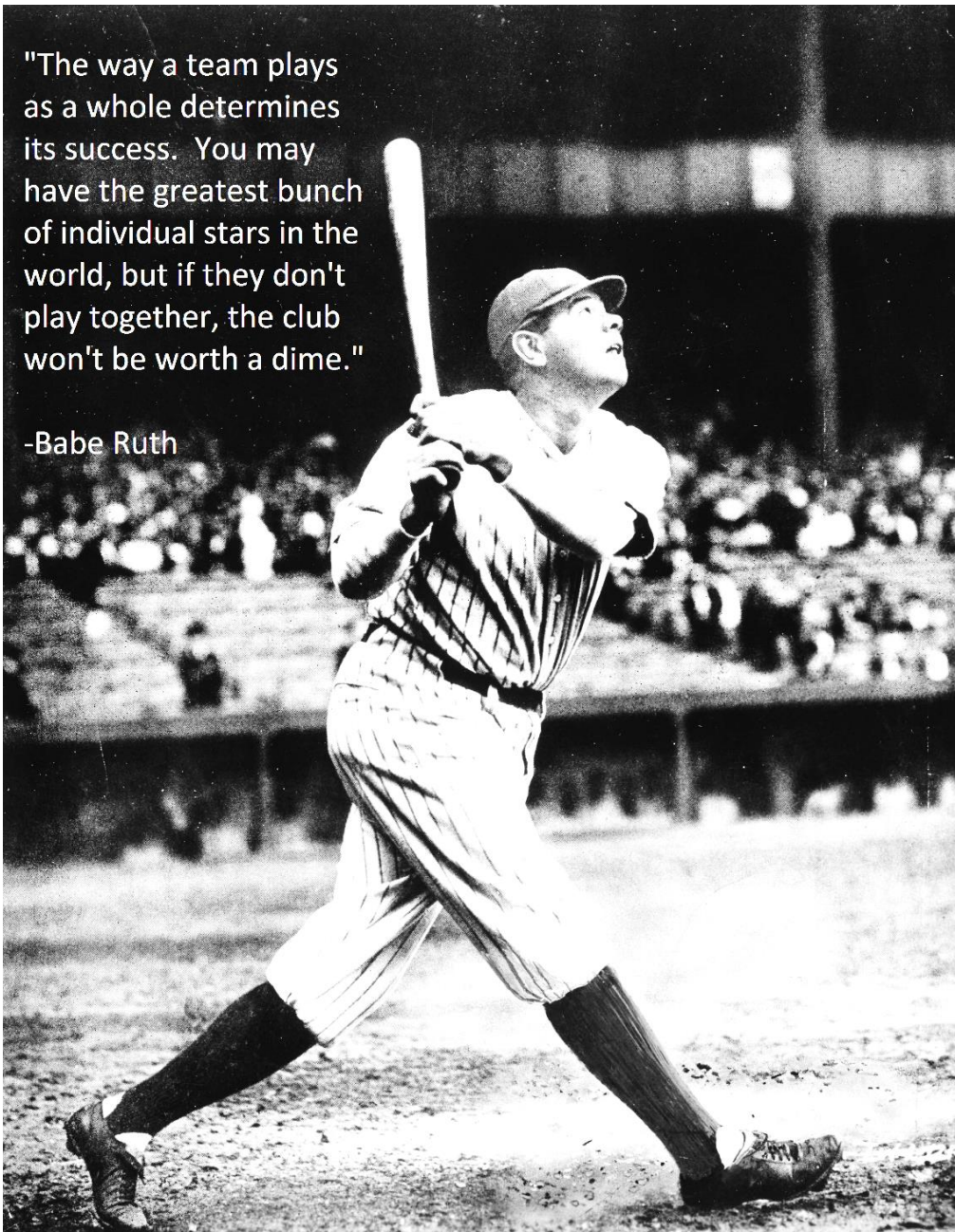


*Gifford Middle School Orchestra*  
Handbook 2019-2020

"The way a team plays  
as a whole determines  
its success. You may  
have the greatest bunch  
of individual stars in the  
world, but if they don't  
play together, the club  
won't be worth a dime."

-Babe Ruth



Dear Students and Parents,

Welcome to the Gifford Middle School Orchestra! Whether you are a returning student, a new member, or a parent or guardian, you are a vital part and will play an important role in the success that we will strive for this year. My request is that all of us approach each day with a great *attitude* and strong *effort*.

Parents, please encourage your child to practice his or her instrument on a regular basis, and when they are ready, have them to perform for friends and family. From scales to exercises to solos, when practicing, students should aim to:

- Produce beautiful Tone (IN TONE)
- Perform accurate and true pitch (IN TUNE)
- Maintain precise rhythm and pulse (IN TIME)
- Play creatively with expression (IN TOUCH)

Please take the time to review the policies, procedures, and calendar in this handbook. The final page must be signed by both student and parent and returned to Mr. Shuping by Friday, August 23<sup>rd</sup>. Also, please take the time to visit the updated orchestra web site for further information at [www.verobeachorchestra.com](http://www.verobeachorchestra.com).

I am excited to be at Gifford Middle School and to see where the year takes us. I know that together we will create beautiful music. Please feel free to call or e-mail me at any time during the school year. My contact information is at the bottom of this page. If you are utilizing a school instrument, please remit payment as soon as possible with a \$75 check made out to Gifford Middle School or with cash.

Sincerely,

Mark Shuping  
Orchestra Director  
Gifford Middle School  
4530 28<sup>th</sup> Ct.  
Vero Beach, FL 32967

**Important Orchestra Contacts:**

VBHS Phone: (772) 564-5458

Mr. Shuping's e-mail: [mark.shuping@indianriverschools.org](mailto:mark.shuping@indianriverschools.org)

[www.verobeachorchestra.com](http://www.verobeachorchestra.com) – Check for information, an updated calendar, documents, files, and more. There is a section dedicated to the GMS Orchestra program.

# HOW TO BE AN OUTSTANDING PLAYER

## PLAN

Develop a flexible plan which establishes priorities and helps you act thoughtfully and knowingly.

**Desire to be successful.**  
Set short and long term goals.  
Revise and redesign. Determine what needs work. Budget time to achieve your goals.

## PRACTICE

A well-prepared part is something you bring to rehearsal – not something you develop in rehearsal.

Nobody knows what you cannot play better than you.

**Take action to be successful.** Physical activity. Build muscle and musical memory. Repetition. Develop your **craft**. Develop consistency. Work on what you cannot play. Use a metronome.

## REHEARSE

You do not come to rehearsal to learn your part. You come to learn everyone else's.

Doing things together that cannot be done alone.

Directed listening and adjusting. Discover the composer's intent. Listen critically. Search for the implied meaning. Solve group problems. Evaluate during the process. Ensemble is the audience.

## PERFORM

Present a gift that comes from the heart and inspires the soul.

Culmination of study and experience.

Spontaneous creation. Focus and target attention. Non-stop energy flow. Learning is more intuitive. Self-monitored listening and adjusting. Formal environment with outside audience.

## Goals and Expectations:

The goal of the Gifford Middle School Orchestra Program is to provide a comprehensive orchestra performance experience. We will perform a wide array of music consisting of orchestral repertoire, terminology, techniques, and composers. Playing in the orchestra will enhance your technical development on your individual instrument while teaching you the essentials of quality musicianship. You will learn about musical time periods, their composers, and the stylistic traits of different genres. Each member of the orchestra is expected to contribute their musical skills to the best of their abilities. Because an orchestra is a team of musicians, strong leadership, individual responsibility, and appropriate rehearsal etiquette is expected at all times. We will be successful if every member follows these *five simple rules*:

- **Always exhibit appropriate rehearsal etiquette.** Students will be held to the highest standards of attitude and behavior. Disrespect shown to peers, directors, guests, and audiences will not be tolerated. Behavior infractions will be dealt with by the director, parents, and if necessary, school administration.
- **Be on time to daily rehearsals and concerts.** Remember that to be early is to be on time, and to be on time is to be late. As a musician, you need time to unpack, tune, and warm up before rehearsals and performances start.
- **PRACTICE.** It's *our* performance on the line, not yours. Please do not waste valuable rehearsal time because you haven't practiced your part.
- **Follow the attendance policy.** Scheduling conflicts must be communicated with the director as far in advance as possible.
- **No gum, food, or candy in the Orchestra room or PAC. Chairs, stands, instruments, and music will be put up following each class and rehearsal. No horseplay in the buildings.**

*Discipline:* Discipline issues will be handled in accordance with the GMS discipline policy.

## Grading:

Grades will be determined from the following criteria:

- ♪ Individual performance skills (scales, excerpts, and musicianship projects)
- ♪ Active participation and proper materials present and utilized
- ♪ Practical application of repertoire (rehearsals and performances)
- ♪ *Accent* assignments

## Instruments:

Students are responsible for their instrument at all times. There are a limited number of school instruments available for rental for a \$75 instrument maintenance fee. Any damage or loss incurred to the instrument by the student will be the student's responsibility. At the end of the school year, the instrument will be inspected for damages or loss, and the appropriate amount will be assessed. If necessary, a bill for the damages will be mailed to the user's home.

However, I highly recommend that students rent from a reputable music store. Most music stores do a rent-to-own program and allow you to put the money accrued towards the purchase of either the rented instrument or a "step-up" instrument. Even if your child does not continue playing after high school, you can always sell the instrument to regain some of your initial investment.

Please consult Mr. Shuping or another teacher before purchasing an instrument. Resources are listed on the website for instruments. Just as there are many things, places, and makers that you would avoid when purchasing a new car, there are many things to avoid when purchasing a string instrument.

## Instrument Care:

String instruments are only made out of wood! Please handle them carefully. Instruments should not be left in a car for any period of time. If the instrument gets too hot, the varnish will boil and the instrument then becomes stuck to the case. If it gets too cold, the wood will crack. Both of these problems are expensive to fix. Avoid having to pay for this by not leaving the instrument in the car for any period of time for any reason. Keeping the instrument away from an air vent or drafty windows/doors is also good.

- ♪ Purchase rosin, a cleaning cloth, and a good quality set of spare strings
- ♪ Bows should be rehaired at least once every 12-18 months
- ♪ **Violins and Violas:** You must use a shoulder rest
- ♪ **Cellos and Basses:** You must use a rock stop or strap
- ♪ A metronome, tuner, and a music stand are highly recommended for home. There are plenty of free metronome apps!
- ♪ **Wipe off the strings and body of your instrument after playing every day.**
- ♪ High quality strings are a must! Dominant, Helicore, Spirocore, and Evah Pirazzi are examples of good quality strings. Also, *strings should be changed once per year.* Fresh strings will greatly improve the tone quality of your instrument. **Please do not buy strings from Amazon. There are many fakes out there designed to look exactly like the brand you normally buy. Only buy from reputable places such as Shar Music or Southwest Strings.**

## Sheet Music:

Students are responsible for all music distributed to them (originals and practice copies). Number the measures in your part, and bring your music, book, folder, and a pencil to every class, rehearsal, and performance.

## Private Lessons:

Private lesson teachers tailor a regimen that is specific to your developing needs as a musician. Students enrolled in private lesson study accelerate their musical development and become better players. If you need help finding a good private lesson teacher, ask the other students in your section or see the director for recommendations. You can also find a list and contact information on the Orchestra website.

## Attendance Policy:

- **Attendance at all rehearsals and concerts are mandatory.**
- Excused absences must be preapproved, except for a medical or family emergency.
- A follow-up note, signed by a parent and/or doctor, is required for excused absences.
- Appropriate concert attire must be worn at concerts, including shoes, or you will not be permitted to perform, resulting in an unexcused absence.
- Musicians who are not musically ready for a concert may be asked to “sit-out” and will be required to complete a make-up assignment of the teacher’s choosing.
- Full performance credit will be given only to those students who arrive no later than the assigned call time, perform at the required performance standard, dress in accordance with the assigned code, behave in a professional manner, and remain in attendance until the completion of the performance.

### Excused absences from a performance include:

- Death in the family
- Serious illness
- Observance of religious holidays
- Circumstances that are cleared by the director in advance

### Reasons NOT accepted as excused:

- Detention, suspension, family or personal vacations, sports or other activities outside of school (leagues, etc), attending another concert, sporting events, parties or other entertainment events, forgetting, minor ailments.

**NOTE: Concert attendance accounts for a large portion of your quarterly grade. An unexcused absence from a concert will automatically lower your grade.**

**The performance schedule** is given in this handbook and is posted on the Orchestra website. Mark ALL of these dates on your family calendars and agenda books immediately. You are receiving these dates early so you can plan all activities, doctor and dentist appointments, family vacations, and other events accordingly. Students involved in other school related activities need to check practice schedules, game/playoff schedules, etc. in order to take care of any potential conflicts AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. Most of the time, these conflicts can be resolved as long as they are noticed early. There are certain, specific circumstances in which I may excuse a student from an after school rehearsal because of a school related activity, pending all appropriate and reasonable venues for resolving the conflict have been exhausted to my satisfaction and in a timely manner.

## Concert absence notification:

If you are going to be absent from a performance because of an excusable reason listed above, I must be notified *prior to the performance*, even if you are absent from school that day. I have done my best to arrange the Orchestra schedule around major school activities already on the calendar. If conflicts do arise, students must communicate their conflict in writing and should be cleared at least 24 hours in advance except in the case of an emergency. This ensures that I will be able to fill the holes and reconfigure parts as needed. Call me at school or send an e-mail to let me know. If I am not notified, your absence may be considered unexcused. Makeup assignments will be required to receive credit for work missed.

## Concert Attire:

**Male:** Black dress pants, black dress button-down shirt, black socks, all black shoes

**Female:** Black pants or long skirt (must reach ankles), black blouse, all black shoes

**Acceptable Jewelry:** Stud earrings only. Fine necklace with a single pendant or pearl necklace. Only fine or thin metal single bracelet. Studs and cuff links for the tuxedo shirt.

**Unacceptable Jewelry:** Large earrings, hoop earrings, drop earrings, and any other large flashy jewelry. Plastic bracelets and snap bands are banned as are large chain necklaces or multiple pendants.

## Seating:

Orchestra is a unified, team effort, and all students, no matter where they sit, are equally important. Everyone is a “starter.” Stands may rotate within all sections for specific pieces, daily rehearsals, or performances throughout the year. Periodic performance assessments may alter seating. A permanent seating change may be made because of persistent talking and/or poor rehearsal etiquette.

## Orchestra Trips:

These are all considered a privilege, and students must meet all performance, attendance, and behavior expectations in order to take part. They must also meet the minimum eligibility requirements as set by the school district. Students must behave in the most professional manner and follow all directions set forth by the director and chaperones.

## Solo & Ensemble MPA:

Solo & Ensemble Music Performance Assessment is a valuable experience for students to perform for a professional adjudicator who provides written feedback. All students who have played for at least one year are expected to perform a solo and are encouraged to also prepare an ensemble (duet, trio, or quartet). You will prepare a classical solo in its entirety. Consult with Mr. Shuping about appropriate literature. I recommend memorizing the piece. You must provide the judge with an original part (no photocopies) of your music with the measures numbered. If your piece has accompaniment, you must perform with an accompanist. **You are responsible for contacting and paying your accompanist.** If your piece is not memorized, you must also use an original part (no photocopies). See addendum for the Solo & Ensemble form, which is due on Oct. 24. MPA is Nov. 9.

## Financial Obligations:

Throughout the year, there will be a few expenses not covered by the school district that will come up. Most of these are optional activities. However, parents should be aware of the possibility. Below are some activities with their anticipated costs:

- All-State Auditions (\$25) – Optional
- Solo & Ensemble MPA (\$12 + accompanist fee)

### Addendums:

1. Orchestra calendar
2. Solo & Ensemble form
3. Accent assignments
4. Living Room Concert form
5. Instrument Pick-up Pass
6. Turn-in sheet to sign

### Parents – a few hints to help your child succeed in Orchestra:

- Encourage your child to practice and commend them for jobs well done
- Ask questions about their schoolwork and Orchestra
- Make sure their instrument is well cared for and brought to class each day
- Expose your child to a wide variety of music, including classical concerts
- Encourage your child to perform for family and friends
- Help your child build a personal music library
- Arrange private lessons for your child
- Become involved with other Orchestra parents and volunteer at events

**Volunteers** – Please contact Mr. Shuping if you are available to volunteer in one of several capacities to help the Orchestra students.

# Gifford Middle School Orchestra 2019-2020 Calendar

(dates are subject to change)

Visit the website regularly to see the updated calendar. Dates will be added as needed.

August 20, in class	All-State Paperwork due to Mr. Shuping
Date TBA	Orchestra Parent Meeting, at GMS Open House
September 11	All-State auditions (at Vero Beach High School)
October 24, in class	Solo & Ensemble forms due. Advanced <b>required</b> . Beginning optional.
<b>October 22, 7:00PM</b>	<b>Concert: "An Orchestral Spooktacular" – Advanced Orchestra only. 6:00PM call time.</b>
<b>November 9, time TBA</b>	<b>Solo &amp; Ensemble MPA (all students). At IRCHS</b>
<b>December 10, 7:00PM</b>	<b>GMS Winter Concert – at VBHS PAC. Advanced: 6:00PM call time. Beginning: 6:30PM call time.</b>
January TBA, in class	Chamber Music Competition entry form due
February TBA, time TBA	Middle School Chamber Music Competition (optional)
<b>March 11, time TBA</b>	<b>District MPA, at VBHS – Advanced Orchestra only. During school day. Chaperones and instrument transportation will be needed. Thanks!</b>
<b>April TBA, time TBA</b>	<b>Performance at Vero Beach Museum of Art (Possible)</b>
<b>May 7, 7:00PM</b>	<b>Vero Pops Concert – all orchestras. At VBHS. 6:00PM call time.</b>

**Be inspired by a professional orchestra in Vero Beach:**

## Vero Beach Chamber Orchestra

### Concert 1

Thursday, January 23rd 7:00-9:00

Thursday, February 20<sup>th</sup> 7:00-9:00

Tuesday, February 27<sup>th</sup> 7:00-9:00

Thursday, March 12th 7:00-9:00

Saturday, March 14th 1:00-4:00

**Concert 1 – Sunday, March 15<sup>th</sup>**

### Concert 2

Thursday, April 2nd 7:00-9:00

Thursday, April 9<sup>th</sup> 7:00-9:00

Thursday, April 16<sup>th</sup> 7:00-9:00

Tuesday, April 21st 7:00-9:00

Saturday, April 25<sup>th</sup> 1:00-4:00

**Concert 2 – Sunday, Ap. 26<sup>th</sup>**

## Indian River Symphonic Association Concerts

Concerts 7:30PM at Community Church – Tickets by calling 778-1070

Jan. 17: *Royal Philharmonic Orch*, Rachmaninoff Piano Concerto 2

Jan. 24: *Siberian State Symphony Orch*, Tchaikovsky Symphony No. 4

Feb. 7: *Brevard Symphony*, Pops Concert

Feb. 13: *Russian State Symphony*, Grieg Piano Concerto, Rach. Sym. 3

Feb. 17: *Ac. Of St. Martin in the Fields*, Joshua Bell, soloist

March 13: *Brevard Symphony*, Beethoven Symphony 6

April 3: *Brevard Symphony*, Tchaikovsky Violin Concert, Brahms Sym. 2

## Atlantic Classical Orchestra Concerts

Concerts 7:30PM at Community Church

Tickets – call

Jan. 7: Beethoven Symphony 1, Dvorak Slavonic Dances

Feb. 18: Stravinsky Pulcinella, Beethoven Violin Concerto

March 3: Piazzolla Aconcagua; Concerto for Bandoneon

April 7: Luiz Concerto for Harp, Beethoven Sym. 7

## Solo & Ensemble Form

**THIS FORM IS DUE OCTOBER 24<sup>TH</sup>.**

**PERFORMANCE IS NOVEMBER 9<sup>TH</sup>**

**DATE:** Saturday, November 9th:

**LOCATION:** IRCHS. You will be assigned a specific time slot for your performance.

**WHAT?** You will prepare a classical piece in its entirety (or a single movement) and perform it for an adjudicator, who will provide valuable feedback and assign a rating.

(Poor, Fair, Good, Excellent, or Superior. "Superior with Distinction")

"Superior with Distinction" may be assigned to truly special performances which are memorized.

- Memorize your piece!                      - Check your piece with Mr. Shuping for approval.
- You must provide the judge an original part (no photocopies) of your music with the measures numbered
- If your piece has accompaniment, you must perform with an accompanist.
- You are responsible for contacting and paying your accompanist.
- You must secure an accompanist before turning in this form on October 24<sup>th</sup>.

### Available Accompanists:

**Suzy Reiser** – All levels

[sreiser@bellsouth.net](mailto:sreiser@bellsouth.net)

772-584-9543

Please e-mail or call

**Ryan Kasten** – All levels

[Ryan.kasten@cbparadise.com](mailto:Ryan.kasten@cbparadise.com)

772-584-9744

Please call or e-mail

**Sue Lorimier** – Beginning and Intermediate

[suelorimier@gmail.com](mailto:suelorimier@gmail.com)

413-427-1441

Please e-mail

- If your piece is not memorized, you must also use an original part (no photocopies) for your performance

-COST: \$12. Make checks payable to "Gifford Middle School." Include address and phone number.

A sample judge's assessment sheet is located here:

[http://www.myfoa.org/sites/default/files/mpaforms/Solo\\_Assessment.pdf](http://www.myfoa.org/sites/default/files/mpaforms/Solo_Assessment.pdf)

-----  
STUDENT NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

SOLO TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

COMPOSER/ARRANGER NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ACCOMPANIST: \_\_\_\_\_

Your grade will be determined by your adjudicator's rating:

Superior With Distinction = A++      Superior = A+

Excellent = A                              Good = B

Fair = C                                      Poor = D

Did Not Play = F

CHECKLIST:

Piece approved by Mr. Shuping

Original music for myself, accompanist and judge

Contacted and rehearsed with accompanist

Memorized my music

Listened to recordings of my piece



# Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Solo & Ensemble MPA

## What is Solo & Ensemble MPA?

MPA stands for Music Performance Assessment and is a requirement for all orchestra students. The MPA is an all-day event that takes place on a Saturday in November. You perform a solo piece for an adjudicator (also called a judge), who gives you feedback and a rating. Possible ratings are: Superior (A), Excellent (B), Good (C), Fair (D), and Poor.

**You will be given a form that needs to be filled out and returned to Mr. Shuping.**

**To fill out the form:**

### 1. Choose a piece

- If you are not sure what level you are at, ask Mr. Shuping.
- Choose a piece that will require some work, but not something too far above your level.
- You need to choose a classical piece, or something that Mr. Shuping approves.  
(For example, "Theme from Star Wars" is not an approved piece.)
- The most commonly chosen pieces are from the Suzuki level books.

### 2. Contact a piano accompanist

- On the form, there is a list of piano accompanists who are available.
- Piano accompanists have their own rates and you are responsible for paying your accompanist.
- You may have a friend or family member accompany you on piano.
- Contact an accompanist through email, text, or phone.
- If your accompanist does not already have the piano music for your piece, you are responsible for purchasing a copy of music for them.

- For example, *"Hi! My name is Luke Skywalker and I am an Orchestra student at Gifford Middle School. I play the violin and will be playing Minuet by Boccherini from Suzuki book 2. Are you available to be my accompanist? Do you have the piano accompaniment music for my piece, or do I need to purchase it for you? How much do you charge? Thanks!"*

**After you turn in your MPA form to Mr. Shuping:**

- Purchase 2 original copies of your piece, one for yourself and one for the judge.
- The Suzuki books are inexpensive and are available at Melody Music or online.
- There may be a second book available for you to borrow at MPA...ask Mr. Shuping.
- Practice your piece BEFORE rehearsing with your accompanist. Listen to recordings on YouTube.
- Number all the measures in your piece.
- Feel free to mark bowings, finger numbers, dynamics, etc. in pencil in your book.
- Schedule a time to rehearse with your accompanist one or two weeks before the MPA.

**On the day of the MPA:**

- Dress up for the event. Wear your "Sunday best" clothes. No shorts, jeans, sneakers, flip-flops, etc.
- Arrive 15-20 minutes early and "check-in".
- Make sure your instrument is in tune and your bow has rosin.
- Borrow an extra copy of the book for your judge, if you need to.
- Someone will escort you to the classroom where your judge and accompanist will be.
- You will wait in the hallway until your turn.
- Introduce yourself to your judge and tell them what you will be playing.
- Give your judge an original copy of your piece.
- After you play, your judge will give you helpful feedback - what you did well and what you can improve on.



### ***Accent Assignment***

**(Choose one of the following each nine weeks)**

- a. Perform a Living Room Concert for your family or friends. At least one adult must be present. Perform 3-4 solos you know well at each concert. Turn in a completed Living Room Concert form.
- b. Participate on your orchestra instrument in a non-school-related musical group (church orchestra, perform in a retirement home, community orchestra, etc.). Bring in a signed note from a parent.
- c. Attend a concert and write a 250 word review of it. All concerts must be approved by your director.
- d. Write a 500 word, grammatically correct essay on the history of your instrument. This may only be done once.
- e. Write a 500 word grammatically correct essay about a virtuoso performer on your instrument.
- f. Write a 500 word grammatically correct essay about a piece of music we have/are studying.
- g. Listen to a complete disk (must be approved by director) and write a review, including summary on each tune

Living Room Concert Form  
*Please make additional copies as needed!*



Performer (student first and last name) \_\_\_\_\_

Concert Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Pieces Performed:**

Name of Piece	Last name of Composer
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____

**Signatures of Audience Members in attendance**  
(at least one adult must be present)

**Comments:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
4. \_\_\_\_\_  
5. \_\_\_\_\_

Additional

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Living Room Concert Form  
*Please make additional copies as needed!*



Performer (student first and last name) \_\_\_\_\_

Concert Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Pieces Performed:**

Name of Piece	Last name of Composer
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____

**Signatures of Audience Members in attendance**  
(at least one adult must be present)

**Comments:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
4. \_\_\_\_\_  
5. \_\_\_\_\_

Additional

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Put this pass in the front pocket of your agenda.

# Gifford Middle School Orchestra Instrument Pick-Up Pass

Students must take their instruments home for daily practice.



Please allow this student to come to the orchestra room at these times:

- before school between 7:35-7:53 for instrument drop-off
- after school between 2:43 and 2:45, or at regular release time, for instrument pickup.

Students are expected to use the most direct route to and from the orchestra room at all times (no loitering). Please notify Mr. Shuping in the case that this privilege is abused.

THANK YOU!

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

# Turn-In Sheet

This form must be detached and returned by Aug. 23<sup>rd</sup>

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have thoroughly read and understand the expectations for Gifford orchestra in the 2019-2020 school year.

We have read and understand the policies for the 2019-2020 Gifford Middle School orchestra and will abide by all guidelines through the extent of the school year.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature