

Vero Beach High School

Orchestra Handbook

2023-2024



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Florida
Orchestra
Association

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Preface

This document has been written to provide orchestra members, parents, and other interested persons with information concerning the various phases, activities, and policies of the Vero Beach High School Orchestra. The policies, rules, traditions, and guidelines set forth are in place to provide a quality musical and orchestral experience for all students. Knowledge of the contents of this document is the responsibility of the VBHS orchestra student and orchestra parent.

School rules and policies are enforced at all times when a student is directly or indirectly involved in any activity sponsored by or in the name of Vero Beach High School. The orchestra director may suspend or amend any portion of this document at any time if deemed in the best interest of the orchestra program.

The Vero Beach High School Orchestra and its Director are members of the Florida School Music Association, Florida Music Education Association, and the Florida Orchestra Association. The VBHS Orchestra operates within the guidelines and policies of these organizations along with those of Vero Beach High School and the School District of Indian River County.

I. Program Overview

GOALS AND EXPECTATIONS:

The goal of the Vero Beach High 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. 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 rules.

- **Treat yourself, other orchestra members, directors, parents and guest with respect.** 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. Speak or play your instrument only when you have been instructed to do so.
- **Attend all required events and be on time.** 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. Bring the materials you need – your instrument, music, and a pencil – and not the ones you don't – cell phones, work for another class, food/drink (except bottled water), and other distractions.
- **Follow the attendance policy.** Attendance (unexcused absence in any class) below 90% will make you ineligible to perform. Scheduling conflicts must be communicated with the director as far in advance as possible.
- **Be prepared and PRACTICE.** Have all equipment and show up to rehearsal with all music learned. Follow instructions the first time they are given and mark your music without being asked.
- **Clean up** after yourself and take care of all personal and school equipment.
- **Participate** in fundraisers and stay current on all orchestra financial responsibilities.
- **No gum, food, or candy in the Performing Arts Wing or PAC. No horseplay in the buildings.**

PARENT EXPECTATIONS:

It is the responsibility of every parent and guardian to support the policies outlined in this handbook. Each parent should ensure their student attends all required orchestra functions and practices their instrument or routines daily. Both the parents and the orchestra director should present a united front in positive support of the orchestra program. Parents are also strongly suggested to volunteer as a chaperone or in some other manner. It is strongly suggested to volunteer one orchestra event.

STUDENT CONDUCT:

Conduct of each orchestra member must be exemplary in the areas of citizenship, adherence to rules, and traditions of the orchestra and school. Orchestra members are constantly on display and each member must always be aware of the importance of the impression they make on others. Any infraction or incident discredits the orchestra and school as a whole.

Below are general good conduct principles of orchestra:

- **Social Networking:** Orchestra members are expected to refrain from posting any information on social networking sites that may cast any discredit upon the Orchestra. Doing so can result in serious consequences. All orchestra members are required to sign the Social Media Contract prior to the start of each school year.
- **Bullying or Hazing:** Any form of bullying or hazing is unacceptable and will result in consequences. All orchestra members are required to sign the Bully and Hazing Contract prior to the start of each school year.
- **Illegal Drug and Substance Use:** Any use of illegal drugs/alcohol is unacceptable and will result in consequences. As per Vero Beach High School policy, students are subject to random drug testing. Please refer to the SDIRC Student Code of Conduct. All orchestra members are required to sign the Random Drug Testing Consent Form prior to the start of each school year.

Students in high school are expected to use reasonable judgment in their actions and avoid conduct that is unsafe. Students should refrain from any action that may damage school or personal equipment. Students who violate the orchestra and school expectations of good conduct may be subject to consequences. The Indian River County School Code of Conduct and Vero Beach High School Code of Conduct are in effect for all orchestra functions.

ORCHESTRA MEMBERSHIP:

The orchestra program is open to all students at Vero Beach High School who demonstrate respect for others, responsibility, desire, proper attitude, conduct, and the ability to be a member of the orchestra. Students desiring membership are required to audition for placement.

Students enrolled in the co-curricular courses Orchestra I through VI constitute the orchestra program at Vero Beach High School. These courses are year-long commitments with students receiving elective credit. Schedule changes out of these classes during the course of the academic year are not allowed.

Students are placed in ensembles and assigned parts by audition, evaluation of membership, and instrumentation needs. Students may be reassigned at the professional discretion of the director. Students may be suspended from participation in any ensemble for any reason as deemed by the director to be in the best interest of the orchestra.

Membership and renewal of membership in orchestra is contingent upon the student being in good standing at the end of each academic year.

Dismissal from Orchestra: On a rare occasion a student may be dismissed from orchestra for any action that:

- Cast serious discredit upon themselves and the orchestra as a whole.
- Undermine or jeopardize the orchestra's goals, mission, and activities.

- Place the safety of students or others at risk.
- Grossly violate the SDIRC Code of Student Conduct.

GOOD STANDING:

The term in good standing refers to a student who is a current member of the orchestra, academically eligible, has fulfilled the terms of the orchestra contract, and is fully active (day 1 of school through day 180) and participating as a committed member of the orchestra. Students who have been chronically absent from both orchestra and academic classes, after school rehearsals or performances are not considered to be in good standing.

AUDITIONS:

Auditions are generally held near the latter part of the 2nd semester each year. Audition results are used for grading, ranking, determining part assignments, and ensemble placement. Audition results are final. Audition recordings (if any), evaluation sheets, mass results, and other materials related to the auditions are confidential and are not released. Individual students and their parent/guardian(s) may request a conference to review their personal audition regarding how they may improve in the future. All musicians in 9th, 10th, and 11th grades are required to audition each spring (even if they are not returning to orchestra the next year). Incoming freshman will get audition materials from their Middle School Director when it is released.

PRIVATE LESSONS:

Private lesson teachers tailor a regiment that is specific to your developing needs as a musician. Students enrolled in private lesson study accelerate their musical development and become better musicians. This in turn allows us to focus on more challenging music in class. It is highly recommended for students to take private lessons, if possible. If you are interested in finding a private lesson teacher, ask the director for recommendations.

SEATING:

Every member of the VBHS Orchestra is incredibly important. It takes everyone to be on the same team in order to make great music. Seating will not be in rank order. Chairs will not be a reflection of scores or progress. Students will move around the ensemble regularly in class as there are different experiences and challenges from all angles of the orchestra set up. Concert seating will also move around each concert and will be determined by many factors. All students are important, appreciated, and vital members of the orchestra.

II. Policies and Procedures

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Class Attendance Policy (Orchestra & Academic) - Students are expected to attend both orchestra and academic classes daily. Any student who does not attend at least 4 of their 7 classes in a single school day may, at the discretion of the orchestra director, lose participation privileges at after school rehearsals or performances. Additionally, students who do not regularly attend school may be subject to attendance consequences imposed by Vero Beach High School and the School District of Indian River County.

Chronic absences in both orchestra and academic classes immediately prior to upcoming performances may, at the discretion of the orchestra director, result in the student not performing.

Consistent class attendance is being present in class 90% or more school days counting from day 1 to the most recent day of the school year.

Chronic class absence is being absent (regardless of reason) from a class or school day 10% or more of the 180 school days comprising the school academic year.

Rehearsal Attendance Policy

All rehearsals are MANDATORY! The minimum expectation is 100% attendance.

Any student with chronic absences from after school rehearsals prior to an upcoming performance may, at the discretion of the director, not be allowed to perform.

Absences from a non-school hour required orchestra activity are classified as either approved or unapproved.

Approved Absences:

1. The reason for the absence must meet the below listed criteria.
2. A Pre-Arranged Absence Form has been submitted 7 days prior to a rehearsal.
3. In the event of sickness or emergency, an Emergency Absence Form has been submitted within 24 hours of the student returning to school. Additionally, the student or parent has contacted the orchestra office within 24 hours of the absence.

Please note: Approved absences for reasons other than approved school activities require a makeup assignment to be completed for academic credit. Makeup assignments must be completed within 10 days of the absence.

Unapproved Absences:

1. The reason for the absence does not meet any of the Approved Absence Criteria OR it appears on the criteria list for Unapproved Absences.
2. The student has not submitted the Pre-Arranged Absence Form OR the Emergency Absence form and followed the instructions on each form.
3. Consequences of unapproved absences include the following:

For each Unapproved Absence from a rehearsal, the student will be assigned after school detention to be served on the next immediate weekly after school detention day. Failure to attend the after-school detention may result in an Administrative Referral.

Please note: Students may complete a makeup assignment to receive academic credit for the absence. Makeup assignments must be completed within 10 days of the absence.

Performance Attendance Policy

There are few acceptable reasons for missing a performance. Every student is a vital member of the orchestra and absences negatively affect those around them more so than the student who is absent.

All performances are MANDATORY! The minimum expectation is 100% attendance.

Approved Absences:

1. The reason for the absence must meet the below listed criteria.
2. A Pre-Arranged Absence Form has been submitted 21 days prior to a performance.
3. In the event of sickness or emergency, an Emergency Absence Form has been submitted within 24 hours of the student returning to school. Additionally, the student or parent has contacted the orchestra office within 24 hours of the absence.

Please note: Approved absences for reasons other than approved school activities require a makeup assignment to be complete for academic credit. Makeup assignments must be completed within 10 days of the absence.

Unapproved Absences:

1. The reason for the absence does not meet any of the Approved Absence Criteria OR it appears on the criteria list for Unapproved Absences.
2. The student has not submitted the Pre-Arranged Absence Form OR the Emergency Absence form and followed the instructions on each form.
3. Consequences of approved absences include the following:

For each Unapproved Absence, the student will be assigned two 30 minute after school detentions to be served on the next two immediate after school detention days. Failure to attend the after-school detention may result in an Administrative Referral.

Please note: Students may complete a makeup assignment to receive academic credit for the absence. Makeup assignments must be completed within 10 days of the absence.

Approved Absences (Rehearsals & Performances) - Below is a list of Approved Absences (provided absentee procedures have been followed):

- Death in family.

- Personal Illness - The student is expected to have a doctor's note stating the student's inability to participate.
- Extenuating circumstances (one time only) or circumstances relating to a personal or family emergencies may be considered for approval on an individual basis. A parent should contact the orchestra directors explain the circumstance.
- Participation in VBHS school athletic or other competitive teams and other Performing Arts Department organizations. Absences for these activities may be approved at the discretion of the orchestra director. Field trips or similar activities will be considered at the discretion of the orchestra director. Students must follow all absentee procedures in order for the absence to be considered approved. Students are expected to complete make-up assignments for each absence in order to avoid the loss of academic credit. Absences not made up within 10 school days will be not be given academic credit.

Unapproved Absences (Rehearsals & Performances) - Below is a list of Unapproved Absences:

- Non-emergency doctor appointments
- Club meetings
- Birthday celebrations
- Driver's license appointments
- Vacations during the school year
- Community affairs
- Dual enrollment college class
- Work
- Non VBHS musical organizations rehearsals/performances Absences to attend club meetings, team practices, or similar events without prior permission (i.e. Pre-Arranged Absence Form) from the directors will not be approved. Students are expected to complete make-up assignments for each absence in order to avoid the loss of academic credit. Absences not made up within 10 school days will be not be given academic credit.

Absentee Procedures - The following is the procedure for being absent:

1. For Pre-Arranged Absences (i.e. you know ahead of time that you will be absent):
 - a. A Pre-Arranged Absence Form must be submitted 21 days prior to a performance and 7 days prior to a rehearsal.
 - b. The student must speak with the Orchestra Director when submitting this form.
 - c. Submission of the Pre-Arranged Absence Form does not guarantee approval.
 - d. Failure to follow procedures may result in the absence being deemed unapproved.
2. For Emergency Absences (i.e. sickness or sudden death in the family)

- a. A parent must notify the Orchestra director of the situation by phone or e-mail prior to the absence or within 24 hours after the absence.
- b. The student must submit an Emergency Absence Form within 24 hours of returning to school.
- c. Submission of the Emergency Absence Form does not guarantee approval.
- d. Failure to follow procedures may result in the absence being deemed unapproved.

The Importance of Attending Rehearsals and Performances:

One of the main factors affecting a student's progress is consistent playing time on their instrument. One of the consequences of being absent is the loss of playing time and the opportunity to build muscle memory, consistency, and endurance. Additionally, every student has an important role in the music making process. Student absenteeism makes it difficult for others to effectively rehearse. When students are absent from after school and class rehearsals, they are solely responsible for learning and mastering all concepts and information covered during the rehearsal. Additionally, students are accountable for missed playing time in both rehearsals and performances.

Participation in Non-Orchestra Activities:

Students are encouraged to participate in other school activities. Every possible effort is made to make allowances for students active in VBHS athletics, academic organizations, or other worthy VBHS activities. Schedule conflicts with orchestra and other activities are unavoidable from time to time. We are generally not able to work around non VBHS activities.

Dual Enrollment Collegiate Classes must be scheduled around the orchestra calendar. When scheduling college classes, remember that the Symphony rehearses every Thursday the spring semester. For spring sectionals, the schedule varies. Please communicate (in advance) with your college professor and let them know of your conflicts. *Everything can be resolved with time.*

All parents, students, coaches, adult sponsors, etc. must understand that participation is shared on a reasonable basis allowing for quality participation in both orchestra and the other activity. In the event of a conflict with an orchestra performance, the orchestra performance must be of prime consideration.

When conflicts arise with other VBHS activities, the following steps are to be taken:

- Parents and students should notify all concerned parties of the problem WELL IN ADVANCE. Students should file a Pre-Arranged Absence Form at least 21 days prior to a performance and 7 days prior to a rehearsal.
- All adults involved should meet to find a solution.
- In the event an agreement over the resolution of a conflict cannot be reached, a meeting with the VBHS Principal is required. In the event the VBHS Principal or other administrator is not available the decision of the orchestra director is final.

STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO ATTEND FESTIVALS, MPAs, OR MAJOR CONCERTS, EXCEPT FOR IN THE INSTANCE OF AN UNRESOLVABLE SCHOOL CONFLICT.

Working Students:

If a student accepts employment, they must have an understanding with the employer that they will schedule the student's work schedule around the orchestra schedule. It is the student's responsibility to provide a copy of the orchestra schedule to their employer. Work will not be accepted as an approved reason for being absent. Every effort will be made to provide adequate advanced notice for called rehearsals and other orchestra events.

Promptness:

Being late to orchestra activities is not acceptable. Being on time means the student is prepared and in place for a rehearsal or a performance at the designated start time. It is suggested that the students arrive 15 minutes in advance of the starting time for rehearsals. Unapproved tardiness of 10 or more minutes may result in the student not being allowed to participate in the activity. Additionally, any student who is late 5 or more times per 9 weeks grading period may lose performance privileges.

VBHS 90% Attendance Policy:

To be eligible to perform with the orchestra, students must attend at least 90% of their academic classes. Any student who falls below 90% attendance will lose performance privileges. Additionally, students who are under 90% attendance may not travel with the orchestra to any away performances. Students may be asked to help move equipment or do some other type of service. Any student who has lost performance privileges is expected to wear the required uniform of the event.

During concert season, 90% attendance must be cleared 24 hours in advance of the start of the performance.

Please note that the VBHS Administration updates or clears 90% attendance NOT the orchestra director (orchestra director does not have the authorization).

DISCIPLINE:

Level I – Misconduct (resets at the beginning of each 9 weeks)

The following actions or behaviors are considered violations of the student conduct expectations:

- Unapproved or excessive tardiness
- Cell phone policy violation
- Food, gum, or drink at inappropriate times or places
- Improper handling of instruments, equipment, items or property not belonging to you
- Locker infractions

- Disruptions
- Dress code violations
- Breaking posted orchestra room rules

Consequences:

- First Occurrence – Warning
- Second Occurrence – 2nd Warning
- Third Occurrence – After school detention or service assignment
- Fourth Occurrence – Parent contacted and the student will lose participation privileges for the remainder of the activity or be sent home
- Fifth Occurrence – Administrative referral and the student is considered no longer in *good standing*. The student will not be allowed to perform or participate in any orchestra activity until the behavior is resolved.

NOTE: Any student who is not able to participate in any required orchestra activity will be given an alternate assignment for academic credit.

Level II – Misconduct

The following actions or behaviors are considered Level II violations of the student conduct expectations:

- Rudeness to staff, leadership team, chaperones, other students
- Defiance of authority
- Destructive behavior - conduct

Consequences:

- First Occurrence – After school detention or service assignment assigned
- Second Occurrence – Parent contacted and the student will lose participation privileges for the remainder of the activity or be sent home
- Third Occurrence – Administrative referral and the student is considered no longer in *good standing*. The student will not be allowed to perform or participate in any orchestra activity until the behavior is resolved.

NOTE: Any student who is not able to participate in any required orchestra activity will be given an alternate assignment for academic credit.

Level III – Misconduct

The following actions or behaviors are considered a Level III violation of the student conduct expectations:

- Any clear or suspected illegal act or conduct

· Social media actions such as cyber bullying, threats, and inappropriate texting of illicit materials or photos

- Gross disrespect
- Gross Defiance of authority – noncompliance
- Gross rudeness, crass remarks, behaviors, or profanity
- Abuse and damage of instruments, uniforms, equipment, accessories, or school facilities
- Bullying, harassment, hazing, threats
- Fighting, loud arguing, out-of-control behavior
- Reckless conduct and endangerment of others or oneself
- Tobacco, alcohol, or drugs
- Theft
- Misconduct on trips
- Willful disobedience or noncompliant behavior
- Objectionable or inappropriate items at orchestra activities or on trips
- Acts that cast discredit and embarrassment upon the orchestra and school

The above-mentioned actions and behaviors are serious and may result in the student receiving an immediate administrative referral and be subject to consequences of the SDIRC Student Code of Conduct. Students may be deemed no longer in good standing and immediately suspended from all orchestra activity. Certain infractions from the above list may also require notification of law enforcement and may constitute dismissal from the orchestra program (even if the situation is a first occurrence). In the event of any additional or repeat behavior that listed as a Level III misconduct, the student will be considered noncompliant and unwilling to conduct themselves appropriately and will be dismissed from the orchestra altogether.

Any student who commits a misconduct from the Level III list at any after school hours activity (on or off campus) or on a trip will be isolated and immediately suspended from all orchestra activities. School administration and parents will be notified as soon as possible. Law enforcement may be contacted. Parents will be requested to pick-up their student as soon as possible or grant permission for them to return home by whatever means may be deemed appropriate and practical. Students not able to be picked up or not able to return will remain isolated and suspended from the group and under the supervision of staff or chaperones for the remainder of the orchestra activity.

LOSS OF PARTICIPATION PRIVILEGES

In the event a student does not meet the expectations outlined in this handbook, they may lose participation privileges.

Rehearsal & Performance

- Students are to sit in an area designated by the orchestra director for the duration or remainder of the rehearsal.
- Any student who is not participating in a concert performance should sit in a designated seat in the audience.
- Students who have lost participation privileges for concert performances should wear the designated uniform for the performance.
- Students who lose participation privileges will receive partial academic credit for the rehearsal or performance. Any student wishing to earn full credit must complete a makeup assignment.

GRADING POLICY:

Academic grades in the VBHS Orchestra are determined by rubric. Rubrics are adjusted each grading period. In general, grades are based on the following:

Preparation & Professionalism:

1. Students are expected to be consistently present, focused, and actively participating in music making or other class activities.
2. Students are expected to consistently have their instrument, accessories, music with folder, and pencil at each rehearsal.
3. Students are expected to consistently demonstrate musically responsible ensemble skills.

Classwork

1. There will be 1 to 2 graded class assignments per week in class (outlined below and above)

Musical Performance Skills:

1. Scales
2. Etudes and Exercises
3. Rehearsal and Performance Repertoire
4. Play offs/assessments Musical Performance skills are assessed by music performance play-offs.

Assessments are rubric based and assess the following areas: Tone, Intonation, Note Accuracy, Articulation, Time-Tempo, Rhythm, Dynamics, and Musical Expression.

Rehearsals and Performances (that occur beyond the school day or school week):

1. Students are expected to be consistently present and on time for the activity, focused, and actively participating in music making. Professional deportment and etiquette is expected.
2. Students are expected to consistently have their instrument, accessories, music with folder, and pencil at each rehearsal or performance
3. Students are expected to consistently demonstrate musically responsible ensemble skills and performance professionalism.

4. Students are expected to be appropriately groomed and follow the required attire guidelines for the rehearsal or performance.

Late Work and Make-Up Assignments

Students absent from class are responsible for any information, assignments, or rehearsal repertoire missed. It is the student's responsibility to ask the director for and complete make-up work. All late work must be submitted by the last day of the 9 weeks grading period.

All absences from after school rehearsals and performances must be made up. Make Up assignment procedures are published at the beginning of each semester. Make-up assignments are due within 10 calendar days of the absence or return to school. Make up assignments for absences occurring within the last 10 calendar days of the 9-week grading period are due no later than the last day of the 9-week grading period.

UNIFORMS:

· Orchestra members will be assigned uniforms during the two months of school. Each student who uses a school-owned uniform is responsible for any loss or damage to their uniform. Each student is responsible to cover their activity fee, which helps insure the continued life and upkeep of their uniform.

· Any items not stored at school are the responsibility of the student who must keep them clean, in good repair, and ready for use.

· Accessories to the uniform (shoes, socks, etc.) are the financial responsibility of the student.

· Lost or damaged items shall be replaced at the student's expense. Any student who fails to properly care for or properly put away any uniform or uniform component is subject to consequences.

Uniform Description:

Gentlemen

- Tuxedo pants
- Tuxedo jacket
- Black bow tie
- Wing tipped tuxedo shirt
- Cuff links and studs (student provides)
- Long black socks (student provides)
- Concert black shoes (purchased from VBHS)

Ladies

- Long black dress
- Concert black shoes (purchased from VBHS)
- Long black socks (student provides)

Performance Jewelry and Make-up:

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.

Hair

- Well groomed
- Red hair elastics or clips must match hair color
- Red ribbons (thin ¼ ")

Make-up

- Natural
- No fingernail polish (clear is ok)
- No dirty fingernails
- No Glitter

Fingernails:

Students must keep their fingernails at a short length so as not to impede correct string playing technique. Student musicians who wear long or acrylic fingernails cannot be successful as musicians on a string instrument. Playing any of the string instruments requires the musician to use his or her fingertips on both hands. The end result is that the student with long fingernails or acrylic nails will not be able to progress properly and the student's technique will be severely hampered. Fingernails that are too long create a physical restriction to musical growth and development. Because of this, the student's weekly evaluation grade and any playing tests grades may be lowered due to incorrect left hand technique. If there are questions about length, please contact the director.

INSTRUMENT CARE, EQUIPMENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

Students are responsible for their instrument at all times. When not in use, your instrument must be locked in its locker. There are a limited number of school instruments available for rental for a \$75 instrument maintenance fee. Please pay your instrument fee to "VBOB" or use the website, <https://vbhsorch.square.site/s/shop>. 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.

Please consider renting 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.

Muni Strings - 433 W New England Ave D, Winter Park, FL 32789

<https://www.munistrings.com/>

[\(407\) 951-6256](tel:(407)951-6256)

Atlantic Strings - 1379 W New Haven Ave, Melbourne, FL 32904

<https://atlanticstrings.com/>

[\(321\) 725-4161](tel:(321)725-4161)

Please be careful of where you purchase an instrument. While online deals with places like Amazon, Facebook Marketplace, or Wish seem great, the instruments are usually poor quality. These instruments are difficult to tune and do not stay in tune for long. They also make it difficult for any player to make a quality sound. String instruments are difficult enough to learn, so the least we can do is find an affordable quality string instrument that is easy to tune and makes a good tone when played correctly. If you need help in purchasing a quality instrument, please contact the director.

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 a year
- **Violins and Violas:** You must use a shoulder rest
- **Cellos and Basses:** You must use a rock stop or strap
- A metronome and a music stand are highly recommended for home. There are plenty of free metronome apps!

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.**

Equipment

The following items are required for all orchestra classes:

1. Rosin
2. All violin and viola players **must have a shoulder rest**
3. All cello and bass players **must have a rock stop**
4. Spare set of strings
5. Tuner
6. Pencil
7. Black 1 inch 3 ring binder or black folder to hold supplements and worksheets
 - Loose leaf paper in your binder/folder

CELL PHONE POLICY:

All school policies regarding cell phones apply to all orchestra activities during school hours. Students may use cell phones at orchestra activities outside the normal school day as follows:

- During breaks
- Free time
- Other as approved by the Directors or Chaperones
- On busses as approved by the Directors or Chaperones

Cell Phones may not be used as follows and must be turned off and out of sight:

- During any rehearsal, class, or classroom extension
- After lights out curfew on overnight trips (emergency OK)
- Any organized group activity of the orchestra
- Any performance
- Any lecture, tour, or special meeting

Cell phone use and possession will be restricted for the group or for individuals when used irresponsibly or when the use of or possession of cell phones distracts from orchestra activities or compromises the safety of the group or individuals. Upon notice from the orchestra director students may be required to deposit their cell phones in a cell phone collection bucket until the end of an activity. It is strongly recommended that cell phones NOT be carried along on orchestra trips, and it should be clearly understood that violations of cell phone policies and the resulting consequences will be fully enforced.

TRAVEL POLICY:

In order to be eligible to travel off campus with the orchestra, a student must be an orchestra member in good standing.

- All students are required to travel to and from all events with the orchestra. Exceptions to this policy are listed below.

- Cars may not be driven to any orchestra activity unless school transportation is not provided, or the activity does not originate from the VBHS campus. Exceptions to the policy must be approved by the orchestra director and the school administration. In the case of an exception, the SDIRC Hold Harmless Form must be on file with the orchestra office in advance of the activity. Forms are available from the orchestra office and are also located in Charms.

- Students may be picked up at the conclusion of an off-campus activity by the parent, legal guardian, other responsible adult so designated only when the Transportation in a Family Vehicle Form has been submitted to the orchestra office in advance of the activity.

- The parent, legal guardian, or responsible adult must personally appear to the director or head chaperone prior to the student's release at the conclusion of the event.

- No student may be released to, nor may ride home with a boyfriend, girlfriend, other student, nor any non-adult. Any exceptions to this require advance approval of the orchestra office or school administration. Hold Harmless forms are required to be on file if an exception is allowed.

- No student will be released until the group is formally dismissed except with prior arrangements being made with the orchestra director.

PERFORMING ARTS DEPARTMENT FACILITY POLICY:

The use of orchestra facilities before, after, or during school is a privilege. Students who abuse the facilities and its contents will be subject to consequences.

Orchestra Room/Building 4 Rules

1. Food, Drinks, Gum, and Candy are not allowed in any rehearsal hall or locker room. The first floor main hallway may be used as eating areas during second lunch ONLY.

2. Hats may not be worn during rehearsal.

3. Cell phones and other electronic devices may not be used during rehearsal.

4. Students are only allowed in the orchestra room during periods in which they have a scheduled orchestra class. Do not ask your other teachers for a pass to building four.

5. Students are not permitted to hang out in the orchestra offices, uniform room, instrument repair room/piano lab, and practice rooms. Students must have permission from the director to use the practice rooms.

6. Building 4 doors are to be closed at all times. Students are NOT to prop open doors.
7. Outside students are not permitted inside the facility except for business with the director.
8. No playing around or horseplay.
9. No playing of instruments outside the orchestra room.
10. No littering or rearranging furniture.
11. Building 4 closes at 3:00 p.m. each school day provided there are no rehearsals or orchestra activities immediately after school.
 - a. In the event of an after school rehearsal or activity, the orchestra room will close 30 minutes after the conclusion of the event.
 - b. For evening or non school day events, Building 4 will open 30 minutes prior to the start time.
12. After school hours, students may not enter Building 4 or the Performing Arts Center until the Orchestra Director is present.

Lockers

1. The following materials will be stored in the locker (items not on this list are not allowed):
 - a. Instrument
 - b. Personal folder (Freshman, Concert and Philharmonic folders should be kept in the folder cabinet)
2. Food, water bottles and any other perishable non-musical items will not be stored in the locker. Any such material found in a locker will be taken to the school lost and found or thrown away.
4. Students will not change or swap lockers with other students.
5. School owned instruments will be stored in the instrument's specified locker.
6. Instruments are to be stored in cases and cases are to be closed and completely latched in the locker, unless it is a school owned low string with its designated rack space.
7. Orchestra lockers are the property of Vero Beach High School and students using the lockers are subject to any policy established by the orchestra director and VBHS.

OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES:

Class and Concert Rehearsal Procedures -

Rehearsal time is valuable and every moment must be used efficiently.

1. Upon entering the facility, get your instrument, music, and equipment and go directly to your seat or area.
 - a. All personal belongings should be kept in lockers or in the area assigned for personal items.

- b. Cases will be stored in the lockers or under seats during rehearsal.
 - c. Cases, book bags, and other personal items are not allowed in the rehearsal hall.
- 2. When the director, staff member or appointed student leader steps in front of the orchestra, all talking and noise will cease and the students will quietly await instructions.
- 3. Rules and procedures for after-school rehearsals are the same for all classes.
- 4. Students have 3 minutes from the sound of the tardy bell to be in their seat with their instrument, music, and pencil. *Shuttle bus students have four minutes from the time the bus arrives.*
- 5. All students in each class period are required to set up the room for rehearsal each day.
 - a. The last class period of each day is required to rack all chairs and stands.
- 6. Students should use the restroom before and after class. Restroom trips during class or rehearsals should be reserved for emergencies only.
 - a. Students are permitted 1 during class restroom break every three weeks. Any student who uses their restroom break and has an emergency should speak with a orchestra director.
 - b. Students must sign out and back in when leaving for the restroom.
 - c. Only 1 student at a time may leave rehearsal to use the restroom. Restroom breaks are limited to 5 minutes.
 - d. Any student who does not follow the correct procedure will lose their restroom pass for the next 3 week period.
- 7. Prior to the start of rehearsal, only appropriate warm-up exercises or passages from the music being rehearsed should be played.
- 8. Students are expected to remain 100% engaged during rehearsal.
- 9. All equipment should be put away at the end of rehearsal.

FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS:

In order to provide the opportunities offered through membership in the orchestra, families must bear some of the expense that cannot be provided by the school or orchestra booster organization. The Orchestra Activity Fee is \$50.00 per student. Payments can be spread out over time. There are no exceptions for paying the orchestra fee and students that do not pay this fee will be turned in to obligations. Other costs include instrument rental of \$75 if you are using a school instrument. Scholarships are available to students who are in financial need.

FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES:

All fund-raising activities of and on behalf of the orchestra are sponsored by the Vero Beach Orchestra Boosters, in accordance with the fundraising policies of Vero Beach High School. The VBOB is responsible for

the organization, implementation, and accountability of these types of activities. All funds raised for and in the name of the Vero Beach High School Orchestra must be spent for the sole purpose of providing support to the legitimate activities and needs of the VBHS Orchestra.

VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES:

Students may claim volunteer hours for the following:

- Stage Crew at Middle School or other community performances in the PAC
- MPA Student Helpers
- Any other service activity approved by the orchestra director

It is the responsibility of the student to keep track of volunteer hours. Additionally, students must get their own volunteer hour sheet, fill it out, and have the director sign it.

PARENT PICK UP POLICIES:

Parent pick up from orchestra events will be approximately 15 minutes after dismissal. The director and a designated chaperone will wait with students until their ride comes. After 30 minutes, the director may call the VBHS Police Department non-emergency number and ask for a police officer to transport the student home.

III. Awards, Leadership, VBOB

AWARDS:

The purpose of the awards and recognition program of the VBHS Orchestra is to honor, reward, and recognize orchestra members who have maintained the traditions and added to the legacy of the orchestra through the achievement of excellence in performance and orchestra citizenship. Awards are earned on the basis of quality participation and performance.

In order to be eligible to receive any orchestra award or recognition at the awards ceremony, the following criteria must be met:

· A student must have been actively participating in all required activities of the orchestra for the entire 180 day school year and whose membership is in good standing at the time of the awards ceremony.

· Any student who drops orchestra, is dismissed from orchestra, not in good standing, chronically absent, or has not fulfilled the terms of the orchestra contract will NOT be eligible for any orchestra award, gift, or recognition at the awards ceremony. This policy also includes the privilege of attending the Senior Dinner and the Awards Ceremony.

The following awards are presented based on the director's professional assessment, student service, participation, and contributions to the success of the orchestra. The selection of these awards is final and not up for any discussion.

- **Top Student** - will be presented to the student who has improved the most not only in musicality but through emotional maturity, this student has grown as a person and as a positive role model.
- **Outstanding Musician** – will be presented to the student who continuously shows musical maturity and expression, even through simple exercises, they never get bored of playing.
- **Spirit Award** – will be presented to the student who exhibits the highest form of spirit for the orchestra, they are excited to participate in class every day and uses their positive light by influencing others.
- **Brightest Star** – will be presented to the student who is not only a positive role model for others but takes charge of their role in the orchestra and is willing to help anyone, they are consistently striving to be the best for themselves and the ensemble.
- **Orchestra Director's Award** - will be presented at the discretion of the director to a graduating senior student who displays outstanding service to the orchestra and outstanding musicianship.

Superlatives -

Superlative awards are voted on in class, some categories suggested by students and others by the director. These awards are meant to be lighthearted and fun, adding a bit of humor to the awards ceremony.

LEADERSHIP:

General leadership policies and procedures are listed below.

Students who are elected or appointed to the Leadership Team must meet the following requirements at the time of selection and maintain these requirements throughout their tenure as leaders.

- Must be a sophomore, junior, or senior member of the orchestra for the full school year and be considered a member in good standing.
- Must have a cumulative GPA of at least 2.5 and must have a consistent record of attendance in all orchestra and academic classes.
- Must maintain an A average in orchestra throughout the school year.
- Must have and maintain a positive attitude towards orchestra and be willing to put in the extra time required for the performance of duties.
- Must be willing to put orchestra responsibilities above other outside activities and jobs.
- Must set and maintain an excellent example for other students to follow at all times.
- Must agree in advance to be in orchestra the entire school year.
- In the event of a vacancy among the Officer Team, the position may either be left vacant or filled by the director from the list of candidates from the immediate prior leadership selection process. Any qualified student may also be appointed by the director.
- Manager or principal player vacancies may also be left vacant or filled by the director.
- Only students who have displayed outstanding qualities of character, responsibility, school attendance, and leadership during their time in orchestra and are deemed to be in good standing will be selected for leadership positions.
- In order to be considered for a leadership position, a student must have completely and correctly submitted a leadership application packet by the deadlines.

Please note: Student leaders should strive to bring dignity and honor to each of their respective positions and to the orchestra. Superior conduct and values are expected and required of all leaders at all times. Casting discredit upon one's leadership position or the ensemble places your leadership position in jeopardy.

Executive Leadership Team

Orchestra Captain(s)

Concertmaster(s)

Other Leadership Positions

The following leadership positions are appointed by the director through an application process:

Principal Players (Spring Auditions aid in determining)

Librarian(s)

Equipment Manager

Stage Manager (Stage Crew)

Uniform Manager

Secretary

Qualifications for Executive Leadership

- Students must meet the requirements listed in this handbook to be eligible for Executive Office.
- Only rising 11th and 12th grade students are eligible to audition or run for Executive Office.
- Students must have a completed Leadership Application Packet on file by the deadlines to be eligible.
- Once all application materials have been submitted and reviewed, the director will interview each candidate and then nominate a slate of candidates to run in the election.
- All nominated candidates must attend an informational meeting prior to elections.
- Candidates must sign an agreement at this meeting. Any student who does not attend this meeting or sign the agreement will not be allowed to run.
- Students who advance to the second round of Executive Leadership and are not selected are automatically nominated to run for Principal Player. The only exception is if the candidate turns the nomination down.

Election Procedures

- Orchestra Elections will take place after Executive Office Auditions.
- Only graduating seniors and students who have committed to being a member of the orchestra for the next school year are eligible to vote. All students must be in *good standing* to be eligible to vote.
- There is no absentee voting. Only students present on the day of elections are eligible to vote.
- Each candidate will present a short 2 minute speech. This speech should be about why students should vote for them and what the candidate will do for the orchestra. The speech should be in good taste, dignified, and refrain from mentioning other candidates in a negative or slanderous way. The director reserves the right to discontinue a speech that is deemed inappropriate. Additionally, candidates may be disqualified from the election.
- Candidates will answer 2 to 3 questions from the floor. At the discretion of the director, written questions may be collected prior to Election Day and the director will draw three questions (at random) for the candidates to answer on election day.
- Any candidate who is asked a question that the director deem inappropriate will be instructed to not answer the question.

· Voting is by secret ballot. Counting of votes will be done by the director and two to three adult staff members.

VERO BEACH ORCHESTRA BOOSTERS

Vero Beach Orchestra Boosters, Inc. (VBOB) is a non-profit organization whose purpose is to support the Vero Beach High School Orchestras.

Volunteers staff performances, chaperone events, prepare meals, and provide instruction.

Capital fundraising activities continue to provide instruments for the program, as well as providing for other needs such as tuxedos and orchestra dresses.

Operations fundraising provides instrument-specific coaching for students, purchases sheet music for study and performance, brings in professional clinicians to instruct the orchestra, maintains and repairs instruments, and provides student awards. In addition, VBOB raises funds to help all students to participate on trips and in competitions.

VBOB is extremely grateful to all of our parent volunteers who passionately support the orchestras, and to this special community of Vero Beach, where many friends and businesses are so loyal in supporting our students. The success of the boosters is due to the active participation of students, parents, and community.

Membership is open to all interested parents and members according to the bylaws of the VBOB. Meetings are held periodically at the call of the booster President. The Vero Beach Orchestra Boosters, Inc. is a support and advisory group. The VBOB does not determine or override school policy and is subject to oversight by the school district through the VBHS Principal, Principal's Designee(s), and the Orchestra Director.

CONCLUSION

It is our responsibility to represent the orchestra, performing arts department, school and county in the finest way possible. This is accomplished by everyone genuinely attempting to do their personal best every day. By adhering to this handbook, we will be able to hold our heads up high and promote what a fine orchestra program Vero Beach High School has to offer. This is YOUR orchestra; it will only be SUPERIOR through YOUR precise intentions.



