



Edison High School Orchestras

STUDENT & PARENT

HANDBOOK

THOMAS A. EDISON HIGH SCHOOL

5801 FRANCONIA RD

ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22310

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DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Welcome new and returning students, parents and guardians to the Thomas A. Edison High School Orchestra Program. I am delighted that you have chosen to explore a higher level of study in instrumental music. My vision for this orchestra program is not only for each student to grow to his/her fullest musical potential, but to provide a medium for students to build their character and creatively express themselves through music. Ultimately, I hope students will enjoy their musical experience, and find it to be of great value to their lives.

This handbook is a resource of information that will help guide you through a successful year in the Edison Orchestra program. Additional information will be available throughout the year via FCPS 24/7 (blackboard), periodic e-newsletters, Remind 101, and posted on the whiteboard in the orchestra classroom.

If you have questions, concerns or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me. Email is the best way to reach me and I will reply within 24 hours.

I look forward to a great and exciting year with you.

Sincerely,

Josephine L. Cofie Arrington

Orchestra Director

Phone: (703)924-8017

jlcofiearrin@fcps.edu

Office Hours: Monday & Thursday -7:00am – 3:00pm
Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday- 12:00pm- 3:00pm

ABOUT THE ORCHESTRAS

Concert Orchestra

Intermediate Orchestra (923815)

Grades: 9-12 Credit: 1

Prerequisite: attainment of beginning level skills and permission from the instructor.

This course offers instruction in the development of intermediate and advanced performing skills, including individual playing and ensemble techniques, and disciplinary skills needed for performance.

After school rehearsals and performances are required of all students as a part of the course. This course requires a student materials fee as listed in FCPS Notice 5922.

Overview of Course Content

Review/ Refine:

- Proper care and maintenance of the instrument
- Correct posture and playing position
- Correct left-hand position and finger patterns in second, third, and fourth positions
- Bow hold/facility and tone production
- Tuning by fifths and / or harmonics
- 2 octave major scales and key signatures up to three sharps/flats

Introduce/ Learn

- Correct left-hand position and finger patterns in fourth and fifth positions and higher
- Vibrato
- 2 octave minor scales and key signatures up to three sharps and flats
- Introduce musical forms, terminology, and history
- Individual and ensemble performance assessments
- Music repertoire up to VBODA Standard grade level four (IV)

Chamber Orchestra

Advance Orchestra (923915)

Grades: 9-12 Credit: 1

Orchestra Calendar

At the beginning of each school year, students are given a calendar of all the orchestra activities scheduled for the year. These activities include required rehearsals and performances, as well as optional fundraisers, and enrichment opportunities that students would like to participate. Students are strongly encouraged to frequently

Prerequisite: Successful audition (and recommendation of instructor)

Students in this course form the representative string performing group for Thomas A. Edison High School. Emphasis is placed on the development of technical, ensemble, and disciplinary skills necessary for refined rehearsals and performances both in and out of school. Based on successful completion of sequential concepts for each level, students will continue as specified in course level. After school rehearsals and performances are required for all students as a part of this course. This course requires a student materials fee as listed in FCPS Notice 5922.

Overview of Course Content

Review/ Refine:

- Proper care and maintenance of the instrument
- Correct posture and playing position
- Bow hold/facility and tone production with regards to various musical styles and time periods

Introduce/ Learn

- Correct left-hand position and finger patterns:
 - Violin/ Viola-- 5th position and higher
 - Cello/Bass-- thumb position and higher
- Three octave major and minor scales in key signatures of three sharps/flats or more
- Music notation:
 - Violin- 8va (octave above)
 - Viola – treble clef
 - Cello/Bass- tenor and treble clef
- Student assessment of ensemble performances
- Study of musical forms, terminology and history
- Music repertoire up to VBODA standard grade level six (VI) and above.

refer to the calendar to organize their personal schedules to prevent future conflicts. Any changes to dates, times or locations will be communicated as soon as possible.

After School Assistance

Students may stay afterschool for help from the orchestra director. Arrangements must be made with the director at least one week in advance. Late bus transportation for students is available on Mondays and Thursdays. Other transportation arrangements should be made on the days that bus transportation is not available.

The following materials are required for orchestra:

- Instrument
- Instrument Accessories: rosin, extra strings, cleaning cloth/ fabric, mute, shoulder rest (for violins/ violas), rock stops and/ or adjustable anchors
- Performance Attire

It is recommended that students have a music stand and access to a metronome to use for practice at home.

Orchestra Program Fee

Edison Orchestra students are assessed a materials fee annually. The fee for students new to the Orchestra program is \$90, and the fee for returning orchestra students is \$25. This fee covers the costs of performance attire, strings, and instrument accessories required for students throughout the year (excluding instrument rental).

Students who participate in the Free or Reduced Lunch program are eligible to receive assistance with this Orchestra Program Fee provided they complete both the Consent to Share Information and Request for Benefits/Services forms. Copies of these forms can be provided by the orchestra director should you need them.

Instruments & Accessories

Students are responsible for obtaining an instrument and bow in good working condition and the accessories needed for use in class and for performances. There are several options suggested below to guide parents and students in obtaining these necessary items:

Music Stores	There are many local music stores who rent/ lease or sell instrument to young string players. Consult the community business directory or the orchestra director for store locations.
Cello/ Bass Rentals	<p>To avoid any restrictions of carrying a cello or bass to school each day. Students are given the privilege of renting one from the school to be used in class all year. These instruments are not to be taken home except by the approval of the director. Students must have an instrument at home to practice.</p> <p>Fee: \$92/ year (not shared) \$46/ year (shared) <i>Please contact the director to obtain an instrument rental form.</i></p>
FCPS Rental	<p>Students, who have applied for and receive free or reduced price lunch, are eligible to rent an instrument through the FCPS <i>Instruments For All</i> program.</p> <p>Fee: \$20/ year <i>Please contact the director to obtain an instrument rental form.</i></p>
Violin/ Viola Rental	<p>Edison has a limited number of violins and violas of select sizes that are offered to students who have difficulty acquiring an instrument to use for class.</p> <p>Fee: \$92/year <i>Please contact director to discuss instrument availability.</i></p>
Accessories	Instrument accessories and supplies are made available through the orchestra program.

Folders, Method Books, Sheet Music

Music folders will be issued to store method books and music assigned to each student throughout the school year. Students are responsible for maintaining these items in good condition. A fee will be charged for any items issued that are lost or returned in a condition unacceptable for further use.

Performance Attire

Students are required to wear standard uniform attire for every performance. This is an important component for the stage presence and appearance of an ensemble.

Formal Performance Attire:

Female

Black concert gown

Black or nude hosiery

Black dress Shoes

Male

Black dress shirt

Black dress trousers

Black Windsor Necktie

Black dress socks

Black shoes

Necklaces and large/long earrings are not to be worn with the formal performance attire. Small stud earrings are permitted. Casual sandals or athletic footwear is not permitted to be worn for performances.

Informal Performance Attire:

Edison Orchestra T-shirt

Denim, Black, or Khaki pants/skirts (determined by the director per performance)

Students will be fitted for and issued concert gowns, concert shirts and trousers, neckties, and t-shirts through orchestra program. Students may purchase any part of their uniform to replace any that has been outgrown or damaged.

All concert gowns and trousers have been manufactured with the hems unfinished to allow for the lengths to be tailored to each student's height. Concert gowns are to be hemmed at ankle length, and tuxedo pants should be hemmed at "full break" (no cuff).

Instrument Storage Lockers

Students will be issued a storage locker with a combination lock to store their instruments during the school day.

Students must adhere to the guidelines as follows:

1. Instruments must be stored in a locker when not in use for class, rehearsal, or a performance.
2. Students are only to use the locker and combination lock that they have been assigned. Lockers are not to be shared unless designated by the director.
3. Students must properly secure locks on the locker at all times, regardless of whether or not there is an instrument present.
4. Lockers are to be kept clean and free of any food or drink.
5. Students are not to share their locker combination number with any one at any time.

Students will be charged fines for any lost or damaged combinations locks, and or damaged storage units.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS & GUIDELINES

An orderly and safe classroom promotes a positive environment for students to develop and attain the highest standards of music and academic achievement. Therefore specific program expectations and guidelines are in place to ensure the success of both the individual student and orchestra ensemble.

Daily Class & Rehearsal Expectations

- Arrive promptly
- Come prepared to class and rehearsal with an instrument, assigned music, pencil and school issued planner.
- Set up and be seated in your assigned section and/ or seat five minutes after the late bell has sounded.
- Cease talking and/ or practicing during tuning sessions.
- Cease all talking, and noise unrelated to the music at hand during instruction, unless otherwise directed
- Keep fingernails short to maintain proper left- hand playing position.
- Wear (or have available) clothing that does not restrict proper playing technique.
- Complete and submit all work assigned and all forms or documents distributed on or before the announced due date.

Performance Expectations

Performance is a fundamental standard of music education, and is a primary standard for instrumental music. An ensemble performance is an evaluated cumulative presentation which requires all students to be present. When one or more students are missing in a performance, this affects the presentation of the repertoire that the repertoire that ensemble has taken several weeks to prepare.

Students are expected to...

- Arrive **promptly** at the designated time with an instrument, music, and the necessary accessories.
- Wear the required performance attire as announced by the director.
- Remain quiet and seated throughout the entire performance.
- Assist in set up and break down for each performance as directed.
- Maintain standard performance etiquette.
- Leave all electronic devices outside of the performance venue.
- Display appropriate behavior that presents a positive reflection of Thomas A. Edison High School

The dates of all performances and rehearsals have been posted on the current Orchestra calendar. Students who foresee a conflict in attending a performance or rehearsal must notify Mrs. Cofie Arrington and submit an Attendance Verification form no later than eight days prior to the scheduled performance or rehearsal. In the event that a student is unexpectedly absent due to illness, family, emergency, or bereavement, the student must submit an Attendance Verification form no later than 10 days after the scheduled rehearsal or performance.

Practice Expectations

Muscle memory plays a significant role in playing an instrument. Therefore, it is essential for students to practice outside of class regularly to master repertoire and playing technique. Students who practice frequently increase their ability to play fluently and confidently in the ensemble.

Students are expected to practice a minimum of four hours a week on assigned music and technical exercises. Practice rooms are available in the music wing for students to use periodically during lunch and/ or after school.

DISCIPLINARY RULES & REGULATIONS

Orchestra Expectations

1. BE RESPECTFUL

- Treat everyone and everything in the classroom as you would like to be treated.
- Follow directions the first time they are initially given.
- Remain seated until dismissed by the director
- Leave food and drink outside of the classroom, rehearsal, and performance space unless otherwise directed by the director.
- Refrain from carrying personal conversations and remain quiet during instruction, announcements rehearsals and performances.

2. BE RESPONSIBLE

- Report to class, rehearsal, and performances on time.
- Bring all required materials to class, rehearsal, and performances.
- Complete and submit all assignments, forms, and fees on time
- Be aware of all scheduled activities, events, and performances.
- Learn, practice, and master all music that has been assigned.

All students are expected to adhere to all the rules and regulations enforced by Edison High School and Fairfax County Public Schools as outlined in the FCPS Student Rights & Responsibilities (SR&R).

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

1. Warning
2. Conference between student and director. Parent/ guardian notification. Detention may be possible.
3. Phone call or conference between parent/ guardian and director.
4. Referral to Administration

GRADING POLICY

Quarterly Grades

Students will receive a grade each quarter reflecting the achievement of music standards established by the Fairfax County Public School Program of Studies and state of Virginia.

GRADING STANDARDS			
<u>MASTERED</u> <i>Grade equivalence: A, A-</i> <u>Demonstrates:</u> Consistency Precision Accuracy Superior understanding, and mature application of content	<u>ADVANCED</u> <i>Grade equivalence: B[±], B</i> <u>Demonstrates:</u> Proficiency Diligence Excellent understanding and progressive application of content.	<u>INTERMEDIATE</u> <i>Grade equivalence: C[±], C</i> <u>Demonstrates:</u> Sufficiency Good understanding and some basic application of content.	<u>NEEDS IMPROVEMENT</u> <i>Grade equivalence: D[±], D, F</i> <u>Demonstrates:</u> Major Inconsistency Poor understanding and application of content.

GRADE COMPOSITION			
55% Individual Skill		45% Ensemble Skill	
Technical Proficiency Assessments	Individual performance assessments will be administered minimum of 2 times a quarter on the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intonation • Left hand position and fingerings • Rhythm(tempo and precision) • Tone (sound production) • Bow (Hand position, articulation, direction, and placement) 	Weekly Ensemble Grade	Students will receive points each week of class and for each scheduled rehearsal. These points reflect student's progress in aural skills and ensemble concepts. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blending & Balancing tone • Matching Pitch • Synchronizing rhythm, tempo, bow direction and articulation • Following standards conducting patterns, and queues for tempo, dynamics and phrasing.
Written Assignments and Quizzes	Quizzes, practice assignments, and written work will be assigned to reinforce skills and concepts. Examples of these assignments include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Music theory, history, and vocabulary worksheets and quizzes • Music performance critiques and evaluations (individual or ensemble performances reflections which outline specific practice procedures and content. 	Repertoire Mastery Assessments	Students will be assessed on excerpts of assigned repertoire studied in class.
		Ensemble Performances	An ensemble performance is the final presentation of the repertoire studied (Similar to a unit test)

A five-point assessment rubric will be used for all individual performances assessments, daily ensemble/rehearsal and ensemble performance grades.

ASSESSMENT RUBRIC				
5 Consistently (Always demonstrates)	4.9-4 Usually (Most often demonstrates)	3.9-3 Sometimes (Occasionally demonstrates)	2.9-2 Seldom (Infrequently demonstrates)	1.9-1 Rarely (Does not demonstrate)

(Grading continued)

GUIDELINES FOR MAKE-UP/ LATE ASSIGNMENTS & REASSESSMENTS

Late Assignments:

-If a student is absent on the day a written assignment is due, the student may submit the assignment the following day of class without affecting their grade.

-Students with pre-arranged absences are expected to make arrangements to submit assignments prior to the announced due date to avoid any grading penalties.

-Late assignments must be submitted no later than one week prior to the end of the grading quarter to receive a grade of 80%

Individual Performance Reassessments:

Students may retake a technical proficiency and/or repertoire assessment twice after the initial day of the assessment. Reassessments must be pre- arranged to take place afterschool. Reassessments must be completed 3 days prior to the end of the quarter.

FINAL GRADES & PERFORMANCE EXAM

Students will receive a final grade which reflects their overall achievement for the year. The final grade will be an average of all four quarter grades and a culminating performance grade.

The culminating performance assignment will require all student to prepare and an etude and scales individually, and sight read an excerpt of repertoire. Students in the Chamber (advanced) Orchestra will be required to prepare perform a solo accompanied by the orchestra, or participate in a performance outside of the required school performances in addition to the individual performance assignment previously mentioned. District honors auditions; pit Orchestra for musical theatre productions, spring trips, Solo & Ensemble Festivals, and studio recitals are some of the examples of performances can fulfill the requirement for Chamber Orchestra students. Students must consult with the orchestra director to verify their performance choices.

ENRICHMENT OPPORTUNITIES

There are numerous opportunities for students to take their instrumental playing experience to a higher level. Information on all of the enrichment opportunities described below is available through the orchestra director.

VBODA NORTHERN VA SENIOR REGIONAL ORCHESTRA

- A full symphony orchestra (a large ensemble consisting of string, winds, brass, and percussion) open to students in grades 9-12 in the VBODA (VA Band and Orchestra Directors Association) Northern Region who are enrolled in their school band or orchestra program.
- Students are selected by audition in September
- One weekend (Thursday night, Friday & Saturday) in November is scheduled to rehearse and perform one concert under the direction of a guest conductor.
- Students selected for regional orchestra become eligible to audition for All-Virginia State Orchestra.

VBODA ALL DISTRICT JUNIOR/ SENIOR ORCHESTRA

- Junior District Orchestra is open to students in grades 7-9 who are enrolled in their school orchestra program.
- Senior District Orchestra is open to student in grades 9-12 who are enrolled in their school orchestra program.
- Students are selected by audition in October.
- One Weekend (Thursday night, Friday & Saturday) in January is scheduled to rehearse and perform one concert under the direction of a guest conductor.

VBODA DISTRICT 10 SOLO & ENSEMBLE FESTIVAL

- Students perform prepared repertoire before a qualified judge to receive constructive comments and a rating.
- Students can perform a solo, or in a small ensemble of two or more students.
- Students who receive a superior (1) or excellent (2) rating for their performance are awarded a medal.

ANNUAL SPRING TRIP

- Students participate in an ensemble that travels outside of the northern Virginia area to compete in a music festival, perform at a public venue, and or participate in a workshop.
- A fee is required for participation. The total cost includes festival or workshop registration, transportation, lodging and attractions
- Students rehearse after school.

PRIVATE LESSONS

- Students receive individual music instruction from a master teacher in the community.
- Students develop their individual playing skills through technical exercises and standard solo repertoire.

EDISON PIT ORCHESTRA

- An ensemble of various string and band instruments that provide live accompaniment for musical theatre productions.
- The ensemble prepares the music in rehearsals after school, including 1 or two Saturdays.
- The ensemble rehearses for four weeks up until the performance.
- There are four to six performances over two weekends.

COMMUNITY/ YOUTH ORCHESTRAS

- There are various string and full orchestras in the Northern Virginia/Maryland/ D.C Metropolitan area.
- Orchestras generally rehearse once a week in the evenings.
- Membership may or may not require an audition; and may or may not require a membership fee.

ORCHESTRA SEATING

Where a student sits within an ensemble will involve the use of various ensemble skills. Students who sit in the front row develop the skills to lead their section. Students who sit in rows beyond the first row learn to develop their aural skills to listen and synchronize their playing

Students will rotate seating when a new set of repertoire is distributed. Seating is generally arranged in three ways:

- Playing test on excerpts from the repertoire being studied. Students demonstrating musical fluency, strength and mastery sit toward the front and on the outside of the stand.
- Violin players will switch between the first and second violin parts through performance assessments and or by the informed discretion of the director.
- Periodic rotation with in each section.

EDISON ORCHESTRA AWARD POINTS

Students receive points for participating in various orchestra related events or activities throughout the year. These points recognize the capacity in which students represent Edison high School through their initiatives and achievements as a musician and as a member of the orchestra. Students are awarded a music pin, Edison varsity letter, bar, and/or honorary plaque according to the total number of points accumulated at the end of each year.

Event/ activity	Points	Descriptions/ Examples	Award Level
Orchestra Member	20	Enrolled in either intermediate or advanced orchestra at Edison	120 Music Pin
Section Leader	10	Principal chair of each section	
Audition for District/ Regional/ State Orchestra	20 ea.	Points given for each audition for placement in District 10 honors Orchestras, Senior Regional, and/ or All Virginia State Orchestra.	
District/ Regional/ State Orchestra Event	20 ea.	Points given when selected and participated in District 10 honors Orchestras, Senior Regional, and/or All Virginia State Orchestra.	250 Varsity Letter
Private Lessons on Orchestra instrument	20	One –on- one instruction with professional instrumentalist outside of school	
District 10 Orchestra Performance Assessment-Superior(I) Rating	20	Orchestra ensemble adjudicated performances	
District 10 Orchestra Performance Assessment-Excellent (II) Rating	10		
Solo & Ensemble Festival – Superior(I) Rating	20 ea.	Individual or small ensemble adjudicated performances.	375 Honor Bar
Solo & Ensemble Festival—Excellent (II) Rating	10		
‘A’ Average per year	20	Final Grade Mark	500 Eagle Honor
Summer Music Camp	10	JMU-Spring String Thing, FCPS Institute for the Arts, etc.	
Youth Symphony Orchestra	20	American Youth Symphony, Prince William Youth Orchestras, etc.	
Orchestra Officer	10	President, vice President, Secretary, Historian, Librarian	700 Honors Musician Plaque
Fundraising Participation	5 ea. (minimum)	Product sales/ services	
Extra performances – School related	5 ea. (minimum)	Spring trip, pit orchestra community performances, etc.	

STUDENT LEADERSHIP

There are several opportunities for orchestra students to develop their leadership skills throughout the year. Some leadership positions are director appointed, while the other positions are appointed by the member of the orchestras. Below are the various positions and their duties. Please speak with the director if you are interested in a leadership position.

Class Position <i>Selected by director</i>	DUTIES
Concert Master/Mistress	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prompts tuning at the beginning of class and at all concerts• Leads ensemble warm-up on scales• Leads rehearsal in the event there is a substitute
Assistant Principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Performs the duties in the absence of the Concert Master/ Mistress
Director's Assistant	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Distributes and collects forms, music, etc. from students• Posts daily class agenda on the board• Sets up director's stand or piano, and or technology equipment as needed• Takes attendance at rehearsals and performances
Librarian	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Organizes, maintains the orchestra music library• Catalogues all music into the computer database

ORCHESTRA OFFICER <i>Elected by Students</i>	DUTIES
E.H.S.O President	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students Representative for the Orchestra in the Edison school community events (concerts, pep rallies, etc.)• Solicit ideas and organize activities, and events for the orchestra• Conducts E.H.S.O Officer and orchestra meetings• Assists all officer with their duties
E.H.S.O Vice President	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fulfills the duties in the absence of the president• Responsible for communicating information to both orchestras• Assist in the organization of orchestra activities and events
E.H.S.O Secretary	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Takes written minutes for all officer meetings• Maintains Orchestra bulletin board with current announcements and information• Responsible for making announcements about concerts, news, fundraisers, and events
E.H.S.O Treasure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assists in researching fundraisers for the Orchestra• Researches costs for activities and events orchestra students wish to do (purchasing orchestra paraphernalia, etc.)• Keeps record of purchases and activity expenses
E.H.S.O Historian	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Responsible for pictures, videos, and other media displaying orchestra activities and events



Attendance Verification Form

EDISON HIGH SCHOOL PERFORMING ARTS

Director use only:
Date Received/Submitted:

Guidelines:

- Submit forms for pre-arranged absences **no later than 10 days before** the required scheduled activity or event.
- Submit form for absence verification **no later than 10 days after** the required activity or event.
- Forms without parent signature **will not be accepted**.

Student Name:

Ensemble level:

Date:

I. PRE-ARRANGED ABSENCE

Anticipated date of absence

Required event/ activity to be missed

☐ Concert

☐ Rehearsal

☐ Other required event/ activity name

II. ABSENCE VERIFICATION

(not pre-arranged)

Date of absence

Required event/ activity missed

☐ Concert

☐ Rehearsal

☐ Other required event/ activity name

Explanation of Absence

Parent Name (please print):

Parent Signature:

Date

***** Director Response Only *****

Absence Status

☐ Excused

☐ Unexcused

Grade/Points Earned

Comments:

Make-up Assignment: