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HANDBOOK

2019-2020

Welcome to the Cypress Creek Orchestra!

In this package, you will find all the pertinent information concerning our program including a calendar of events, fees sheet, orchestra policies, and other necessary documents. We are requesting a fee of \$90 in order to cover orchestra expenses such as a t-shirt, solo & ensemble entry fee, dry cleaning and alterations of uniforms, a Smart Music account, and a banquet ticket for each student. Please read this package thoroughly. Also, please fill out and sign all required pages (see the paperwork check-list on p. 10).

As we strive towards excellence, I would like to invite you to become involved with our orchestra through our “**Cypress Creek Orchestra Booster Club**” (CCOBC). The CCOBC is a 501(c)(3) non profit and is critical to the growth and success of the orchestra program. Currently we are in urgent need of more members. You can learn more about the CCOBC by circling “YES” to the question “*are you interested in learning more about the cypress creek orchestra booster club?*” on the PARENT INFORMATION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM on p. 9.

Also, if you are interested in taking private lessons through the school this year, please circle “YES” on p. 9 as well. We have half-tuition scholarships available to those who need them.

I am looking forward to a great year. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at aaron.johnston@cfisd.net or by calling the orchestra office at 281-517-6012.

Sincerely,

Mr. Johnston
Orchestra Director
www.creekorchestra.org

CY-CREEK ORCHESTRA CALENDAR 2019-2020

* Events in gray are mandatory events. Those in white are optional.

** Please visit the orchestra website at www.creekorchestra.org for an online version of the calendar

| DATE | EVENT | LOCATION | TIME |
|--------------------|---|-----------------------------------|-------------------|
| August 26 | First Day of School | Orchestra Room | |
| October 12 | Region Strings Audition | Spring Branch Middle School | 8:00 AM |
| October 10 | Fall Concert | Cypress Creek High School | 7:00 PM |
| October 26 | All State Taping (only for students trying out for all-state) | Cypress Fair High School | TBA |
| November 7 | Region Sectional (for region winners only) | Stratford High School | 6:00 PM-9:00 PM |
| November 15 | Region Clinic (for region winners only) | Cy-Park High School | 6:00 PM-9:00 PM |
| November 16 | Region Clinic (for region winners only) | Cy-Park High School | 8:30 AM – 6:30 PM |
| December 11 | Winter Concert | Cypress Creek Auditorium | 7:00 PM |
| January 23 | Side by Side 8 th Grade Concert (required for Chamber Students only) | Cypress Creek Auditorium | 4:00 PM – 7:00 PM |
| Jan. 27, 29, & 30 | Solo and Ensemble Preparatory Recitals | Cypress Creek Orchestra Room | 3:00 – 5:30 pm |
| February 7 & 8 | Solo and Ensemble | Cypress Springs High School | Individual times |
| March 4 | UIL Full Orchestra Competition | Cy Ridge High School | TBD |
| March 20 & 21 | Pre-UIL | Cy-Fair High School | TBD |
| TBD | End of the Year Trip | TBA | TBA |
| March 31 – April 2 | UIL Non-Varsity Orchestra Contest | Berry Center | All day |
| April 21 & 22 | UIL Varsity Orchestra Contest | Memorial High School/Berry Center | All day |
| May (TBD) | Orchestra Banquet | | 6:30 PM-10:00 PM |
| May 14 | Spring Concert | Cypress Creek Auditorium | 7:00 PM |
| May 28 | Last Day of School | | |

FEE SHEET

Listed below you will find the fees that you can expect to pay during the school year for different activities the orchestra is involved in. These due dates do not reflect the time of the actual event, but rather the date that the fees and entries need to be submitted. To see the dates of the events view the calendar. Some fees are optional, such as (e.g. orchestra outings & region auditions). The ones that are required are **highlighted**. Also, there may be some small optional fees that come up as the year progresses that are not accounted for on this sheet. I encourage you to make your payment **online** via our website this year, as it is easier for you and for us to account for. If you choose to pay in paper we accept Personal Checks, Cashier's Checks and Money Orders which should be made out to **Cypress Creek Orchestra Booster Club**. Do not submit the payment to the Finance Office as that is a separate account.

| Fee | Description | Fee Due Date |
|---------------------------------------|---|---------------------|
| \$90 | <u>Activity Fee</u> – covers an orchestra t-shirt, solo & ensemble entry fee, dry cleaning of uniforms, alterations of uniforms, Smart Music subscription, and the end-of-the-year banquet. <i>If financial need arises, optional payment plans can be arranged. All financial disclosures remain confidential.</i> | 9/13/18 |
| \$15 (optional) | <u>Region 27 Audition</u> – This is an optional event. Students in the Symphony and Chamber Orchestras are encouraged to participate. The actual audition is Saturday, Oct. 13 th . | 9/27/18 |
| \$30 – cash only(optional) | <u>All State Taping Session</u> – For students who have been awarded a spot with the Region Orchestra and wish to submit a taped audition for the all-state orchestra. The \$30 will be paid upon arrival at the audition. | 10/27/17 |
| \$25 - 50 (for solos only) | <u>Solo Accompanist Fee</u> – Students who sign up for a solo at Solo and Ensemble Festival will need a pianist to accompany them. An accompanist will provide two rehearsals and the performance for this fee. Students are welcome to engage their own accompanist also. | TBD |
| TBD (optional, approx = \$300 -\$800) | <u>Spring Over Night Trip</u> . – We are planning to take a over-night end-of-the-year trip out of town in March or April. Details are still being planned | TBD |

PERTINENT AND USEFUL INFORMATION

GRADING

Below are the different categories of grading, the percentage of the overall grade, and the examples of each type.

1. **Category 1: Checking for Understanding – 25%**

a. **Examples**

- i. Participation – Students will be graded on starting rehearsal on time, tuning, and following the instructor's lesson activities.
- ii. Preparation/Practicing – knowing one's individual part as marked by improvement from previous class periods. This also includes bringing one's instrument home daily for violin & viola students and having an instrument at home to practice on for cello and bass students that is well tuned and in playing condition.
- iii. Theory Assignments

2. **Category 2: Relevant Applications – 35%**

a. **Examples –**

- i. After School Sectionals – Students will be required to attend after-school sectionals during the course of the school year. Sectional schedules will be given ahead of time for 1st and 2nd semesters. Sectionals are mandatory.
- ii. Short playing tests in class or in sectionals.

3. **Category 3: Summative Assessments – 40%**

a. **Examples –**

- i. Performances – We are a performance class and spend a significant portion of our time preparing for public and competitive performances. Attendance at all three school concerts, Pre-UIL & UIL string orchestra competitions, and Solo/Ensemble Festival is mandatory. If a student is unable to fulfill the after-school performance obligations as listed in the orchestra calendar he or she should enroll in a different course. *See Field Trips & Eligibility section for ineligibility rules for competitions.*
- ii. Solo & Ensemble Festival – All students are required to participate in solo and ensemble festival in February and the preparatory recital in January. Students who are ineligible will have to make up their solo & ensemble grade via the preparatory recital.
- iii. Track Tests – Most weeks during the year students will be required to perform a playing test from their track packets given to them by Mr. Johnston. While some playing tests will be taken in class in front of their classmates, a number of these will be done on **Smart Music** at home, an internet based application that gives immediate feedback to students after recording. Smart Music does not work on a smart phone but only on laptops, desktops, and tablets. If a student has trouble using Smart Music, contact Mr. Johnston about trouble shooting or recording options at the school. Track tests are on a pass/fail basis. Students who score over a 90% on their test may move on to the next track in their packet. Students who score below a 90% will need to repeat the same the track the following week. Student progress with their track tests will significantly influence placement in the different orchestras and their chair

placement within each ensemble. See the website for instructions on how to log into Smart Music.

MATERIALS NEEDED FOR CLASS

- I. Instruments – All students will need an instrument to practice on at home. Cello and bass students can use school instruments while at Cy Creek. Violin and viola students need to bring their own purchased or rented instrument as the school does not have an inventory of these instruments. There are a limited number of school basses and cellos for loan available to those are in financial need. *Please contact your director if applicable.* The following instruments shops are extremely reputable & service our school weekly
 - a. **Fishburn Violin Shop** - fishburnviolin.com, (281) 290-4580.
 - b. **Lisle Violin Shop** - www.violins.com, (281) 396-4848.
- II. Black Binder, Track Packets, & Music - Students will be provided with a black three-ring binder in which they will house all of their music. All students are responsible to maintain their folders.
- III. A pencil!!
- IV. Uniform – *see uniform section for details.*
- V. Metronome – This can be downloaded for free on a smart phone. I recommend the Metronome+ app. You may also purchase a Korg TM-50 Combo Tuner Metronome.
- VI. Tuner – For apps on smart phones I recommend Tonal Energy which costs \$4.

STUDENT CONDUCT

- I. Students are expected to abide by all CFISD, Cy Creek High School, and Cy Creek Orchestra code of conduct standards. This applies to all curricular/extracurricular activities such as UIL performances and overnight trips. From the CFISD Code Conduct:

With the approval of the principal and Superintendent, sponsors and coaches of extracurricular activities may develop and enforce standards of behavior that are higher than the District-developed Student Code of Conduct and may condition membership or participation in the activity on adherence to those standards. Extracurricular standards of behavior may take into consideration conduct that occurs at any time, on or off school property. Extracurricular behavioral standards shall not have the effect of discriminating on the basis of gender, race, color, disability, religion, ethnicity, or national origin. A student shall be informed of any extracurricular behavior standards at the beginning of each school year or when the student first begins participation in the activity. A student and his or her parent shall sign and return to the sponsor or coach a statement that they have read the extracurricular behavior standards and consent to them as a condition of participation in the activity. Standards of behavior for an extracurricular activity are independent of the Student Code of Conduct. Violations of these standards of behavior that are also violations of the Student Code of Conduct may result in independent disciplinary actions. A student may be removed from participation in extracurricular activities or may be excluded from school honors for violation of extracurricular standards of behavior for an activity or for violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

- II. Classroom Conduct – Students will be held to the following standards. Repeated failure to comply with these standards will result in a referral to the appropriate Assistant Principal. Students will:
 - **Be Prepared**. This means they will have all their classroom materials at the beginning of class.

- **Be Punctual**. Students need to be in their seats with their instrument out on time.
- **Be Present**. This means students will be on task and engaged in the lesson.
- **Be Polite**. This means that students behave respectfully to teachers and other students in the classroom. In my classroom this means that students raise their hands and wait to be called on.

FIELD TRIPS & ELIGIBILITY

- I. Cy Creek Orchestra Field Trip Policy – Field trips and orchestra outings are a great way to bond as a team and gain outside musical experiences not available in the classroom. All students are welcome to come provided that:
 - a. Students are academically eligible. Academically ineligible students are not allowed to participate per TEA, UIL, & CFISD policies.
 - b. Students have been demonstrating proper classroom decorum and have been fulfilling their after-school orchestra responsibilities. The director may choose to restrict field trip participation for the following reasons:
 - i. Unexcused absences to major events such as concerts & competitions.
 - ii. Poor classroom behavior. This includes, but is not limited to
 1. Multiple phone calls home for frequent disruptions such as talking/playing out of turn or defiant and disrespectful behavior toward the director or other members of the orchestra.
 2. Administrative referral/referrals
 - iii. Poor attendance at after-school sectionals.
- II. UIL Eligibility
 - a. Per UIL policy students who have not maintained a 70 or higher in all of their courses are ineligible to participate in UIL competitions and events such as Solo and Ensemble Contest in February. However, due to recent changes in UIL policy students who are not passing all their class **will** be able to perform at both Pre UIL and UIL Concert and Sight Reading Competition. Students can regain eligibility at the appropriate progress report/report card. Being UIL ineligible does not exclude a student from participating in **school concerts** since a concert is part of a student's assessment in a music class, but does pertain to Region Orchestra Auditions and Clinic, Solo/Ensemble Festival, and UIL String Orchestra Contest. Help us out by staying on top of your coursework!

REMIND & OTHER INFORMATION

- **Remind**- Mr. Johnston uses an anonymous texting program called Remind to communicate with parents and students about upcoming events and assignments. Instructions for joining the different groups are listed below.
 - **Parent Orchestra Remind** - Text the message @creekorch to the number 81010.
 - **Philharmonic Orchestra** – Text the message @3philhar to the number 81010.
 - **Concert Orchestra** - Text the message @4concert to the number 81010.
 - **Symphony Orchestra**- Text the message @2symph to the number 81010.
 - **Chamber Orchestra**- Text the message @1cham to the number 81010.

- We ask that all our students keep their fingernails cut short. Long nails and/or fake nails contribute to bad hand posture and will not be allowed. Please help us enforce this rule and don't believe that the student can play "as well" with them.
- Every effort was made to give you as many dates and times ahead as possible, but dates and times may change and some opportunities cannot be foretold.

UNIFORMS

Students will be issued a formal concert uniform at the beginning of each year. We only purchase new uniforms once every 10 years, so it is imperative that they remain in good condition. It is the responsibility of the student to maintain these items throughout the school year. In order to preserve the uniforms students will dress before concerts at school and return the uniforms after the concert to the wardrobe room in the orchestra hall. **No uniforms are to be taken home!** Students will be charged for any damaged uniforms returned at the end of each year.

- Gentleman will receive a tuxedo jacket, pants, cummerbund, and bow tie but must purchase their own tuxedo shirt, black socks, and black dress shoes.
- Ladies will receive a dress/gown. Ladies are responsible for the appropriate black dress shoes. No open-toe footwear please!

PRIVATE LESSONS & SCHOLARSHIPS

Private lessons combined with regular practice dramatically improve skills and contribute to a deep satisfaction in playing one's instrument. Many of our top students take private lessons. Please consider enrolling your student in district lessons or choosing from our excellent list of local instructors. All the information for private lessons is available on the private lessons tab on the website.

Last year we were able to sponsor 5 half-tuition scholarships to students at our school. This year we plan to provide 10 such scholarships.

EQUIPMENT

A student's instrument, bow, or strings can dramatically impact his or her sound and enjoyment in playing. Incoming 9th graders should consider stepping up to a higher quality instrument and getting resized. Strings only last so long. **All violin, viola students should buy a pack of strings from the recommended list on our website and change their strings if this hasn't been done in the past year! Cellos and basses should change their strings every 1.5 to 2 years.** Please see the website under the "Other Information" tab for more details.

CYPRESS CREEK ORCHESTRA

PARENT INFORMATION & ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

****PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY****

STUDENT NAME: _____ ORCHESTRA: _____

PARENT NAME(S): _____

BEST NUMBER TO REACH:

(Dad) _____ Circle: (CELL / HOME) EMAIL: _____

(Mom) _____ Circle: (CELL / HOME) EMAIL: _____

- ARE YOU INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE ABOUT THE **CYPRESS CREEK ORCHESTRA BOOSTER CLUB?** (YES / NO)
- ARE YOU INTERESETED IN LEARNING MORE ABOUT **PRIVATE LESSONS & SCHOLARSHIPS?** (YES / NO)

PLEASE CHECK ANY AREAS FOR WHICH YOU ARE INTERESTED IN VOLUNTEERING

WARDROBE:

_____ Assist sizing students for jackets and dresses during school hours

CHAPERONES FOR CONCERTS:

_____ Help monitor before and during concerts.

COMPETITION CHAPERONES

_____ Assistance as needed, monitoring students, help with wardrobe, etc. Chaperone students on the bus to and from performances for Pre UIL and UIL Contests.

ORCHESTRA HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Please sign below:

I have read the 2018-2019 Orchestra hand book and agree to abide by the rules and procedures listed herein. I agree to support my son/daughter in his/her roles and responsibilities in Orchestra.

Parent Signature

Student Signature

Date

PAPERWORK CHECKLIST

PLEASE COMPLETE THESE REQUIRED DOCUMENTS:

___ CFISD FIELD TRIP/ HEALTH PERMISSION FORM

___ PARENT INFORMATION & ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

OPTIONAL:

___ PARENT PERMISSION FOR SCHOOL SPONSORED ACTIVITY W/O DISTRICT
TRANSPORTATION (This is permission to drive a student home from one of the events outside
the school)

FINANCIAL CHECKLIST

REQUIRED:

___ ORCHESTRA FEE-- REQUIRED OF ALL STUDENTS \$90

- Please pay online at www.creekorchestra.org or submit cash, money order, or personal checks only in an envelope with the students name & the title “*orchestra activity fee 2019-20*” written across the front. Checks and Money Orders can be made out to Cypress Creek Orchestra Booster Club. *Do not turn the payment into the Finance Office at Creek; this is a separate account!*
- **RECEIPTS WILL BE ISSUED FOR ALL MONIES COLLECTED**