

Timberwood Middle School



Orchestra Handbook

Student Name: _____
(Keep this for future reference!)

Orchestra Room: 401
18450 Timber Forest Drive
Atascocita, TX 77346
281-641-3922

Mrs. Priscilla Mika, Orchestra Director
Priscilla.Mika@Humbleisd.net

Ms. Anne Bewig, Assistant Orchestra Director
Anne.Bewig@Humbleisd.net

Welcome Letter

Hello Orchestra Parents!

Welcome to Timberwood Middle School Orchestra, where we are passionate about teaching Violin, Viola, Cello, and Bass! We are excited to work with students and make some great music and memories this school year! We strive to make orchestra a fun and safe environment where students can have fun learning their instruments and making friends. Like sports, in orchestra we work together as a team and rely on one another to be successful. All students have to do their part for the team to get the best possible experience in the class. Concerts are a fun way to showcase all of the students' hard work and new skills. We are glad that you and your child chose orchestra this year, and we look forward to an awesome school year and hope that your child will continue their love of music and playing their instrument through high school and beyond!

Musically,
Mrs. Mika
Ms. Bewig

About the Directors



Mrs. Priscilla Mika is from Washington D.C and lived in that area as she grew up being the youngest of six children. She went to college at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond Virginia and then transferred to West Virginia University (Go Mountaineers!), where she received her Music Education Degree, Magna Cum Laude. She has been teaching in Humble ISD since 1999, all of those years at Timberwood Middle School. Many of her former students are currently musicians or music teachers, including the orchestra director at West Lake Middle School.

She lives with her husband, Tim, and has four children, Douglas, Emily, Sharon, and Greg, and two (so far) grandchildren. She and her husband (also an orchestra teacher) like to perform and adjudicate music events around Houston. In her free time, she enjoys reading, cooking, hiking and camping.

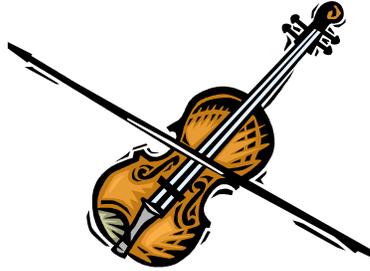


Ms. Anne Bewig is a native of St. Louis, Missouri, where she double majored in Viola Performance and Music Education at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. After graduating magna cum laude, she moved to Houston in 2014 and has been teaching in Humble ISD ever since.

When she is not in the classroom, Ms. Bewig enjoys playing viola, singing, and judging music events throughout Houston. She also enjoys hanging out with friends, watching Star Trek, knitting, and playing with her cats, Rory and Angel. She also loves to travel to St. Louis to visit her Dad and her sister, Kathryn.

Orchestra Code of Conduct

The success of all orchestra classes is determined by individual and group efforts. The discipline required to achieve this success must be of the highest standard. TMS orchestra classes are conducted in a very positive, motivating manner in which all students have the opportunity for success. Proper student behavior is expected at *all times*. One student's poor conduct affects the entire class and will not be tolerated. In addition, *HISD discipline management code, dress code, and bus rules apply on all trips*. TMS Orchestra members are expected to be respectful of bus drivers and sponsors.



Class Rules

Class rules apply when you enter the room, ***not*** when the bell rings.

1. Enter the room **with respect**.
2. Need to be in seat with instrument and supplies 90 seconds after the bell rings.
3. No playing or talking while teacher is talking.
4. No playing or talking during tuning.
5. Stay in your seat unless you have permission to leave it.
6. No food or drink **OR GUM** in the Orchestra Room.
7. No horseplay.

General Class Expectations

- Students should arrive in the classroom with plenty of time to prepare for class before the bell rings. Once the bell rings students need to be silent and within 90 seconds in their seat with all needed supplies, ready to tune.
- Leave books and other materials not related to class in the assigned cabinets.
- Raising your hand does not give you permission to speak, the teacher does.
- Students need to keep their hands, feet, and any other belongings to themselves.
- Students are not to go in the practice room, uniform storage room, library, or the orchestra office unless they have permission from Mrs. Mika or Ms. Bewig.
- Students are not to use the piano or any electronic equipment unless given permission by Mrs. Mika or Ms. Bewig.
- All other school rules still apply while in Orchestra.
- This is a yearlong commitment. Changes to your schedule at semester cannot be granted for any reason.

Orchestra Ensembles

Beginning Orchestra: *No musical experience required!* Students will learn the necessary skills to play a string instrument. The main focus of this class will be string technique, reading music, and music theory. Students already in orchestra may also join beginners on a secondary instrument. All 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students are welcome to join!

Concert Orchestra (Intermediate): Students will build on the techniques acquired in their previous orchestra classes. Students will work on a variety of challenging pieces of music and continue to reinforce reading skills, music theory, and scales. Students will be required to participate in UIL Contest. By audition only.

Philharmonic Orchestra (Intermediate): Students will build on the techniques acquired in their previous orchestra classes. Students will work on a variety of challenging pieces of music and continue to reinforce reading skills, music theory, and scales. Students will be required to participate in UIL Contest. By audition only.

Symphonic Orchestra (Advanced): This is the top orchestra at TMS. It has the most challenging music and requires the biggest time commitment and work ethic. Students will build on the techniques acquired in their previous orchestra classes. Students will work on a variety of challenging pieces of music and continue to reinforce reading skills, music theory, and scales. Students will be required to participate in UIL Contest. By audition only.

Orchestra Class Aid: 8th grade students who are third year orchestra members may apply to act as an aid in a beginning orchestra class. Students will spend class time working with small groups of beginning students to help them advance and will occasionally be asked to help with other tasks as assigned by the orchestra directors. Students must be concurrently enrolled in Symphonic, Philharmonic, or Concert Orchestra to qualify.

Fingernail Policy

Fingernails must be kept short to allow students to be successful on their instrument. They get in the way of playing when they are too long and make it more difficult; imagine trying to play basketball in high heels! Students are expected to trim their nails on a regular (weekly) basis and are not allowed to wear fake nails. Nails may be colorful, as long as they are short. This makes playing easier and more fun.

Lost Music Policy

All orchestra students are provided a free binder at the beginning of the school year to hold their orchestra music and books. Students are also provided with one free copy of each music selection that it rehearsed in class. Any student who loses their copy of the music must pay 10 cents per page to replace the lost music, similar to students who have to pay a fee to the library for materials not turned in on time.

Grading Policy

Concert, Philharmonic, and Symphonic Orchestras

Grades in these orchestras will be given in **two** categories:

Formative grades count 40% and include:

Weekly Participation/Supply Grade

Active participation in class with all necessary supplies
(personal supplies, not shared)

Points will be deducted for each missing supply item

Weekly Sectional Grade

One sectional each week after school when assigned.
(See Section Rehearsals)

Weekly Practice Log Grades

Enter practice minutes in Charms after every practice session

Minutes will be automatically calculated on Sunday at 11:59PM for a
weekly grade (see Practice Logs)

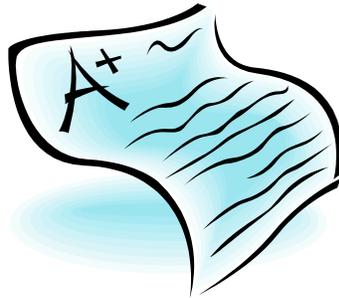
Summative grades count 60% and include:

Tests and Performance Grades

Playing and written tests over pre-assigned material

Co-curricular performances, rehearsals, and clinics

(see Absence Policies)



Beginning Orchestra:

Grades in Beginning Orchestra will be given in **two** categories:

Formative grades count 40% and include:

Weekly Participation/Supply Grade

Active participation in class with all necessary supplies
(personal supplies, not shared)

Points will be deducted for each missing supply item.

Weekly Practice Log Grades

Enter practice minutes in Charms after every practice session

Minutes will be automatically calculated on Sunday at 11:59PM for a
weekly grade (see Practice Logs)

Summative grades count 60% and include:

Tests and Performance Grades

Playing and written tests over pre-assigned material

Co-curricular performances and rehearsals (see Absence Policies)

Grading Policy (cont.)

Participation/Supply Grade Rubric:

Supplies are essential to the success of the orchestra. When one student does not have a pencil to mark in their music, the rehearsal process is distracted by their movement as they retrieve one. The same is said for their music and instrument. We read music **every day**; we use our instruments **every day**; we use a pencil to write in our music...you guessed it: **every day**! Points will be deducted for each supply item missing.

Each student starts with **20 points a day** and points are deducted from any lack of supplies that inhibits that student's participation in class. The required supplies are as follows: instrument, music binder with all music, essential elements books, PENCIL (pens and other writing implements are not accepted), short fingernails, and a Korg tuner and microphone for 7th and 8th grade students.

Practice Logs:

Students must record their practicing **for every practice session** by filling out the practice log form in Charms. On Sunday every week at 11:59PM Charms will send a report to the Orchestra Directors with the total number of minutes that the student practiced from Monday morning to Sunday night, which we use to enter their grades in the gradebook. Because this is daily submission that students know about in advance, **technology problems will not count as an excuse for not logging their practicing.**

The number of practice minutes that are required for each class are as follows: Symphonic Orchestra—210 minutes, Philharmonic and Concert Orchestras—180 minutes, and Beginning Orchestra—100 minutes during first semester starting the 4th week of school and 150 minutes during second semester. The number of minutes that students are required to practice for their class is the number of points that the practice log will be worth each week. For example: a beginning student who practices 135 minutes in one week will receive a grade of 135 points out of a possible 150 points for the week. Students who cannot practice due to injury/illness need to bring a parent note so that the Orchestra Directors can record an excused grade in the gradebook. Late submissions must be emailed to Ms. Bewig to receive credit since Charms does not allow students to go back in time to enter practice minutes.

Playing Tests:

We assess students' playing through in-class playing tests and tests that are submitted electronically through a program called Charms. All students will be required to set up a Charms account, which is provided at no cost by the district. Ms. Bewig is also available before and after school most days to help students with technology questions or to record students who do not wish to record at home. Because we give students a minimum of one week to complete playing tests in Charms, **technology problems will not count as an excuse for tests that are submitted late.** Additionally, we will only accept playing tests through Charms. Please make sure that students are being proactive about solving technology problems and submitting playing tests on time.



Absence Policy

“All ensembles perform at various concerts, community events, competitions, and select festivals which require frequent before and/or after-school rehearsals and performances. Attendance is required at all before and/or after school rehearsals and performances as part of the graded curricula.”

- Humble ISD Middle School Course Guide (pg 30)

Orchestra is not an individual sport, just like football is not an individual sport. One defensive lineman cannot block an entire opposing team, much like one musician cannot produce the sound of a large orchestra. Therefore, it is necessary that all members of the Orchestra “team” are present at all the practices and concerts to be the most successful.

Please read the following guidelines and contact the directors if you have any questions:

- 1) Email notices **from parents** to the Orchestra Directors are required for all absences to be excused. These must be sent as soon as the conflict is known, not less than fourteen days before the event. Verbal or written excuses from students are **NOT** acceptable.
- 2) **Conflicts with other TMS activities** need to be communicated with the Orchestra Directors by email from a parent as soon as the conflict is known, not less than fourteen days before the event. We will work with the other teachers to come up with a solution for the absence and let the students know what they need to do. We want to make it possible for students to participate in other school classes and activities.
- 3) **Conflicts with activities that are not school related** also need to be communicated with the Orchestra Directors in writing by email from a parent as soon as the conflict is known, not less than fourteen days before the event. These events may or may not be excused at the discretion of the Orchestra Directors. Examples of events that may be excused include, but are not limited to: family reunions/vacations that are out of town, religious events (see below), etc. Examples of events that may be unexcused include, but are not limited to: league sports (outside of TMS), birthday parties, sleepovers, lack of transportation, forgetfulness/oversleeping, etc.
- 4) **Religious holidays** or other conflicts for religious beliefs are excused if the Orchestra Directors are notified in writing by a parent as soon as the conflict is known, not less than fourteen days before the event.
- 5) In the event of **circumstances beyond the students’/parents’ control**, the parents should inform the Orchestra Directors in writing as soon as possible. Examples of events that may be excused for this reason include, but are not limited to: serious illness, death in the family, car problems on the way to an event, etc. This is the only time when an absence will be excused within two weeks of an event.

Please communicate directly with the Orchestra Directors if there are individual or unusual circumstances which may be a problem. Students with excused absences (approved by an Orchestra Director) are required to do a make-up assignment to earn their concert grade within two school days of the performance date. If a student’s absence from a performance is unexcused, the student will receive a zero for the performance and will not have an opportunity to make up the grade.

Home Practice

Home practice is expected, similar to homework in regular education classes. The difficulty of the music is selected for the orchestras based on the assumption that students will work in class and at home. The technical demands and physical requirements of producing a clear sound, accurate pitch, and clean articulation will improve if daily practice is performed. Music reading ability will also improve over time with daily home practice. Success of the group and of each student depends on individual hard work.

Parental support and guidance is essential for establishing a regular schedule for home practice, especially in the first year of instruction. Twenty minutes of practice after the first hour of homework can be a welcomed break. Many students find the time before school the best time to practice. Students and their parents need to find their “best” time for practice.

No instrument should spend the night in the orchestra room! Practice logs should be completed daily and submitted every Sunday in Charms for documentation of weekly practice grades.

Practice is more than just playing the notes: **it needs to have a goal.** Good practice is playing in tune, playing correct rhythms as well as playing with a clear tone and playing musically: **without stopping!** Students are strongly recommended to isolate 2, 4, or 8 measure sections, repeating problems areas many times until each section can be played both easily and perfectly at performance tempo. Here are some tips for efficient practice:

1. Practice where you will have minimal distractions.
2. Practice daily.
3. Begin practice where you have problems in your music.
4. Practice thoughtfully.
 - a. Set goals for your practice time.
 - b. Focus the most on things that are difficult for you.
 - c. Avoid “noodling,” giving up and playing random notes with bad posture/technique.
 - d. Demand progress.
5. Practice musically.
6. Be your most severe critic. (Don’t let it be your teacher.)
7. Relax as much as possible.
 - a. Frustration sets up “road blocks” to improvement. Take breaks when something seems overwhelming.
 - b. Tension blocks improvement. You should never feel tense when playing.
8. **Remember that everything is possible with practice.**



Instrument and Supplies

The following supplies are essential for students to have a successful learning experience in Orchestra. Each student is responsible for providing their own instrument and supplies (basses are provided by the school). If there are financial concerns with providing an instrument, please email Mrs. Mika or Ms. Bewig.

IF YOU ARE CONSIDERING PURCHASING AN INSTRUMENT FROM SOMEWHERE OTHER THAN LISLE OR FISHBURN VIOLIN SHOP, PLEASE CONSULT US IN ADVANCE OF WHAT YOU WANT TO PURCHASE. WE WANT TO MAKE SURE THAT WHAT YOU PURCHASE IS OF HIGH QUALITY AND WILL HELP YOUR STUDENT BE A SUCCESSFUL MUSICIAN.

Lisle Violin Shop
281-487-7303
Violins.com

Fishburn Violin Shop
281-290-4580
Fishburnviolin.com



These the supply packages for each orchestra. **Please label EVERYTHING with your child's first and last name.**

Beginning Violin/Viola

Essential Elements Book 1
Folding Music Stand
Cleaning Cloth
Pencil (**not pen**)
Rosin
KUN/Sumi-type shoulder rest
3-ring, black, 1" Binder (provided by school)

Beginning Cello/Bass

Essential Elements Book 1
Folding Music Stand
Cleaning Cloth
Pencil (**not pen**)
Rosin (Nyman Hartz for Basses)
24-inch stool (basses only)
3-ring, black, 1" Binder (provided by school)

Concert, Philharmonic, and Symphonic Orchestras

Essential Elements Book 2
Essential Techniques (Book 3)
Korg TM 50 (tuner)
Korg CM 200 (tuner microphone)
Pencil (**not pen**)
Pencil pouch
3-ring, black, 1" Binder (provided by school)

All Students

Klennex and hand sanitizer are optional, but greatly appreciated!

Orchestra Uniform

Informal Orchestra Uniform

The informal uniform is worn by all Orchestras during all field trips, informal concerts, and trip performances and consists of the following:

Orchestra Spirit Shirt

This shirt is not to be altered from it's original form.

Blue Jeans

Tennis Shoes



Formal Orchestra Uniform

The following is a list of attire students are required to wear during picture day, formal concerts, and other performing venues such as UIL and Solo and Ensemble.

* purchased from or provided by the school

	<u>Symphonic</u>	<u>Philharmonic/Concert</u>	<u>Beginning</u>
Male Students	Long Sleeve Solid Black Dress Shirt (with collar) Solid Black Dress Pants Solid Black Dress Shoes Solid Black Dress Socks *Maroon Tie	*Maroon Polo Shirt Solid Black Dress Pants Solid Black Dress Shoes Solid Black Dress Socks	*Maroon Polo Shirt Nice Blue jeans Nice Tennis Shoes
Female Students	Long Sleeve Solid Black Dress Shirt (no lace) Solid Black Dress Pants Solid Black Dress Shoes Solid Black Dress Socks *Maroon Cummerbund- Sash	*Maroon Polo Shirt Solid Black Dress Pants Solid Black Dress Shoes Solid Black Dress Socks or knee-highs	*Maroon Polo Shirt Nice Blue jeans Nice Tennis Shoes

Uniform Costs

Spirit Shirt: \$15

All students purchase a new shirt at the beginning of each school year. The design is different every year.

Maroon Polo Shirt: \$20

All students except Symphonic Orchestra students are required to have a polo shirt for concert attire. This design stays the same every year. We recommend buying a slightly large shirt at the beginning of 6th grade so that it can be worn multiple years.

Maroon Cummerbund-Sash and Maroon Ties: \$0

These are provided by the school to students in Symphonic Orchestra and must be returned to the school at the end of the school year. Replacement costs for lost/damaged items may be charged to students who do not return these items in good condition.

So I Signed up for Orchestra, Now What?

(Beginners)

Welcome to Orchestra! We are excited that you have decided to join us for orchestra and know there are probably many questions as your student begins their journey of learning to play a string instrument. Here is an outline of what to expect from the start of beginning orchestra:

- **Getting an instrument and supplies**
 - The first step in orchestra is to get sized for an instrument by the orchestra directors (it is not too late after the start of school)
 - Contact Lisle or Fishburn Violin Shop and set up an instrument rental and purchase the “Timberwood Supply Package” (Basses need supply package only)
 - ***IF YOU ARE CONSIDERING PURCHASING AN INSTRUMENT FROM SOMEWHERE OTHER THAN LISLE OR FISHBURN VIOLIN SHOP, PLEASE CONSULT US IN ADVANCE OF WHAT YOU WANT TO PURCHASE. WE WANT TO MAKE SURE THAT WHAT YOU PURCHASE IS OF HIGH QUALITY AND WILL HELP YOUR STUDENT BE A SUCCESSFUL MUSICIAN.***
 - Please have instruments and supply packages delivered directly to Timberwood Middle School. Lisle and Fishburn do not charge extra for this service.
- **Taking instruments home**
 - The first weeks of school, students learn the care and parts of instrument and bow so that they do not break. We also start to teach correct instrument and bow posture. It is essential to prevent injury and to establish a firm playing foundation that students learn correct posture from the beginning. Advanced techniques are not possible in later years of playing without correct posture. Student instruments are securely housed in the orchestra room the first few weeks of school. When students demonstrate that they have a mastery of correct posture (usually after about the second week of school) students will then be allowed to take instruments home. Bass students are assigned a school instrument at that time.
 - Cello/Bass students will play a school instrument during class and a rented cello/bass at home so that the large instruments do not need to go back and forth to school every day. Violin/Viola students will be assigned a cubby for their instruments, and will be allowed to drop off their instruments in the morning before school and pick them up at the end of the day.
- **Taking bows home**
 - While playing a stringed instrument, the left and right hands are performing independent movements of one another that are difficult to master concurrently. For this reason, we teach left and right hand skills separately at first to facilitate correct learning of each hand individually before placing them together. The left hand learns to play notes on the strings with correct posture while the right hand learns to hold the bow and move the bow across the open strings (no fingers down from the left hand). We will send the instruments home first without the bows.
 - Bows will be labeled with student names and stored securely in the orchestra room. Students are able to pluck the string with the right hand to play some fun tunes and learn left hand skills with the instrument. Students can also use a pencil to practice the correct posture for holding a bow separately from the left hand.
 - Once students demonstrate a mastery of left and right hand skills individually (usually around the fifth week of school) they will be allowed to take home their bows. This is one of the most exciting days of the school year!

Concert Etiquette

(All Orchestra Students)

Orchestra students work exceptionally hard to prepare for all of their performances. They deserve to have an audience that is supportive and attentive during the showcase of all of their hard work, and other audience members do not wish to be distracted during their child's performance. With this in mind, here are a few guidelines to help our performances run smoothly:

- If you arrive late to a concert or leave early, do so between selections.
- Refrain from conversation while the students are performing.
- Be sure all pagers and cell phones are in the off or vibrate position and that all watch alarms are turned off during the concert.
- If younger children become disruptive, please take them outside.
- Avoid walking in front of the group or taking flash pictures while the students are performing.
- Do not consume food or beverages during the concert.
- Please put down your phone and pay attention, the kids worked hard and want you to see them!
- Please help with stands and chairs at the end, if physically able
- Save applause for the end (and clap loudly!)



Private Lessons

(All Orchestra Students)

Private lessons are a wonderful opportunity for students to improve their playing skills individually! It is the musical equivalent of having a personal trainer. It is impossible to be “too good” at playing an instrument, just like in athletics it is impossible to be “too in shape.” The individual attention that a student receives in private instruction helps develop their unique maximum potential as a player and member of our orchestra. We recommend lessons for all students, starting second semester of beginners. Atascocita High School hosts the private studios of many local music teachers who are successful at working with young musicians. For more information, please visit their website: <https://www.humbleisd.net/Page/28045>. Mrs. Mika and Ms. Bewig can also provide recommendations to help find a teacher who would be a good fit for your child.

Solo and Ensemble Contest

(All Orchestra Students)

This event is a very important part of the student's musical education. The experience of playing solos and ensembles is different from playing in orchestra. With this in mind, we host a competition each year where students and small groups play in front of a guest judge to experience performing as a soloist and in a small ensemble. They also get invaluable feedback from a judge that listens to them as well as the opportunity to receive a medal for a superior performance.

All Orchestra students are required to learn an ensemble and a solo. These will be taught in class as part of the graded curriculum. At the competition, solos **must have a piano accompanist**. Students who cannot perform a solo at the competition (in accordance with the absence or eligibility policies) will play it during class the week before the competition with their accompanist for another music director.

Some students may arrange to be accompanied by their private teacher or other capable pianist. We will assign an accompanist to the students unless other arrangements have been made. Most schools hire a capable pianist to accompany their students for a fee. Below is a list of prices, per student, based on the difficulty of the music they perform. All music selections must be on the Prescribed Music List AND approved by the orchestra directors.

Beginning Orchestra - \$20

Class III - \$30 (intermediate, suitable for 7th/8th grade)

Class II - \$35 (advanced, suitable for advanced 8th grade)

Class I - \$40 (difficult, suitable for very advanced 8th grade)



The cost includes at least two rehearsals during class with the pianist, the pianist's time spent performing with students all day Saturday for Solo and Ensemble, as well as time the pianist spends at home practicing the music.



UIL Contest and Sight-Reading

(Concert, Philharmonic, and Symphonic Orchestras only)

This is the most important contest for orchestra students after their beginning year. It is required for all students after beginners. Students are adjudicated as a large group on three pieces that have been prepared in class, and a slightly easier piece which must be sight-read (played for the first time) to the same level of perfection as the three prepared selections. The level at which students are expected to perform is very high. Extreme preparation and diligence is required to excel in this event. Students are expected to do their parts to contribute to the success of the entire group. Please see the Eligibility Policy for more details.

Section Rehearsals

(Concert, Philharmonic, and Symphonic Orchestras only)

Section rehearsals (“Sectionals”) provide students the individual and small group specialized instruction that they cannot receive during the orchestra class rehearsal. Each section plays a different part with different technical and rhythmical demands. To address these instrumental and individual differences, sections rehearse once each week after school. For each season of the year different classes will meet for sectionals (we base our “seasons” off of what event we have coming up next, i.e. UIL, Region, etc.). When sectionals are announced or changed, we will notify you and a schedule will be sent home with your child.

Attendance is required at our weekly sectionals during the weeks that they are assigned, and students will receive a grade for their attendance. We will rehearse from 4:10 to 5:00 after school. Students are given 10 minutes from the end of school to the start of the sectional to use the restroom or call parents so that there will not be disruptions to learning once sectional begin. Cell phone use is strictly forbidden. Since these rehearsals are intended to help students prepare for upcoming events, the class rules still apply even though the school day has ended. If students are not able to attend their assigned sectional or the make-up day, an email **from the parent** is necessary to receive an excused absence (See Absence Policies).



Region Orchestra

(Concert, Philharmonic, and Symphonic Orchestras only)

The All-Region Orchestra tryout is an individual competition in which the students in this region of the Houston area compete for chairs in a highly select musical organization. By learning the tryout music required for the competition, each student gains advanced musical skills and audition experience. Students who are fortunate enough to make the Region groups will then participate in a special All-Region concert with a guest conductor.

All students in the Timberwood Symphonic Orchestra and select students from the other Orchestras will be learning the music and are strongly encouraged to try out for Region Orchestra. Please keep in mind that students involved in this process are not required to try out, however Symphonic Orchestra students are still responsible for learning the music.

We will sign up any student we feel is interested and prepared for this competition. Students and parents will be asked to sign a permission slip before the entries are made to determine which students want to be signed up for the contest. Students who are selected to participation in Region are expected to be present for all rehearsals and the region concert. Do not audition if there is a conflict with the region clinic and concert dates.

Fundraising

(All Orchestra Students)

Our Orchestra program has one fundraiser each year, and all orchestra students are welcome to participate! The money raised goes directly to the Orchestra fund and is used for any music needs, transportation to competitions and trips, and Orchestra supplies. We appreciate all efforts to raise much needed money for our program.

Details about the fundraiser, including start and stop dates, will be passed out with the calendar. Cash and Checks are accepted (please note that we are **NOT** using Charms for the fundraiser), please make checks out to Timberwood Middle School Orchestra. ***Students must collect money as they take orders.***

Donations are also more than welcome! If someone wishes to donate money please keep it in a separate envelope marked "Donations."



Eligibility

(All Orchestra Students)

UIL's No Pass/No Play does not affect Concert and Sight Reading Contest due to concert literature being considered a part of the music curriculum and not extra-curricular. HOWEVER, if a director notices that a student is struggling with performing the concert music accurately, extra playing assessments may be required to determine if the student will perform at UIL. The playing assignments will be taken from either the concert literature or a sight reading excerpt of the same difficulty level and will be assessed for pitch accuracy, rhythmic accuracy, articulation, tempo consistency and dynamic contrast.

Both school concerts and UIL Concert and Sight Reading Contest are considered part of the class curriculum. Any additional performances are considered extra-curricular, which includes Spring Trips. As a member of the Timberwood Middle School Orchestra, students are ambassadors of the school while out in public and are expected to behave in accordance with Humble ISD Policy. **Therefore, students with ISS/DAEP offenses, consistently poor classroom behavior or inconsistent sectional/rehearsal attendance, may not be allowed to participate in Spring Trips or other orchestra-affiliated events per discretion of the directors. Parents will be notified in advance.**

Spring Trip

Every year we take students on a trip that is part competition and all parts fun as a reward to enjoy for their hard work during the year. These are called festivals, where an independent company or groups of educators work in conjunction with an amusement park and nearby schools to have students compete for group trophies! Students will first travel to a local high school and perform and then later that week we go to Splashtown (beginners) or Fiesta Texas San Antonio (Concert/Philharmonic/Symphonic) for a day of immense fun. Students who do not attend the performance are not eligible to attend the fun day. **We will give out more specific information, including costs, starting in September.**



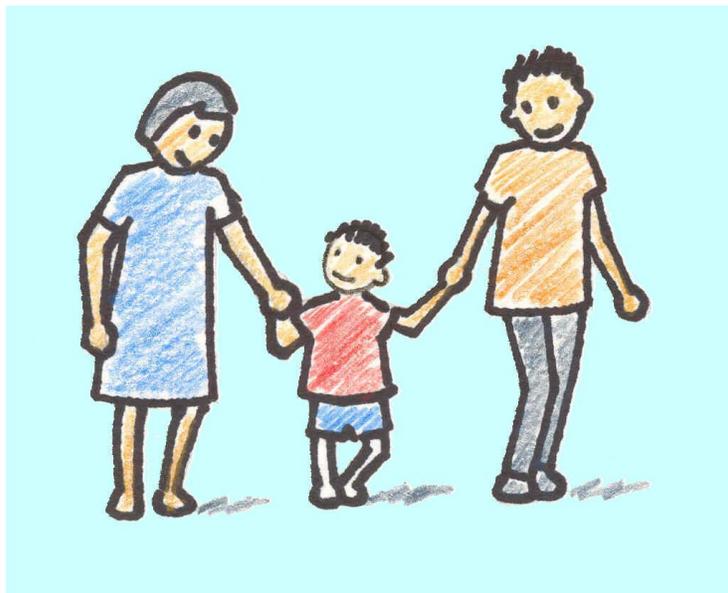
Refunds

All payments for Spring Trips will be accepted in Charms. **Refunds cannot be granted for any reason**, per district financial policy. If students becomes unable to attend the trip, we will give your child their ticket, if applicable so that you may attend the park on another date. Chaperones who cannot go on the trip will not receive their ticket; it will instead go to a substitute chaperone recruited by the orchestra directors to make sure that all students are kept safe on the trip. If a student is unable to attend a trip and their parent is signed up to chaperone, their parent will be removed from chaperoning. Please see the Eligibility Policy for details regarding trip attendance.

Chaperones

Without parent chaperones for our trips and orchestra events, we would not be able to go! We are thankful for all parent volunteers to chaperone our trips throughout the year. Please read through the following guidelines when deciding to give your valuable time to our students!

- All chaperones must sign up with Humble ISD using this link: <https://www.humbleisd.net/chaperones>. Please fill out the information you're your name as it appears on your driver's license and return the chaperone acknowledgement form electronically or on paper to the orchestra directors. Because all chaperones need to complete this process, if you are unable to attend you may not send a "substitute" chaperone, such as a spouse, in your place.
- Please make sure to check for other commitments before signing up! The directors work very hard prior to a trip to make sure students are distributed evenly into chaperone groups and there are a safe number of students for whom the chaperone is responsible. When we have a cancellation right before the trip, it can really create a lot of confusion for our students. Of course, if it's an unforeseeable event, please communicate with us as soon as the conflict is known.
- Chaperones **MUST** be a parent or legal guardian of an orchestra student.
- Parents will not be allowed to show up at the designated trip site unannounced and purchase their own ticket to walk with their child. This is due to background and safety checks. All chaperones must sign up on the trip intent form so that visitor badges can be printed. Any adult who does **NOT** have a visitor's badge is not allowed to be with our students! Again, this is for the safety of our students.
- Refunds are never issued once the tickets have been purchased, student or chaperone. Should you be unable to attend the trip as a chaperone after you have paid, your ticket will be donated to another parent who we can recruit in time to fill your spot.



Charms Office

Timberwood Orchestra is using a system of communication, testing, and financial accounting called Charms Office. This is a cloud-based system with a free interactive mobile app (**Charms Blue**) and website (www.charmsoffice.com). We will use the online testing feature for about half of our playing tests this year as well as all practice logs. We need your help keeping these records up to date to maximize this system's full capability.

Web address: www.charmsoffice.com

Download the free mobile app: **Charms Blue**

School Code: TimberwoodOrchestra

Password: The password is the student ID number (lunch number). Please do NOT change the password; click directly on the "home" icon. If there are any issues logging into Charms, please contact Ms. Bewig.



Calendar: The calendar feature on Charms is a quick and easy way for you and your student to keep up with upcoming events. It is possible to sync it to a phone calendar from the website.

Recording Studio: This feature of the app (not the website) is where students go to record themselves and submit playing tests. To submit playing tests, please log into the charms blue app, go to the "Recording Studio," and then to "Assignments."

Practice Logs: This feature works in both the Charms Blue app and at www.charmsoffice.com. Students will need to enter their practice minutes every day that they practice.

Finances: Charms makes it possible for parents to pay conveniently orchestra fees without having to send your student to school with cash or a check. We will provide this option for beginning of the year supplies, piano accompaniment fees as well as trip payments. Please note that this feature only works on the website (www.charmsoffice.com). Go to the section labelled for the payment you wish (either in the "Finances" or "Shopping Cart" section" to make and follow the online instructions. If a trip payment is not showing up or if there are any Charms questions, please contact Ms. Bewig.

Remind 101

We will be sending reminders via text messages throughout the year for each class. This is a secure way to communicate where teachers and parents/students do not see each other's cell numbers. Here is how to sign up for each class:

1 st Period-Beginners	Text the message @tmsorchp1 to the number 81010.
2 nd Period-Concert	Text the message @tmsorchp2 to the number 81010.
3 rd Period-Symphonic	Text the message @tmsorchp3 to the number 81010.
4 th Period-Beginners	Text the message @tmsorchp4 to the number 81010.
5 th Period-Philharmonic	Text the message @tmsorchp5 to the number 81010.
7 th Period-Beginners	Text the message @tmsorchp7 to the number 81010.

* Standard text message rates apply.