



ORCHESTRA HANDBOOK  
2015-2016

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## **ORCHESTRA AT WHEELER HIGH**

The Orchestra program at Wheeler High School is an exemplary program that continues to grow and flourish. The program consists of three performing orchestras. In the past 9 years, the program has grown from approximately 30 members to about 175 in the 2015-16 school year.

If current trends continue, tomorrow's adults will have more leisure time than ever before. Music educators have unparalleled opportunities to guide young people into a worthwhile use of this increased leisure time. With these opportunities come the responsibility for raising the quality of, and the standards for both listening and performance. The orchestra in the schools provides that opportunity for students to have an early involvement in music that will grow and enrich their adulthood.

The objective of the orchestra program at Wheeler High School is to provide students the opportunities to express themselves in some form of musical activity. The child who is involved in the performance of music today is the future adult who will be interested in and will enjoy music, ensuring its vitality in our culture.

In addition, a sense of personal pride and satisfaction in meeting new and different challenges can be experienced through membership in orchestra. Playing a stringed instrument is a very personal endeavor and a means of expression that requires commitment of your physical, emotional, and intellectual abilities. The discipline and skills you learn from your membership in orchestra will serve you well in the years to come, regardless of what you choose to do.

The Orchestras of Wheeler High School welcome you and your family into this exciting and unique opportunity. Each member is vital to the continued success of the Orchestra program. Through commitment to hard work and team effort, we will be able to achieve even higher levels of success and self-fulfillment - together.

## **COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**

### **PHILHARMONIA ORCHESTRA**

The Philharmonia Orchestra is a performing group made up of freshmen and upperclassman orchestra students. Focus in this group is technique and performing literature up to a Grade IV level by the end of the year. (Music levels are graded from 1- 6, 1 being the easiest and 6 being the most difficult.) Students in this ensemble may choose to participate in additional playing opportunities such as Honor Orchestra, Solo/Ensemble, area youth orchestras, and All State auditions. Field trip opportunities may be available as well. Although private lessons are not required, participation in private lessons enhances the playing abilities of those who participate.

**Out of school rehearsals and performances are required.**

### **SINFONIA ORCHESTRA**

The Sinfonia Orchestra is a performing group made up of students in grades 9-12. Students begin the year performing music at about grade IV level and perform grade V music by the end of the year. (Music levels are graded from 1- 6, 1 being the easiest and 6 being the most difficult.) Students in this ensemble may choose to participate in additional playing opportunities such as Honor Orchestra, Solo/Ensemble, area youth orchestras, and All State auditions. Field trip opportunities may be available as well. Although private lessons are not required, participation in private lessons enhances the playing abilities of those who participate.

**Out of school rehearsals and performances are required.**

### **CHAMBER ORCHESTRA**

The Chamber Orchestra is a select string ensemble whose membership is based on audition. Students start at a Grade V level of music and perform grade VI music by the end of the year. (Music levels are graded from 1- 6, 1 being the easiest and 6 being the most difficult.) Students in this ensemble may choose to participate in additional playing opportunities such as Honor Orchestra, Solo/Ensemble, area youth orchestras, and All State auditions. Field trip opportunities may be available as well. Although private lessons are not required, participation in private lessons enhances the playing abilities of those who participate.

**Out of school rehearsals and performances are required.**

## **ORCHESTRA COUNCIL**

Two student officers are selected from the Chamber, Sinfonia, and Philharmonia Orchestras. These students make up the Wheeler High School Orchestra Council. These students are responsible for assistance with Orchestra operations, fund-raising activities, vertical team concerts, recruiting tours, trip planning and preparation, and the Orchestra banquet. The Council is an active and integral part of the Orchestras' communications to its members, and an invaluable organizational tool for the director. Student officers meet with the director on a regular basis. Additionally, student officers meet with the orchestra booster club prior to its regularly scheduled meetings.

### **2015-2016 Orchestra Council Representatives** **(To be determined)**

Chamber .....

Sinfonia .....

Philharmonia .....

### **ATTENDANCE**

The orchestra concert (along with other group performances) is the musician's "final exam" following many hours of preparation and study. In a large ensemble, like orchestra, each musician is important to the total sound. When students are missing from the expected and 'rehearsed' sound, the total group sound changes dramatically. This can be disastrous. Members who elect to join any school group are expected to be loyal and to follow through with their commitments to the group. Attendance is considered so highly because the work that is missed cannot be made up (without a valid excuse). Good attendance is imperative if an orchestra is to be successful. The director cannot stress it too much. The attendance consideration is not intended to punish students, who are really ill, or who have serious emergencies; it is stressed in the hope that it will discourage unnecessary absences. Students will need to furnish a written excuse following an absence due to illness. If families know in advance that a student will miss a scheduled Orchestra event, a note should be sent to the director at least twenty-four hours in advance, with a brief description of the conflict. All families are furnished with a calendar of Orchestra events to aid in planning. Please check the calendar often.

### **Tardies**

Students are to be seated in their chairs with all materials for class (instrument, music, mutes, pencil, etc.) and warming-up appropriately by the time the class is scheduled to begin. Anyone arriving after the tardy bell will be subject to the school-wide policy on tardies. Tardies to sectional rehearsals or after school rehearsals will count the same as tardies to regular classes.

### **Absences**

Orchestra rehearsals are extremely important. Please make efforts to schedule medical appointments, tutorials, and other temporary commitments outside of Orchestra time. If you know that you are going to be absent from an orchestra event, please fill out an Orchestra Absence Form at least one week prior to the event.

### **After School Rehearsals & Sectionals**

Occasionally, we will have rehearsals and sectionals outside the regular school day. Plenty of notice will be given prior to these events. Please do not schedule appointments during these times. Recreational sports teams' schedules do NOT qualify as excused absences from any Orchestra activity.

### **Rehearsal Absence Form**

A rehearsal absence form is available in the Orchestra Room. If you are going to be absent from a required orchestra event, students must clear the absence with the director as soon as the conflict is known. The absence form should be completed no

later than one week prior to the event. **Whether the absence is considered excused or unexcused, the student is responsible for making up the absence.** At least 2 weeks notice will be given for all required events (dress rehearsals, concerts, etc.).

## **USE AND CARE OF SCHOOL-OWNED INSTRUMENTS**

A student is expected to care for a school-owned instrument as if it were his/her own. This includes providing rosin, rock-stop, mute, and replacement of broken strings. Repair of damage caused by the student is the financial responsibility of the student.

1. A \$40 school instrument fee is requested from all who use a school instrument to assist with maintenance. If any damage is caused by the student, it will be his/her responsibility to repair the instrument to its original condition.
2. Each student will receive an Instrument Check-out form. Parent and student must sign and return the form to the director before the instrument can be used.
3. Students using a school-owned instrument will be required to return the instrument in the same condition at the conclusion of the school year.
4. Summer check-out of instruments is available; see the director.

## **INSTRUMENT INSURANCE**

It is **HIGHLY** recommended that each student insure his/her instrument. Many homeowner's policies provide adequate coverage. Check with your agent to be sure. If your homeowner/renter's policy does not cover your instrument, please see me about insurance options.

### **EXPENDITURES**

1. Instrument and bow in good playing condition. Instrument case in good condition and identified with a tag indicating name, school name, home address and telephone number.
2. VIOLIN/VIOLA- extra set of strings kept in your case. On hand by the end of the first six weeks.
3. CELLO/BASS- one rock-stop for your instrument. Identify with your name.
4. Ample supply of rosin appropriate for your instrument.
5. Uniform--dress/tux and appropriate footwear.
6. Entry fees and music for Honor Orchestra, All State Orchestra, Solo & Ensemble Contest, if student chooses to participate.
7. Payment for lost school music or equipment.
8. Orchestra Fee--\$90.00 per year per student.

## **PRIVATE LESSONS**

**OPTIONAL ACTIVITY!** Private lessons are **NOT** required for membership in any orchestra. However, tremendous progress can be achieved in this one-to-one setting. It may be possible to arrange private lessons at school during your orchestra class time. Details are available from the director. **A listing of teachers who work from their homes is available from the director.**

## AWARDS

Various awards are presented throughout the year for recognition of outstanding achievement and service. These awards are determined through criteria established by the director and the presentation of it is intended as recognition for constructive participation in, and service to the group.

Individual awards may be earned through Solo & Ensemble contests, and All-District & All-State.

## ORCHESTRA VARSITY LETTER REQUIREMENTS

1. Students must participate in an Orchestra class both semesters of the current year.
2. Students must attend all scheduled concerts.
3. Students must adhere to all rules and regulations of the Orchestra. Flagrant violations will result in immediate loss of the opportunity to letter.

### **Point System—300 Points Required for Varsity Letter**

For accountability purposes, the following point system will be used in the awarding of a varsity letter. A student must have met the above minimum criteria. All records regarding points will be kept by the director or his designee. Students are to keep track of their own progress as well. If necessary, students may make appointments with the director to confirm point status. There will be no appeals at the end of the year for a letter.

### **Private Lesson Journal**

A private lesson journal showing a consistency of lessons through a semester may receive points associated with the receipt of an orchestra letter. A maximum of 50 points will be awarded for the practice journal that is consistently written for a minimum of 12 weeks. A student is to write both private instructor's comments/instructions and the student's own observation of his/her progress. A journal must be turned in to the director in order to receive points.

### **Rehearsals/Performances**

WHS Orchestra Concerts	40 points each
Ensemble Performances	10 points each
AYSO/MYSO/GYSO	40 points
(or similar Youth Orchestra) Participation	
Solo/Ensemble Participation	20 points
Year long ensembles (i.e. Cello choir, fiddles)	20 points
Honor Orchestra Audition	10 points
Honor Orchestra Participation	25 points
All State District Audition	10 points
All State Final Audition	15 points
Statewide Honor Orchestra Participation	25 points
All State Participation	25 points
Full Orchestra Participation	20 point per semester

### **Volunteering/Concert Attendance**

Peer Tutoring at East Cobb	10 points each session
Orchestra Patron/Sponsor Fundraiser	10 points per Patron or securing a Sponsor
Volunteering for a non-performance orchestra event	10-35 points (depending on event)
Outside Concert Attendance (must bring in program or concert ticket)	10 points

# ORCHESTRA GRADING SYSTEM

Students will be evaluated on class assignments and activities, and these assignments and activities will be weighted accordingly to determine grades for each grading period:

· Playing/written assignments	30%
· Daily performance assignments/daily grade	30%
· Performances	25%
· Final exam	15%

**\*\*A daily grade will be given in orchestra. A part of the grade is based on class participation and performance. Each student is expected to bring his/her own instrument, music, and a pencil to class. Points will be deducted if any of these items are missing.**

## CLASS RULES

### Class Rules

1. You must be on time for class. On time means inside the orchestra room doors. After the bell, you will have 2 minutes to retrieve materials for class.
2. Treat others with respect. We are a team!
3. No gum, food or drink in the orchestra room. A water bottle (with a top) is permissible.
4. Computers are for school use only. Permission to use the computer is required. Printing from the computer is not allowed without permission.
5. **All school and school district rules regarding conduct and behavior apply in the orchestra classroom, on field trips, and at performances.**

### Orchestra Detention

Orchestra detention will be assigned to students who do not follow the rules. Detention is a 30 minute study hall in the orchestra room. Students may serve detention each morning from 7:45-8:15 or MTThF afternoon from 3:30-4:00. Failure to serve detention within one week of being assigned detention will result in a phone call to parent. After failure to serve 2 detentions, a referral to the student's assistant principal will occur.

### Tardy Policy

1. All students must be inside the classroom door prior to the tardy bell.
2. Students will have 2 minutes beyond the bell to retrieve instruments and music.
3. Students must be ready to tune at 2 minutes past the bell
4. Per school rules, no students are allowed outside the classroom during the first or last 15 minutes of class.
5. Students will be allowed 4 passes out of class for any reason during the semester—clinic, water, restroom, etc. These will be managed by Dr. Wasson.
6. When leaving class for any reason, students must have a pass that will be written by the student. Before a pass will be signed, it must include time of departure, date, and destination.

## HOW PARENTS CAN HELP!

Parents of Orchestra students are an integral part of the Orchestra program. Their individual and group support is needed, with active participation encouraged.

1. Show an interest in the music study of your child. Come to our concerts to hear the music they have worked diligently to prepare for your enjoyment. Invite your relatives and neighbors.
2. Arrange a regular time and a quiet place for practice. Monitor practicing. Make sure that it is happening. Inquire about the practice assignment and practice record, if required.
3. Keep the instrument in good repair with rosin, strings, etc. in the case.
4. Teach your student to be on time for rehearsals and concerts.
5. Notify the director if the student is to be absent or tardy, and explain why.
6. Be generous with your praise and encouragement
7. **SHOW YOUR SUPPORT WITH YOUR ATTENDANCE AT ALL OF YOUR CHILD'S PERFORMANCES.**
8. **JOIN THE WHEELER ORCHESTRA BOOSTER CLUB**

## FUNDRAISING

Fundraising for the orchestra is primarily dependent participation in the Orchestra Booster Club by paying dues. The balance of funds needed to fund the orchestra program are supplemented by our Family Patron and Business Sponsorship program and through ticket sales for the Holiday Music Showcase Concert in December. The IRS no longer allows booster clubs to have individual student accounts for fundraising so all proceeds from fundraisers must go into the booster organization account.

## WHEELER ORCHESTRA BOOSTER CLUB

The Wheeler Orchestra Booster Club has become the driving force behind communication and cooperation between the Orchestra Director, Orchestra students and Orchestra parents. The Wheeler High School Orchestra Booster Club, Inc. is also a 501©3 charitable student and parent organization dedicated to enhancing the music education, assisting the director and supporting the activities of the orchestra program at Wheeler High School. Through membership dues, our annual patron/sponsor program and fundraising events throughout the year, we help our director and orchestras with the following:

- provide supplemental instruction through workshops and clinics
- assist with uniform purchases and rentals,
- assist with music purchases and instrument repair and maintenance
- provide student recognition awards and scholarships
- arrange payment of dues for group competitions and music organizations
- travel to competitions
- provide volunteers assistance with concerts and other orchestra events
- provide printed programs for our concerts
- maintain the Orchestra Website and database
- organize dues collection, organize fundraisers and the Patron/Sponsor program.
- provide food on competition days and workshops and for hospitality events
- oversee order of annual T-shirts
- provide professional development for our director
- assist with purchases of new instruments and equipment

As a Booster Club, we count on your support to help us achieve these goals. Committed parents and families are essential to the success of our orchestra program. Please pay dues, contribute to our annual patron/sponsor program and volunteer whenever or however you can!

### Meeting Schedule for 2015-2016

Our Annual General Booster Club meeting will be held on Saturday, August 15 at 1:00 p.m. following the Pot Luck Meet and Greet Luncheon. Officer meetings are held monthly, and they are open to all. A schedule will be published once the meetings dates are established.

### Booster Club Officers

**2014-15 Officers: contact by emailing [boosterclub@wheelerorchestra.com](mailto:boosterclub@wheelerorchestra.com)**

<b>Co-Presidents</b>	.Rhonda Kaye and Ginger McCoy
<b>Vice-President</b>	.... .OPEN
<b>Secretary</b>	.....Marla Litz
<b>Co-Treasurers</b>	.....Kelly Fisher & OPEN
<b>Media Chair</b>	..... Barbara Cheng



## UNIFORM INFORMATION

**MEN:** The dress uniform for the male members of the orchestra is a black tuxedo, black dress shoes and black socks. Rental fees are charged for the usage of the jacket & pants. The rental fee will be sent home in a separate memo. This fee is required for each year of participation in orchestra. **Students are responsible for the purchase of a white tuxedo shirt, black bow tie, and cummerbund.**

The informal uniform will be the Wheeler Orchestra shirt and blue jeans. The t-shirt is included in the student orchestra fees. If you need to purchase an additional shirt, the cost is \$10 per shirt.

**LADIES:** The dress uniform for the female members of the orchestra will be a long black dress and black shoes. These dresses are purchased by the female members. Measurements for the dresses will be made during orchestra class. Exact costs will be shared in a separate letter to the students and parents. Shoes must be black dress shoes. **NO SANDALS ARE ALLOWED.** Black stockings must be worn. We are planning for a new uniform for the girls this year. Girls returning to the program may use the dress from previous years unless they would like to purchase one of the new dresses.

The informal uniform will be the Wheeler Orchestra shirt and blue jeans. The t-shirt is included in the student orchestra fees. If you need to purchase an additional shirt, the cost is \$10 per shirt.

## DIRECTOR CONTACT INFORMATION

**Orchestra Office Phone: 770-578-3266 x068**

Parents and students are encouraged to call the Orchestra Room if there are any questions. Be sure to leave your name and telephone number so we will be able to return your call. The answering machine is left on during class time and when the directors are on duty at the middle schools. Please do not call and leave messages for your student as once they leave the Orchestra room after class, the directors may not see them again that day. Please use this phone number if your student is going to miss a rehearsal or Orchestra function. Students may use the phone with the permission of the directors.

## **TRIP INFORMATION**

The goal of the Wheeler High School Orchestra is to participate in a major trip every other school year. By establishing this tradition, each student will be eligible to participate in two trips during his/her high school years. In the interim years, we will participate in a smaller (probably in-state) trip. Details about the trip will be announced in the near future.

DESTINATION: 2015-16 is not a planned trip year. Watch for details to come.

TRAVEL COMPANY: DATES:

ESTIMATED COST: TBD

## **CHAPERONES**

Any Wheeler High Orchestra parent is welcome to go on any trip we take. You might even like to volunteer to be a chaperone. We generally travel with a ratio of 8:1, depending on where we go. The chaperones pay the same trip cost as a student does. We are always in need of people to accompany the Orchestra, and veterans of this activity will tell you that it is a combination of work and fun, not a whole lot of sleep, but getting to hear the groups perform and having the chance to interact with this great group of students is well worth it. Think about volunteering now!

## **PERFORMANCE OPPORTUNITIES**

Honor Orchestra: Auditions for this orchestra take place on August 20 at Walton High School. Rehearsals for this orchestra will be September 8 & 9 at Lassiter HS. The concert will take place on September 13 at Lassiter. HS. See the director for audition materials.

All State Orchestra & Statewide Honor Orchestra: All State Orchestra takes place in March in Athens. District auditions for All State occur on October 17. Prescribed music excerpts are required for this audition. See the ~~data~~ for information about auditions. Registration is due by August 30

Youth Orchestra: Several youth orchestras are available in the Atlanta metropolitan area. Each of the orchestras maintains its own audition requirements. Please contact the orchestra or visit their website to determine requirements.

Solo/Ensemble: an optional event for students who wish to perform a solo or small ensemble in front of a judge. Solo/Ensemble contest will be held on October 10 at Sprayberry High School.

Cello Choir: The Cello Choir was established 3 years ago, and cellos meet one day per week before or after school. The schedule is decided by the membership of the group. Depending on the level of interest and level of musicianship, the ensemble may be divided into more than one group.

Fiddle Ensemble: A Fiddle group was established 2 year ago. The makeup of the group will be determined as needed. Information and rehearsal times will be given near the beginning of the school year prior to the start of the ensemble.

## 2015-2016 Calendar

Date	Event	Location	Time
August 12	Honor Orchestra Registration	Online	closes at 4 pm
*August 15	Fall Orchestra Workshop	Wheeler	9 a.m-1 pm
August 20	Honor Orchestra Auditions	Walton HS	Begin 3:45 pm
August 28	Registration Deadline for All State and Solo/Ensemble		4:00 p.m.
September 8	Honor Orchestra Sectional	Lassiter HS	5:30-9:00 pm
September 9	Honor Orchestra Rehearsal	Lassiter Concert Hall	6:00-9:00 pm
September 13	Honor Orchestra Rehearsal	Lassiter Concert Hall	1:00-3:00 pm
September 13	Honor Orchestra Concert	Lassiter Concert Hall	3:30 pm
*October 6	Fall Concert	Wheeler Auditorium	7:00 p.m.
October 10	GMEA Solo/Ensemble	Sprayberry HS	TBA
October 17	All State Audition	Pope HS	TBA
*December 5	Band/Chorus/Orchestra	Lassiter Concert Hall	2 & 4:30 pm
January 9	All State Final Auditions	Westminster School	TBA
*January 22	Winter Workshop-Chamber	Wheeler	4-7:00 pm
*January 23	Winter Workshop-Sin/Phil	Wheeler	9-12:00 noon
January 28-30	GMEA Convention	Athens, GA	
*February 11	Winter Concert	Wheeler PAC	7:00 p.m.
February 28-March 2	Large Group Performance Eval	Lassiter HS	TBA
March 3-5	All State Event	Athens, GA	TBA
April 20	Full Orchestra Concert	Wheeler PAC	7:00 pm
April 27	Tri M Honor Society Senior Recital	Wheeler PAC	7:00 pm
*May 13	Spring Concert	WHS PAC	6:00 p.m.

\*Required dates for all students

## DIRECTOR

### Dwayne Wasson

Dr. Dwayne Wasson is starting his 10<sup>th</sup> year at Wheeler High School. Prior to Wheeler, he was at Kent State University where he was Assistant Professor of Instrumental Music Education from 2004-2006. Prior to Kent State, he taught in Austin, Texas, where he was director of orchestras at Austin High School and served as coordinator of the Austin Youth Orchestra. From 1991-1999, he was orchestra director at the Academy for Academics and Arts in Huntsville, Ala. While in Huntsville, Wasson was assistant conductor of the Metropolitan Youth Orchestra and was region chairperson and state secretary for the Alabama Orchestra Association. For the past four summers, he has been on the staff at the University of Richmond as orchestra director at the Virginia Governor's School.

Dr. Wasson received a bachelor of music education degree from Tennessee Technological University in Cookeville, Tennessee, and a master of music education degree from Belmont University in Nashville, Tennessee. In May 2002, he completed his doctorate in music education from the University of Texas at Austin. He is an active clinician and adjudicator. Recently, he has presented workshops at the Ohio Music Educators Convention and the national convention of the American String Teachers Association. He received National Board certification in 2003.

# WHEELER ORCHESTRA FEES AND INSTRUMENT GUIDELINES

## ORCHESTRA FEES

### 1. Orchestra Dues (\$90.00 per student)

Payment of your dues makes you a member of the Wheeler Orchestra Booster Club. which provides program support for workshops and visiting clinicians, an orchestra t-shirt, sheet music, music organization memberships, registration fees, lunches for required participation in Large Group Performance Evaluations (LGPE), pre-concert food and snacks, receptions, program printing costs, school instrument purchases, awards and scholarships, and business operating costs.

### 2. School-owned instrument use fee (donation of \$40.00 requested)

### 3. Uniform Fees—

Gentlemen—Tuxedo, black shoes, black sox—

\$40.00 for *annual rental* of Tuxedo jacket and pants

\$21.00 tuxedo shirt purchase (to keep)

\$13.00 tie and cummerbund purchase (to keep)

Ladies—Dress, black shoes (closed-toe), black hose

\$65.00 for dress purchase

### 4. Optional Activity Fees

a. All State Orchestra--\$20.00 (Due by August 28)

b. Honor Orchestra - \$35.00 (participation fee if selected)

c. Solo/Ensemble (Due by August 28)

i. Solo--\$7.00

ii. Ensemble--\$5.00 per member

**Total** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please return this form with your payment.**

**By Check: Please make out to WHSO Booster Club**

**By Credit Card at Wildcat Daze**

**Or through PayPal on our website at [www.wheelerorchestra.com](http://www.wheelerorchestra.com) and select Pay/Donate.**

## INSTRUMENT GUIDELINES

1. Instrument in proper playing condition \_\_\_\_\_
2. Bow in proper playing condition (rehaired within the past 2 years) \_\_\_\_\_
3. Rosin appropriate for your instrument \_\_\_\_\_
4. VIOLIN/VIOLA—extra set of strings in your case \_\_\_\_\_
5. CELLO/BASS—rock-stop appropriate for your instrument  
(marked with your name) \_\_\_\_\_
6. Soft cloth for cleaning instrument \_\_\_\_\_
7. Instrument case clearly identified with luggage tag:  
Name, school name, address, & phone number \_\_\_\_\_
8. VIOLIN/VIOLA—shoulder rest appropriate for your instrument \_\_\_\_\_