

Bellaire High School
Orchestra and Piano
Handbook

2011 – 2012

Dr. Kathryn Brown, Director

Room 250

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Our Orchestra/Piano Classroom Rules are simple and based on respect:

Each student is expected to be respectful to everyone in the room – in how they talk, in how they interact, in how they treat property.

Students are expected to be in their seats, ready to play when the bell rings. This includes instruments, mutes, shoulder rests or endpin rests, music, pencils, and all necessary equipment out and ready to perform.

Students are expected to take pride in the orchestra's home and care enough to not permit food, drink, or gum to damage it.

Each student is expected to be careful about the treatment of all instruments. Only piano students will use the electronic pianos. Only the person assigned a specific stringed instrument will be allowed to use it.

School Instruments:

The Bellaire High School Orchestra owns a number of stringed instruments, which are available for your use. In order to check out one of these instruments, you will need to pay an annual maintenance fee of \$50 per instrument, which includes insurance for the school-owned instruments.

You are expected to take the responsibility of making sure the instrument is properly cared for and stored carefully.

Music and Supply Fee:

All students are expected to pay a \$25 music and supply fee. This means that if you are using a school instrument, the total fee is \$75. Fees may be paid in installments when necessary. See Dr. Brown for a payment plan.

Attendance:

While you are encouraged to participate in other activities and organizations, you are also expected to participate in all orchestra/piano events, rehearsals, and performances. The team succeeds only with the contributions of all individuals.

All excused and unexcused absences must be made up. This generally happens by making a practice tape (see section on make up tapes).

You can receive full credit only with an excused absence – such as another school activity. Please make efforts to be sure that you have reliable prearranged transportation to all activities because problems in transportation do not qualify a student for an excused absence. If you need help, please try to get a ride from another student – or call one of the orchestra officers. There are always others who are willing to pick you up.

IMPORTANT -- When you have a conflict, you will need to turn in a completed ABSENCE FORM which can be found at the end of this handbook. While this form does not automatically excuse an absence - each case is considered individually and privately according to its circumstances - it is helpful to you if you turn in the form at the earliest possible date.

Make-Up Tapes:

Make-up tapes are not designed to be busy work – but to help you learn your music. For your make up – you need to make a tape recording of you practicing for one hour. It must be on the music assigned by Dr. Brown.

During that recording – you will play and you will make comments. The best way to do this is to play a few measures – then comment on it. You can make comments on any of the following: intonation, rhythm, dynamics, tone quality, tempo, or whatever you can think of that is musical.

Then – go back and play the section again. Hopefully, it will be better. There should probably never be more than thirty seconds of straight playing during the entire tape. Think quality, not quantity.

Note – If your comments are inaudible, you will have to re-do the assignment to get credit!

Calculation of Grades:

Your achievement is important to all of us – so we have a grading system that will help you attain the highest scores. Grade points are assigned on the following basis:

- Class participation (including having instrument, pencil, music, etc.)
- Concerts and performances
- Rehearsals and sectionals
- Quizzes
- Tests
- Final exams

Any assignment turned in late will be assessed a penalty for each day late. **An unexcused absence from a performance results in the lowering of at least a letter grade for the six weeks.**

Procedures for Taping Performance Tests (Orchestra)

Any recording device may be used. CD's, cassette tapes, or digital recordings are acceptable as long as the format is readable on any computer or tape recorder. If you choose to use a digital recorder, please include instructions for its use. If you do not have access to a recording device, see Dr. Brown to make arrangements to record your test at school.

Be sure to get the beginning of the performance. Check the volume level to be sure the sound is acceptable. Pause briefly between cuts. If using a tape recorder, please rewind the tape when you have completed the test.

Please do not write your name on the recording. Put your name on the inside cover of the tape or CD container instead. This will allow you to remain anonymous until after grading and seat assignments are completed.

Turn in the recording on or before the due date of the test. Late tests will be accepted, but will be graded accordingly. Seating will also be affected if a test is submitted late.

You may e-mail your test to **bellaireorchestra@gmail.com**. Do not use my kbrown@houstonisd.org address. Be sure to check for a reply. If you do not receive a response in a reasonable amount of time, re-send the test.

Performance Attire:

Orchestra:

Ladies: Long black dress or dressy black blouse and long black skirt (no slits), flesh colored hose, and black dress shoes.

Men: Tuxedo, white shirt, black bow tie, black dress shoes, black socks.

Piano:

Ladies: Dress or skirt (mid-calf or longer), dressy blouse, dress shoes. Slacks may be worn only if part of a dressy outfit.

Men: Dress pants, shirt and tie, dress shoes. Jacket not required, but is preferred.

2011-2012 CALENDAR OF EVENTS
ORCHESTRA AND PIANO

Sept 20	Deadline for Region/All State Entries
Oct 6	Fall Orchestra Concert (Required)
TBD	Sinfonia Honor Orchestra Recording
Oct 15	Region Orchestra Auditions – Kerr HS
Oct 29	All State Auditions – Katy Taylor HS
Nov 11	Region Orchestra Rechairing and Sectionals -- Morton Ranch HS
Nov 17 & 19	Region Orchestra Clinic and Concerts – Morton Ranch HS
Dec 1	Winter Piano Recital (Required)
Dec 6	Winter Orchestra Concert with Choir (Required)
Dec 7	Deadline for UIL Solo and Ensemble Contest Entries
Jan 21	Play-a-thon Fundraiser (Required)
Jan 28	UIL Solo and Ensemble Contest -- Pershing MS
Feb 8-11	All State at TMEA
Feb 14	Rehearsal for Piano/Ensemble Concert (4 - 6:00 p.m.) (Required)
Feb 21	Piano/Ensemble Concert (Required)
Mar 5	Rehearsal for Pops Concert (4 - 6:00 p.m.) (Required)
Mar 6	Orchestra Pops Concert (Required)
TBD	Spring Performance Trip
Apr 3	Pre-UIL Contest Concert (Required)
Apr 10	UIL Concert and Sightreading Contest (Philharmonic) -- Mayde Creek HS
Apr 11	UIL Concert and Sightreading Contest (Sinfonia) -- Mayde Creek HS
Apr 19	Spring Piano Recital (Required)
May 21	Spring Orchestra Concert (Chamber and Philharmonic) (Required)
May 22	Spring Orchestra Concert (Sinfonia) (Required)

**All concerts begin at 7:00 p.m. unless otherwise noted.

**Bellaire High School Orchestra/Piano
Handbook Signature Page**

Student Name (Printed) _____

Class Period _____

Parents: Please check all that apply, sign, and return by September 2, 2010.

_____ I have read the Bellaire High School Orchestra/Piano Handbook and understand and support the policies and expectations therein.

_____ I have reviewed the calendar and understand that while it rarely happens, all dates and times are subject to change. I trust that notice of such changes will be given well in advance.

_____ I understand the fee requirement and have paid the annual fee.

Parent Signature _____

Date Signed _____

**Bellaire High School Orchestra/Piano
Absence Report**

Step 1: Fill out and submit before day of event (as soon as you know of a conflict).

Student Name:

Date Submitted:

Event to be missed:

Date of absence:

Reason:

Student Signature:

Parent/Teacher Signature:

Step 2: Director determines whether the absence will be excused or unexcused.

Excused: _____ Unexcused: _____

Director's Initials:

For your make-up, you must make a recording of you practicing for one hour. Music will be assigned by Dr. Brown. On the recording, you will play and make comments. The best way to do this is to play a few measures, then comment on it. You may make comments on intonation, rhythm, dynamics, tone quality, tempo, or whatever you can think of that is musical. Then go back and play the section again. Hopefully, it will be better.

Remember, quality of practice is better than quantity of measures. Also, remember -- if I can't hear your comments clearly, you will have to re-do the assignment.

Step 3: Make-up assignments must be turned in by 3:30 p.m. the Friday following the event.

Date make-up assignment received:

Event grade: