**Sacajawea Orchestra Handbook  
Ms. Montgomery  
heathermon@spokaneschools.org  
Room 162 – (509) 354-5431**

Welcome to Orchestra! I’m so glad you’ve decided to join the excellent music department here at Sacajawea Middle School. I hope that you are ready to work hard, play challenging music, and have a lot of fun! Please read over the following requirements and sign the attached contract. Don’t hesitate to email or call if you have any questions.

This information will also be posted on the Orchestra page of the Sacajawea web site. Click on “Music” under the “Learn” icon.

Grading:

Students will earn a grade by demonstrating proficiency in skills related to the Washington State Arts Standards, which fall into four categories:

* **Creating -** Conceiving and developing new artistic ideas and work.
* **Performing -** Realizing artistic ideas and work through interpretation and presentation.
* **Responding -** Understanding and evaluating how the arts convey meaning.
* **Connecting -** Relating artistic ideas and work with personal meaning and external context.

Students will be given frequent opportunities to demonstrate skills throughout each quarter.  
Rehearsal Expectations:

Students are expected to come to Orchestra class every day with:

* Their instrument (cellos and basses may play school instruments, but must have an instrument at home to practice) and rosin
* Their folder, with their name on it, containing all of their music/books
* A pencil (Not a pen—marks in music should be erasable.)
* Their Sacajawea planner

During rehearsal, students are expected to demonstrate excellent rehearsal skills by:

* Being in their seat with all materials when the bell rings.
* Maintaining a quiet classroom atmosphere, so that all instructions can be heard.
* Stopping when the ensemble stops to avoid wasted rehearsal time.
* Being polite and supportive of classmates.
* Being respectful of school instruments and materials.

Students who do not demonstrate good rehearsal techniques will choose the following consequences:

-One incident in a week will result in a verbal warning from the teacher.  
-Two incidents in a week will result in a call home.  
-Three incidents will result in an office referral.

To be prepared for rehearsal, students are expected to practice their orchestra music at home. Playing alone is a completely different experience from playing with the group, and an important part of a student’s musical development. It is recommended that students practice 5 times a week, for 15-30 minutes. Instruments should not be left in lockers overnight.

Literacy and Vocabulary:

To demonstrate Connecting/Responding standards students will be asked to complete journal pages and reflections. Students may be asked to write about their learning in class, a listening example, an article about music, a concert experience, etc.

Performances:

As this is a performance-based class, attendance at all performances is critical for the following reasons:

*-*Concerts provide an experience that cannot be reproduced in the classroom.   
-Performances are the means by which the skills learned in class are evaluated.   
-Playing in an orchestra is a group effort. The performance is weakened by every missing performer. We rehearse together and we perform together.

At the end of this handbook is a complete list of scheduled performances for your bulletin board or refrigerator. Please put the dates on your calendar.

Concerts will only be excused in cases of illness, and I must receive a note, email or phone call *before* the performance begins. Please note that choosing another activity on the night of a concert (soccer, dance, theater etc.) is not excused, even with a note. Missing a required performance means that there will be a lack of evidence for certain standards that can only be met by performing in front of an audience. Make-up assignments may be assigned, but there is really no way to make up for the impact absent musicians have on the ensemble during a performance.

**Orchestra uniforms:**

This year we will have polo shirts that are checked out to students for formal concerts. In addition to the t-shirt, we will be asking students to wear black pants, socks, and shoes. Please purchase these items at your discretion but keep “classy” in mind. If you need assistance obtaining these items please let Ms. Montgomery know at least two weeks before the performance.

**Obtaining an Instrument:**

Instruments for orchestra class can be rented or purchased through a local music store. Please do not buy an instrument online unless it is from a reputable instrument dealer (Shar Music, Southwest Strings)—Many of the cheap instruments from big online retailers are unplayable. Please ask me if you aren’t sure about a brand!

We also have instruments for students to borrow from school. Students using school-owned instruments and equipment pay $20 for the year (a great deal compared with a monthly rental!). This fee, or communication with the director requesting a waiver, must be completed before an instrument is checked out to the student.

**Volunteering:**

Parents—there are a number of volunteer opportunities throughout the year. Please fill out the form on the back of the orchestra contract if you are available to help out.

I am excited that you are here! I hope you will find Orchestra to be a valuable and fulfilling part of your time at Sacajawea Middle School and in years to come.

-Ms. Montgomery

**Sacajawea Orchestra Contract**

Performances: I understand that performances are part of being in orchestra, and agree to attend all scheduled performances. I also understand that missing a performance impacts the entire group and that I must notify Ms. Montgomery in advance if I will be absent from a concert.

Music and materials: I agree to keep all of my music/books in a folder with my name on the front. I will have this folder with me every day in class, and take it home with my instrument every day after school.

***Cellos and Basses should own a rock stop/chair strap.***

***Violins and Violas should own a shoulder rest.***

Uniforms: I understand that the uniform for orchestra is the Orchestra polo shirt (provided at school), with black pants, black socks and black shoes, and I will let Ms. Montgomery know if I need help obtaining any of these items.

Nails: I understand that long (artificial or not) nails interfere with my ability to play with proper technique, and agree to keep my nails short for the entire school year.

I have read the entire Orchestra Handbook and will meet the requirements listed above.

Signed,

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Name (printed) Parent Name (printed)

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature Parent Signature

Parent email: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Volunteer Opportunities**

Parent Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Student Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Please check the dates you are available to help out. I will call you to confirm a couple of weeks before the event. Thank you!

* Elementary Tour (8th grade) Dec. 6th 9:00-3:30
* Elementary Tour (8th grade) Dec. 7th 9:00-3:30
* Mall Performance (8th grade) Feb. 9th 3:30-7:30
* Large Group Festival (6/7/8) Mar. 21st 9:00-4:00

(Large group times are an estimate)

**6th Grade Orchestra Performances 2023-2024**

6th Grade Winter Concert Dec.13th 5:30pm, Sac Gym

Solo & Ensemble Festival (optional) Feb. 3rd Shadle Park HS

6th Grade Pre-Festival Concert Mar. 13th 7pm, Sac Gym

Large Group Orchestra Festival Mar. 21st TBD, EWU Music Building

Orchestra Awards Concert May 29th 7pm, Sac Gym

A violin and a bird logo

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**7th Grade Orchestra Performances 2023-2024**

7th Grade Winter Concert Dec. 13th 7pm, Sac Gym

Winter Con Dec. 15th 9am, Sac Gym

Solo & Ensemble Festival (optional) Feb. 3rd Shadle Park HS

Black History Month Concert w/LC Feb. 15th 7pm, Sac Gym

5th Grade Parent Night Feb. 21st 6:30pm, Sac

7th/8th Grade Pre-Festival Concert Mar. 20th 7pm, Sac Gym

Large Group Orchestra Festival Mar. 21st TBD, EWU Music Building

Orchestra Awards Concert May 29th 7pm, Sac Gym



**8th Grade Performances 2023-2024**

Perform at Veterans Home Nov. 8th AM, Vet’s Home

Veterans Day Concert Nov. 8th 7pm, Sac Gym

Veterans Day Con Nov. 9th 9am, Sac Gym

Elementary School Tour Dec. 6th/7th Feeder Schools

Lyon’s Club Lunch Dec. 13th Lunch time, Cafeteria

8th Grade Winter Concert Dec. 14th 7pm, Sac Gym

Winter Con Dec. 15th 9am, Sac Gym

MLK Con Jan. 12th 9am, Sac Gym

Solo & Ensemble Festival (optional) Feb. 3rd Shadle Park HS

Perform at Riverpark Square Feb. 9th After school, perform 5-7pm

Black History Month Concert w/LC Feb. 15th 7pm, Sac Gym

7th/8th Grade Pre-Festival Concert Mar. 20th 7pm, Sac Gym

Large Group Orchestra Festival Mar. 21st TBD, EWU Music Building

Orchestra Awards Concert May 29th 7pm, Sac Gym

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