

## 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Orchestra - Student Practice Procedures

### **What to practice:**

Students will be given specific assignments to practice during their Orchestra class

### **How often to practice:**

Instrument and music are to go home after every Orchestra class for daily practice. Avoid leaving the instrument at school on days that your Orchestra class does not meet.

### **How long to practice:**

Students should practice 15 minutes a day (7 days a week). Practice does not include time to set up, rosin your bow, etc. Practice means a concentrated effort to improve. Practice only counts if proper positions are used. Long practice sessions cause the muscles to tire and become tight and the mind to wander. If students want to practice longer, please take a break between each 15 minute session. As you become more advanced you will be able to increase your practice time. Performance for parents and friends is highly encouraged, but it is not to be confused with practice.

### **How to practice:**

A routine practice time for each day is best. Conduct practice like a “mini-class”. Warm up on bow placements and careful position work. Slow and careful practice of small sections and repetition of difficult spots will help you master your goals. Always have a goal in mind with your approach so that you leave your practice session with a positive feeling about something you have accomplished.

## Practice Equipment

### **Parent’s checklist:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Weekly Practice Record to record number of minutes practiced each day. This should be signed and returned to the Orchestra teacher on Thursday or Friday, depending on what day your class meets.

\_\_\_\_\_ Quiet, distraction-free location to practice

\_\_\_\_\_ Music stand that can be adjusted to the height of the student

\_\_\_\_\_ A safe place to store the instrument. No one else should be allowed to touch or play the instrument. The instrument should not be exposed to excessive heat or cold as this may cause cracks. Keep instrument in case when not being played.

\_\_\_\_\_ Chair (optional for violin/viola who can stand) should have a straight back with no arms and be at the proper height.

\_\_\_\_\_ A scheduled time to practice that fits with the family schedule. Should be the **same time every day** so as to help ensure that practice is accomplished. This time should be 15 minutes in length and can be increased as student advances on their instrument.

### **Optional Aids:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Mirror (student can see their position)

\_\_\_\_\_ Metronome (highly recommended) Online metronome is available at [www.metronomeonline.com](http://www.metronomeonline.com)

\_\_\_\_\_ Cassette recorder and blank tape or recording device (Your Charms account has a recording studio!)

## How Parents Can Help

- Be generous in your praise and encouragement. Take a positive attitude toward your child’s efforts.
- Show interest in your child’s practice and study. Help keep his/her daily record of practice.
- Encourage your child to play for others when opportunity arises in the home and community.
- Show your support by attending all performances in which your child is involved.

## Care of the Instrument and Bow

String instruments and bows are fragile and can be easily broken or damaged if dropped, bumped or struck against other objects. Remember to put a name tag on your instrument case. Below are the steps students should follow in order to keep their instrument and bow in proper working condition.

- 1) Hands should be clean before handling the instrument and bow.
- 2) A clean cloth should be kept in the instrument case to wipe fingerprints off the instrument and rosin from the strings, instrument and bow stick after playing the instrument.
- 3) **Do not turn the pegs on the instrument.** The strings and other parts of the instrument can be easily broken.
- 4) Never let others play or handle your instrument.
- 5) The instrument and bow should be stored in its case in a safe place in the house when not in use.
- 6) The instrument should be stored in a place of moderate temperature. Never leave the instrument in an extreme hot or cold environment like a car.
- 7) Do not attempt to repair the instrument or bow yourself. Consult with your teacher.
- 8) Violin/Viola Students:
  - Always remove the shoulder rest before placing the instrument back in the case.
  - Never hang the instrument from your music stand.
- 9) Cello/Bass Students:
  - The bow should be taken out of the case before unpacking the instrument.
  - The endpin must be pushed back into the instrument when placing the instrument on the floor before casing up.
- 10) The Bow:
  - Never touch the bow hair or place the bow hair against other surfaces other than your instrument's strings or rosin.
  - Before playing tighten the bow hair with the adjusting screw.
  - After playing, loosen the bow hair with the adjusting screw (do not remove screw from the bow).
- 11) Never leave your instrument unattended when uncased. The instrument or bow should not be placed on the floor or on a chair. Someone could step or sit on the instrument or bow.

