



**ALLEN  
ORCHESTRA  
HANDBOOK  
2010 – 2011**

[www.allenorchestra.org](http://www.allenorchestra.org)

# ORCHESTRA HANDBOOK

## 2010 - 2011

A handbook for the orchestras in the

Allen Independent School District

### TEACHING STAFF AND ADMINISTRATION

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Allen ISD Director of Fine Arts: Anthony Gibson

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### COMMUNICATION

Please visit the Allen orchestra website at [www.allenorchestra.org](http://www.allenorchestra.org) for additional information.  
All students in orchestra grades 6 through 12 will use the CHARMS system on-line at [www.charmsoffice.com](http://www.charmsoffice.com).

**CHARMS** is a time saving, information and communication tool used to help our orchestra programs succeed. Please go to [www.charmsoffice.com](http://www.charmsoffice.com) Locate the "Parent/Student Login" section of the web page. The parent/student login is: Allen HS/Lowery FC: AllenHSOrch Curtis MS: CurtisMSOrch Ford MS: FordMSOrch Ereckson MS: ErecksonMSOrch. Next, enter at the "Student ID/Password" prompt your child's Allen ISD student ID. (After logging in, you may create your own unique password.) Here you can update the student information. (This information is safe and NEVER shared with any 3rd party.) It is used to send emails with orchestra news, upcoming events, etc. Handouts and forms will be located in the CHARMS account. Also, students can listen to songs that we are playing in class.

## PURPOSE

The purposes of the **Allen ISD Orchestras** are:

- to develop an understanding and appreciation for one of the greatest artistic achievements of mankind - the full and string orchestra repertoire.
- to train students in music to a point where they may participate in the performance of these great works and to enable them to continue making music, whether as an avocation or a profession, after graduation from high school.
- to assist students in growing into responsible and successful members of society, able to produce well both individually, and as a member of a group, and possessing the essential characteristics of integrity, dependability, and loyalty.

The rules and procedures outlined in this handbook have been developed to accomplish these goals in the most efficient and productive manner, and to provide an accurate method of assessing each student's progress. It is the personal and musical progress of each student which is the ultimate goal of this organization. The success of the **Allen Orchestra Program** has traditionally been based on the concept of each student's performing his or her assigned tasks to the best of his or her ability. Each student is capable of making a contribution to the group and to grow in knowledge and appreciation.

Students will contribute to the Allen ISD Orchestra by:

- **CARING** for other students who share similar musical interests
- **RESPECTING** self and fellow musicians
- Demonstrating **RESPONSIBILITY** on and off the performance stage
- Manifesting **TRUST** by being dependable and honest
- Role modeling the standards of our musical **FAMILY** to the Allen community

## ORCHESTRA MEMBERSHIP AND ORGANIZATION

Orchestra in the Allen ISD is both a class and an activity. Instruction on a stringed instrument is available to those who maintain proper standards of conduct and fulfill their financial obligations. Students who are members of the Allen Orchestra Program will be required to participate in ALL activities of the organization, including rehearsals, sectionals, and performances. Students are encouraged to fundraise and participate in the Off-Campus Trips/Festivals/Performances.

Orchestra is open to any 6<sup>th</sup> grade student. Starting in 7<sup>th</sup> grade, students are placed in orchestra classes based on an audition the previous Spring (or scheduled by the director/parents/student), orchestra grade history, eligibility history, and director recommendation.

## STATEMENT ON STUDENT ASSESSMENT

In order to succeed in the orchestra, a student should demonstrate two things:

*A willingness to improve their musical skills*  
*A work ethic that will improve the orchestra team*

It would not be fair to assess a student's progress based solely upon playing abilities. Those born with higher natural skills would have an unfair advantage over those who really have to work hard at playing their instrument. Instead, several things can come into account, including:

- an *improvement* in overall performance skills
- being *on time* to class and rehearsals
- *success* in all academic courses – understanding that failing courses affects participation in orchestra
- *attitude* toward other students as well as the directors
- willing to *accept constructive comments*
- willingness to *help* with daily functions of the orchestra
- *a spirit that is positive* toward the image of the orchestra program
- the ability to *represent* the Allen Orchestra Program and the city of Allen in a positive manner

## TESTS AND EXAMS

Playing tests and exams, consist of material assigned by your director - usually an assigned excerpt from the repertoire of the upcoming concert or other performing material. Playing tests may affect chair placement for concerts. Occasionally, it may be necessary to give a written test and/or exam.

## GRADES

Each student will be awarded points based upon the following scale. At the end of each grading period, the number of points awarded can be divided into the number of points available to compute the average.

<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>AVERAGE</b>
Class Participation (This grade includes daily equipment checks for instrument, pencil, music, and other necessary equipment as well as full involvement in rehearsals by the student)	50%
Concerts, Quizzes, and Tests (Unexcused absences from concerts or tests will require make-up work for grade )	50%

## ATTENDANCE

Orchestra activities are planned so that the least amount of activities will conflict. All students are encouraged to participate in as many activities as they wish, but at the same time, orchestra members are required to participate in all orchestra events, rehearsals and performances - remembering that a **grade is given for each event.**

**IMPORTANT:** In the event of a conflict, the student has the responsibility of submitting a signed note, email, or phone call from a parent or the appropriate teacher or sponsor stating the reason for the conflict. Notes that have not been submitted prior to two weeks before the orchestra event *may not be considered*. This note does not automatically excuse an absence. Each case is considered individually and privately according to its circumstances.

All absences, whether excused or unexcused, must be made up and it is the student's responsibility to obtain the makeup assignment with their director. Only excused absences will be given full credit. Last minute excuses cause problems in scheduling and may not be excused. The only exceptions would be a student illness, death in the family, or religious holiday. Not having a ride to an orchestra function does not qualify a student for an excused absence. If this occurs, please try to get a ride from another student. As a last resort, contact your director. Please make efforts to make sure that you have reliable prearranged transportation to all activities. The attendance guidelines do not apply to social events.

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance is required at all scheduled rehearsals, sectionals, chamber music rehearsals and performances.

Examples of excused absences:

- **Death in the family**
- **Medical emergency or illness**
- **Religious holiday**

Examples of unexcused absences:

- **Family trips**
- **Jobs**
- **Personal business or entertainment**

All requests for excused absence from rehearsals, sectionals, chamber music rehearsals and performances are to be **REPORTED IN WRITING, EMAIL, OR PHONE CALL**. If an absence is anticipated, a written request for an excused absence should be submitted at least two weeks in advance. Circumstances may justify an excused absence for reasons other than those listed above. In the case of illness or family emergency, an explanatory telephone call or email prior to the rehearsal or performance is appropriate.

## ELIGIBILITY

It is very important that each student maintains passing grades in all classes in addition to orchestra. If you are having trouble passing a class, please notify your conductor. We can try to get you extra help, if not from a teacher, maybe from a fellow student. We expect each member of the Allen Orchestra to do all the work necessary to pass all his or her classes. School performances (events held at an AISD campus) are required regardless of a student's grades. UIL Contests/Extra-Curricular activities (events not held at an AISD campus and/or UIL events) are directly affected by students' eligibility. **All grades must be passing to attend contests and school orchestra trips (events outside of AISD)**

## ORCHESTRA RULES

Orchestra rules are designed to be simple and easy to follow. They are effective in keeping order during classes and rehearsals only when each member of the orchestra chooses to follow them. They are:

- When class is scheduled to begin, **be in your seat** with your instrument ready to play and with your music notebook, pencil and any other necessary equipment on your music stand. **THE SCHOOL TARDY POLICY WILL BE ADHERED TO.**
- Everyone must have **their music/binder and pencil** at their seat *every* day.
- Respect the property of other individuals. This includes instruments as well as music. **You do not have the permission to use anyone else's instrument or materials.** Please do not assume that you do.
- **No food, drink or gum is allowed in the orchestra room.**
- Be respectful to everyone in the room - **that includes when and how you talk.**

Most discipline problems can be handled in-house, such as, assignment to orchestra detention hours, for such things as eating in the orchestra room, failure to follow rules, etc... Any behavior problem can (for any reason) result in a call home and completion of the AISD Student Discipline form to their house office. **Poor behavior will not be tolerated and can affect a student's participation in orchestra.**

## PRACTICE

Individual home practice is an integral part of any musician's learning process. It is very important to our orchestra that effort is being made by each student for learning individual parts outside of the classroom. **Class meetings and rehearsals are not to be used as a practice session, but as time for working out ensemble concerns.** The Allen Orchestra Program is successful because of the quality teaching you have received in the early years of your musical education. It becomes a superior orchestra when all of its members put hard work into it. Just as in any other class, if there is a problem in the music that you cannot handle, please talk to your orchestra director.

## PRIVATE LESSONS

In a program this large, it is impossible for the directors to meet the individual needs of each student. With private lessons, participating students can have the luxury of extra help on a one-to-one basis. Each lesson from the AISD program costs \$17.00 for a half-hour of instruction. It is up to students and parents to coordinate lessons which are off-campus and not a part of instruction during the school day. Applications and further information can be obtained from your orchestra director. Lesson slots and times are honored on a first-come-first-served basis. It would be to your benefit to register early as time slots and studios fill early. **A list of Private Lesson teachers is available at: <http://www.allenorchestra.org>.**

## COMPETITIONS

All students are encouraged to participate in competitions outside the scope of the orchestra experience. The Allen Orchestras have been represented well in these types of contests, and has enjoyed the successes of individual as well as collective performances. Many students elect to participate in the AISD Chamber Festival each spring. TMEA (Texas Music Educators Association) sponsors auditions for the Region XXV and All-State Orchestras

Students do not receive extra grade points for participation in any of these activities and participation in any of these events may not interfere with any work that is required for the class. Students do receive credit in audition placements each Spring for their extra work. Students desiring extra help in preparing for these events should see your director to schedule an appointment.

## ALLEN ORCHESTRA BOOSTER CLUB

The Orchestra Booster Club has one meeting each year in the beginning of the fall semester (Registration) and a meeting in the Spring Semester (Spring Trip Meeting.). At these meetings, it will be possible for parents to volunteer for committees such as chaperones, finance, transportation, etc. More information is available at <http://www.allenorchestra.org>.

## MUSIC

All music performed by the Allen Orchestras is provided by the school district. Any music used for extra-curricular purposes is usually be provided by the student or the organization (TMEA Region & All-State Orchestra, Solo & Ensemble, etc...). Originals are the property of the Allen Orchestra Program. Students are expected to take good care of the music. Markings should be made in soft lead pencil only. Any originals are collected during the first class following a performance. Photocopied music needs to be kept in a **black three-ring binder, provided by the school**. If music is missing, it is up to the student to obtain a copy of the music from a section member – it is not the director’s responsibility! After each performance, all photocopies are destroyed.

**Each student is expected to have his or her own personal copy of the music at every class and/or rehearsal. Even when a stand partner’s copy of the music is being used, each student needs their personal copy of the music to make markings.** Do not assume that if your stand partner’s music is marked, yours is as well. Furthermore, don’t assume that you will remember them next time. **Everyone needs to mark his or her music.** From time to time, there may be an unannounced grade given for your work in marking your music.

## EQUIPMENT:

- Instrument (district provides cellos and basses for class use (\$100 student use fee)
- Electronic Tuner (district provided - \$25 replacement fee for lost tuners)
- Black 1" binder – district provided
- Pencil (**at all times**)
- Mute
- Soft cloth to wipe off instrument after each use
- Shoulder pad (violin/viola) - Cello Strap or Rock Stop (cello/bass)
- clipped fingernails on the left hand\*

\*Left hand fingernails must be kept short enough for students to use the tips of their fingers when holding down the string on the fingerboard. For most people, this means that the fingernails should not extend beyond the tip of the finger. Artificial or acrylic fingernails should not be worn unless they meet this description.

**Label all instruments, accessories and materials with your name and school**

## INSTRUMENTS

A quality school orchestra program requires quality musical instruments. By the time a student is a freshman at the Lowery Freshman Center, they will be expected to be using what is considered a step-up quality instrument and a quality wood (Pernambuco) bow. In most cases, these items will have been purchased during or after the eighth grade year. One advantage of owning such an instrument is that, in contrast to “starter” instruments which can depreciate in value, quality string instruments actually gain value as they age.

Students are responsible for your instrument’s care and maintenance. Whether you own or rent an instrument, you are responsible for purchasing replacement strings (Dominant brand or Pro Arte strings recommended.) For your convenience, music representatives from local stores can fill orders from students. To order – sign the order sheet in the AHS or Lowery Orchestra Hall foyer bulletin board. Prices are posted on the bulletin board – students will be responsible for paying for the merchandise when delivered. Payments should be made by check – directly to the music company.

With all personal and school instruments, it is strongly recommended that the instrument be insured through a parent’s homeowner’s policy or a private company. **The school district will not assume liability for maintenance, repair, or damage of personal instruments on school property.**

In addition, students may obtain inexpensive coverage on a school or privately owned instrument from the Music Agency, Inc., Arlington, Texas. Application forms for this insurance are available online at [www.musicagencyinc.com](http://www.musicagencyinc.com).

### INSTRUMENT LOAN – Cello/Bass

AISD and Allen High School owns cellos and basses that can be loaned to a student for a small charge. In order to use these, the student must pay an annual maintenance fee of \$100 per instrument, which includes insurance for the school-owned instrument.

In addition to the annual maintenance fee, it is the students’ responsibility to provide general upkeep to maintain the instrument in proper playing condition, including bow rehairing and replacement of strings due to misuse. Please complete and return the AISD Orchestra Instrument Contract if loaned an instrument from AISD – form available at <http://www.allenorchestra.org>.

### INSTRUMENT LOCKERS

**Lockers & Locks: Each student will be assigned a locker for their instrument. Students are responsible for the school issued lock. Replacement cost is \$10 for lost or damaged locks.** Always put your instrument in your **LOCKED** locker when it is not in use.

# T-Shirt

2010-2011 Order form



Please indicate size:  
(adult sizes)

\_\_\_S \_\_\_M \_\_\_L \_\_\_XL \_\_\_XXL

(youth sizes)

\_\_\_YM \_\_\_YL

total\_\_\_\_\_ @ \$10.00 each

Name \_\_\_\_\_ School\_\_\_\_\_

*Please make checks payable to AISD.*

# ERECKSON MIDDLE SCHOOL ORCHESTRAS

*Class Specific Information*



## **PRACTICE REQUIREMENTS**

Students must practice regularly to improve on their instruments and to achieve a continuing level of success. Practice marathons do not achieve the same positive results as practicing distributed over several days. Therefore, it is suggested that you try to divide your practice time over the entire week rather than crowd it into one or two days. Your individual practice may include time spent practicing class assignments and private lesson assignments. **The recommended amount of practice is 25-30 minutes 6 days a week. We will not be turning in practice records this year unless a student is struggling and would benefit from them.**

**If the director notices that a student is not making adequate progress, they may require that student to use a weekly practice record to record their practice minutes on CHARMS and turn it in with a parent signature to verify the minutes.** After a 6 week program of recording minutes, the student would be allowed to go back to the normal practice schedule without turning in practice records.

If asked to do practice records, those students would turn in signed practice record every Monday (Tuesday, if there is a school holiday on Monday).

## **CONCERT DRESS**

**Formal concert attire:** Used for Winter Concert and for Pre UIL Concert in the Spring

**Boys:** black dress slacks, a long sleeved black dress shirt, dark socks and dark shoes (preferably dress shoes).

**Girls:** black dress slacks or dressy floor length skirt, a black blouse, and dark shoes (no flip flops). Your blouse should have sleeves,  $\frac{3}{4}$  length or full length sleeves, and needs to completely cover your midriff.

**Basically as you read above, our formal concert dress is ALL black, very dressed up, with very little skin showing. Please do not wear black jeans or any other black clothes that are not considered dressy, such as tennis shoes, etc.**

**Informal concert attire:** Ereckson Orchestra T-shirt and jeans. The Ereckson orchestra t-shirt is available for purchase for \$10. The shirt is available in adult sizes (S, M, L, XL, XXL) and youth sizes (M, L). The shirt is required because students will be asked to wear it for several events and also just for fun! To buy a shirt, bring cash (exact change, please) or a check made out to **AISD** and a completed shirt order form found in this packet. All orders are due by September 6th.

# HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM

*Please complete this and all the following forms - All Allen ISD Orchestra Students/Parents*

**Student name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Period** \_\_\_\_\_

I have read and agree to the policies, responsibilities and commitments required of members of the Allen ISD Orchestra Program. I will do my best to uphold these commitments, including passing all other classes besides orchestra and attending rehearsals and concerts outside class time.

**Student signature** \_\_\_\_\_

As a parent, I agree to support my child as a member of the Allen ISD Orchestra Program. I have read the policies, responsibilities and commitments of orchestra members and will do my best to see that my child upholds these commitments.

**Parent signature** \_\_\_\_\_

# Orchestra Information Form

Please be sure to enter all this information in your CHARMS account on line at [www.charmoffice.com](http://www.charmoffice.com)

## ***Student information***

First and last name \_\_\_\_\_  
Street address \_\_\_\_\_  
City and Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Orchestra period \_\_\_\_\_  
Home phone \_\_\_\_\_

## ***Parent information***

Mom's first and last name \_\_\_\_\_  
Home phone \_\_\_\_\_ Work phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell phone \_\_\_\_\_ email \_\_\_\_\_  
Dad's first and last name \_\_\_\_\_  
Home phone \_\_\_\_\_ Work phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell phone \_\_\_\_\_ email \_\_\_\_\_

Please place a check by any of the following volunteer opportunities that you might be interested in participating:

- During school hours (fundraisers, organization, etc.)
- Chaperone trips
- Supervise students during concerts
- Provide food/snacks for receptions/concerts/events
- Transport equipment for performances

**Private Lesson Information** Private teacher list available at [www.allenisd.org](http://www.allenisd.org) - call teachers for their individual rates and prices.

Is this student currently enrolled in private lessons? YES NO

If yes, private teacher's name is: \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, do they take lessons at the teachers home or studio? YES NO

If student is NOT currently enrolled in lessons and you would like to sign them up for lessons, please check the appropriate line or lines below:

- I would like my child to take private lessons
- I would like help matching my child with a private teacher
- I would be willing to drive my child to the teachers home or studio
- I would like to enroll in private lessons at the school during orchestra class. (Please note that

there are very few teachers that come to campus and they fill up very quickly. It is on a first come first serve basis.

# CALENDAR 2010-2011

9/6/2010 T-shirt money due for EMS Orchestra Shirt

10/16/2010 (Saturday) [TMEA HS and MS Region Auditions](#) - All Day - [Carpenter MS](#), Plano ISD  
(For very advanced students only)

10/25/2010 (Monday) Ereckson/LFC (Sinfonia/Concert) Fall Concert - 7:00 p.m. - LFC Auditorium  
All EMS Orchestras

11/2010 DATE TO BE ANNOUNCED Party at Studio Movie Grill with EMS and Ford Orchestras

11/12 - 11/13/2010 (Friday & Saturday) [TMEA MS Region Orchestra Clinic/Concert](#) - Lowery FC  
For students who were selected to the All Region Orchestra on 10/16

12/7/2010 (Tuesday) EMS Chamber Orchestra Staff Breakfast 7:30 a.m. - EMS Orchestra Room

12/9/2010 (Thursday) AHS (Chamber/Sinfonia)/Ereckson - Winter Concert 7:00 - LFC Auditorium  
All EMS Orchestras

1/25/2011 (Tuesday) 6th Grade Concert - EMS Feeders - 6:00 p.m. - Ereckson MS Cafeteria  
EMS Chamber Orchestra only (with 6<sup>th</sup> grade feeders groups)

1/29/2011 (Saturday) Skating party with EMS Orchestra, Band and Choir

1/27/2011 (Thursday) 8th Grade Orientation - 6:00 p.m. - AHS Orchestra Hall  
All EMS 8<sup>th</sup> grade orchestra members

3/22/2011 (Tuesday) MS Pre-UIL Concerts - 6:00 p.m. LFC Auditorium  
All EMS Orchestras

3/30 - 3/31/2010 (Wednesday & Thursday) MS Orchestra UIL - ALL DAY - LFC auditorium  
EMS Chamber Orchestra only

5/7/2011 (Saturday) AISD Chamber Festival - 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. - AHS  
All students enrolled in private lessons

5/19/2011 (Thursday) Ereckson MS Orchestras Spring Concert 7:00 p.m. - EMS Cafeteria  
All EMS Orchestras

5/2011 DATE TO BE ANNOUNCED Six Flags Trip with EMS Orchestra Band and Choir

**AISD Orchestra Instrument Contract  
2010-2011**

Cello and Bass students will be allowed to use school instruments during their scheduled class time and before/after school sectionals. We ask our cellists & bassists to have an instrument at home for practice and concert use. School instruments are for school use only.

Last name\_\_\_\_\_ First Name\_\_\_\_\_

Campus\_\_\_\_\_ Instrument\_\_\_\_\_

Inst. Brand\_\_\_\_\_ Serial Number\_\_\_\_\_

*To be filled out by director To be filled out by director*

We, the undersigned, accept the above named school instrument and agree to maintain it in the condition in which it was received. Every effort has been made to issue this instrument in good playing condition. It is the responsibility of the student to inform the director of any routine maintenance needed to keep the instrument in good playing condition. We also understand that the director, who may ask for its return if it is improperly used in any way, determines the issuance of this instrument. This includes lack of progress and/or participation. We agree to pay Allen ISD a one time per year charge of \$100.00 by October 1st, 2010. We understand the \$100.00 usage fee is used for annual maintenance and repair of the instrument. We also understand that any repairs exceeding \$100.00 will be our responsibility if it is determined the needed repair is due to misuse, carelessness, or other damage or neglect caused by our student.

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

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

Mailing Address\_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone\_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone\_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone\_\_\_\_\_ Email\_\_\_\_\_

Today's Date\_\_\_\_\_

IF THERE ARE REPAIRS THAT NEED TO BE DONE DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR, NOTIFY THE ORCHESTRA DIRECTOR IMMEDIATELY!!