

[en Español](#) (translation done by Google)

Good morning 8th Grade Orchestra Families!

Friday, May 3, 2024

Northfield Middle School orchestra students have quickly moved onto new skills and pieces since our All-District Orchestra Concert in March. Each group (6th Grade, 7th Grade, 8th Grade and Chamber Orchestra) is working on exciting pieces that are pushing each grade in their individual and group playing. This Orchestra Update will provide you with a few events and assignments that are happening right now in orchestra class.

What have we been working on in class?

All 8th Grade students are working on building skills in Essential Technique for Strings. We recently spent many weeks learning to play in 2nd position. Currently, we are learning to identify written key signatures and intervals, and play in a variety of positions & finger patterns while moving through multiple key signatures. Each instrument needs to shift into many positions on the fingerboard for these scales. Students have handled this challenge well and are playing these new patterns and positions with success! We also continue to work on vibrato - you will see more of this at our concert!

8th Grade Orchestra students are currently working on two orchestral pieces: Hunger Games and Joshua. These pieces are challenging and very different from each other, which allows us to work on a variety of styles. 8th Grade students are also exploring the musical skill of improvisation!

Upcoming Concert Information: Tuesday, May 28

The next NMS Orchestra performance will feature only Middle School Orchestra groups on May 28, 2024 at Northfield MIDDLE SCHOOL. This concert begins at 7:00 pm.

Students need to arrive by 6:30 pm. Students in Chamber Orchestra need to arrive by 6:00 pm.

More information will be sent home closer to the concert.

Performance Video 8: Due May 9

In place of a traditional practice calendar, 8th Grade students are assigned specific scales or sections of music to practice and record. I provide EVERY student with specific feedback that can be used to improve playing. Students have an option to revise their playing and turn in a new video - 1 week is provided for this. The current assignment includes measures from Hunger Games.

As the weather turns warm, it can sometimes be challenging to want to practice indoors. Please encourage your student to continue to practice at home - even for a short time. Our upcoming concert pieces are challenging and individual at-home practice is a necessity.

Thank you for your support!

Orchestra Lessons: Make-up Lessons on Tuesday, May 7 & Wednesday, May 8

Any student that is missing a 4th Quarter orchestra lesson is assigned a make-up lesson time on May 7 or 8. This schedule will be shared with students on May 3 in Schoology. If you are unsure if your student is missing a lesson, please check Skyward. There will be one more opportunity for make-up lessons at the end of Quarter 4.

Instrument Size Changes

In April and May, I check each student to see if it is time for a larger instrument size. If I feel that your orchestra player should move up a size, I will email home with these details. This process is lengthy because there are many students needing to be checked, and I want to give each student the necessary time for a thoughtful trial. Thank you for your patience during this time.

Summer Orchestra Opportunities

Summer Lessons:

Northfield Public Schools will not be offering summer orchestra lessons this year. If you are interested in finding a private teacher for your student for the summer months, please let me know and I can provide you with some options.

Orchestra Sessions:

If your student is interested in a group orchestra experience over the summer, CVYO (Cannon Valley Youth Orchestra) is a local option. Information can be found here: [CVYO Summer 2024](#)

Online registrations are due June 1.

CVYO is also offering financial scholarships: applications are due May 15.

NMS Solo & Ensemble Festival: Update

The NMS Solo & Ensemble Festival was an optional event for students in April. We had a large number of orchestra students participate this year - maybe a record for this event! Congratulations to all of our participants!

Chamber Orchestra: This information only pertains to students in Chamber Orchestra

Chamber Orchestra students have been working very hard at our weekly Friday rehearsals. To help us be prepared for the May 28 concert, an additional rehearsal has been scheduled (there isn't school on Friday, May 24). While I realize that not all students will be able to attend, this practice will be very helpful for those that are available. Students completed a Google Form earlier this week, sharing any after school conflicts.

Below is a list of all end of the year events for students in Chamber Orchestra.

Final Chamber Orchestra Rehearsals:

Regular Friday Rehearsals (3:00-3:45 pm)	ADDITIONAL Rehearsal Please attend if you can!	Chamber Orchestra Celebration
May 3 May 10 May 17	Thursday, May 23 3:00-3:45 pm	Friday, May 31 3:00-4:30 pm

Note: The last Chamber Orchestra is on Friday, May 31

Note: Students in Chamber Orchestra need to arrive at 6:00 pm for the May 28 Concert.

THANK YOU!

Thank you for supporting your orchestra student. We are having a great year, filled with lots of learning and fun! I will send home another Orchestra Update closer to our May concert.

Heather Olivier

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