

**Wando High School**

**2009-2010**

**Orchestra Handbook**

**Derek Deakins, Director**



Dear Wando High School Orchestra Members and Parents,

My name is Derek Deakins, and I am the new orchestra director this year. I am extremely excited to be here at Wando High School and am looking forward to the upcoming year. I want to tell you a little bit about myself. I am originally from eastern Tennessee and started playing the violin when I was six years old. Being exposed to many genres of music at a young age, I have grown to love and perform many different styles including classical, jazz, country, and bluegrass music. In 2005, I graduated from Belmont University in Nashville, Tennessee with a B.M. in Music Education. Since graduating from college, I have worked professionally as a music teacher, studio musician, and stage performer.

This handbook is for both students and parents. Please take time to read through the handbook and return the two forms located in the back of the book by Friday, August 21<sup>st</sup>. In this handbook I will discuss orchestra policies, supplies needed for class, grading policies, concert schedules, required concert attire, and other important information. Also, I will be maintaining a class website <http://www.wandohigh.com/clubs/orchestra>. The website will be accessible for parents and students to stay informed and updated on all orchestra information and news.

Please remember that the success your child enjoys in strings here at Wando High School is largely due to your support and encouragement. I hope that you will encourage your child to practice at home and help him or her be prepared for rehearsals and performances.

If you ever have any conflicts, concerns, or questions,  
please feel free to contact me via e-mail at  
DDFiddler@gmail.com  
or call me at 615-477-8110 (cell)  
Wando Orchestra Office- 849-2830 ext. 24050



I hope everyone had a great and enjoyable summer. I am looking forward to meeting all the new students, returning students, and parents.

Let's make it a great year!

Derek Deakins 

## Philosophy

By choosing to participate in orchestra, each student makes the commitment to demonstrate behavior, attitude, and skills that contribute to the continued excellence of the group, as well as his/her own personal growth. Students entering the Wando High School string program will be expected to learn and apply correct playing posture, appropriate and courteous rehearsal behavior, and consistent practice habits. Students are expected to continue these established practices and put forth their best effort each day because they have made a commitment to the development of the group and themselves.

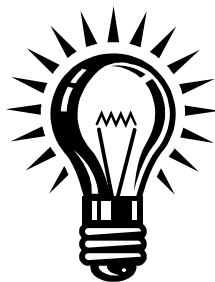
Also, in order to provide students with a well-rounded music education, the orchestra class will spend time on various topics, including music theory, music history, and cross-curricular connections.

## Orchestra Policies



1. Respect the teacher, your fellow orchestra members, and all the musical equipment.
2. You are expected to bring the following materials EVERY DAY as part of your grade:
  - a. Instrument
  - b. Rosin
  - c. Pencil
  - d. Music folder
  - e. Shoulder Rest (violins/violas) Rock Stop (cellos/basses)
3. PLEASE take care of our orchestra room! Do not allow any students other than orchestra members into the room without permission from Mr. Deakins.
4. Orchestra members are not allowed in practice rooms, storage rooms, or any other rooms without permission from the director.
5. No eating, drinking, or chewing gum allowed in the orchestra room.
6. Please be on time for class. Students not inside the classroom when the bell rings will be counted tardy.
7. Please take care of bathroom and water needs between classes.
8. Please store your personal items against a wall during orchestra class to ensure a safe, uncluttered classroom.
9. There will be no talking when Mr. Deakins steps on to the podium. Be polite during rehearsals. Do not pluck or make other distracting noises during rehearsal.
10. Keep fingernails at a reasonable length to encourage good performance technique.
11. Music that is issued to the students is property of the school orchestra and must be returned in good condition for use in future concerts. Students will be charged for damages or loss of music and a hold may be placed on the student's progress report/report card if the fine is not paid.
12. Playing instruments other than your own without permission is strictly forbidden. This policy applies to all instruments, including the piano, cellos, and basses.
13. Any intentional or accidental damage that occurs to an instrument will be paid for by the student responsible for such damage. This includes any damage that occurs in or out of the classroom, whether it is your instrument or someone else's.
14. Please follow school dress code and wear appropriate clothing for all events. (concert attire must follow dress code)
15. All orchestra members are to be on their best behavior at all times. Please represent our orchestra in the most positive manner at all events and show the same respect to members of the audience and other orchestras.

## Supplies



## Daily Class Materials:

### 1. Instrument

\* There is a limited number of cellos and basses available for use at the school. These instruments may be rented for a small yearly fee of \$50.00 and must be kept at the school. Students will rent their own instruments for use at home.

### 2. Shoulder Rest (Violin/Viola)

End Pin Belt (Cello)

Rock Stop (Bass)

### 3. Pencils with Erasers

### 4. Rosin

### 5. Soft cloth or rag to clean instruments

6. Music Folder with all assigned music or method books (folder provided by orchestra)

### 7. Extra set of strings (preferably Dominant or Helicore)

## Where Should I buy these things?

Locally:

**Music & Arts Center** 975 Savannah Highway 852-0900

**Pecknel Music Co.** 1660 Sam Rittenberg Blvd. 766-7660

For instrument repairs please contact **"The Instrument Doc, LLC."**

Chris Bluemel 276-9239

Online stores:

**Southwest Strings** [www.swstrings.com](http://www.swstrings.com)

**Shar Music** [www.sharmusic.com](http://www.sharmusic.com)

**International Violin** [www.internationalviolin.com](http://www.internationalviolin.com)

**PLAN AHEAD!!!** Class participation grades depend on the student having the proper equipment and supplies on a daily basis.



## Concert Dress

Music is often heard through the eyes of the audience, which is why we aim to have a professional appearance. Unless otherwise determined, the Wando High School Orchestra will wear the traditional orchestra attire for every concert.



Our attire will be:

**-Guys:** Tuxedo pants, shirt, and jacket;  
with black bowtie, black socks, and black shoes (no sneakers please)

**-Girls:** Ankle-length black dress skirt or pants with a black shirt and black shoes  
-(Pants worn by girls should be full-legged, not skin-tight. Shirts must cover the  
entire abdomen and have sleeves. No bellybuttons showing or thin shoulder  
straps!)

\*If there is any question about the appropriateness of an outfit, bring it to class at  
least a week before the concert for my approval.

### **Instrument Care**

Each orchestra student is responsible for his or her instrument. Cello and bass players are responsible for the school instrument to which they are assigned. Instruments should be stored away when not in use and NEVER left on the floor or on top of a case unattended. Violins and violas should NEVER be hung from the lip of a music stand. Instruments, strings, and bows should be wiped clean with a soft cloth after each use. Bows should be loosened and put away when not being used. Any damage incurred to an instrument or bow due to the failure to follow these procedures or by negligence on the part of the student is solely the responsibility of that student.

### **Finances**

The class fee is \$75.00 for orchestra. This helps pay for:

Fee for All-State/Region Orchestra auditions

Fee for Concert Festival registration

Fee for Solo & Ensemble registration

Miscellaneous class supplies (extra rosin, cello belts, pencils, etc.)

Music for the concert and chamber groups

\*\*\*The additional \$50.00 rental fee for cellos and basses will need to be written on a separate check. Please wait to send checks until after Labor Day.

**The \$75.00 class fee will be due after September 7 but by September 15 (Tuesday).**

Please note that the class fee (\$75.00) does not pay for extra orchestra trips.

Make checks payable to Wando High School Orchestra. \*Please send checks after  
Labor Day

If you need financial assistance, please contact me directly.

### **SmartMusic Software**

Students have the option of purchasing this fantastic piece of software. It makes practice time more effective and fun and is available for the low cost of \$30.00

This will buy a year-long subscription.

It will provide:

accompaniments to all lines in the method book

built in metronome and tuner

thousands of musical exercises

accompaniments to Solo and Ensemble literature

immediate feedback on how they are doing  
allows students to record themselves playing their instrument  
teaches them how to read music more effectively

We will be doing some of our playing tests using this software. Students who have this at home can take their playing tests at home and email me their scores and recordings.

To order the software, log on to [www.smartmusic.com](http://www.smartmusic.com) or call 1-866-240-4041.

## Behavior Guidelines

### 1. Be on time.

Be in your seat and ready to tune at the start of class.

### 2. Be prepared.

Have your instrument, music, and pencil with you for every class.

### 3. Be attentive.

Give Mr. Deakins your full attention at all times.

### 4. Be respectful.

Respect yourself, others, and your instrument.  
This includes not talking when Mr. Deakins is talking.

### 5. Be positive.

Your success in this class, and in life, is up to you.  
If you believe you can, you will.

**Failure to follow any of these policies may result in the following consequences:**

<b>1st infraction:</b>	Verbal warning
<b>2nd infraction:</b>	Move seat location
<b>3rd infraction:</b>	Packing up for the class period
<b>4th infraction:</b>	Phone call to parents and administrative referral
<b>5th infraction:</b>	Parent/student conference and administrative referral

## Grade Scale and Points

93-100	A
85-92	B
77-84	C
70-76	D
69 and below	F



Grades will be distributed as follows:

<b>Class Participation</b>	<b>35%</b>
<b>Performances/Dress Rehearsals</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Homework Assignments/Practice Journals</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Written Quizzes &amp; Playing Tests</b>	<b>20%</b>
<hr/>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

### **Class Participation**

Class participation is a large part of playing in an orchestra. When a student misses class, there is no way to fully recreate what was learned during the missed rehearsal. Successful rehearsals as an ensemble depend on having all musicians in rehearsal whenever possible. Each day of class is worth 10 points. A student who comes to class and puts forth his/her best effort will receive full credit.

**Points will be deducted for:**

- **Forgetting his/her instrument and/or music at home (10 pts.)**
- **Being disruptive or disrespectful to Mr. Deakins or peers (5 pts.)**
- **Lack of participation during class (5 pts)**

Students who forget their instruments/music will be given an alternate assignment during class. If this assignment is not completed during class, it will become homework. The assignment must be turned in at the start of the following class in order to receive credit. (If forgetting his/her instrument/music at home becomes a habit for a student, Mr. Deakins will find an alternate solution with the assistance of a parent/guardian).

### **Performances/Dress Rehearsals**

Performances are the ultimate goal of the orchestra, and each member is expected to be in attendance with their music and instrument, wearing the proper attire. This is 25 percent of the student's grade.

**Excused absences from a dress rehearsal/performance will be decided by Mr. Deakins on a case-by-case basis.** The only possible excused absences involve student illness or a family emergency. Due to the fact that concerts are scheduled with advance notice, church activities will not be considered excused absences. Unexcused absences will result in 0 points for the missed dress rehearsal/performance. **PLEASE** review the calendar for the 2009-2010 school year and mark all rehearsals and concerts on your personal calendar.

### **Homework/Practice Time**

Just like any other class at Wando High School, the orchestra has work that must be completed beyond school time. Students will be assigned specific practice assignments on the first day of each week. Students will be provided with practice sheets to keep inside their Orchestra Folder. These must be signed by a parent/guardian. Practice sheets will be collected by Mr. Deakins on the first day of the following week. No exceptions will be made for forgotten folders.

Students will be required to practice **at least 90 minutes per week.** This breaks down into just 15

minutes per day (6 days) with one day off. Practice is more beneficial for 15 minutes per day or 30 minutes three times a week rather than 1½ hours on Sunday night. **Practicing for a straight 1½ hours after not practicing all week can also lead to injury.** Please be aware of this and take it into consideration when planning practice time!!

**NOTE TO PARENTS:** Please make sure that your child is practicing the assigned amount of time. The entire orchestra is influenced by every single player. Even if one person chooses not to practice, the entire group feels the impact.



### Written Quizzes

There will be written quizzes placed in the schedule. Students will be notified about the majority of these quizzes at least a week in advance. Mr. Deakins reserves the right to have pop quizzes at a time of his choosing.

### Playing Tests

Every week a certain passage of music or an exercise the students are working on in class will be assigned as the “playing test” for the week. Students will have time to prepare for the test which will occur that week.

The following criteria will be used for grading playing tests:

**1. Musical/Technical**--Learning the required music with regard to:

Correct Fingerings	Bowings
Rhythm	Interpretation
Pitch	Tone (Quality of Sound)
Articulation	Dynamics

**2. Posture/Position**--Playing the music with proper technique with regard to:

- A. Proper posture
- B. Left hand fingers
- C. Bow Hold/Right Arm
- D. Correct shifting

### How You Can Be A Great Orchestra Parent

Your decision to provide your child with a quality musical education is an investment in his/her future. You are assisting with his/her self-expression, creativity, and achievement. Numerous studies suggest that students who have experience in the arts have increased brain development, higher test scores, higher academic development, and work better on a team. These suggestions are to assist you in giving your child the best support possible for his/her musical growth.

#### What to do

- Check the orchestra website often for updated events and assignment information.
- Remind your child to bring their instrument, music, and other materials to class every day.
- Make sure their instrument is well maintained.

- Encourage them to perform for family and friends.
- Offer compliments and encouragement regularly.
- Expose your child to a wide variety of musical experiences, including concerts and recitals.
- Listen to your child practice and acknowledge improvement.
- Encourage your child to make a commitment to their music studies.
- Attend every concert with enthusiasm!

#### **Encourage quality practicing**

- Provide a music stand in a quiet place for your child to practice.
- Remain nearby during practice times as often as possible.
- Assist with scheduling a daily practice time, approximately 15 minutes per day.
- Praise your child's efforts and achievements.

#### **What to avoid**

- Using practice as a punishment
- Insisting your child perform for others if he/she doesn't feel comfortable
- Ridiculing or making fun of mistakes



## **Fundraising and the Strings Booster Club**

Along with the assistance of the Strings Booster Club, students will have the opportunity to raise money for the WHS Orchestra through various fundraising events. These efforts are extremely important to ensure that the booster club can continue to supplement the orchestra's cost of music, equipment, and other expenses of the orchestra. It is recommended that EVERY student participate in these efforts.

Orchestra students will be given opportunities throughout the school year to raise money for their personal student accounts, which will be handled by the WHS. The student account balances are to be used towards Spring Trip payments. Please stay tuned for information about fundraising and take advantage of these opportunities.

### **PARENTS...**

Please make every effort to attend and assist with this organization. I really need your help!! Please call or email me and we can set up this year's meetings and events.

## **Performance Opportunities**

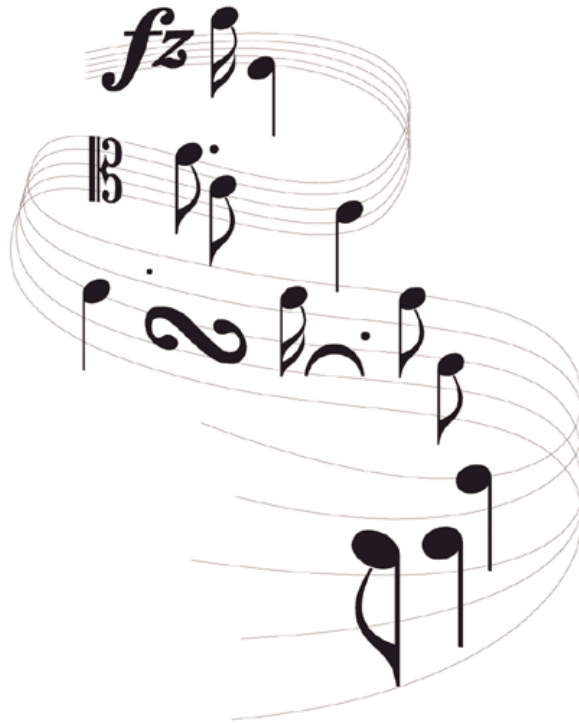
Along with our regularly scheduled concerts, there is a possibility of orchestra students participating in the Region, All-State, Concert Festival, and Solo & Ensemble.

In addition, students will be able to participate in additional musical events such as voluntary performances at venues such as nursing homes and churches. I encourage every student to take advantage of these opportunities as they are great learning experiences.

## **Private Lessons**

Private lessons provide students with a level of individual instruction that cannot be given

during orchestra rehearsals. Any student wishing to take private lessons should contact Mr. Deakins for more information.



## **WANDO HIGH SCHOOL ORCHESTRA 2009-2010 SCHEDULE**

### **2009**

<b>August 18</b>	First Day of School
<b>August 22 &amp; 29</b>	Youth Orchestra of the Low Country Auditions
<b>September 4-5</b>	SC Cello Choir @ College of Charleston
<b>September 8</b>	Deadline: Region Audition Registration
<b>September 15</b>	Class Fee of \$75.00 due (checks payable to Wando High School Orchestra)
<b>October 10</b>	Region Orchestra Auditions @ James Island Charter H.S.
<b>October 16</b>	Deadline: Region Pre-Registration
<b>November 20-21</b>	Region Orchestra Weekend
<b>December 8</b>	<b>Winter Orchestra Concert @ Wando 7:00pm</b>
<b>December 4</b>	Deadline: All-State Audition Registration

### **2010**

<b>January 8</b>	Deadline: Concert Festival Registration
<b>January 9</b>	All-State Orchestra Auditions @ USC-Columbia
<b>January 19</b>	Deadline: All-State Orchestra Pre-Registration
<b>February 5</b>	Deadline: Solo & Ensemble Registration
<b>February 26-28</b>	All-State Orchestra Weekend @ Furman University
<b>March 24-26</b>	Concert Festival (Regional; Place TBA)

**April 22-24  
May 10**

**Solo & Ensemble Festival @ James Island Middle School  
Spring Orchestra Concert @ Wando 7:00 pm**



**Wando High  
Orchestra  
Membership  
Information**

**School  
Form**

Student First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Birthdate \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian(s) Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Parents Work/Cell Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

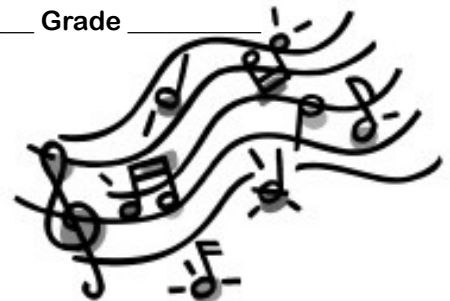
Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Chamber Ensemble or Concert Orchestra \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Instrument \_\_\_\_\_ Years Played \_\_\_\_\_

Other Instruments \_\_\_\_\_ Years Played \_\_\_\_\_



Do you need to rent an instrument for \$50 this year? \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, which one? \_\_\_\_\_

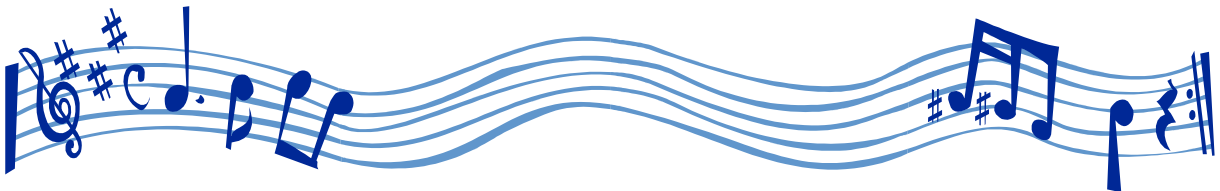
Are you currently taking private lessons? \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Other music ensembles you are a member of: \_\_\_\_\_

I have thoroughly read and agree to the policies and responsibilities of the WHS Orchestra as stated in this handbook and agree to support the "Tradition of Excellence" to the best of my ability. As a member of the WHS Orchestra, I understand that I am expected to always perform at my highest ability level. I agree to respect all of the members of the group at all times. I look forward to celebrating the achievements of our orchestra!

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



I have thoroughly read and agree to the event dates, policies, and responsibilities of my child's commitment to the Wando High School Orchestra as stated in this handbook. I agree to support them emotionally and financially to the best of my ability. I will encourage my child in all aspects of the Wando High School



Orchestra.

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

**Please return these two forms by Friday, August 21.  
Thank you for supporting the Wando High School Orchestra!**