



2025-2026 Handbook

Grading Policies

Please see CTLS for all upcoming assignments and deadlines. Playing checks will be submitted in Teams this year---please be sure you have joined your orchestra's Class Team. Synergy is the gradebook program, and you are encouraged to keep up with your grade progress via StudentVue and ParentVue.

The orchestra website has the most up-to-date information as well. It also provides a wealth of information about our program and history: www.waltonorchestra.org. The orchestra calendar is always up to date on the Walton Orchestra website, and it is linked in CTLS. Students and parents are encouraged to constantly check the calendar for updates. When in doubt about times and dates, the orchestra calendar always supersedes any other calendar.

Grading Percentages

- I. Coursework (tuning checks, practicing, etc.)- 40%
Examples: Skills demonstrations, Practice, Written assignments, Orientation Paperwork, Music Listening Homework.
- II. Performance Tasks-30%
Examples: Playing checks, Tuning Checks, Concert Performances
- III. Non-Performance Tasks- 20%
Examples: Music Listening Test, Written Music Quizzes; Music analysis
- IV. Final Exam- 10%

Please note: for Fall Semester 2025 ONLY, Orchestra Students will have an early exam on Monday, December 15th (Exemption Day) during their normal class period since Dr. Holbrook and Mrs. Grimes will be at the Midwest Clinic. Please plan accordingly.

Deadlines

Deadlines are deadlines. This is an important life skill to learn. We give students plenty of time to accomplish tasks and then the deadline is firm. **Technology issues or instrument issues (internet outages, program issues, broken string) must be addressed ahead of the deadline or a have a screenshot of the submission or instrument issue to address the problem. Do not e-mail assignments/documents. All assignments need to be turned into their proper space (Teams/CTLS). See original assignment for that information.**

Late work policy:

After due date/time until 1-week past deadline: max score 75%

After 1 week past due date until end of grading period: max score 50%

Grading Period Final Deadlines

Grading Period 1: Wednesday, September 10th at 8AM

Grading Period 2: Wednesday, October 29th at 8AM

Grading Period 3: Wednesday, December 10th at 8AM

Grading Period 4: Wednesday, February 11th at 8AM

Grading Period 5: Monday, April 1st at 8AM

Grading Period 6: Friday, May 1st at 8AM



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Concert Performance Grades

Concert performance grades must be made up in accordance with the school make-up grade policy. If there is a known legitimate conflict in advance, at least a two-week notice is required, and the concert make-up must be performed in advance of the concert date. There will be no make-ups for skipped concerts as the dates have been communicated in advance. Should the student fail to inquire about and arrange for make-up work, zeros will be assigned. Students who are sick are expected to communicate via e-mail to the directors and will perform the concert for the make-up upon return to school.

Authentic Work

All submitted work must be authentic student-created work. The use of AI tools to generate or modify music and art compositions, arrangements, written assignments, or performances that are submitted as the student's original work is strictly prohibited. A student will receive a 0 on the assignment, have a meeting with the instructor, and a record of the offense will be submitted to the school.

Requirements for Equipment

- Instrument and bow in good working order
- Case with provided name tag.
- Four working fine tuners or "peg heads" for easy tuning
- Shoulder rest (sponges are not acceptable in high school)
- Mute
- Scanner app on laptop or phone (Notes App or CamScan)

Conduct & Procedures

All Walton High School and Cobb County rules and policies will be followed in the Orchestra classroom. Good rehearsal conduct shall be always observed. The most important rule of conduct is to show respect for your peers and teachers. Consideration, courtesy and a positive attitude are contagious. Conduct which affects the learning of others will not be tolerated. Rehearsal time is limited and valuable. Inappropriate talking disrupts a rehearsal, wastes time, and hurts the entire ensemble.

Instrument Care

Students must take care of their own instrument. Only the owner should touch it. If a student damages someone else's instrument, they must pay for the repair or replacement.

Gun/Food

Gum and food are not allowed in the fine arts classroom or the theater. Bottled water is the only food/drink item allowed in the orchestra room.

Consequences: In the classroom, 1st time: warning. 2nd time: 30-minute detention with fine arts teacher during WEB. The detention must be served with one week, or it will be an administrative referral. 3rd time and subsequent times: Administrative referral for insubordination. *In the theater, there is no warning, and it will automatically be a 30-minute detention with the procedures above.*



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Headphones/Cell Phones

Cell phones and other technology devices including headphones are not allowed to be used unless the fine arts teacher specifically allows. Cell phones must be checked into the “Cell Hotel” daily. Headphones hinder learning in the aural classroom environment.

Consequences: 1st time: reminder and contact home. 2nd and subsequent times: administrative referral for insubordination.

Nails

Short fingernail length is an important aspect of playing a string instrument. Nails that are too long prohibit proper intonation. Posture/position grades on assessments will be impacted by nails that are too long in addition to the intonation grade.

Tuner Responsibility

Tuners are provided on stands for violins, violas, and cellos, and on instruments for basses. Please use the utmost care with the tuners. They should remain attached to the stand/instrument. It is a \$15 replacement fee if you drop/break the tuner.

Cellos & Basses

Cellos & Basses: At the high school level, students are encouraged to have their own instrument at home to complete assignments, and they will need to come to school for **concerts**. Walton is very fortunate to be able to provide cello and bass students with a good quality instrument and bow to use during the school day. The daily use of these instruments carries a substantial cost for upkeep (including bow re-hair, replacing warped bridges, gluing open seams, replacing worn strings, etc.). Each student using a school instrument is asked to donate to the School Instrument Usage Fund.

Each student will be assigned a specific instrument and bow and should wipe clean the instrument top and students and loosen the bow hair after each use. School expenses incurred due to student carelessness will be the responsibility of the individual student and his or her parents. **All bass players will be using a French bow during class time unless we have an e-mail from a private teacher stating that they are supervising German bow instruction.**

Violin & Viola Lockers

Each violinist and violist will be assigned an individual instrument locker. A lock will be issued to each student for the school year and should be used to lock your locker each time you leave the classroom. If the lock is misplaced or lost, a fee of \$10 will be charged for a replacement lock. Only a violin or viola is allowed in your locker. Your locker can be inspected and searched at any time. **Only violin and viola players are allowed in the locker room.**

Injuries

If an injury prevents you from playing, we need a doctor’s note explaining your limitations. You are expected to be in your seat with your music silently participating through your listening. If the injury limitation time is over a week, you will receive an alternate assignment at the teacher’s discretion.



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The Orchestra Room

Chairs and stands should not be moved. The side rooms are only to be used for musical practice with permission. Please keep the orchestra room and side rooms neat and orderly by straightening stands and chairs before you leave. If you take stands and chairs from the main classroom, please return them when you are done. The orchestra office is a place of work. Please knock before entering and do not enter without Dr. Holbrook or Mrs. Grimes' permission. The telephone is for orchestra business only and may only be used with permission. Failure to respect this rule will result in a detention. Only orchestra students are allowed to use our facilities.

Music

Music folders with original stay at school. Students are responsible for their own practice parts.

Class Attendance & Tardies

Attendance is taken 3 minutes after the bell. Tardy is defined as one of the following two items 1) not being in the orchestra room when the late bell rings 2) not being in your assigned seat within 3 minutes of the late bell, ready to observe good tuning procedures.

Class tardies are handled according to the following steps as outlined in the Walton Student Handbook. Students who are late due to school business (excused) must have a signed note from a teacher or administrator and need to see Dr. Holbrook or Mrs. Grimes at the end of class period to update the online attendance report. Excessive class tardies will affect future auditions.

After School Rehearsal Attendance

Any student absent from any after-school rehearsal for any reason must complete a Request for Excused Orchestra Absence Form:

<https://waltonhighschoolorchestra.wufoo.com/forms/request-for-orchestra-absence/>

A student must follow these guidelines for an excused orchestra absence.

1. Complete a Request for Orchestra Absence online form.
2. The absence form should be completed more than two weeks in advance of an anticipated absence.
3. In the event of illness or emergency, please call the Orchestra Office voice mail and leave a message at 770-578-3225 ext. 092. Then complete the Request for Orchestra Absence online form.
4. Conflicts with other school activities will only be excused if BOTH teachers are notified well in advance and student planning is evident.
5. Upon returning from an absence of a rehearsal, a student may be required to perform excerpts for Dr. Holbrook or Mrs. Grimes. Concerts will be addressed based on the grading policy listed above.

Music students are encouraged to participate in sports provided they can attend rehearsals for their performing groups. The director and coach will work out a compromising schedule if conflicts arise, however it is the student's responsibility to inform the director and coach



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of any conflicts at least a week in advance. Last minute conflicts will not be accommodated.

Class Placements

Joining the Walton Orchestra Program is by recommendation of the middle school/high school orchestra teacher and by audition. To be enrolled in on-level students are enrolled by teacher confirmation of minimal rehearsal skills and playing competencies. The advanced orchestras (Sinfonia, Philharmonia, and Chamber Orchestra) are by audition only. Rehearsal standards corresponding to your placement are expected; failure to maintain a high standard may result in a lowered orchestra level.

Auditions for the advanced orchestras are typically held in March for the following school year. Audition requirements are posted on the orchestra website. The judge will use a standardized form to score each performance. These scores will be tallied and to determine orchestra placement for the following year. Audition results are final. Practice, over a long period of time, under the guidance of a private instructor, and on a quality instrument and bow will help you make the most progress.

Orchestra is a year-long class, and mid-year changes will not be accommodated. Please see this scheduling table for the Walton names of classes compared to the scheduling software names. The number next to the name is your grade (1-freshmen, 2-sophomore, 3-junior, 4-seniors)

- 2nd period Dorian Orchestra: Intermediate Instrument Ensemble
- 3rd period Sinfonia: Intermediate Orchestra
- 4th Period: Philharmonia: Advanced Orchestra
- 5th period Chamber: Mastery Orchestra
- 6th period Aeolian: Beginning Orchestra

Orchestra members who foresee scheduling problems should consult the directors for assistance. A student's scholastic progress will be given prime consideration when trying to resolve conflicts between Orchestra and other courses. However, enrollment in Orchestra is always encouraged and desired.

Uniforms

We have three uniform options: dress, tuxedo, or tunic. With any option, jewelry should be modest. Hairstyles should not be distracting.

The dress uniform is a black flutter-sleeved, long gown with black dress shoes. Each girl will purchase her own dress at the time of fitting (through WROG). Dresses may be hemmed to the bottom of the ankle if needed.

The tunic uniform is a black long-tunic top with matching pants. Tunic wearers should wear closed-toe black dress shoes and tall black socks (if appropriate).

The tuxedo uniform is a black tuxedo jacket and pants, worn with black tuxedo shirt tucked in. The black tuxedo shirt may be ordered from a tuxedo shop or Amazon.

(https://www.amazon.com/Van-Heusen-Poplin-Fitted-Collar/dp/B00CAKDXKM/ref=sr_1_5?dchild=1&keywords=black%2Btux%2Bshirt&qid=1626809166&sr=8-5&th=1). Tux wearers should wear closed-toe black dress shoes, tall black socks, and black belt. The rental fee is approximately \$50 per year for tux jacket & pants and includes dry cleaning. Failure to return a tuxedo will result in charges from the school.

At the end of your time in orchestra, you may donate your dress/tunic to the program for a tax receipt or sell your uniform in the community.



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Communication & Additional Information

Walton Raider Orchestra Guild (WROG)

The orchestra is fortunate to have an active parent organization that supports the Walton High School Orchestra programs. They provide leadership, support, and volunteers for the orchestra directors and the students. See the orchestra website for current leadership and for who to contact to get involved!

E-mail

We will send a monthly e-mail to all orchestra parents via CTLS. E-mail is the easiest way to reach the Orchestra Directors for both students and parents. Please contact Dr. Holbrook at perry.holbrook@cobbk12.org and Mrs. Grimes at sara.grimes@cobbk12.org. Conferences are scheduled as necessary. Students are encouraged to e-mail with any issues to help prepare them for college, work, etc. in their future. Please contact the directors for an appointment.

An important life skill is e-mail etiquette. Please observe the following

- A clear subject line.
- A properly formatted e-mail (Dear Mrs. Grimes/Doc, complete sentences, and closing like Sincerely, student name (first and last))
- All e-mails should be written in a professional and respectful manner. Remember you are e-mailing your teacher and not texting a friend.
- Allow 24 school hours for a response.

Yearly Fees

Orchestra booster collects Fall Fees at the beginning of each school year to minimize continual collection of fees throughout the year. These fees vary according to the year's planned activities. Please respect our deadline and submit all Orchestra Fees before the deadline.

Pictures

Individual and group orchestra pictures are taken in the fall semester. All students participate in the group pictures, in complete uniform, whether purchasing a photo or not. Each student also has an opportunity for individual picture package with his/her instrument. Pre-payment is required for all pictures on the Fall Fees.

Insurance

It is strongly recommended that every musician provide insurance on his or her instrument and bow. Please check with your homeowner's insurance provider or other insurance agencies for policy information.



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Banquet & Lettering

Orchestra awards, from the fun to the serious, are presented at the annual Orchestra Awards Banquet held in late spring. This year-end event is for all orchestra students and their families, with much of the evening's program being student led and student inspired. Scholarships will also be presented at this event.

Students participating in the Orchestra program have the opportunity during the school year to qualify for a Walton High School Orchestra Letter. In subsequent years, bars are given to the student to attach to his/her letter. Essentially, performance in orchestra class earns a report card grade; participation outside of class earns a letter (or bar). To qualify for a letter award, an orchestra student must:

1. Attend all concerts and after school rehearsals
2. Obtain 45 letter points.

Patron Program: 10 points per ad space

Library help: 5 points each time

Private lessons: 15 points once

Stage/room set-up: 5 points each time

Leadership Team: 15 points once

Honor Orchestra Participation: 5 points once

All State District Audition: 5 points once

All State Final Audition: 5 points once

All State Participation: 5 points once

Community Orchestra: 15 points once

Walton-approved Chamber Music: 5 points per performance

Middle School Assistance (approved in advance): 5 points per event

Additional points may be awarded at discretion of the directors.

Special Trips & Trip Fees

To enrich the Orchestra experience, the Directors may propose special trip. Depending on the performance opportunity presented, the trip may occur any time during the school year. Each trip is handled independently with itinerary, expected costs, and payment schedule presented to students and parents in advance. Participation is voluntary.

These events are intended to be financially self-sustaining. Fees are estimated to cover the cost of goods and services for a particular trip. A student indicates their commitment to participate by making the initial payment installment on or before the deadline set by the event committee, and is obligated to follow-up with full payment as required.

Students risk participation status if payment deadlines are not met. Typically refunds are not available due to financial and contractual obligations incurred by WROG which are based upon a commitment to participate in trip. Students are encouraged to participate in fundraising to help defray costs.



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Extracurricular Ensembles: Georgia Music Educators Association All State Orchestra, District 12 Honor Orchestra, Chamber Music

Audition requirements for All State are found on the Georgia Music Educators Association website. You can find the link to their site on the Orchestra Website. District Honor Orchestra information will be given in class. If you are a soloist or chamber ensemble performing in the community and stating you are a Walton Orchestra group, you must have played for the directors to ensure quality representatives of our program. You must be in good standing with the organization for any teacher recommendation to be written for an extracurricular ensemble.

Senior Recognitions

Seniors interested in our senior recognitions should attend the fall meeting. The deadline for applying for both awards will be in August of the student's senior year.

Fine Arts Diploma Seal: Walton has been accepted to award the State of Georgia's new fine arts diploma seal beginning with the Class of 2017. This seal recognizes graduating seniors who have been involved with fine arts excellence and show dedication to the arts. Requirements include being enrolled for credit for all four years, participating in fine arts related extra-curricular activities, obtaining 20 hours of community service related to the arts, and completing a capstone presentation explaining your experiences in the fine arts programs at Walton.

Tri-M: Tri-M is the National Music Honor Society organization that recognizes seniors who have been involved with band, chorus, or orchestra for all four years of high school with a pink cord to be worn at graduation. Students must be of high character and complete community service, performances, and program service each semester of their senior year.