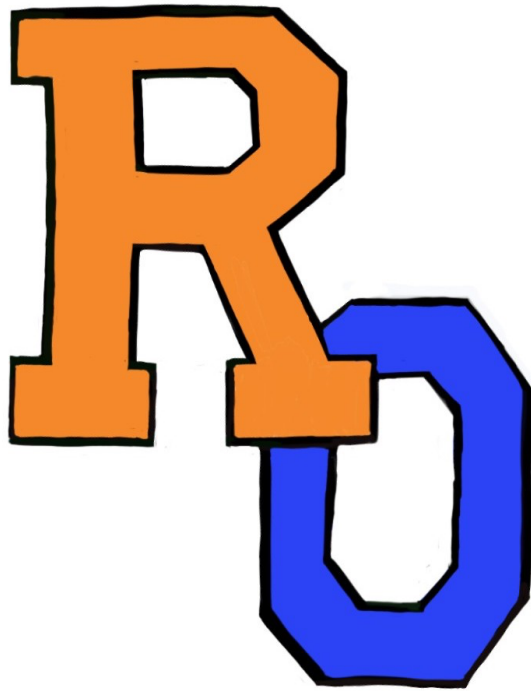


Ramsey Middle School  
Orchestra Handbook  
2020-2021



*Director*  
*Mr. Darrick Turner*

Email  
james.turner@jefferson.kyschools.us

~"Success is a choice!"~



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## **1. Introduction**

Welcome to the Ramsey Middle School Orchestra where everyone has the ability and chance to make music.

This *Handbook* is meant for you, the student and your parents/guardian, to take a look at the expectations of the RO program. The orchestra is a growing program so we need students who are ready to participate and work hard! You have a lot of opportunities to become a fine musician, leader, optimist, and have a great way to meet new people.

**EVERY** student is welcome into this orchestra program. There is no reason why anyone should not have a chance to make music.

***The JCPS Course Description States: “The student selected for this class understands that all extra rehearsals and performances are required in agreement with District guidelines.” (The number of commitments varies, and directors should give advance information concerning performances and extra rehearsals.)***

***National Core Arts Standards Connection:*** Kentucky has adopted the National Core Arts Standards. The four anchor standards we will use in orchestra are: Creating Music, Performing/Presenting Music, Responding to Music, and Connecting (ourselves and others) to Music.

### ***Outline of Course***

This school year will include many opportunities to create, perform, connect, and respond to music. At the end of each unit, **students will participate in a performance on which they will receive their exam grade.** Since it is an exam grade, **attendance at the performance is required!** If a student is absent from a concert, they will be issued a performance-based make up assignment. If that student fails to make up the concert assessment grade, they will receive a zero. If transportation is an issue, a signed note from a parent is due more than a week BEFORE a performance. Students, ask around and see if there is a way you can carpool or plan ahead if you know transportation may be complicated. All, please mark your calendars carefully. Tentative dates are included in this handbook, but they are subject to change.

### ***Literature Selection Policy***

As a member of the Ramsey Middle School Orchestra, students will perform a selection of string repertoire that is very diverse. In an effort to support inclusion, we will perform music of various styles, cultures, and experiences. As a string



player, it is necessary to be inclusive of other religions, languages, and perspectives; performers try to convey someone else’s perspective through playing their instrument! Music will be selected based on the highest standards for teaching musical independence, and while individuals are entitled to their personal opinions, we will always perform in a respectful and inclusive manner as a group. Finally, music and concerts will contain both secular and sacred/religious themes.

Anyone can make music; they just have to be given the right tools.

I believe that the ideal ensemble can produce a good quality of sound and can learn the ability to make music at a distinguished level. Hard work and dedication are what make a fine musician. Everybody is somebody in my class. An orchestra needs people to make a full and rich sound. One person cannot do it alone. The director waves a stick, but it is the students that are making the music. You alone can really make a big difference in this ensemble. Are you ready to take the responsibility?

\*Be sure to follow the @orchestraramsey on Twitter! There will be a YouTube channel and Facebook “like” page coming soon! Stay up to-date with upcoming events, concerts, fundraisers, and general reminders!

## 2. Grading Policy

<b>Grading Scale:</b>	<b>Category:</b>	<b>Weighted Averages:</b>
90-100	A	Student Engagement with the Standards (Participation) 10%
80-89	B	Student Progression toward Standards (Class Assignments) 20%
70-79	C	Student Mastery of Standards (Assessments/Performances) 70%
60-69	D	
59 and below	U	

Grades will be updated weekly; please use Parent Portal to keep up with student progress!

### **Make-Up Work Policy:**

Students may make up work if they have an excused absence. Appropriate documentation will be required to substantiate an excused absence. The JCPS policy states that students may be granted the amount of missed days plus one to complete any assigned work.

### **Cell Phone Policy:**

### **Sickness:**

Since a string instrument moves with the human body, sometimes injuries may affect class participation. On these rare occasions, it is the student’s responsibility to inform Mr. Turner that they cannot participate in playing that day **before class starts**. Mr. Turner will have an alternate assignment that will serve as their participation grade. More than 3 consecutive days of no playing



Students should not use any cellular devices in class unless previously approved by Mr. Turner.

will need a signed parent note or the student's grade will be affected.

**Supplies:**

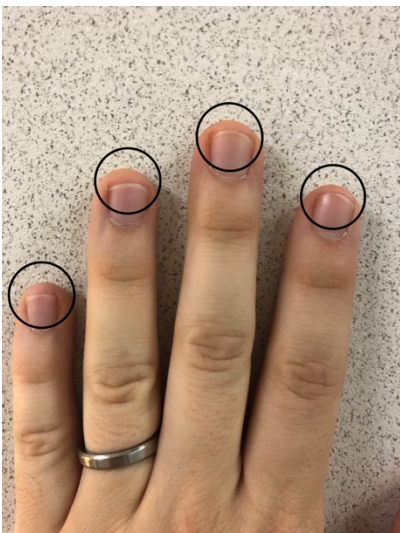
You will need the following items **every day** for this class:

- |  |
|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Your instrument</li><li>2. All music required for rehearsal that day</li><li>3. Pencil (a pen is NOT a pencil)</li><li>4. A positive attitude!!</li></ol> |
|--|

**\*\*WE ARE IN DESPERATE NEED OF KLEENEX/TISSUES! PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE BRING SOME!**

**FINGER NAILS:** This is important for the development and affects the ability to play a string instrument well. If you hold your hand out and point your fingers to the ceiling, you should clearly be able to see your finger tips. Long nails can harshly hurt the sound and tuning of a string ensemble, **especially** if multiple students have them. Those ensemble are classified as “mediocre”. We will play recordings in class to hear examples of orchestras with these types of inabilities to play their instrument well.

Points will not be taken off in any way but it is HIGHLY RECOMMENDED that you do NOT have long nails.



In the event that a student receives a “D” or lower at the end of the year, it is obvious that they do not take orchestra seriously and there will need to be a conference with your parents/guardians to discuss your position in the RO program. It is not fair if



all students pull their weight and others do not. There is a standard each student is required to meet and there will be consequences.

**Concert Uniform Requirement: Black Shoes/Socks, Black Uniform Trousers, and a Black Shirt (collared button down, sweater, polo, etc.). I will always refer to this as your “concert black”. If you have a financial need, please communicate with Mr. Turner or our Youth Services Coordinator, Mr. Radford.**

### **3. Classroom Rules and Procedures**

#### **RO Classroom Rules**

1. Actively listen and follow directions.
2. Raise your hand to ask permission to speak or leave your seat.
3. Take care of your OWN instrument and music. Always be prepared.
4. Respect your classmates and Mr. Turner.

#### **Consequences**

1. Verbal Redirect
2. TAB In
3. TAB Out
4. Parent Phone Call
5. Referral to AP

(Any of these steps can be skipped based on frequency and severity of behavior.)

#### **When entering the room:**

1. Level 1 voices.
2. Set down binders and other personal item on the table by the door.
3. Grab required music and method book for that day.
4. Grab instrument and have a seat.
5. Complete daily sponge upon arrival.

#### **When leaving the room (sad face):**

1. Students will receive a maximum of 2-3 minutes to put away all items for orchestra. One section will be released at a time to control movement in the room.
2. Students will come back to their seats and wait to be released by Mr. Turner.

### **4. Instrument and Classroom Fees**

There will be a \$40 classroom fee to participate in the orchestra, whether using a school owned or personally owned.

(Fee Waiver Exempt)



This money will go toward items needed for the orchestra to function. Such as strings, sheet music, rosin, etc. If you need to have a meeting about this fee, come see me in private.

### **School Owned Instruments**

For students to use a school owned instrument, a \$40 rental is required by Jefferson County Public Schools to cover any damage or yearly “wear and tear” of the instruments.

These instruments are OWNED by Ramsey Middle School are to be treated with care for the future RO students that come. One instrument can cost the same or more as an iPhone so I ask that these instrument are treated with the upmost respect.

### **Fee Waiver**

For students on fee waiver, no payment will be required for the use of a school owned instrument OR the classroom fee.

These students are exempt from paying, but are still held to the same expectations for instrument care. If you are not sure if you are on fee waiver, be sure to fill out the green and white application because you never know!

### **Personally Owned Instruments**

Ramsey Middle School is not responsible for the any damage that occurs to a personally owned instrument unless a unique situation comes up.

EX: Mr. Turner is tuning your instrument and a string breaks. I will cover that.

Students are able to leave their instruments at school but are always encouraged to ALWAYS take them home to practice.

## **5. Performance Opportunities**

### ***Solo & Ensemble***

At Ramsey, we take pride in the ability to perform on a musical level. Performing by oneself causes maturity and determination to grow. Playing a solo gives musicians confidence in themselves to build independence and the courage to perform in front of others. Ensembles can consist of duets, trios, quartets, etc. Being apart of these ensembles force individuals to listen to the people around them but also holds each musician personally responsible for their part in the group.



Registration for S&E will be handed out in September with a fee of \$8 for a solo and \$13 for an ensemble. This pays for their registration and traveling judges to assess the students. Students in ensembles can split the cost among one another.

In the spring, there is opportunity for students to perform as a soloist or ensemble and receive a rating of 1 distinguished (being the best), 2 proficient, 3 apprentice, and 4 novice. This gives students the chance to be heard by professionals and receive comments for areas of growth.

### ***All-County Orchestra***

All-county orchestra is on an audition only ensemble. This group consists of the top string musicians in Jefferson County and is an honor to be apart of. ANYONE can audition. For the audition, you will receive a prepared piece the student will work up on their own, a sight-reading piece where the play a piece the student has never seen, and playing scales.

7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> Grade All-County – Auditions in Oct., rehearsal and performance in Nov.

6<sup>th</sup> Grade All-County – Auditions in Feb./March, rehearsal and performance in April.

### ***Community Involvement***

There are different community ensembles that are great for growth and development as a musician. For example, the LYO (Louisville Youth Orchestra) is a youth performing symphony for middle and high school students. It is audition required but a great opportunity to perform on a high level with students the same age and talents. If you are interested in community involvement, see the director if fees and dates. HIGHLY RECOMMENDED.

Meeting new people, performing at a high level, and learning musicianship is what every musician needs. Auditioning and performing with these ensembles can teach principles of being a musician and become college ready.

## **6. Code of Behavior for Trips**

The conduct of the orchestra member reflects directly on the individual, the program, and the school. The conduct of each orchestra member should be highly respectable as the orchestra and its members are on constant display. Each student should help reflect the honor and respect that is the bases of the orchestra program.

### **RO Members:**

- Intake of smoking, alcohol, or use of drugs will **NOT** be permitted. You will be asked to leave the organization and there will be serious consequences.
- Are expected to follow all school and county behavior guidelines and rules.
- Should treat **all adults** with respect at all times.
- Should not talk when instructions are being given.





- Should follow the instructions of the staff and chaperones.
- Should be courteous toward each other, as well as toward other people.
- Profanity, vulgarity, and obscenity will not be tolerated.
- No Public Display of Affection (PDA) whatsoever.

### **Bus**

- Members must remain seated when the bus is in motion.
- Silence must be maintained at all railroad crossings or when requested by the bus driver or band staff.
- Members must keep body parts inside the bus at all times.
- Audio/video equipment is prohibited on the bus unless it is used with a personal listening device; for example, headphones. Anyone not following this rule will have his/her equipment confiscated. A parent/guardian may retrieve these items from the main office according to school policy.
- No disorderly conduct will be tolerated.
- Members must remain on the bus until instructed to exit by the staff.
- Members should remove all personal items and trash from the bus.

## **7. Individual Practice**

It is the responsibility of each orchestra member to practice his/her individual music outside of rehearsal/class time. Practice should be spent on music, scales, and etudes assigned by the directors or private instructor. Practicing assures that the student is strengthening fundamental skills and learning assigned music. Also, the individual improvement will directly affect the overall improvement, abilities, and success of the entire orchestra. Students are extremely encouraged to take private lessons with a qualified private instructor. To obtain a private instructor, see the director.

## **8. Student Leadership**

The Ramsey Orchestra members have an excellent opportunity to develop and expand their leadership abilities. Section leaders have many important responsibilities ranging from welcoming guests to aiding in maintaining order and discipline.

### **Concert Master**

This position will be based on playing and leadership abilities. The concert master is the second in command to the director and also takes the place as the 1<sup>st</sup> violin section leader. Traditionally, the concert master is the section leader to the 1<sup>st</sup> violin section but if the 1<sup>st</sup> violin cannot meet the orchestra standard then another section will be appointed. There will be a concert master for both intermediate and symphonic orchestra and has to audition for the position in symphonic orchestra every fall semester. The duties and responsibilities are:



- In charge of uniformity in **each** section.
- Tuning the ensemble.
- Responsibility for requesting, running sectionals, or running rehearsal when appropriate.
- Assist in maintaining order within the entire ensemble.
- Inspecting all section members and leaders prior to each performance.
- Making sure his/her section area of the orchestra room is kept clean and presentable.

### **Section Leaders/Officers**

These positions will be filled based on playing and leadership abilities. There are 5 positions for each section, 1<sup>st</sup> violin (also concert master), 2<sup>nd</sup> violin, viola, cello, and bass. This position is not just a title; you have responsibilities and can easily lose your leadership position if one does not meet the standards expected. The duties and responsibilities are:

- In charge of uniformity in the assigned section.
- Responsibility for requesting and running sectionals when appropriate.
- Assist in maintaining order within their section.
- Inspecting all section members prior to each performance.
- Making sure his/her section area of the orchestra room is kept clean and presentable.

## **9. Fundraisers**

The RO Family will be working diligently to raise money. We will be doing multiple fundraisers for the program to have what it needs.

It is HIGHLY RECOMMENDED that every student within the orchestra participates in each fundraiser so that the program hits each goal (new instruments, new strings, shoulder rests, instrumental equipment, sheet music, trips, etc.).

You will receive more information once the school year proceeds.

### **Yearly Costs**

- Sheet music - \$50/\$60 PER piece of music
- String Sets PER instrument – Violin (\$60), Viola (\$80), Cello (\$120), Bass (\$180)
- Shoulder Rests for Violin and Viola – \$15/\$20 each
- Endpin holders for Cello and Bass - \$15/\$20 each
- End of the year awards - \$200-\$400
  - Yearly Instrument repairs - \$300-\$600

**I can't wait to see what this year unfolds! The success of this orchestra is on OUR shoulders! Let's work together to make some life-changing music!**



## RO Signature Form

By signing this form, the student and parent/guardian have completely read this handbook and understand the guidelines and policies for the Ramsey Orchestra. The student and parent/guardian have no reason for not knowing the expectations of the RO and there will be complete understanding for any disciplinary action that might have to be taken toward the student and agree to pay the \$10 classroom fee, if not on fee waiver.

Student Print: \_\_\_\_\_ Shirt Size: \_\_\_\_\_

Circle Size: Youth or Adult

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Print: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

This form is due Friday, August 16<sup>th</sup>!