

COURSE DESCRIPTION
EMERSON, DA VINCI & HARPER JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS
COMBINED ORCHESTRA PROGRAM 2016-2017

Dear Parents and Students,

Allow me to introduce myself. My name is Greg Brucker, and I am very proud to be your orchestra director for the 2016 – 2017 school year at Emerson, Da Vinci, and Harper Jr. High Schools. I am a professional double bassist with extensive orchestral conducting and performance experience, private lesson teaching experience, and have a strong background in general string instrument technique and orchestral technique. Outside of the Davis Joint Unified School District, I conduct the Vivace Strings and Prelude Strings Orchestras of the Sacramento Youth Symphony and Academy of Music, and own and run the Davis Bass Studio, a private instrument instruction studio located in Davis. Many DBS students have been ranked as the top student bassists in California, and many former students attend conservatories in the US and Europe. I hold the Principal Double Bass Chair for the Folsom Lake Symphony Orchestra. I am very excited about this continued opportunity to further your child's music education and look forward to a great year of music making. Most importantly, I cannot thank you all enough for your gracious and continued support of the music programs in the Davis City Schools.

On to business: Your child is now a member of the Emerson-Da Vinci-Harper Junior High School Orchestra Program. Our Davis Junior High community is proud of its music department, of which each group is a very important part. My standards reflect the high expectations I have of each student and for me as their teacher. The purpose of this letter and course description is to share with you some of those expectations. Parents, too, are an important part of our success. Without your support, the standard of excellence enjoyed by the orchestra cannot be achieved.

The most current list of dates in which students will be expected to perform or rehearse outside of school hours is currently being sent home. As stated in the course description packet from which students select classes in the spring, attendance at concerts and rehearsals is required and is used as a large percentage of the grade in the course. Announcements of any additional required dates or date changes will happen as soon as they are known via in class announcements and email lists. I will be posting the events on our website as well (<http://groups.dcn.org/edh-orchestras>). Please click on the "Concerts and Events" tab or check School Loop to see our events calendar.

As the Emerson-Da Vinci and Harper Jr. High Orchestras will perform together as a combined ensemble for major concerts and events, it will be necessary to hold rehearsals together outside of school hours before each concert. Please make sure to note on the orchestra events calendar that a few weekend and weekday afternoons have been scheduled for this purpose. Please also note that our annual Wennberg Music Festival will be held at the Mondavi Center on April 8th, 2017.

The students and I will work hard throughout the year to represent ourselves and our schools in a positive manner. Parents can be a huge source of support as well through their attendance at concerts and events and by simply being encouraging through the home practice process. There are many volunteer opportunities as well, and I encourage all parents to attend DSOMA (orchestra boosters) meetings and help by volunteering with the Emerson-Da Vinci-Harper Orchestras. Parental support is an important key towards successful musical achievement for students, and without parent support, this great program and many others would not exist.

Please fill out and sign the last page of this packet, and turn it in to Mr. Brucker by Friday, August 26th, 2016. Hold on to the rest of this packet so you can refer to its contents throughout the year.

I look forward to seeing you this year at concerts or any time you would like to visit the classroom or outside rehearsals. I can be reached by telephone on my cell phone (530) 400-1142 or by e-mail gbrucker@djusd.net or gregbrucker11@gmail.com at any time. As I teach at two sites and will be traveling around the district during the day, I prefer these modes of communication rather than school phone lines. If you are interested in meeting, please contact me to set up a time and day.

Looking forward to another excellent year of fun music making,

Greg Brucker

COURSE REQUIREMENTS FOR MUSIC STUDENTS

There is only one rule for Emerson-Da Vinci and Harper Jr. High Orchestra classes:

Respect Everyone And Everything

(And the only other “unwritten” rule is: HAVE FUN!)

Students should also adhere to the following points:

- Arrive in the classroom and at all rehearsals and concerts on time, with instruments, music, a pencil, and needed accessories (rosin, shoulder rest, cleaning cloth, cello/bass endpin stop).
- Be seated by the posted tuning time for the class: 3 minutes after the bell rings. The first three minutes are dedicated to class setup, which will be explained in class.
- Participate in daily class, outside rehearsals, and concerts, by playing his/her instrument to the best of his/her ability
- Demonstrate co-operation by following directions and classroom rules and showing respect in all interactions with students and adults.
- Demonstrate evidence of home practice by 1) turning in a signed practice sheet (specific dates will be announced in class), and 2) being able to play the assigned orchestra music to the best of one’s ability.
- Keep a music folder (given out by teacher) of all, music and handouts and forms in good condition.
- Contribute to a positive class environment, demonstrating good citizenship by refraining from:
 - **Talking or playing** when instructions are being given or teacher is listening to an individual or section play.
 - **Playing, plucking and talking** when the director or a guest is talking or teaching.
- **Students may not:**
 - **move** around the classroom during instruction without permission;
 - **chew** gum or **eat** food or drink in the room (a closable water bottle is the only exception);
 - **Wear** hats in class or in performance.
- Keep instrument in good playing condition.
- Students are required to participate in performances and rehearsals, unless stated by the teacher as “not required” or if excused prior to the performance or rehearsal. Please see the note about excused absences in the “Parent Responsibilities” section of the syllabus.
- Be responsible for maintaining one’s music folder and keeping all sheet music well organized and in good condition
- Check the Email List, School Loop, the orchestra website, and the classroom orchestra information board for notices, dates, assignments, etc.
- Return all permission slips and other documents requiring parental signatures.

****REQUIRED FORMAL CONCERT DRESS****

BOYS: WHITE BUTTON-UP LONG-SLEEVED SHIRT, BLACK DRESS PANTS, BLACK BOW TIE, BLACK SHOES AND BLACK SOCKS.

GIRLS: BLACK FULL LENGTH SKIRT OR PANT, WHITE BLOUSE $\frac{3}{4}$ TO FULL LENGTH SLEEVES, BLACK NYLONS AND BLACK "CLOSE TOED" DRESS SHOES.

IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO PURCHASE THESE ITEMS, DSOMA (our booster club) OFFERS THE "DSOMA CLOTHES CLOSET," A SOURCE FOR LIGHTLY USED DRESS CLOTHES. IT WILL BE OPEN AND AVAILABLE AT COMBINED REHERALS BEFORE OUR FIRST CONCERT. PLEASE DO THINK ABOUT YOUR DRESS CLOTHES NOW SO THAT YOU ARE NOT SURPRISED SHORTLY BEFORE THE CONCERT.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents are asked to:

- Read the **REQUIREMENTS FOR MUSIC CLASSES** and discuss them with their child. **Sign and return** the last page of this Orchestra Course Description and all other forms by the assigned date during the school year.
- **NOTE ON ABSENCES:**
 - ❖ If you know your child will be absent from a mandatory rehearsal or performance, I ask that you inform me **as soon as you know**. This can be done by email, written note, or call to the to my cell phone. School Sports Games, illness and injury, religious and family obligations, and family emergencies, are considered excused absences regarding the grade, but please notify Mr. Brucker if something comes up as soon as possible. If a student is absent the day of a performance or rehearsal due to any reason, please call my cell phone at (530) 400-1142 to let me know as soon as is appropriate. Thank you for your support.
 - ❖ **Please Note:** Students will not be excused for more than one rehearsal or concert per semester for reasons not listed above. Other missed events' points will need to be made up through extra credit. If you know of multiple potential absences, please contact Mr. Brucker as soon as possible to work out a plan for how to make up lost points.
- If possible, provide the student with an instrument which is in good playing condition, and the necessary accessories needed to play and maintain the instrument. If there is a need, an instrument will be provided from the school collection. All students will be given the opportunity to play and equipment will be available for all students in need.
- Help your child be well organized by adding events, rehearsals, and performance dates to the family calendar as required events as soon as you receive the calendar. If there is a conflict found, please let Mr. Brucker know as soon as you can.
- Support your child's musical activities by encouraging practice and attending performances. It is important for a music student to know that their parents want to hear the groups play and that they have your support of their musical education. I encourage attendance of local, community, university, or professional concerts with your child. Exposure to music of all types, played by students or adults can be very beneficial to a student's musical education, and something the school can not always provide. There will be opportunities for all students to attend concerts through field trips and guest musicians visiting Emerson and Harper.
- Please notify the teacher if you have any questions about your child's work in the class or any other matters which may be of concern to you as parent, or to your child as student.

TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES

The Teacher is expected to:

- Be prepared for instruction and provide appropriate curricular materials, instruction and guidance.
- Provide a variety of challenging music for the students' use in learning and for performances.
- Provide an instrument for students who do not have one.
- Inform students and parents if class work, behavior or other standards are not being met.
- Inform students and parents of assignments, performance dates, and other necessary information.
- Provide a positive classroom atmosphere in which students can work without interference from others.
- Supervise all activities, including inside and outside of class.
- Be punctual for all activities and provide timely information for students and parents.
- Inform students and parents as to departure and arrival times when traveling to and from a performance outside of school.
- Provide a positive and enriching musical experience for all students, giving equal access to all students:

A personal note about our larger goals--

As I aim to create a comfortable environment for learning for all students, I extend the invitation to all parents to contact me at any point about anything regarding your child's musical education or the class. Creating lifelong interest in music is a major goal of the Emerson-Da Vinci-Harper Orchestra program, and I hope, through open communication, respect of everyone and everything, and constructive interaction (and a bit of fun), that as teacher and parents, we can help to properly support and educate all students to not only be better musicians, but also to learn how to interact in a positive, respectful and constructive way in an activity that is at the same time a team sport and a high level academic experience.

100% Equal Access Statement

If a student cannot provide their own instrument, one will be given to them for use (with needed accessories) by the teacher. Those students will be given priority for use of school equipment. All students *will be allowed* to participate in all school events, field trips, and other events which are paid for through DSOMA (Davis Schools Orchestral Music Association-the orchestra booster club), regardless of a family's ability to contribute financially. This ensures all students can participate in full in all orchestra and class events.

ORCHESTRA RULE

1. RESPECT EVERYONE AND EVERYTHING. *(and have fun!!)*

ALL STUDENTS MUST ALSO:

1. BRING INSTRUMENT, MUSIC, AND A PENCIL TO ALL REHEARSALS.
2. GIVE THEIR FULL ATTENTION AND KIND RESPECT TO WHOMEVER IS ON THE
DIRECTOR'S PODIUM
3. REFRAIN FROM CHEWING GUM OR EATING/DRINKING IN THE MUSIC
ROOM
4. BE IN HIS/HER SEAT AT THE ASSIGNED START-UP TIME
5. PARTICIPATE IN ALL REQUIRED PERFORMANCES AND REHEARSALS
6. MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO CARE FOR HIS/HER INSTRUMENT
7. CAPS AND HATS ARE NOT APPROPRIATE TO WEAR IN CLASS
8. OTHER PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES WILL BE ANNOUNCED IN CLASS

CONSEQUENCES:

1. NO INSTRUMENT: No class participation points for that day. Student may be assigned another task.
2. NO PENCIL OR MUSIC: Deduction of class participation points.
3. TALKING OR DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR: Student is given first warning. Second warning, student/teacher conference after class and class participation points are deducted. Third warning, class participation points are deducted, parent is called and situation is explained.
4. EATING OR DRINKING IN CLASS: student will be given a warning and asked to put it away. Second offense: points will be deducted. Further offenses: loss of points, phone call home.
5. TARDINESS: Refer to school-wide discipline policy.
6. PERFORMANCE ABSENCE: With prior notification from a parent, as outlined in this packet, if an absence is considered excused by means of illness, religious obligation, or family emergency, there will be no penalty. If an absence is unexcused, the grade will reflect the loss of all the points for the concert or rehearsal.

GRADES

Grades in Orchestra will appear on the student's report card at the end of every quarter. Approximately every 5 weeks in between quarters, students will also be given a progress report. Progress reports may or may not be given for students with a grade of a "C" or higher. A grade scale and detailed outline of the point system is on the next pages.

PLEASE NOTE: IT IS IMPORTANT TO BE AWARE THAT WHEN A REPORTING PERIOD HAS NO CONCERT IN IT, THE WEEKLY PRACTICE RECORDS, CLASS PARTICIPATION AND OTHER ASSIGNMENTS BECOME A HIGHER PERCENTAGE OF THE GRADE, AS THEY ARE THE ONLY MEANS TO DETERMINE THE GRADE.

The components of the grade system are detailed below:

- WEEKLY PRACTICE PROJECT will be turned every several weeks. Students are assigned 80 minutes per week. Students that wish to excel in their seating auditions and overall stage performances should plan to practice more. Students will be responsible to keep their practice sheet completed and obtain a parent signature on a weekly basis. All practice above the required amount turns into extra credit points. There is no limit to extra credit practice minutes.
- REHEARSALS AND CONCERTS
- CLASS PARTICIPATION (attendance, active participation, bringing music and a pencil to class, positive attitude, etc.)
- SEATING AUDITIONS
- CONCERT REPORTS, ASSIGNMENTS, FORMS
- THEORY AND HISTORY WORKSHEETS (7th graders)

The next 2 pages contain specific assignments and point values composing the grade for both semesters of the 2016-2017 School Year.

Emerson - Da Vinci -Harper Jr. High Orchestras

Grading Scale and Assignment Sheet

2016-2017

The following document will give you a point-by-point scale of each assignment of the class upon which you will be graded. Your quarter grades will be combined to derive the final semester grade. The grading scale and assignments may vary in number or type, and assignments can be added or removed at any point during the semester, including assignments not listed on this form. Please contact Mr. Brucker gbrucker@djud.net with any questions.

Semester 1

August 24th – January 20th

Assignment	Total Pts	Pts Per assignment	Late Deduction
Beg of Yr Paperwork	200		10/day
Seating Audition	200		
Participation/Materials	450	5/day	
Practice Min	900	50/week	5 pts per day late up to 1 week. 0 points after 1 week late
Nov Rehearsal	200		
Dec Rehearsal	200		
Winter Concert	550		
	2700		
Other Assignments May Be Added such as Theory or History Worksheets, Concert Reports, Article Reviews, and Research Essays		50 - 100 pts per assignment	

Semester grades will be based on the following percentages of the combined total quarterly points.	
90% - 100%	A
80% - 89%	B
70% - 79%	C
60% - 69%	D
59% and below	F

Semester 2**January 24th - June 8th**

Assignment	Total Pts	Pts Per assignment	Late Deduction
Seating Audition	200		
Participation/Materials	450	5 per day	
Practice Min	800	50 pts per week	5 pts per day late up to 1 week. 0 points after 1 week late
February Rehearsal	200		
March Rehearsal	200		
Wennberg	500		
April Rehearsal #1	200		
April Rehearsal #2	200	INT Only	
GEMF	500		
SbS Rehearsal/Concert	500		
May Rehearsal #1	200		
May Rehearsal #2	200		
Spring Concert	500		
TOTAL	4650		
Other Assignments May Be Added such as Theory or History Worksheets, Concert Reports, Article Reviews, and Research Essays			50 - 100 pts per assignment

Note: Other required concerts and events worth grade points may be added as the year progresses. All of these grades will be kept updated on School Loop.

Extra credit assignments are offered to make up for lost points:

Extra Credit Points	Points Per Activity	Points Allowed Per Semester
Concert Report or Article Review	50	100
Stage Crew	50/setup/cleanup 200/manager	200
Practice Minutes	25/hour above required minutes	unlimited
Outside Performance	50/performance	unlimited

You are allowed up to the stated number of extra credit points per semester per area of extra credit.

(EXCEPT: extra credit from extra practice is unlimited)

Extra Credit Opportunities:

Concert report, rehearsal or concert setup, extra practice minutes, performance outside of school, music research paper or analysis paper on a piece of music or composer we are working on in class (must be pre-approved by Mr. Brucker), or write a review of an article from a music magazine (provided by Mr. Brucker) are examples of extra credit assignments. Additional extra credit opportunities may be allowed when offered by Mr. Brucker.

SUPPLIES YOU SHOULD HAVE TO BE A SUCCESSFUL MUSIC STUDENT

- All students will need a folder to use as your orchestra folder. In this, you will keep all handouts, music, and forms. The folders will be given out by Mr. Brucker in class.
- IF YOU ARE RENTING OR USING YOUR OWN INSTRUMENT, YOU WILL NEED TO HAVE YOUR NAME MARKED ON YOUR INSTRUMENT CASE. PLEASE PURCHASE A GOOD QUALITY LUGGAGE TAG WITH YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS CLEARLY MARKED ON IT AND ATTACH IT TO THE CASE HANDLE.
- **Violin and Viola players** will need **rosin, a cleaning cloth, shoulder pad, mute** and **tuning device**. The tuning device should stay at home. The director will provide ones at school for students to use.
- **Cello and Bass players** will need **rosin, a cleaning cloth, mute, tuning device, and an end pin stop** for performances on stage or on other non-carpeted surfaces.
- **A music stand for home practice is strongly recommended.** Playing on a table or out of a case causes poor technique.

IT IS RECOMMENDED TO PURCHASE ALL OF THE ABOVE ITEMS IN ORDER TO BE A SUCCESSFUL MUSIC STUDENT. THESE ITEMS CAN BE FOUND AT WATERMELON MUSIC. MR. BRUCKER WILL PROVIDE SHOULDER RESTS AND ROSIN FOR SCHOOL USE.

Seating Auditions

Every orchestra student must participate in a seating audition for a chair placement in the class. Auditions for the first half of the year will be held September 26th - October 7th. Auditions for the second half of the year will be held between January 24th - February 3rd. Auditions will take place during class and will be adjudicated by Mr. Brucker or a local music professional. Students will be asked to play several excerpts of predetermined pieces chosen by Mr. Brucker. If they are auditioning for a principal position they will be asked to prepare and play a solo of 2-3 minutes of their choosing in addition to their orchestral excerpts. **It is recommended to provide the adjudicator with a copy of the solo being played.** The student will also receive a grade upon their completion of the assignment based on preparedness, timeliness, and overall professionalism. *Students will **not** be graded based on ability.*

**Emerson-Da Vinci-Harper Jr. High Orchestras
Course Description
Parent and Student Signature Page**

**Please return this page, signed, to class by
Friday, August 26th**

Your signatures below indicate that you (as parent) and your child (as student) have read and understand the expectations, rules, and information provided in this syllabus. If you have questions, please contact Mr. Brucker at gbrucker@djusd.net or (530) 400 1142

Student Name: _____

SCHOOL: _____ **GRADE:** _____

STUDENT SIGNATURE _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE _____

Date _____