

String Curriculum

Instrumental Objectives

1. Develop and expand knowledge of specific instrumental techniques, including unified bowing and violin positions.
2. Develop an understanding of the care and handling of the various stringed instruments.
3. Develop and expand knowledge of music reading, and of musical concepts such as pitch, rhythm and meter.
4. Develop and expand knowledge of music interpretation, style, and history of music and musical instruments.
5. Develop responsibility, self-discipline and musicianship through individual and ensemble play.
6. Develop a good sense of pitch for tuning and playing in tune.

Elementary

Grade 4 & 5

Students are recruited in the fourth and fifth grades for strings. Each student receives either a small group or private lesson twice weekly. Students study from a like-instrument lesson book at either the beginning or advanced level. String ensemble music is practiced during the orchestra time.

Technique and Performance

1. Demonstrate good posture and playing position
2. Learn proper care and handling of instrument and bow
3. Learn basic right hand technique
 - a. bowing – legato and staccato – and pizzicato
4. Learn basic left hand technique
 - a. violin and viola – first position, and upper and lower extensions
 - b. cello – 1st, 2nd and half position, upper and lower extensions
 - c. bass – 1st, half position, upper and lower extensions
5. Perform with attention to intonation
6. Understand basic principles of good tone production
7. Learn selected major scales

Music Fundamentals

1. Develop skill in reading basic music notation
2. Develop understanding of basic meter signatures and rhythm patterns using whole, half, quarter, eighth and dotted notes and their rests $\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{2}{4}$ & $\frac{6}{8}$
3. Learn to sing basic melodic intervals

4. Recognize expressive and bow markings
5. Recognize value of individual practice

Musical Interpretation

1. Learn a vocabulary of terms to discuss and describe music
2. Attend music concerts (particularly orchestra and strings) whenever possible

Musical Activities

1. Fall Concert involving the advanced students in each elementary school
2. All School Spring Concert involving all the string students in the elementary schools

Elementary Evaluation Procedure:

Evaluations of each string student are sent home to the parent with the quarterly report card. The form is set up with a chart to indicate where the student's performance is adequate or better, and where improvement is necessary. Personal comments directed to both the student and the parents are added at the bottom. Occasionally, results of written tests on music fundamentals may be included in the quarterly report.

Middle School

Grade 6 – 8

Orchestra meets twice, weekly in the middle school. In addition, each student receives a small group lesson once a week. Student's study from lesson and etude books suited to the level of ability. They also work on selected parts of the concert music.

Orchestra literature consists both of classical type music from Baroque, Classical and Romantic periods and of contemporary string orchestra music. Music is also selected from a variety of ethnic and religious backgrounds but may also reflect the needs of the community for a variety of styles from fiddle music to patriotic music.

Technique and Performance

1. Study a progressive plan of materials for individual growth on own instrument.
2. Expand left hand technique
 - a) Violin and viola – 1/2, third and fifth positions
 - b) Cello – 1/2, third, fifth and fourth positions
 - c) Bass – second and third position
3. Expand right hand with new bowing techniques
 - a) Tremolo, ponticello
4. Learn procedures for tuning the instruments with ear training and the use of electronic tuners
5. Match pitches and play a melodic line in tune
6. Perform a variety of bowing styles appropriate to different styles of music

7. Recognize and play rhythm and tonal patterns at sight as they occur in instrumental line
8. Demonstrate correct tone production and resonance; understand how to achieve this at various dynamics
9. Learn how to approach sight-reading in a systematic way
10. Learn embellishments such as trills, grace notes, etc.
11. Understand the use of vibrato as an expressive element
12. Perform in large and small ensembles in public
13. Demonstrate rehearsal and concert manners such as posture, action, and attire
14. Perform solo repertoire with or without accompaniment
15. Listen to classical music as much as possible from radio, CD's, concerts, and technology

Music Fundamentals

1. Use a systematic counting method
2. Perform major and minor scales and arpeggios
3. Know keys and key signatures of major scales
4. Recognize key changes within a piece of music
5. Understand meters of $\frac{3}{8}$, $\frac{6}{8}$, $\frac{9}{8}$ and $\frac{12}{8}$
6. Recognize and demonstrate basic conducting patterns of 2, 3, and 4
7. Recognize and understand expressive and bow markings
8. Define musical symbols and abbreviations
9. Recognize the value of individual practices and individual instruction
10. Recognize the need for listening to recorded orchestra music

Musical Interpretation

1. Know composers and styles of music studied
2. Study the expressive qualities inherent in music
3. Attend orchestra, string ensemble and string solo concerts of school, college and professional quality

Musical Activities

1. Strings & Bows Orchestra Concert – presented with Middle School orchestra for middle school students and parents

2. Spring Orchestra Concert – an evening string orchestra concert presented for parents and friends
3. Solo and Ensemble Performance – may be an optional performance in contest or concert
4. Spring Art Festival – the middle school strings perform along with the choir and art departments

Middle School Evaluation Procedure

Middle School students are evaluated on their orchestra and lesson performance, which primarily stresses attitude and attendance. Students are encouraged to attend lessons regularly, and their attendance is reflected on their grade. The grading system for orchestra is A, B, C, D & F with plus and minus indicators. Supplemental comments are also sent with the report card that indicates where a student's performance is adequate or better and where improvement is necessary. Students may also be asked to prepare for written tests on fundamentals of music. The increased use of technology is expanding student's ability to learn individualized instruction.

High School

Grade 9 – 12

The high school string orchestra students meet as a daily class during the school day. Students study lesson books, études, and solo material selected to match their ability and potential. Small ensembles are formed to involve every student and meet both during class and out of class at various times during the school year. Full orchestra involving every string student and selected wind and percussion students. This large ensemble meets during class time at various times during the year. Occasionally special practices before school or in the evening may be required.

The string orchestra is featured at a minimum of two concerts during the school year. The full orchestra is featured at two additional concerts and performs in the Baccalaureate ceremony at the end of the school year. The literature practiced and performed is of the highest quality, and covers a variety of historic music periods and styles. Both the string orchestra and the full orchestra music is chosen to meet the capabilities of the students and also to challenge them.

Technique and Performance

1. Study a progressive plan of material to develop ensemble and solo performance skills
2. Study the higher positions of the instruments
 - a) Violin and viola – 2nd, 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th positions
 - b) Cello – 5th, 6th, 7th and upper thumb positions
 - c) Bass – 4th, 5th and upper thumb positions
3. Demonstrate preferred fingerings on the instrument
4. Expand right hand with more advanced bowings
 - a) spiccato and ricochet
5. Play with good intonation and with the ability to adjust to the vertical structure in a chord
6. Define and use in performance: standard notation, dynamic and bowing markings, musical symbols and terms.
7. Be familiar with music of many styles, forms, and periods and listen to classical music frequently
8. Have experience in both small and large string ensembles and in full orchestra
9. Experience public performance both individually and in ensemble

10. Perform with appropriate rehearsals and concert manners such as posture action and attire

Music Fundamentals

1. Use a systematic counting method
2. Identify the construction of and perform both major and minor scales and arpeggios
3. Know the key signatures of major and minor scales and their forms and be able to use technology for learning music fundamentals
4. Recognize (both visually and aurally) elements of a melodic line, such as motif, sequence, phrase and cadence
5. Expand own vocabulary of music and study All State orchestra terms
6. Recognize value of private instruction and individual practice
7. Be able evaluate progress with skill tests and written tests

Music Interpretation

1. Listen to, analyze and study the literature performed and similar literature
2. Know the historical and stylistic periods of music, their major composers and characteristic literature
3. Study at an advanced level the elements of music in varying contexts
4. Make musical decisions with respect to interpretation and expressiveness
5. Evaluate individual and group performance
6. Identify and define characteristics of different large forms of music
7. Explore types of music careers and music related careers, job descriptions and job availability
8. Demonstrate knowledge of various types of music in today's society
9. Attend concerts and clinics of school, college and professional quality
10. Discuss and evaluate concert and clinic performances

Musical Activities

1. Auditions – for All-State Orchestra, including preparation of programmed selections, specified etudes, and a written test
2. All-State Orchestra – two days of rehearsal totaling at least 14 hours plus the final concert with All-State Chorus
3. Fall Concert – string orchestra concert with the MMS orchestra
4. Strings and Bows Holiday Concert – full orchestra concert with MMS orchestra
5. Regional Music Contest – including solos, ensemble and chamber orchestra

6. Annual Musical – members of orchestra make up the pit orchestra for the musical
7. Chanhassen Trip – for entire group to see a professional musical
8. All School String Celebration – string orchestra concert grade 4 – 12
9. Membership in SDSU Civic Orchestra – directors may recommend outstanding students to the university orchestra director for a more challenging musical experience

High School Evaluation Procedure:

High school students are evaluated on their orchestra and concert performance, which primarily stresses attitude and attendance. Concert attendance is mandatory. The grading system is with letter grades A to F. Every student with a good attitude and regular class and lesson attendance can achieve an “A” grade.

String Instrumental Curriculum Overview

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Goals

The purpose of the orchestra is to enjoy the study of music through the performance of a variety of music pieces suitable for the middle school orchestra. Music selections may be chosen from a variety of sources and may include selections from standard classical music, sacred music, wedding music, folk music, and music from other lands. They may also include music from movies, musicals, and patriotic songs. Our goal is to expose musicians to a wide variety of music, which they can use throughout their life. Students are encouraged to continue in the musical groups for their lifelong enjoyment and musical enrichment.

Musical Objectives

Tuning the instrument – Students will learn to tune with the piano, electric tuner, or another individual.
Bowing Procedures – Students will learn proper bowing techniques for legato, staccato, and variations.
Positions – Students will explore the third and fifth positions, building scales in those positions as needed.
Scales – Students learn major scales and their natural, harmonic, and melodic minors. Also the chromatic.
Key Signatures – Students define key signatures by melodic analysis, whether major or minor in sound.
Rhythms – Students study counting and rhythm patterns as needed by the difficulty of music literature.
Terms – Students will learn terms used for their performance music from terms lists of graded difficulty.
Instrument Care- Students learn to polish and restring the violin. They also learn how to care for the bow.
Special care should be taken for sudden changes in temperature and humidity. A good case is essential.

Grading and Performance

Grades are reflected in the students work lessons, practice, and group participation. Small group lessons are required. In the 9-weeks period students are excused from classes to be in lessons. If they cannot make a lesson because of a test or an excused absence such as illness or a field trip, they may make up a lesson. Students must attend six lessons in a 9-week period. Practice is reflected in their ability to perform in the large group and in lessons. Practice cards may be used for a more formal evaluation of effort. Terms tests and skills tests also evaluate student progress. The strong student with a positive attitude will show the leadership required to earn a high grade. Grades earned are A, B, C, D, and F.

Extra Credit

Students who participate in concerts, contests, and trips with the orchestra will receive extra credit for their efforts. This also includes playing for school and community functions beyond the school day. Students who are taking private lessons or are working with special church or community musical groups are asked to report these activities to the director for extra credit.

Important String Activities

September	Beginner String Students Meeting Grade 4 All State Preparation Clinic
October	Fall String Festival Grades 6 – 12 All State Auditions at Watertown
November	South Dakota All State Orchestra and Chorus
December	All School Strings and Bows Holiday Concert Grades 4 – 12
January	BHS Orchestra's fund-raiser Variety Show
February	MMS Instrumental Ensemble Contest South Dakota Music Teachers Workshop
March	North East South Dakota String Festival Grades 6 – 8 All School Orchestra Festival Grade 4 – 12
April	Regional contest for BHS Solos and Ensembles BHS String Soiree at a Church. (Ascension Lutheran)
May	BHS Orchestra Students visit Chanhassen Dinner Theater MMS Spring Art Festival for Art, Chorus and Orchestra BHS Orchestra plays concerts for the Elementary Schools BHS Orchestra plays for Baccalaureate processional.

Students are encouraged to continue with lessons, church music, and other music activities during the summer. There is no school orchestra activities sponsored by Brookings High School during the summer months.