

## **About the McCullough JH Orchestra Program**

The orchestra program has an enrollment of 250+ students. Orchestra is a full year, 2 semester commitment at McCullough Junior High. Our students have a legacy of success through musical performance with consistent superior ratings at UIL Concert and Sightreading Contest, Best in Class Awards, and Overall Outstanding Awards at Directors Choice festivals.

### **How is the orchestra program organized?**

There are six (6) different orchestra classes at McCullough. Students are placed into these orchestra classes based on their ability level. These six ability grouped classes are all performing orchestras. They are the following: Chamber, Concert, Symphony, Camerata, Philharmonic, and Sinfonietta. \*Beginning Orchestra is not offered at McCullough JH.

### **How are students placed into orchestra classes?**

Students are placed into orchestra classes based on their ability level. Auditions are held for all 6th graders in February/March. Current 7th graders are evaluated throughout their year in orchestra. The auditions are scored, and students are ranked. The students are then placed into ability grouped orchestra classes based on their scores and the instrumentation needs of the orchestras. Current 6th graders' scores are ranked along with our current 7th grade students for next year's placement.

### **Are the classes separated by grade level?**

No. All orchestra classes are ability grouped and have both 7th and 8th graders in them.

### **What events and activities does the orchestra participate?**

The orchestra performs numerous times throughout the school year at many different events. We perform at the following events: a Fall Concert, a Winter Concert, Pre UIL Concert, Spring Contests, and a Spring Concert. Students also have the opportunity to participate in Conroe ISD Auditions, TMEA All-Region Orchestra, and Solo and Ensemble Competition.

### **What orchestra classes participate in the orchestra events?**

All orchestras will perform at the Fall, Winter, and Spring Concerts. All students in the Orchestra Program have the opportunity to participate in UIL Solo & Ensemble Competition. Symphony, Concert, and Chamber will perform at the TMEA UIL Concert & Sight-Reading Contest. Chamber students are required to participate in either TMEA Region Orchestra or UIL Solo & Ensemble, preferably both.

### **Can I be in orchestra and other activities (athletics, drill team, choir, etc.)?**

ABSOLUTELY!! The majority of the students in orchestra also participate in other activities. We work with the coaches and sponsors here on campus to make it possible for students to be a part of multiple activities. We have students who are also involved in: football, basketball, volleyball, cross country, drill team, cheerleading, color guard, theater, choir, art, DI, Student Council, Robotics, golf, swimming, private PE, track, lacrosse, tennis, as well as outside of school activities.

### **How much time is required outside of school?**

Students are expected to practice outside of the school day to improve their music skills. Students in the top two orchestras (Chamber Orchestra & Concert Orchestra) have a one hour rehearsal outside of class once a week called a sectional. Students in Symphony, Camerata, Philharmonic, and Sinfonietta will have few additional rehearsals throughout the school year before performances.

### **What about practice records?**

All orchestra students complete practice records. They are collected each week and graded. Orchestra students practice record grades are determined by the number of minutes practiced each week. Practicing is a vital part of improving and continuing to develop skills necessary to be successful.

### **How are students graded in Orchestra?**

Students receive grades in orchestra for the following: performance/attendance at concerts, performance on playing and chair tests, practice records, attendance at sectionals and other rehearsals outside of class, having their supplies for class, and any written assignments that may be done in class.

### **What are the financial responsibilities of participating in the McC Orchestra?**

General financial responsibilities for each student include all necessary musical accessories such as the rental of their instrument, rosin, strings, and a soft leaning cloth. Boys will also need to purchase their formal uniform (black button down shirt, black dress pants, black dress shoes, black socks). Girls will be provided a black dress for the school year but must also buy black foot coverings (hose, socks, knee highs, etc.) and black dress shoes. Every student is required to pay an orchestra fee of \$100, which includes their orchestra t-shirt, black binder, locker sign, and a lock for their orchestra locker. This fee also covers guest clinicians to work with sections during class, sheet music, and the food bought for socials or after school rehearsals. The McCullough Orchestra Program does not hold any fundraisers. \*Students who play school-owned instruments are required to pay a yearly fee of \$77. This is a fee given by the district and can be paid through School Cash Online.

Please contact the orchestra department if you have questions about the McCullough JH Orchestra Program!