

Cane Bay Middle School Orchestra Handbook 2025-26



PLEASE REGISTER ONLINE VIA OUR WEBSITE OR
COMPLETE AND RETURN ALL FORMS BY FRIDAY, AUGUST 22ND.

ORCHESTRA DIRECTOR

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<https://cbmsorch.wixsite.com/home>

*"Ability is what you're capable of doing.
Motivation determines what you do.
Attitude determines how well you do it."*

Lou Holtz
South Carolina Football Coach
1999-2004

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MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Cane Bay Middle School Orchestra program is to provide students a positive and supportive environment where they can learn the art of making music through playing a string instrument. Music is an international language that crosses all cultural, political, socio-economic, and religious boundaries. It is a lifelong skill that can unite people to create something beautiful. Through practice, and participating in rehearsals and performances, students will learn self-discipline, problem-solving, goal-setting, self-expression, memory skills, concentration, poise, enhanced physical coordination, high self-esteem, and the importance of teamwork. Like all the arts, music has a profound effect on the academic success of students. Students are expected to develop a sense of pride and respect for the orchestra. In addition to the knowledge and experience that students gain by learning to perform, analyze, and interpret music, students also gain valuable social and interpersonal skills. The opportunities for playing a string instrument in high school and life are abundant, with many universities offering scholarships for musicians.

6TH GRADE BEGINNING ORCHESTRA

This orchestra is for beginning students. The primary goal is to learn how to read music, use correct posture, and become proficient in fundamental string technique. We will cover String Basics book 1, music theory, and perform grade .5 to grade 1 music and skills.

6TH - 8TH GRADE ADVANCED ORCHESTRA

This orchestra is for intermediate and advanced students that have successfully completed a year or more of orchestra, or who audition for Mr. DePriest. The primary goals are to learn how to read higher level music, improve our tone, learn advanced skills like shifting, vibrato, and two octave scales. Students will represent our school in local and regional competitions. We will cover String Basics book 2-3, Habits of a Successful Middle Level String Musician, music theory, and perform grade 2-3 music and skills.

FEES

Fees are in place to ensure students have the necessary supplies to succeed. They can be reduced by participating in fundraisers. These fees offset the cost of music books, tuners, sheet music, accessories (pencils, rosin, shoulder rests, rock stops), and to maintain the instrument inventory. These items are not covered by BCSD or CBM, so they are funded by fundraisers and fees. Fees are due by September 5th and are non-refundable. Checks or money orders should be made payable to Cane Bay Middle School. No member will be denied the opportunities of our organization due to financial difficulties. Contact Mr. DePriest with any questions or concerns.

6TH GRADE BEGINNERS

Tuner	\$10
Theory Software	\$10
Method Book x2	\$20
Uniform Polo Shirt	\$25
TOTAL	\$65*

6/7/8TH GRADE ADVANCED

Theory Software	\$10
Method Book	\$10
Orchestra Music	\$10
All County Audition	\$5
TOTAL	\$35**

*Optional Orchestra Instrument Rental Fee +\$60 (*for renting a CBM instrument for 2025-26*)

**Please add any cost for replacement products such as a shirt or tuner if needed.

CALENDAR

Please transfer important dates or deadlines to your calendar. Attendance and participation is required. Any changes to the schedule will be communicated as soon as possible.

DATE	EVENT	GROUP	PLACE & TIME
August 13	Sponsorship Drive Begins	All Students	
August 22	Registration & Materials Due	All Students	
September 5	Fees & Shirt Orders Due	All Students	
October 8	Fall Orchestra Concert	All Students	CBM 6-7pm
December 13	All County Orchestra Auditions	Advanced Orchestra	BHS
December 17	Holiday Orchestra Concert	All Students	CBM 6-7pm
February 27-28	All County Orchestra	Select Students	CBH
March 4	March Concert	All Students	CBM 6-7pm
March 11-12	SCMEA CPA Region IV	Advanced Orchestra	Lucy Beckham HS
April 25	Cane Bay Recital (Solo & Ensemble)	Select Students	TBA
May 18	Orchestra Spring Concert	All Students	CBM 6-7pm

ATHLETICS AND MUSICAL CONFLICT POLICY

I am thrilled to have many students involved in sports and other music programs at the school and community level. This can be very beneficial for their musical skills such as improving hand eye coordination, reaction time, stamina, posture, teamwork, and more. All potential conflicts must be turned into Mr. DePriest in writing at the start of the season, or as soon as possible if an event is rescheduled. Please communicate conflicts with Mr. DePriest and with the other coach or music director. **Conflicts that are not communicated in writing will be considered an unexcused absence.** Please review the policy below:

1. Conflicts between practices and rehearsals will be worked out between the coach and director so that the student will participate in approximately 50% of the practice and rehearsal.
 2. Conflicts between a rehearsal and a game/performance - student will take part in the game/performance.
 3. Conflicts between a performance and a practice/rehearsal - student will take part in the performance.
 4. Conflicts between a performance and a regular season athletic event - student will take part in the performance.
 5. Conflicts between a performance and a playoff game - student will take part in the playoff game.
 6. Conflicts between multiple performances or athletic events must be dealt with by the coach and director.
 7. Students may not choose to participate with only one musical program if both programs are performing for the same date or event. They will be required to fulfill their commitment to BOTH programs.
- For more information on performance grades and excusable absences, please review the grading section of the handbook.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

Please have these by Friday, August 22nd

All of these items are available at the local music stores listed on the next page:

1. Instrument Outfit from store or CBM (including case, bow, rosin, cleaning cloth)
2. 1" hardback 3 ring binder (no multi-subject binders)
3. Clear sheet protectors to keep music in binder (minimum 25)
4. Pencil for every class
5. Extra set of strings (encouraged but not required)
6. Shoulder rest (violin/viola only) **included with most rentals
7. Rock stop (cello/bass only) **included with most rentals

Please note that method books, theory software, and tuners will be provided using class fees.

Local Music Stores

Music and Arts Center
1219 N Main St. Suite A
Summerville, SC 29483
843-871-4784
www.musicarts.com

Southern String Supply
502 Wando Park Blvd #106
Mt Pleasant, SC 29464
843-225-2467
www.theinstrumentdoc.com

INSTRUMENTS

Every student must have an instrument. No non-wood, colored, or painted instruments allowed. Most stores offer affordable rental, lease, or purchase plans. DO NOT purchase instruments from another source before consulting with Mr. DePriest. It is important to invest in an instrument that will sound good and not be constantly out of tune or in the repair shop because of inferior construction or condition. The school owns a limited number of string instruments that can be rented on a yearly basis. School instruments will be assigned on a first come, first served basis. The rental fee helps cover string replacement as well as instrument repair and maintenance. Parents and students are financially responsible for damage to a school instrument that exceeds their rental fee.

1. Take care of your instrument. Keep it clean and stored in a climate-controlled facility because extreme temperatures and humidity can damage the instrument. Instruments should be stored in their cases when not in use and never left on the floor, furniture, or on top of a case unattended. Bows should be loosened and put away when not being used and cello/bass endpins must be in before returning them to racks.
2. All instruments will be stored in the orchestra room throughout the day.
3. If your instrument is in need of repair, do not attempt to fix it yourself. Bring it to Mr. DePriest first. If it is a minor problem, I will fix it. If I cannot, I will recommend a reputable repairman.

HOMEWORK IS PRACTICING OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL

Students will receive feedback each class on specific skills and musical excerpts that they must master. A minimum of 20 minutes of practice for 5 days is expected from every student or 100 min/weekly. Students who have a daily practice time are more consistently prepared for class, performances, and assessments. They are also more likely to enjoy their instrument than those that struggle to keep up. Consistency and perseverance are the keys to success. All students must take their instruments home after school if they do not already have one at home for practicing. Parents, please continue to encourage your child to practice regularly by providing time and space that is free from distraction.

ADVANCING IN ORCHESTRA

Beginning Orchestra is open to everyone. Advanced Orchestra is open to students that complete Beginning Orchestra, or by auditioning for Mr. DePriest. If a child is not being successful, I will contact their parent(s) or guardian(s) to plan an intervention. If the intervention fails to correct the problem, it will not benefit them or their classmates to force them to stay involved in a class in which they are not having a positive, successful, or productive experience. The following conditions are causes for intervention:

- ☐ Does not have all required materials to be successful (music, binder, book, pencil)
- ☐ Does not have a functional instrument (repairs or replacement recommended)
- ☐ Does not practice enough to learn skills and music in a timely manner to keep up with their peers
- ☐ Does not accept correction and continues using incorrect technique negatively affecting their peers
- ☐ Did not participate fully in mandatory rehearsals and performances this year
- ☐ Regularly forgets to complete work, practice logs, or bring required materials to class
- ☐ Regularly has discipline problems that cause significant loss of instructional time for the class
- ☐ Is currently failing or close to a failing grade due to any or all of the above (see attached grade report)
- ☐ Failed a test

Students that demonstrate any of the above conditions for more than one consecutive quarter will be dropped from Orchestra at the end of the semester. Parents may elect to get private lessons to help prevent this, or to have their child audition for Mr. DePriest to rejoin the orchestra. Readmittance is at the sole discretion of Mr. DePriest. This is for their sake, and the sake of their peers that are affected by their ability to support their classmates musically.

GRADING POLICY

The Grading Scale used for all classes at CBM is:

90-100=A

80-89=B

70-79=C

60-69=D

59 and below=F

Grades will be based on the following criteria:

Practice Assignments (Rehearsal/Journals) 25%

Minor Assignments (Quizzes/Theory) 35%

Major Assignments (Tests/Performances) 40%



Rehearsal

In order for an ensemble to be successful, active student participation and preparation is essential. A student must be in rehearsal. There is no way for a student to “make-up” a missed rehearsal. Students must have their instrument, book, binder, and pencil at every rehearsal and put forth their best effort.

Performances

Performance grades are 60% participating fully, 20% being on time and staying for the entire event, and 20% being fully in uniform. A student's grade will be reduced for tardies or leaving early without approval from the director. Please make sure the dates and times of required events are in your calendar so that conflicts can be minimized. If there is a conflict, notify Mr. DePriest well in advance of the scheduled event. There are four excused reasons for missing a performance:

1. Death in the family or comparable family emergency.
2. Student illnesses verified by a doctor's excuse.
3. Documented religious holiday.
4. Athletic/Music events communicated in advance that follow the conflict policy on page 3.

For an excused absence or tardy, or permission to leave an event early, parents must send written notification to Mr. DePriest describing the nature of the absence. Absences or tardies, as well as potential make-up assignments, are solely at the discretion of the director. Lack of transportation will not be excused. If transportation is an issue, please contact Mr. DePriest at least one week prior to the scheduled event so that arrangements can be made. Students who show up in unacceptable attire will have their grade reduced. In extreme cases, a student will be restricted from performing and may receive a zero.

Journals

Students must complete a weekly digital practice journal. The purpose of this journal is to help students set goals and reflect on their progress. A minimum of 20 minutes of practice for 5 days is expected from every student or 100 min/weekly. Students who have a regular daily practice time are more consistently prepared for class, performances, and assessments.

Quizzes & Theory

Students will have specific skills and music every class that they are to learn for the next class. Students will demonstrate their mastery of them through individual or small group performances. Quizzes will be recorded at home and submitted digitally using Schoology. Music theory will be assigned to reinforce the concepts taught in class.

Tests

Tests will be given with advanced notice to evaluate students on mastery of music and technique. Performances are also a test grade. Students will be tested individually or in small group performances.

CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS

Students are expected to demonstrate respect and pride in their orchestra at all times. Classroom expectations, procedures, and policies are taught and enforced from day one. There are three rules:

1. Do not talk or touch things without permission.
2. Sit correctly at all times.
3. Only play when directed to do so by the teacher.

Inappropriate Behavior

Students and parents must respect the ideals, principles and rules of the organization. Each member must think for themselves and make good choices. Misconduct casts a bad light on the orchestra program, as well as our school and community. Consequences for inappropriate behavior will include:

1st Offense – Verbal warning and reteaching expectations.

2nd Offense – Verbal warning and seat change, loss of playing privilege, or alternate assignment.

3rd Offense – Parent contact and referral to administration will follow. Severe or habitual misbehavior may result in automatic referral to administration, or ineligibility for concerts, field trips, and other special events/activities.

FINGERNAIL POLICY

One sacrifice we make in order to play our instrument correctly is having short nails. Are they too long?

Test: with a straight finger, firmly press the fingertip down onto the top of a table so that the finger is perpendicular to the table. If the fingertip can firmly press to the table without the nail getting in the way, the nail is short enough. If the nail gets in the way, it is too long to play a string instrument correctly.

Wearing salon nails in orchestra is like wearing high-heels in PE. They make it hard to be successful and poor playing affects their peers. A warning will be given by the director to shorten or remove long nails.

Repeat offenders will not be allowed to perform until their nails are the proper length.

PERFORMANCE ATTIRE

A professional looking ensemble adds to the overall aesthetic of any performance, boosts the confidence and morale of the players, and leaves a positive impression on the audience. It is for these reasons that a standard concert uniform is required at all performances. Ladies and gentlemen should wear the orchestra polo shirt (provided) with black dress pants, black dress shoes, black socks, and a black belt. Shirts must be tucked in with a belt. Denim and athletic wear are not acceptable concert attire unless an exception has been clearly communicated for special events. Students who show up in unacceptable attire will have their grade reduced, or in extreme cases, may be restricted from performing and receive a zero.

PICTURES, SOCIAL MEDIA, VIDEOS, WEBSITE

You can find important information including calendars, important documents, and more through our orchestra website – <https://cbmsorch.wixsite.com/home>. In addition to information about our program, videos of our performances as well as pictures from rehearsals, events, performances, etc. may be posted to our school's social media to show off the great things happening in our program. If you do not want pictures/videos that show your child to be displayed on these websites, please notify the director in writing.

FUNDRAISING

Fundraising is critical to the mission and success of our program. Why do we need to have fundraisers?

1. to provide the means for families to fund their child's strings account to assist in paying for class and instrument fees, event fees, and field trips.
2. to offset additional costs, over and above the orchestra fees, which allows us to keep our fees at a level similar to other area middle school orchestra programs.

3. to raise money so that we may continue to provide our students with quality instruments, music, and equipment that are needed to ensure the excellence of our program.

FIELD TRIPS

Musical field trips have educational and social value. All students are encouraged to attend these trips. Mr. DePriest puts a great deal of time and preparation into our music field trips and is committed to making these trips fun and safe for everyone. Students who cannot follow directions in class or who are chronically disruptive will not be allowed on field trips. Students that have missed required performances, or with poor grades may be restricted from orchestra field trips.

ORCHESTRA OPPORTUNITIES

All County Orchestra (ACO)

This is an annual two day clinic and concert open to Orchestra students throughout Berkeley County by audition. Auditions are held in December with the event being held in February. ACO is designed to bring together the strongest string players in Berkeley County, have them work intensively with guest teachers and conductors, and put on a high level performance. Being selected to represent our school's Orchestra program at All County is an honor. This can be a very challenging but positive experience for students and the key is in attitude, preparation, and teamwork. All advanced orchestra students are required to audition and participate in ACO if selected.

Concert Performance Assessment (CPA)

This is our annual evaluation called Concert Performance Assessment (CPA). Each spring, middle school and high school students throughout SC prepare a high level performance for a panel of professional musicians. This external evaluation is an important part of giving the students a different perspective on their performance abilities, earning awards, and to receive a performance rating.

Private Lessons

I encourage the highly motivated children, and those that need extra support, to consider private lessons. While we make good progress when I see them in a mixed ensemble every day, great strides can be made with one on one instruction. Private instructors teach at the student's pace, and help each student develop technical and musical skills specific to their instruments. These skills can be well applied in an orchestra setting, and in most cases, students who work with a private instructor progress much faster than those who do not. Teacher fees and lesson lengths vary. If you are interested in getting instruction, see the orchestra website for a list of local private teachers. <https://cbmsorch.wixsite.com/home/local>

Cane Bay Recital (Solo and Ensemble)

I encourage interested students to participate in Solo & Ensemble each spring. This is an excellent opportunity for the students to perform by themselves or as a small ensemble (duo, trio, quartet). Students will receive constructive feedback regarding their performance technique and musical interpretation. Participants will also receive a certificate of participation. If you are interested, see Mr. DePriest for more information.

Summerville Orchestra Youth & Junior Philharmonic

This is a FREE extra curricular orchestra program open to students by audition. I encourage advanced orchestra players to consider trying out. The orchestras rehearse once a week on Monday evenings and have end of semester performances. I will provide flyers to interested students at school and I am happy to assist them in preparing to audition. More information can also be found on their website at <https://summervilleorchestra.org/youth/>

ORCHESTRA CONTRACT

Please register online OR complete and return this form by August 22nd. You do not need to do both.

Student: I have completely read the Orchestra Handbook. I understand and agree that:

1. I will follow all policies, rules, and procedures outlined in the handbook.
2. I will practice at least 5 days a week for 20 minutes each to master my skills and music, and submit a journal weekly.
3. I will bring my book, binder, instrument, and pencil to every class, and submit a journal weekly.
4. If I miss a required performance, my grade will be affected unless the absence is excused.
5. My contribution to the orchestra is an important part of the Orchestra's success.
6. Pictures and videos from our events may be posted to the orchestra website and social media to show off the great things happening in our program.

Student Name _____

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Parent: I have completely read the Orchestra Handbook. I understand and agree that:

1. I support the student agreement listed above and my child has agreed to it.
2. I will follow all policies, rules, and procedures outlined in the handbook.
3. Conflicts that are not communicated in writing will be considered an unexcused absence. If my child misses a required event, their grade will be affected unless the absence is excused.
4. If I have questions or concerns about my child's experience, I will contact Mr. DePriest first to give him a chance to address them.
5. I must pick up my child no later than 15 minutes after an event has ended. If I am going to be late, I will contact Mr. DePriest to make him aware of the situation.
6. I have a financial obligation to the orchestra program. This will ensure my child has necessary supplies for the greatest chance of success, and to maintain a standard of excellence for the program as a whole.
7. Pictures and videos from our events may be posted to the orchestra website and social media to show off the great things happening in our program.

Parent's Name _____

Parent Signature _____ Date _____

Please fill out the information below to assist in orchestra communication:

Home Address: _____

Phone #1: _____ Phone #2: _____

Email Address: _____

Email Address: _____

*****Email is our primary form of communication. Please update the director if it changes.***

Cane Bay Middle School Instrument Agreement

Please register online OR complete and return this form by August 22nd. You do not need to do both.
This form is **ONLY** for students applying for a school instrument.

Student's Name _____ School Year _____

Type of Instrument: (circle one) violin viola cello bass

Type of Rental (Check all that apply)

School Use:

☐ Year 2025-26 Rental (\$60)

☐ ~~Summer 2026 Rental (\$30)~~

Home Use: (if available)

☐ Please inform me if we can take the instrument home.

☐ We have our own instrument at home.

The orchestra director will fill out this section of the form. Please sign at the bottom of the page.

Make _____ Serial Number _____ Value _____

Accessories _____

Condition _____

Cane Bay Middle School (CBM) charges a rental fee for the use of school owned instruments and equipment. This fee is used to maintain and repair the instruments throughout the academic year and over the summer. The undersigned agrees to rent the following instrument from CBM for the period of time indicated above. Rental fees are non-refundable. No member will be denied the opportunities of our organization due to financial difficulties. If there are financial issues, please talk with us!

The undersigned assumes full responsibility for the proper handling and care of the instrument and equipment. All repairs that exceed the rental fee collected for the rental period above (e.g. replace strings or rosin, set sound-post, etc.) are the responsibility of the renter. Those repairs must be accomplished within a reasonable amount of time. If the instrument and equipment becomes lost, stolen, or destroyed while in the care of the renter, it will become the renter's responsibility to reimburse the school the replacement value of said instrument and equipment within a reasonable amount of time. Students may forfeit their use of school owned instruments and equipment if it is found that the student is willfully and/or negligently abusing or harming it.

All fees are due before the instrument can be released to the renter. Instruments must be turned in at the end of the rental period indicated above. Checks or money orders should be made payable to Cane Bay Middle School.

Parent/Guardian Name (Please Print) _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian _____

Date Signed _____