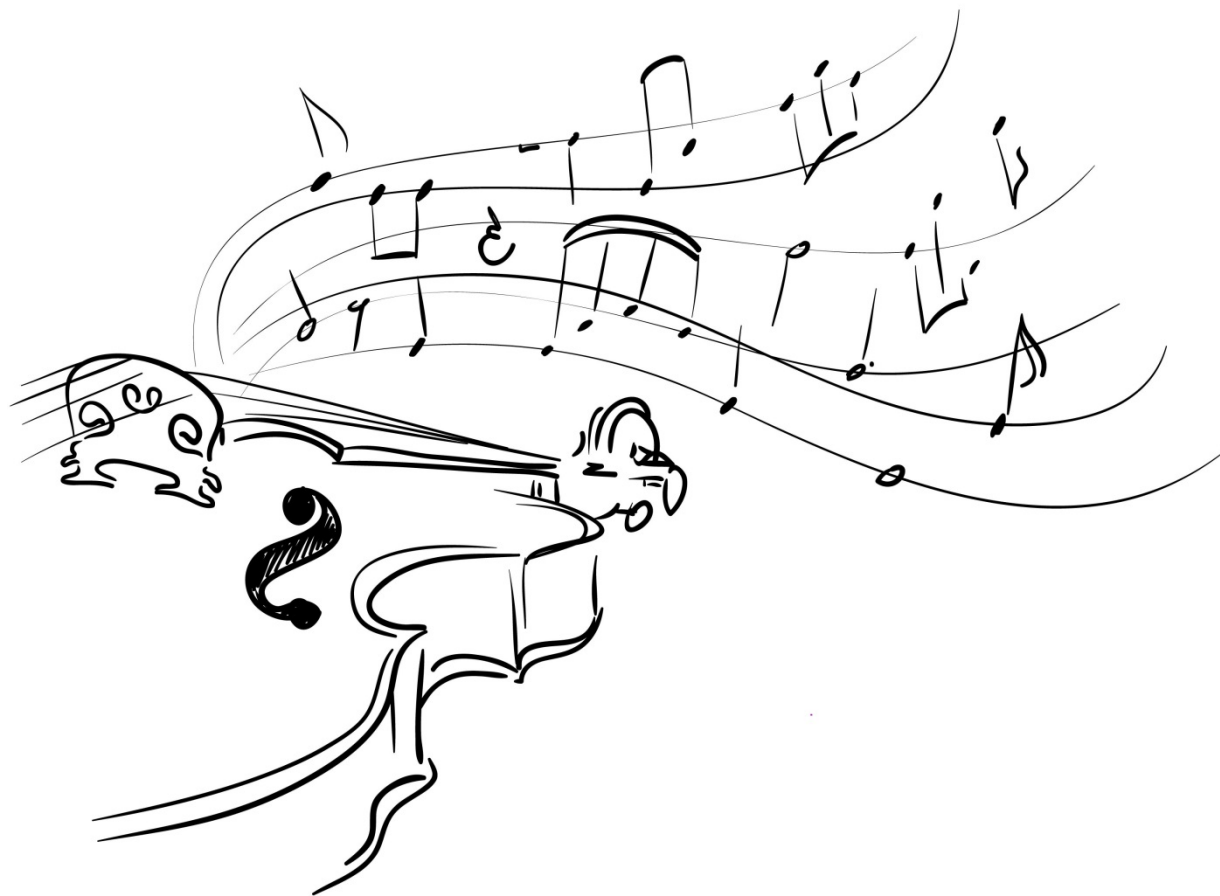


# Casteel High Orchestra Handbook

Information, Contracts and Release Forms



**2019-2020**

**Concerts: September 19, December 3 and May 7**

# Casteel High Orchestra Handbook

*"The theory of relativity occurred to me by intuition, and music is the driving force behind this intuition. My parents had me study the violin from the time I was six. My new discovery [theory of relativity] is the result of musical perception."*

- In a letter from Albert Einstein to Shinichi Suzuki

## Introduction

Welcome Casteel Orchestra students! Everything is new and full of potential and I could not be more excited to teach and guide the orchestra program from potential to reality. Thank you for choosing to continue your studies by participating in the orchestra program. Most students are continuing along a trajectory of learning their instrument they started in grade school, some started playing before they started school, others have never before held an instrument.

I have high expectations. My educational philosophy is a combination of experiences and education I have obtained over the years. My elementary and high school orchestra teacher instilled me the principles of good playing and musicianship. My high school choir teacher taught me to approach learning and teaching with joy, community and enthusiasm. Finally, I deeply appreciate the teaching of William Glasser and his "Choice Theory."

Orchestra is Cross-Curricular: Not only do students learn how to play an instrument, but they learn the context of playing in history. Students also learn to employ science and sound engineering to produce the best possible sound. Math is also a staple in music because of the spatial and rhythmic components necessary to be a great player.

Orchestra is Co-Curricular: Orchestra is both an academic course and an extra-curricular event. It is true that each student receives an individual grade, but orchestras also attend festivals where the performing ensembles are adjudicated as a team. This festival grade reflects the state and national educational music standards met and the ability of the orchestra to perform as a "team" under the direction of the teacher. This team approach includes direct instruction from the instructor, working as smaller student-led teams and keeping up with personal and group practices and rehearsals.

Some students will work extremely hard to continue on with music past high school. However, most will find themselves using music as Einstein did; to promote creative and out-of-the box thinking to help solve the problems they encounter in the world. Whichever category a student chooses, the experience of working hard to create something beautiful and beyond words will be priceless in their life memories.

In short, I invite students to work hard, learn good self-discipline habits, have fun and strive to make the Casteel Orchestras among the best in the state.

## Website and Communication

Website: The Casteel Orchestra Pages on the school website will be a valuable connection to information, learning tools, calendar, booster opportunities, fundraising information, regional and all state etudes and other information.

Remind: Please find the insert in this handbook for contracts, permissions and sign-ups. Remind 101 is a tool I will be using to send out notifications to students, parents and boosters. You will be asked to follow procedures to signing up for these notifications.

Communication: By far the best way to communicate directly with me is via email: [jones.paula@cusd80.com](mailto:jones.paula@cusd80.com).

## Class Contracts

Students and parents are required to read, sign and return the inserted contracts.

- Orchestra Contract: The primary purpose of this contact is to make certain both students and parents are aware of the responsibilities involved in orchestra membership.
- Performance schedule: **September 19, December 3 and May 7**. This year we will not be going to festival out of state, but will attend a couple ABODA festivals. Additionally, Concert and Chamber might be asked to play for graduation. More details will be coming. Watch [www.casteelorchestras.org](http://www.casteelorchestras.org) for more information.
- Media Release: We would like to start the process of recording the history of Casteel High Orchestra. To facilitate this celebration of learning and performance pictures, recordings and other images will be gathered for use in future brochures and website productions. It is not required or promised that student images will be used, but permission is a requirement for image use. This form will include a choice for participation, but contract must be returned.
- Enter Info on Website for Boosters: We need parents to help out by being boosters. Please, please, please consider participating and filling out the interest survey on the website: [www.casteelorchestras.org](http://www.casteelorchestras.org).

## Technique Books

All orchestra students will use supplementary technique books in addition to their regular orchestra sheet music. Students are encouraged to purchase a copy of these books for classroom and home practice.

### Cadet Orchestras:

- ❖ String Explorer Book One – Publisher: Alfred
- ❖ Advanced Techniques for Strings – Publisher: Hal Leonard

### Concert Orchestras:

- ❖ Advanced Techniques for Strings – Publisher: Hal Leonard

### Chamber Orchestra:

- ❖ Advanced Techniques for Strings – Publisher: Hal Leonard

## Playing Tests, Challenges and Chair Placements

Playing tests will be given at least once per quarter throughout the school year and will function also as chair placements for each orchestral section. The playing test may be comprised of scales and excerpts from the current repertoire. The tests may be taped or observed at the discretion of the orchestra director. In class playing quizzes may be given periodically and may or may not be announced. Student grades will not be determined by comparing players to each other; it will be based entirely on the effort of each student and progress made related to individual musical potentials and aptitudes. In addition to being graded, students will be seated according to how well they perform comparing with others in their section and/or with a consideration of what is the best for the orchestra. Seating within a section will freeze approximately one to three weeks before each major performance. Chair rotation will also be part of the orchestra class seating practice.

During the grading period playing test may be retaken only once for a better grade. It will be student's responsibility to arrange a time with the orchestra director to come in after school to make up missed tests or retake a test. A zero will be scored for missed test until it is made up. Seating will not be changed on the basis of a retake test.

All grades close one week prior to the end of a quarter. No test may be made up or retaken after this date. Students will be given feedback from tests to help improve their understanding and playing.

## Private Lessons

Private lessons are not a requirement for participating successfully in class. However, if a student is a beginner, or a student who has fallen behind, private lessons can be a helpful tool for greater success. For the more advanced students private lessons can increase the chances for students to participate in High School Regional and All-State Orchestras; as well as prepare them for collegiate level. It is highly recommended all students consider taking private lessons. Class instruction is critical, but private lessons are invaluable for individualized expert attention and guidance.

## Practice Check

*“My secret is practice” - David Beckham*

Practicing your instrument is considered homework in orchestra and each student is expected to practice a **minimum** of **30 minutes** daily for Cadet; **45 minutes** daily for Concert; and **one hour** for Chamber. If needed, Practice checks will be done by two parts: student self-evaluation and the teacher’s observation/evaluation. Students may be asked during the orchestra class to play a part or section of the music to demonstrate they understand the music rendition (if they practice enough). The practice check is in addition to the formal playing test. It is considered an unannounced quiz.

## Concerts and Performances

### School Concerts

**All performances are mandatory and are part of the student’s orchestra grade. If an unavoidable conflict arises, a parent must notify the director in writing at least 3 weeks prior to the concert. If the reason for the absence is qualified, the director will assign a makeup work that will substitute for the student’s grade absence. The student will receive zero points if he/she is unexcused and does not attend a performance without proper notification. Because orchestra is a performance class, approved make-ups will entail performance.**

### ABODA Festival

ABODA (Arizona Band and Orchestra Director’s Association) organizes performances in which the students have the opportunity to be evaluated by other well established educators and musicians, and perform for other schools. These festivals occur about once a semester, and are hosted by other schools. This year only the Cadet Orchestra will be considered for this festival because other orchestras are going to festival in CA. **ABODA Festivals are AIA sanctioned events, which mandates that students must maintain their passing status in order to participate. Dates to TBA.**

### Regional and All State Honor Orchestras

In January the students in grades 9-12 have an opportunity to audition for and participate in an orchestra that is comprised of the best string students in the region, and later in the state. Audition and excerpt information will be passed out as soon as the organization makes them available. Students in the Concert Orchestra are mandatory to audition and participate. Students in Symphony Orchestra are strongly encouraged to participate. **Regional and All State Festivals are AIA sanctioned events, which mandates that students must maintain their passing status in order to participate.**

## Grading Policy

### Grade Breakdown

- **10 pts:** Daily Participation: 10 pts for good attitude, 5 pts for supplies. No instrument will result in loss of all pts.
- **300 pts:** Concert participation. Being prepared, dressed, good attitude, good posture, etc.
- **200 pts:** Playing tests. Includes formal testing and informal quizzes.
- **100 pts:** Listening quizzes
- **100 pts:** Practice checks. 50 pts student self-evaluation and 50 pts teacher observation/evaluation.
- **100 pts:** Writing prompts, written tests and concert evaluations.
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**Per school policy semester grades are calculated according to the 40/40/20 formula**

**Letter Grade Distribution: A = 90-100% B = 80-89% C = 70-79% D = 60-69% F = 59% or lower**

### Performance Attire

We play better when we look sharp! When competing at festivals, it is typical to receive a “uniform grade.” We need to dress well to reflect personal and Casteel pride. Concert and Chamber will wear school tuxes and dresses. This year Cadet and Jr. High Concert students will dress as follows for performances:

**Women:** Black dresses with  $\frac{3}{4}$  or long sleeves, at ankle length, black hose and black shoes. (Cello and bass students will need dresses that are longer and give you room to sit and comfortably hold your instrument.)

**Men:** Tuxes are acceptable: Black pants, white shirt, black bowtie, black cummerbund, black socks and dress shoes.

Watch the website for information on where you can obtain appropriate clothing for both men and women.

### Locks and Lockers

Violin and viola students may check out an instrument locker in the orchestra room if they wish based on availability. There is also some rack space availability for cellos and bass. The lockers are only for the storage of musical instruments and must be kept neat and locked at all times. Student may have to share a locker with another classmate. The assigned locker is school property and may be accessed at any time. Lockers must remain locked even during class to avoid involuntary displacement of lock by another student, or incase students share a locker with a student in a different class. If a students' locker room behavior is inappropriate, the assigned locker privilege will be revoked.

This year locks will be provided by the school.

### Lettering

Students will be able to participate for Orchestra Lettering in the future. Watch the website for details.

## **School Instrument Check Out**

Casteel has a limited amount of instruments for student rental. Violinists and violists, it is highly recommended you rent/own your own instruments. Because there are only a few school instruments available they are reserved for students who have no means of having an instrument otherwise. Once these needs are filled, the remaining instruments can be rented out.

Cellos and basses will follow the same format, though there is greater availability for these instruments. (Currently we are waiting on more ordered cellos and basses to arrive. Until then, cellos will need to bring their instruments from home to use in class.)

**Instrument rental Fee is \$40** for the current year with a signed contract. The student is responsible for any damages to the instrument while it is in his/her possession.

## **Casteel Colts Fiddler Round-Up Program**

The Casteel Colts Fiddler Round-Up Program and club is a student-help-student instrumental study program. It is offered to any orchestra student at Casteel free of charge. Students must commit to report at a specified time weekly to work with student tutor. Regular attendance and consistent practice is the key to be successful in the study of their chosen instruments.

Student instructors will be chosen by the instructor and placed with the appropriate student(s). Student instructors will be able to use their instructional time for community service hours, or toward later lettering requirements.

Additionally, the Casteel Colts Fiddler Round-Up Jr. Program will be offered to elementary students who plan to attend Casteel High within the next two years. This round-up club will also be student taught, with additional instruction and oversight by the instructor.

## **Fundraisers**

The Music Department uses several fundraisers to help pay for the purchase of performance and rehearsal equipment, supplies, in addition to helping pay for festival activities. Items to be purchased with the funds raised include metronomes, tuning equipment, sound and recording equipment, music, instruments, accessories and field trip needs. All students enrolled in a music performing group are expected to participate in these FUND RAISERS since every student benefits from the items purchased with the funds.

## Orchestra Council

Good student leadership is critical for a strong and healthy orchestra program. Students will be nominated by students as potential leaders for a specific office. Nominated students will have a short period to explain how they will help the orchestra proceed for success. Elections will be held during class. Once students have been elected, officers will meet with instructor as advisor.

Officers will include:

President – Chamber Orchestra  
Vice President – Chamber Orchestra  
Secretary – Chamber Orchestra  
Treasurer – Chamber Orchestra  
Member Representative – Concert and Cadet  
Librarians – All Orchestras  
Publicity – All Orchestras  
Historian/Photographer/Videographer – All Orchestras

## Remind

Remind is a tool I will use to push notifications to students and parents. Such notifications will include reminders to practice, concert dates and other information. Signing up is easy and is **highly recommended** for **BOTH** parents and students. All that is required for receiving these notifications is a phone number or an email. You may register here: <https://www.remind.com/> All classes were cleared from last year, so all need to re-register.

Text: 81010 You will be asked to enter a code for your class:

Chamber Orchestra code: **@874d633**

Concert Orchestra code: **@9c7326**

Jr High Concert Orchestra code: **@gkkakc7**

Cadet 7<sup>th</sup> Orchestra code: **@g8c4g7**

## Contact

Paula Jones - Instructor

[jones.paula@cusd80.com](mailto:jones.paula@cusd80.com)

(Email is by far the best way to reach me.)

Office Hours are after school by appointment.

Twitter [@Casteel\\_Orch](#) / Booster Twitter [@BoostersCasteel](#)

Booster Facebook: Casteel Orchestra Boosters

# ORCHESTRA CONTRACT

(Orchestra teacher will keep on file for the 2019-2020 school year)

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Concert Orchestra    Chamber Orchestra    Jr High Concert Orchestra    Cadet Orchestra    (circle one)

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Work or Cell Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent email address (please print clearly) \_\_\_\_\_ Okay to share email with boosters? Yes / No

## Parent/Guardian:

“I have read the Orchestra Handbook, and I understand and agree to its contents. I am especially aware of grading requirements, practice expectations, instrument storage requirements, and concert expectation for attendance, dress and participation.”

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**PRINT** Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Student:

“I have read the Orchestra Handbook, and I understand and agree to its contents. I am especially aware of grading requirements, practice expectations, instrument storage requirements, and concert expectation for attendance, dress and participation.”

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**PRINT** Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_



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

### MEDIA CONSENT AND RELEASE FORM

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (Parent/Guardian Name), give consent to the Casteel Orchestra instructor at Casteel High School, or any party authorized by Casteel High School Authorities, to use (circle one) **my son's / my daughter's** image during the school year 2019-2020 for any Casteel or CUSD purpose including, but not limited to, use in publications (periodicals, books, brochures, etc.), video and audio productions, advertising and promotional materials, or other media.

I release Casteel Orchestras and CUSD, from any and all liability that may arise in connection with such use.

I am the parent or legal guardian of the child named below and have the legal authority to execute this consent and release.

or

\_\_\_\_\_ I am the parent or legal guardian of the child named below and I do not Consent to Media Release. I have the legal authority to deny this consent and release. (Only check if you do not consent.)

Signature of Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name of Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to Child: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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