

Frequently asked questions about Fremd High School Orchestra:

Q. When does orchestra meet?

A: NO MORE EARLY MORNING REHEARSALS!!! Each orchestra meets everyday during the day. There are very few rehearsals outside of the school day--those dates are on the calendar at the beginning of the year. Students and their families are asked to plan accordingly to reserve those dates.

Q: Do I have to bring my instrument to school every day?

A: All cellists and bassists will be able to use a school instrument everyday. We establish a rotation for violinists and violists at the beginning of the year. Depending on how many students we have for each instrument, you might have to bring your instrument for two weeks in a row--2 or 3 times a year.

Q. How do you know which orchestra to sign up for?

A. There are three orchestras at Fremd. All freshmen should sign up for Orchestra 1 or Concert Orchestra (C124-01). However, all students will need to audition for Mrs. Caballero. You will receive audition music in late February/early March. Please sign up for Orchestra C124-01 and we will make changes if necessary.

Q. What if I haven't signed up for orchestra but now I want to?

A. All you have to do is call the FHS (847-755-2600) and ask to be connected to guidance. Let them know that you'd like to add Orchestra (C124-01) to your schedule. It's never too late to add the class. However, call soon if you want to receive information about orchestra opportunities for next year.

Q. Do you need to be able to do vibrato to be in symphony and philharmonic orchestras?

A. Yes. For Philharmonic and Symphony Orchestra you will need to know vibrato, shifting, bowing techniques, solid intonation and rhythm as these are all skills necessary to play advanced string repertoire.

Q: How does seating work? Will I be first chair?

A: We do a rotational seating in all three orchestras at Fremd. You may be in the back of the section for one piece and in the front for another. You may be 1st violin for one piece and 2nd for another.

Q: How are we graded in orchestra?

A: Students receive a daily grade, a weekly lesson/sectional grade, as well as both written and playing tests. The playing tests are based on scales and the pieces that we are working on in rehearsals. The written tests are on music theory, music history, and musical terminology. Your lesson/sectional is during either your study hall or lunch period for 25 minutes—you do not miss another class to come to your lesson.

Q: What materials do I need for orchestra?

A: You will need to have a mute, pencil, rockstop (cello/bass), shoulder rest (violin/viola), rosin, cleaning cloth and I highly recommend a metronome and tuner.

Q: What kind of trips do the orchestras take?

A: Each of the orchestras have participated in the clinics at the University of Illinois. They have also traveled and participated in festivals/clinics in Sandusky, OH (Cedar Point), St. Louis, Milwaukee, University of Michigan, Toronto and Florida (Disney World) and this year, we're going on a performance cruise to the Bahamas. We also try to go downtown at least once a year for dinner and a Chicago Symphony Orchestra concert per year.

Q: Do you have fundraisers for the trips?

A: Yes. We have a wonderful parent organization that runs our fundraisers (Fremd Music Association). The credit that you earn from these fundraisers goes into your student account and stays in that account for as long as you are a student enrolled in orchestra. After you leave the program, that money goes into the general orchestra account.

Q. How much time will orchestra require outside of school?

A. Your main time commitment will be your individual practice time. This is **your** responsibility to **your** orchestra. Evening rehearsals are kept to a minimum. You will receive a calendar at the beginning of the year that has all of our evening rehearsals and concerts listed. You will need to reserve these dates for the year.

Q. What kind of music is played?

A. The orchestras perform a wide variety of music from each of the musical periods, featuring many of the most influential composers (Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, etc.). We also perform music from movie soundtracks, musicals, etc.

Q. Are the orchestras really big?

A. The orchestras range in size. This year the range is between 18 - 31.

Q. Is it possible for junior high students to perform with the high school orchestra?

A. No. Because we meet daily as a class, a student must be enrolled as a high school student and in the orchestra to be a member. If you are looking for other opportunities try the Schaumburg Youth Orchestras.

Q. Are there freshmen mixed with seniors in orchestra?

A. Yes, all orchestras have freshmen through seniors.

Q. How many hours are required for individual practice time?

A. I recommend that each student tries to get in at least a half hour of practice time at least 5 days a week. In order for you to progress and advance, you must practice.

Q. Does orchestra count as an elective?

A. Yes. It also counts toward your grade point average and fills a graduation requirement.

Q. Are the people in orchestra friendly?

A. Yes. Many of the members have some of their closest friends in orchestra. I truly believe that you have the opportunity to make lifelong friendships in orchestra.

Q. What is pit orchestra?

A. The "pit orchestra" is a small group of musicians, usually string, woodwinds, brass and percussion, that plays for the musical. Students who play for the pit orchestra receive a recommendation from their director.

Q. Is it possible to be in two music classes and still eat lunch during a lunch period?

A. Yes. Many freshmen choose to option out of their study hall so they can take two music classes. We also have a couple of students who are in 3 music classes!

Q. Will I have to take summer school if I'm in orchestra?

A. Not necessarily. It depends how many electives I want to take. It is recommended that you take some classes during summer school (Health and Consumer Ed.) as this will allow you to take other electives instead.

Q. Can you join other activities and/or sports and still be in orchestra?

A. Yes! In fact, many of the orchestra members are involved in at least one activity or sport.

Q. Should we bring our instrument on the 1st day of school?

A. No. We usually do not play on the first day of school. We use that time as an opportunity to get to know each other.

Q. Do you get picked on as a freshmen?

A. NO! A freshmen commented this year that people really don't care what year you are. You have nothing to worry about!

Q. Why should I join?

A. You should join if you enjoy the following things: performing great music, learning about music, participating in different musical activities, and making lifelong friends!

Some things you should know about high school...advice from current orchestra members:

*Don't spend too much time studying for just one class. Spread out your effort on all of your classes.

*Join all the sports/activities you want freshmen and senior year are the years where you have the most freedom to do what activities you want to do.

*Your friends will change.

*Get involved even if you don't have any friends in that particular activity (you'll make new friends).

*No one really cares if you are a freshman.

*Make sure you have a healthy balance of activities you can handle

*Go on the fall chamber music retreat—you'll get to play some great music and get to know a lot of people before school even starts! (This year's retreat is August 18 – 20—you'll receive more information through the mail in April.)