

## Gold Orchestra Program Handbook Fall 2022

### ***What is the purpose of the Gold Orchestra program?***

The **Gold Orchestra** is an organization in three tiers (Gold Full Orchestra, Silver String Orchestra, and Bronze Training Orchestra) that seeks to develop the youth of Manhattan, KS and the surrounding areas. It exists to provide ambitious musicians with enhanced opportunities to prepare and perform music. It also seeks to develop character traits like responsibility, perseverance, ambition, teamwork, and others through working collaboratively to prepare a performance.

The **Gold Orchestra** was founded by Dr. David Littrell in 1989. The **Silver Orchestra** became an intermediate orchestra in 2012, when the **Bronze Training Orchestra** was created to serve the community's beginning students. For a full history of the orchestras, visit [www.goldorchestra.org](http://www.goldorchestra.org).

### ***How does a student join the Gold/Silver Orchestra?***

Auditions are held in mid-May to give string students an opportunity to join the Gold or Silver Orchestra. This audition also decides the orchestra in which the student will be placed. The Gold Orchestra accommodates the most accomplished students, while the Silver Orchestra serves as an intermediate orchestra and is for students aspiring to eventually join the Gold Orchestra. Seating auditions for placement within the orchestra take place during the regular season.

In 2019, Gold Orchestra expanded to include woodwinds, brass, and percussion. The Gold Orchestra returned to a string ensemble in 2020 and 2021 because of pandemic restrictions. The Gold Orchestra will be a full orchestra again in 2022, with woodwind, brass, and percussion auditions held in early fall. These positions will be re-auditioned every year.

### ***How does a student join the Bronze Training Orchestra?***

Participation in the Bronze Training Orchestra does not require an audition. Students should have some experience playing their instrument, and should be able to identify notes and read simple rhythms. Interested students should register via the Gold Orchestra website ([goldorchestra.org](http://goldorchestra.org)). The Bronze Training Orchestra meets on Saturday mornings beginning September 10 and ending October 8.

### ***What are the responsibilities of a Gold/Silver Orchestra member?***

- You **MUST** be a member of your public school orchestra/band, if there is one available.
- You **MUST** commit to the fall season, dates specific to your ensemble.
- You **MUST** attend ALL rehearsals and concerts, unless otherwise excused *in advance*.

Criteria for excused absence:

- A. Total **excused absences**, including illness, should be limited to **two** or fewer for Silver Orchestra, and **one** or fewer for Gold Orchestra. Missing more than this, regardless of the reason, is grounds for removal from the orchestra.

- B. Excused absences such as important family trips and weddings, will require a **written (email) two-week advance request** with a parent/guardian statement of the reason(s) for the absence.
  - C. Students should be aware that absences, for any reason, may affect chair seating.
  - D. Absences to “sleep in” or take a day off are **NOT** excused. The intent of the policy is to provide some accommodation for families and students with **valid schedule conflicts**.
  - E. The final **dress rehearsal** (Nov. 12 for SO, Nov. 15 for GO) and **Rock Springs** (Oct. 29-30) are 100% **required** rehearsal days. No students will be excused from these days **for any reason**.
- You are required to bring your **music folder, pencil, and instrument** to each rehearsal.
  - No cell phone use during the rehearsal time, wearing of hats, or gum chewing during rehearsals.
  - You are responsible for being **punctual** to all orchestra rehearsals, concerts, and other activities. It is recommended that you arrive no later than **15 minutes before** each rehearsal and **allot time for warming up** on your instrument.
  - Gold and Silver members **MUST** attend the **October 29-30** retreat at Rock Springs 4-H Camp, which is held the last weekend in October every year. (Students who are considering taking the ACT in the fall need to schedule it on some other Saturday than Rock Springs weekend).
  - You are expected to practice and learn all pieces during individual practice time. Rehearsals are to be spent on ensemble-related preparation, not mastering individuals’ parts.
  - GO/SO members are responsible for proper formal black concert attire
    - Men: Black long-sleeve, collared dress shirt, black dress pants, **black socks**, black dress shoes. Ties are optional, but must be black.
    - Women: Black top with minimum ½ length sleeves, black slacks or skirt (skirt/dress must be long enough to pass the knee when seated), **black hose or leggings (IF skirt/dress does not reach all the way to ankles)**, black dress shoes.
  - BTO members are expected to wear something nice for their concert on October 8.

### ***Why are there so many rules and expectations?***

An orchestra (much like a sports team, marching band, choir, etc) excels only when the collective membership works towards a common goal. If any one member is unable to play their part, the collective result is less than satisfactory. By its very nature, an orchestra relies on the unity of each section to create the masterpiece that was initially envisioned by each composer. This may be accomplished **ONLY** by commitment and hard work. The end result is rewarding and always magnificent.

### ***What is the fall schedule?***

The Gold, Silver, and Bronze Orchestras follow a fall schedule that includes regular rehearsals specific to each group. Specific rehearsal, retreat, and performance dates are listed on the website ([goldorchestra.org/rehearsal-schedule](http://goldorchestra.org/rehearsal-schedule)). All SO and BTO rehearsals will be held at Eisenhower Middle

School in the Band and Orchestra classrooms. The Bronze Training Orchestra does not attend Rock Springs and holds their own performance on October 8<sup>th</sup>. The Gold and Silver Orchestras both attend the Rock Springs weekend, and will hold their formal concert on Thursday, November 17<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 in All Faiths Chapel on KSU Campus.

***What expenses are associated with Gold/Silver/Bronze Orchestra participation?***

Tuition

- GO Tuition: **\$110**
- SO Tuition: **\$160**
- BTO Tuition: **\$60**

Rock Springs Weekend payment – cost will be determined by September 10, but it will be **under \$150/student**.

Supplies including

- Music stand. A Manhasset music stand, though not mandatory, is far superior to wire stands for use at home and at Rock Springs.
- Concert dress uniform for GO/SO (see above)
- Assist in supplying refreshments after concerts.

Rock Springs payment will be due by **October 1**. **Late payments will incur a \$10 late fee each week that they are overdue.** If cost is an issue, please contact Kristen Toll directly ([kristenmtoll@gmail.com](mailto:kristenmtoll@gmail.com)) to discuss payment plans and/or scholarship options.

***Are there any additional opportunities?***

Manhattan has numerous opportunities for student musicians to broaden their musical experiences.

- **String Fling** is held every January at Kansas State University and is open to all string students grades 7-9.
- The **Manhattan Arts Center** offers private instruction and group classes on a variety of instruments.
- The **Kansas State Symphony Orchestra** performs numerous times throughout the fall and spring semesters. Dr. Rachel Dirks directs this orchestra. The concerts are free.

***Who may I contact with questions?***

Gold Orchestra: Dr. Rachel Dirks ([rdirks@ksu.edu](mailto:rdirks@ksu.edu))

Silver Orchestra: Mrs. Kristen Toll ([kristenmtoll@gmail.com](mailto:kristenmtoll@gmail.com))

Bronze Orchestra: Mr. Brayden Smith ([bwsmith@ksu.edu](mailto:bwsmith@ksu.edu))

General questions about the program: Mrs. Kristen Toll ([kristenmtoll@gmail.com](mailto:kristenmtoll@gmail.com))