



Welcome Parents and Students to the 2025-2026 school year!

We are excited that you will be a part of our award-winning Klein Forest Orchestra! Each year the Klein Forest Orchestra continues to reach new heights of quality music making, success, community outreach, and musical excellence.

This handbook contains very important information for both parents and students involved in the Klein Forest High School Orchestra Program. Please make sure you read it thoroughly and let us know if you should have any questions. Please sign and return the needed forms on time.

The following also contains rules and guidelines that need to be followed. Please make sure you do so - our success depends on it!

We have a highly motivated group of parent and student officers that are working alongside us to make this upcoming school year a success! We always need volunteers and extra help - we can't do it without you! Please lend a helping hand when possible.

We are dedicated to the continued success of the Klein Forest Orchestra Program! Let's have a wonderful year of music making!!

Cameron Tesoro
Head Orchestra Director

Adrianna Garza
Assistant Orchestra Director

OPA Officers 2025-26

President: *Mrs. Norma Arteaga*

Vice-President: *Mrs. Isis Lopez*

Treasurer: *Mrs. Ambreen Ahmed*

Secretary: *Mrs. Graciela Melendez*

Members:

Mrs. Tiffani Archie

Mrs. Macaria Castanon

Mrs. Stephanie Garza

Mrs. Ashley Harris

Mrs. Cindy Kounkaseum

Mrs. Christine Spence

Mrs. Yoselinda Tavera

Mrs. Marisol Tovar

KFO Student Officers 2025-26

President: *Reinaldo Morales*

Vice-President: *Fernando Ramos*

Secretary: *Jazmine Reyes*

Historians: *Sophia Suarez, Sofia Torres*

Librarians: *Max Camacho, Jason Dang, Heydy Galindo*

Social Media Managers: *Joanne Bach, Miley Bach*

Music Supervisor: *Mr. Frank Chuter*

KFHS Principal: *Mr. Lance Alexander*

Mission Statement

We, the 2025-26 KFO officers, wish to represent all members by ensuring all voices are heard, striving for excellence through not only personal effort, but through collaboration as musicians. We will promote more opportunities for our members to get themselves more involved in the program. With more passionate and active members, we hope to push and support our members from all classes in order to grow together not only as musicians but as a community we strive to be.

General Objectives

We, the directors of the Klein Forest Orchestras, are here to see that we provide you, the student, with complete musical experience. We are here to educate you in music, citizenship, self-discipline, courtesy, cooperation, time management, punctuality, and teamwork!

Music makes you smarter! It is a proven fact. Students that participate in the fine arts have higher test scores; tend to be more disciplined and well-rounded individuals.

Music is a form of expression. It allows you to have an outlet in which to express yourself. It allows you to use your leisure time in beneficial ways. It is a creative outlet which contributes to the development of mental awareness and well-rounded character.

Orchestra Philosophy

In order to produce music, we must exist in social harmony. Rules, regulations, traditions, and group support (teamwork) must be at the top of our list. Orchestra is teamwork and cooperation at its highest. We must work together to make music. Tension creates discord - that is the last thing we need! An individual may be corrected and given chances to correct their actions, but continued failure to comply with rules and expectations will hurt the entire orchestra's effectiveness and musicianship.

The function of music education in the public-school curriculum should be a clear requirement for the total development of students. One must feel as well as think! One must create as well as discover!

Help us support the arts in education. The talented and dedicated students, who are working towards the goal of making music as a team, will be the great achievers and leaders of tomorrow!

Eligibility

It is extremely important that all students maintain passing grades in all their classes, as well as orchestra. Many of our activities require us to follow the no pass/no play rule. If you are having trouble passing a class, let us know. Often there are other students that can help you, or we can contact that teacher. **Every member of the orchestra is expected to do all the necessary work to pass all their classes.** Directors will run eligibility checks at specific times during the school year. Directors will speak to those students that are ineligible to participate in specific events.

Behavior Expectations

All KFHS Orchestra members are expected to follow all classroom, KFHS, and KISD rules at all times. This also includes rules pertaining to internet usage, including social media sites.

Posting of Video/Audio

KISD has informed us that the online posting of video or audio recordings of our performances is against copyright law. Do not post any audio or video of our performances on social media.

Fundraising

Money makes the world go round! Fund raising is a part of our orchestra program. Many of the items that we need money for are not covered in our school budgets - therefore we must raise funds. We realize that you are involved in other groups that need to do fundraising as well. Please make the effort to sell just a few items. A little can go a long way!

Fundraising for the orchestra: Everyone is encouraged to participate in orchestra fund raisers. Fund raising money helps support the orchestra in so many ways. It will also help reduce the cost of students taking the orchestra spring trip! Please do your part - we will all be better off!

Fundraising for OPA (Orchestra Parent Association): OPA provides our program with many wonderful things! They help with items such as private lesson scholarships, senior scholarships, banquet expenses, social activities, and other needs of the program. They do a lot for us. Please support their fundraising needs.

*** The purpose of the fundraiser will always be specified. Please ask questions if you are unsure. Some families may wish to make a cash donation instead of doing fundraising. That option is also welcome. Fundraising is not required but strongly encouraged.**

Activity Fee

The orchestra activity fee for the 2025-26 school year will be **\$120.00** and is required by each member of the orchestra. **The orchestra Activity Fee must be paid in full by the KFO Registration Day, Saturday, September 6th.** Students that have not paid their Activity Fee in full by this time will not participate in the Elementary Holiday Tour. The Activity Fee needs to be paid on your child's School Cash account or in the finance office, as we are not able to collect this fee in class. This fee is required. The activity fee covers the following items: orchestra T-shirt, guest conductor fees, clinician fees, snacks, incentives, social activities, program expenses, contest fees, hosting fees, recording fees, postage, etc. This fee is a vital part of running our program. * Please note that the Activity Fee cannot be fundraised and it does not cover

region, solo/ensemble, accompanist, trip expenses, and other program fees. If unpaid by the end of the first semester, it will automatically turn into a financial "hold".

Debts

KFHS policy states that all students participating in a school sponsored trip and/or organization sponsored banquet must have all debts owed to KFHS and its organizations paid in full before participating in either of these two events.

Supplies

Many times, a string will break, you will need rosin or a mute, etc. The orchestra maintains a small inventory of supplies, for your convenience. (**Klein Forest Orchestra does not make a profit from selling supplies to its members.**) If you are needing any supplies and wish to save a trip to the music store - just let us know what you are needing, and we'll let you know if we have it. **Please understand that payment must be made at the time you are needing the supplies.** Representatives from both Lisle Violin shop and Fishburn Violin Shop service our school weekly. If there is something you are needing from them, just call the store and they can deliver it to the school.

Music

All music performed by the Klein Forest Orchestra will be provided by the school district. It is important that students take good care of their music - **make sure not to lose the copies that you are given.** Music should be kept in your orchestra binder (**black 1 inch - 3 ring binder with a pocket**). **All students are required to have a black one inch 3-ring binder with a pocket.** Each student should always have their own copy of their music. Music should be marked in **pencil only!** Everyone needs to mark their music - it is impossible to remember every little detail that is discussed. **Your orchestra binder is considered your textbook for this class.** Don't lose it! Bring it with you to every class. **Keeping your music marked and your binder up to date will be a part of your participation grade. All handouts must be kept in your binder, as well.** You never know when we might have a binder check!

* Those students taking private lessons may be asked to purchase selected pieces of music/books requested by your instructor. Please do so in a timely manner.

Practice

Individual practice is essential for both your personal growth and the overall success of the orchestra. Practice time is considered time spent on your instrument outside of the classroom, rehearsals, and lessons. We do not use practice charts at the high school level - we must trust that you are putting in the time. As a director, it is very easy to tell who knows their part and who does not!

The KF Orchestra is an excellent orchestra because of the quality of teaching you have received in the early years of music education. It becomes a superior orchestra when all its members put hard work into it. If you feel that some of the music is too difficult for you, please come talk to us - we are here to help you!

Youth Orchestra

If your child is a member of a Houston area youth orchestra, we are so proud of their success! Please be reminded that all students involved in a youth orchestra must be in good standing with their school orchestra. School orchestra activities must be a priority. Alternate assignments will be given for any missed KF Orchestra rehearsals/sectionals.

Seating

The Klein Forest Orchestra maintains the philosophy that every member has equal value in the orchestra - teamwork is what it's all about! **The Klein Forest Orchestra program has rotational seating.** Each day you may sit in a different chair. Some days you will sit up front and some days you will sit in the back. Concert seating is also rotational, but we will also consider ability, attendance at sectionals and rehearsals, and seniority. Violins will be divided into Gold and Green sections. Every section of the orchestra is important! **Don't worry about where you are sitting - do your best to learn your part and play it well from either the front, middle, or back of the orchestra! Remember – it's not where you sit, it's how well you play the notes!**

Tests and Grades

Playing tests and exams will be based off information and music that is gone over in class. You will have prior notice for most playing tests and exams - you may at times have a pop quiz! Playing tests will usually be given once a week over a short excerpt of music that you are working on. **You have the option to re-test a playing test as many times as you wish, throughout the grading period. We want each student to achieve a mastery level of their music and playing ability!** So, if you are unhappy with your grade, keep practicing until you get it right. We will also have tuning tests, graded binder checks, checking to make sure you have your measures numbered, etc. Everything is graded and you will have the opportunity to make up a test if you are absent from school. Tests and assignments may be turned in late, but penalties will apply.

Major grades include: Playing tests and Concerts (binder (music)-100 pts, uniform-100 pts, instrument-100 pts, electronics turn in -100 pts, and concert attendance-100 pts). Concert grades are worth 500 points total.

Minor grades include: written work, after school rehearsals, sectionals, daily class participation, measure numbers, binder/pencil/equipment checks, and anything else found necessary by the directors. Each is worth 100 points. **We want all students to be successful in orchestra! This is a breakdown of the percentages. These percentages follow the KFHS Grading Guidelines.**

Major grades=60%

Playing Tests

Concert Grades

Minor Grade=40%

Sectionals/Rehearsals

Rehearsal Technique

Written Work

Supply Checks

Misc. Assignments

Final Exams: occur at the end of both fall and spring semesters. The exam grade is weighted according to a percentage set by Klein ISD, not by the orchestra directors.

Rehearsals

All after school rehearsals/sectionals are a graded extension of the class. If a student is late for a rehearsal, points will be deducted. If a rehearsal is missed, it is the student's responsibility to let the director know why they missed the rehearsal. Students will need to make a practice recording of the length of the rehearsal to make up their missed time and rehearsal of the music. Recordings will be graded accordingly and should be turned within a week's time. Trip rehearsals are evaluated separately. **Under length recordings will have points deducted. You may continue to submit recordings to improve your grade. Make sure to attend all rehearsals –we need you!! * KF cell phone policy must be followed during rehearsals.**

Concerts

Concerts of any type are an extremely important part of this class. We are a performing class. - Do Not Miss a Concert! You will be given the calendar dates at the start of the school year, please plan accordingly. We are aware that conflicts will come up; it is your responsibility to speak to all parties involved in the conflict in a timely matter. KF Orchestra also requires that we receive parent notification stating what the conflict is. Parents, please contact us sooner rather than later. We cannot help you unless we know there is a conflict - don't just not show up - your grade is at stake! It is to your advantage (and the orchestra's) to attend all performances. *Cell phones must be turned in before each concert. No student cell phones are allowed during a performance. KF cell phone policy will be followed. Phones will be returned at the end of the performance. All cell phones/electronic devices will be collected before performances. They will be locked up and returned after the performance.

***Parents and students are required to email the directors immediately if there is a conflict with a required orchestra event. If a student does miss a required orchestra event, then there is a make-up assignment.**

Perfume/Cologne

Please do not wear perfume or cologne to concerts, in consideration of those with allergies and our proximity to each other.

Nails

Nails, yes that's right - fingernails! Long nails on a string player make us play out of tune as well as change our finger pattern and hand placement. You work so hard to achieve a high level of playing; don't let long nails ruin it. A quick and easy way to tell if your nails are too long to tap the tip of your finger against a hard surface. If the nail touches first, the fingernail needs to be trimmed.

Writing Assignments

Students that fail to bring their instrument and/or music binder to class will be given a writing assignment to do that day during their class time. Students that fail to attend a performance will be given a substantial research paper to do. A missed concert/performance is a major grade- therefore the length of the research paper will be

quite long - usually 3-5 typed pages. All assignments will be clearly specified as to their length, topic, and when they are due. Papers will be graded on the following: date turned in, length, grammar, punctuation, sources cited, quality of work, etc. This will carry the standards that all writing assignments have - like what you would turn into your English class. **Students may only turn in a hard copy of their paper unless specified by a director.** Research papers and assignments cannot be e-mailed to your director. Please note, writing assignments will not be given for a missed sectional or rehearsal. We strongly encourage that all members have their required supplies with them in class as well as attending all concerts and performances. **Concerts and performances are easier and much more fun than doing a research paper! Please attend - we need you!!** * You will also be given a writing assignment to help make up your lost time in orchestra. Writing assignments are given so that you can maintain a good grade in orchestra!

Uniforms

For all concerts, students will wear the required uniform. Uniforms are district property (Klein ISD). Each student is loaned a formal uniform to use throughout the school year. It must be dry cleaned and kept in good repair. Repairs and dry cleaning are at the student's expense. Formal uniforms are provided by the school district except for tuxedo shirt, cummerbund, bow tie, socks, stockings, and shoes. Tuxedo items may be purchased at any local tuxedo store. Students will receive a contract when they receive their formal uniform, it must be signed and returned, and the care procedures must be followed - otherwise you will be charged the replacement cost of the uniform. **Informal Uniform:** orchestra T-shirt, school appropriate jeans, and closed-toed shoes. **Ladies Formal Uniform:** provided black dress, black stockings, black under garment, and black dress shoes. All hair accessories need to be black. Please do not wear jewelry that makes noise. **Men's Formal Uniform:** provided tuxedo jacket and pants, white tux shirt, black bow tie and cummerbund, black dress shoes and black socks. ***Conservative hair, make-up and jewelry are also required for all performances. No perfume or cologne for performances. *See uniform contract for specific details.**

Instrument Maintenance and Upgrading

It is extremely important that each student has a quality instrument and bow to work with. Cello, Bass, and Harp players will be provided with an instrument to use at school – it is necessary to have an instrument to use at home, as well. All violin and viola players are expected to bring their instrument to and from home daily. When not in use, instruments need to be stored and locked in your assigned instrument locker. Do not leave your instrument out in the open - it is very easy to lose or misplace an instrument - and they are expensive to replace! Also, do not share your instrument locker combination with other students.

Strings need to be changed on a regular basis. With use they wear out. Bows also need to be rehaired on a regular basis. Playing with good quality and well-maintained equipment is essential to your success as a player. Playing on a

good instrument will make things easier for you - you will be able to achieve your musical goals quicker.

Now that you are in high school, it is important to upgrade to better quality equipment - better than what you used in elementary and middle school. You must first be playing on an instrument that is the right size for you. If you are needing and/or interested in upgrading your instrument and bow, let a director or your private teacher know. It is very important to get professional advice when selecting an instrument. Good equipment can be more expensive, so it is important that you get all that you can for money you are willing to spend. **Student instruments will be assessed at the beginning of the year. Many stores will offer store credit and trade in value for your instrument. It may not cost you very much if anything at all to upgrade! Let us help you with this process.** *If planning to purchase an instrument, please consult the directors for better guidance with this process.

School Instruments

The use of school instruments is available to cello, bass, and harp students. These instruments are provided for your use by Klein I.S.D. and need to be cared for and maintained as if they were your own. You are responsible for any damage that occurs to your instrument while it is assigned to you and in your care - both in school and out of school - this includes performances. **You will be responsible for paying the repair costs if your school instrument is damaged due to carelessness.** Please inform a director right away if you should notice any damage that need to be repaired on your instrument. **Students using a district provided instrument will need to fill out, sign and return a Klein I.S.D. School Instrument Usage Form and the \$50.00 usage fee per school instrument, before you will be able to use the school provided instrument.** This fee applies towards general maintenance and upkeep of district instruments. This is not an insurance policy. The fee may be paid in full, or \$25.00 per semester. **We find it is easier to pay the entire fee at the start of the school year.** If you wish to not pay the usage fee, you will need to use your instrument from home each day at school. The district cannot afford to purchase new instruments for us every year and the costs involved in repairing and maintaining a stringed instrument is high - please help us in taking care of these instruments! **Fishburn and Lisle Violin Shops are KISD approved vendors!**

Music Store Information

Fishburn Violin Shop

11435 Spring Cypress, Suite C, Tomball – 77377, 281-290-4580

Lisle Violin Shop Northwest

11550 Louetta Rd. Suite 1400, Houston, TX 77070, 346-236-6650

Private Lessons

Private lessons are an important part of your music education and orchestra experience. Taking private lessons and having the opportunity to study one on one (student and teacher) allows you to learn quicker and be more challenged with your music. Students that take private lessons tend to have a higher level of playing ability and confidence. Working one on one with a teacher can also give you a better sense of accomplishment and pride – you were able to achieve a new skill or technique on your own!

We strongly encourage all students to participate in private lessons. The key is finding a good teacher! We have many very talented and highly qualified teachers that come to Klein Forest and teach lessons. Some students choose to travel to a teacher's house/studio to take lessons. Make sure that the teacher you are studying with is qualified to teach and is a good musician. Sometimes taking private lessons from a bad teacher can cause more harm than good.

If you are interested in taking private lessons at Klein Forest through KISD, please sign up quickly. Spaces fill up quickly and students are placed on a first come first served basis. Other students will be put on a waiting list and placed when an opening becomes available. Students taking private lessons need to take them for the entire year. Advancement on your instrument takes time and consistency. Lessons take place weekly. Students taking lessons through KISD, will need to pay the KISD approved lesson fee. Students studying outside of KISD, will pay the individual instructor's fee. Teachers are paid directly – either at the start of the month for the entire month, or after each lesson. Procedures for canceling or rescheduling a lesson must be followed, otherwise you may have to pay for your missed lesson. **Please let us know if you are interested in private lessons!**

Instrument Lockers

All violin, viola, and cello students will receive an instrument locker at the start of the school year. Locks can be checked out for each student. The locks must remain with the assigned locker for the given school year. Locks are \$5.00 each and must be paid by the student if the lock is lost or stolen. * Students may not use their own lock – must be a KFHS lock.

Instruments – Private or School Owned

All violin and viola students must bring to school and use their own instrument. No sharing of private instruments is allowed. For all school owned instruments please make sure to ask a director for approval to use a specific instrument. ***It is an expectation that students take their instruments home every day to practice.**

Money Collection

Please pay all money due to the KF Orchestra in class except for the activity fee. The Activity Fee must be paid online on the student's School Cash account or in the finance office. All other money collection will take place in class. This includes: KISD instrument fees, solo and ensemble, fundraising, supplies, etc. **Per KISD, cash or**

money order are preferred. We cannot accept temporary checks, or checks that do not have your name, address, or phone printed on the check. Receipts are issued upon request. **All trip payments must be paid on time.** *Please note that once a "hold" has been placed on a student's overdue payment, it must be paid for online or in the KF Finance office. If we receive multiple returned checks from individuals, we will no longer be able to take your checks. Payment would need to be in cash or cashier's check. Fees will apply to all returned checks. Orchestra trips – It is under the discretion of the directors to allow/ not allow someone to participate on orchestra trips.

Klein Forest Orchestra Class Requirements

Chamber Orchestra: Considered to be the AP orchestra class. This is the top orchestra class. **This orchestra will consist of up to sixteen violins, eight violas, eight cellos, and three basses.** Students that have been placed in this class have achieved a very high level of playing and show exceptional team spirit and leadership. This class consists of upper classmen - no Freshman are placed in this class. **Students are strongly encouraged to take private lessons. Students will attend required rehearsals and sectionals. Rehearsal times may change. This class will participate in the Klein Forest Symphony Full Orchestra. Students in this class will be required to work on the region music.** Students are strongly encouraged to take the region audition. Students in this class are encouraged to take private lessons and participate in solo contest. **Students in this class will be required to learn and perform in an ensemble for the UIL Solo and Ensemble Festival. Students will be required to attend a set number of region workshops. Students in this class will be required to participate in all required concerts and contests.** This class performs as the Varsity String Orchestra at U.I.L. and the Varsity Symphony Full Orchestra at U.I.L. Contest. **If it is a musical year at KF and strings are required, this is the orchestra that would perform.** Students in this class will often be asked to perform in outside events at school and in the community. The spring trip is open to all students in this class.

Sinfonia Orchestra: Students in this class have also achieved a very high level of playing. This class consists of all grade levels - no size limit but a balanced orchestra is required. **Students are encouraged to take private lessons. Students will attend a weekly sectional/rehearsal(s). Rehearsal times may change. This class will participate in the Klein Forest Symphony Full Orchestra. Students in this class will be required to work on the region music. This class is combined with Chamber to make up the Symphony Full Orchestra string section.** Students are strongly encouraged to take the region audition. Students in this class are encouraged to take private lessons and participate in solo contest. **Students in this class will be required to learn and perform in an ensemble for Solo and Ensemble Festival/ Chamber Music concert. Students will be required to attend a set number of region workshops. Students in this class will be required to participate in all required concerts and performances.** This class performs as the Non-Varsity String Orchestra at U.I.L. and the Varsity Symphony Full Orchestra at U.I.L. Contest. The spring trip is open to all students in this class.

Philharmonic Orchestra: This class consists of all grade levels. No size limit, but a balanced orchestra is required. Students show a great amount of talent. Time is spent in this class refining their skills and playing ability. **Students will attend a weekly rehearsal and participate in all required concerts/ contests. Students are encouraged to take private lessons. Students in this class will be required to learn and perform in an ensemble for the Solo and Ensemble Festival/ Chamber Music Concert.** This orchestra performs as the Sub Non-Varsity A String Orchestra at U.I.L. Contest. The spring trip is open to all students in this class.

Camerata Orchestra: This class consists of all grade levels. No size limit but a balanced orchestra is required. Students show a great amount of talent. Time is spent in this class refining their skills and playing ability. More fundamental and technique work is done in this class. **Students will attend a weekly rehearsal and participate in all required concerts/ contests. Students are encouraged to take private lessons. Students in this class will be required to learn and perform in an ensemble for the Solo and Ensemble Festival. Chamber Music Concert.** This orchestra performs as the Sub Non-Varsity B Orchestra at U.I.L. Contest. The spring trip is open to all students in this class.

Concert Orchestra: This class contains all grade levels. Students show a great amount of interest in their instrument. Time is spent reviewing and learning new technical and musical skills for advancement into the higher orchestra classes. More time is spent on rhythm, note reading, and fundamental musical skills and techniques. **Students will attend a weekly rehearsal and participate in all required concerts and contests. Students are encouraged to take private lessons.** The spring trip is open to all students in this class.

*** Every orchestra member is a vital part of our program. Remember, it does not matter where you sit or which orchestra you are in, but how well you learn and contribute to the entire orchestra program.**

****Activities such as region, all-state, solo and ensemble, and using an accompanist require that additional fees need to be paid. These fees are set at the region and district levels. Klein Forest has no control over these fees, but if you are participating in these activities, you are required to pay these fees.**

Orchestra Parents and Students,

The Orchestra Parent Association (Booster club) supports the Klein Forest Orchestra program in many ways! Please consider supporting OPA and turn in the following requested items at any point throughout the year:

- 1. 1 pack of mechanical pencils**
- 2. 1 pack of water bottles or soda**
- 3. 1 pack of Kleenex**
- 4. 1 bag of candy**
- 5. 1 ream of copy paper**
- 6. Hand sanitizer**

Thank you,

Klein Forest Orchestra

Letter Jackets!!

Klein I.S.D. allows students to earn points towards their letterman jacket. Please see the attached information, for earning your letter jacket! Letter jackets are ordered several times throughout the school year.

Participation points carry over from year to year. Solo and Ensemble, Region, All-State, points, etc. are only valid for the year in which they occur.

Please see an orchestra director for a lettering points survey, if you feel you have earned enough points towards your jacket.

Semester Auditions

The Klein Forest Orchestra Program wants its students to be musically motivated and challenged.

Those students in Concert and Camerata Orchestras will have the opportunity to audition for placement into the next higher orchestra for the spring semester.

Students will be given music to perform at their audition in November. Those students who have achieved the skills needed for the next level will be moved up in the Spring Semester - January.

***Please note: A student's schedule will have to be able to accommodate the move to the next orchestra.**

Semester Auditions are scheduled to take place starting on Wednesday, November 5th, 2025, in class.

Orchestra Parents and Students,

Please do not forget to attend this very important and required meeting to discuss our orchestra activities and procedures for the year, as well as our spring trip to Orlando, Florida! Please plan to attend the meeting!

**Thursday, August 21st
6:00 p.m.
Klein Forest Orchestra
Room
See you there!!!**