

# ORCHESTRA COURSES

West Career & Tech 2026-2027



## BEGINNING

STRINGS ONLY, NO ASSESSMENT REQUIRED

This one-year course is designed for students with no prior experience playing a bowed string instrument. The curriculum introduces fundamental techniques, including posture, bowing, tone production, rhythm, and basic music reading. Students will learn about the role of string music in their cultural and musical heritage while building foundational skills necessary for individual and group performance. Emphasis is placed on consistent practice, developing proper technique, and cultivating an appreciation for ensemble playing.



## INTERMEDIATE

STRINGS ONLY, PLACEMENT ASSESSMENT REQUIRED

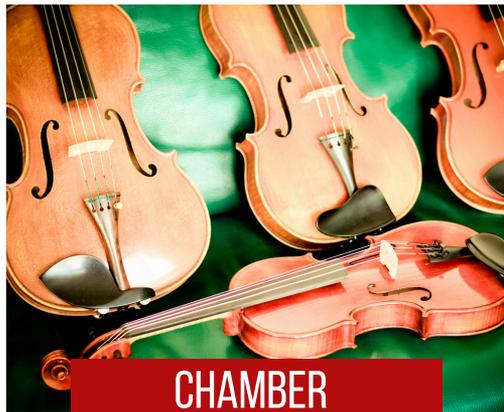
This one-year course is designed for bowed string students who have advanced skills beyond Middle School Chamber Orchestra or Beginning Orchestra. The curriculum focuses on developing the skills necessary for independent musicianship and includes an exploration of string literature from 1600 to the present. Students will refine techniques such as third position and higher, double-stopping, vibrato, and harmonics while enhancing articulation, dynamics, rhythm, and tone production. Students will engage with repertoire at Grade 2 difficulty and higher, with private instruction strongly recommended to support their growth.



## ADVANCED

PHILHARMONIC, PLACEMENT ASSESSMENT REQUIRED

This one-year course is designed for students of string, wind, brass, and percussion instruments. Students will explore the rich heritage of orchestral music, studying its evolution in style and genres, articulation, dynamics, rhythm, and tone production throughout history. Students will participate in a variety of performance opportunities to refine their skills and gain ensemble experience. A basic understanding of music theory is also expected. Pianists with advanced proficiency and strong sight-reading skills, as well as guitar players with exceptional sight-reading ability, may audition for this ensemble.



## CHAMBER

STRINGS ONLY, PLACEMENT ASSESSMENT REQUIRED

This one-year course is the highest-level ensemble offered for advanced bowed string students. The ensemble focuses on performing highly stylized chamber orchestra repertoire, including works of significant technical and musical complexity. Students are expected to demonstrate an exceptionally high level of proficiency on their instruments, including mastery of advanced techniques such as shifting to higher positions, double stops, harmonics, and interpreting complex rhythms. A basic understanding of music theory is also required. The repertoire typically includes music at Grade 4, 5, and higher levels of difficulty.

# WEST CAREER & TECHNICAL ACADEMY

## 2026-2027 Orchestra Placement Assessment



Room F122 (WCTA Orchestra Room)

All students who are choosing Orchestra as an Elective must perform an Ensemble Placement Assessment.

Sign up here on May 4, 5, or 6:

[Placement Assessment Form](#)

**What to bring:** This form, Instrument, Music

**What to wear:** Nice dress clothes suitable for a job interview

**What to expect:** A brief interview, followed by a performance, which is to include a one-, two-, or three-octave Harmonic minor scale in any key, a piece of your choice that is appropriate to your playing level, and a sight reading. The selection can be from such method books as Suzuki for strings, Rubank method books for winds, etc., or other solos or orchestra pieces that you have in your repertoire.

### Questions?

Email Dr. Maldonado at [maldogm@nv.ccsd.net](mailto:maldogm@nv.ccsd.net)

### WEST CAREER & TECHNICAL ACADEMY ORCHESTRAS

Please print; Be sure to bring this form to your placement assessment.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Current School: \_\_\_\_\_

Instrument(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Phone/Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Name/Phone/Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please check the ensembles that are of interest to you:

#### Ensembles

\_\_\_\_ Chamber Orchestra/String Ensemble (Strings only, placement assessment required)

\_\_\_\_ Advanced (Symphonic) Orchestra/Philharmonic (placement assessment required)

\_\_\_\_ Intermediate Orchestra/Sinfonia (Strings only, placement assessment required)

\_\_\_\_ Beginning Orchestra/Sinfonietta (Strings only, no assessment required)

**Chamber Orchestra (Strings only):** This one-year course is the highest-level ensemble offered for advanced bowed string students. Membership is selective and based on audition. The ensemble focuses on performing highly stylized chamber orchestra repertoire, including works of significant technical and musical complexity. Students are expected to demonstrate an exceptionally high level of proficiency on their instruments, including mastery of advanced techniques such as shifting to higher positions, double stops, harmonics, and interpreting complex rhythms. A basic understanding of music theory is also required. The repertoire typically includes music at Grade 4, 5, and higher levels of difficulty. Opportunities for after-school chamber music ensembles (e.g., trios, quartets) may also be available. Private string instruction is strongly recommended to support students' development. This course fulfills one Arts/Humanities credit or an elective credit required for high school graduation and may be repeated for additional credit. Admission is by audition only.

**Advanced Orchestra (Full Symphonic Orchestra):** This one-year course is designed for students of string, wind, brass, and percussion instruments who have progressed beyond the skills outlined in the Middle School Orchestra syllabus. The curriculum focuses on developing the technical and musical skills required for independent musicianship. Students will explore the rich heritage of orchestral music, studying its evolution in style and genres, articulation, dynamics, rhythm, and tone production throughout history. The course emphasizes the importance of sustained individual and group effort, with a structured progression of technical proficiency expected. Students will participate in a variety of performance opportunities (including after school Jazz Band, if desired) to refine their skills and gain ensemble experience. A basic understanding of music theory is also expected. Pianists with advanced proficiency and strong sight-reading skills, as well as guitar players with exceptional sight-reading ability, may audition for this ensemble. Private instruction is strongly recommended to support students' development. This course fulfills one Arts/Humanities credit or an elective credit required for high school graduation and may be repeated for additional credit. Admission is by audition only.

**Intermediate Orchestra (Strings only):** This one-year course is designed for bowed string students who have advanced skills beyond Middle School Chamber Orchestra or Beginning Orchestra. Admission is by audition (required for all Middle School students) or instructor approval. The curriculum focuses on developing the skills necessary for independent musicianship and includes an exploration of string literature from 1600 to the present. Students will refine techniques such as third position and higher, double-stopping, vibrato, and harmonics while enhancing articulation, dynamics, rhythm, and tone production. A strong emphasis is placed on sustained group and individual effort, with an expectation of moderate technical proficiency and a foundational understanding of music theory. Students will engage with repertoire at Grade 2 difficulty and higher, with private instruction strongly recommended to support their growth. Performance opportunities are a central component of the course, along with the appropriate integration of technology to support learning and performance preparation. Pianists with highly proficient playing ability and strong sight-reading skills may audition to join the ensemble. This course fulfills one Arts/Humanities credit or an elective credit required for high school graduation and may be repeated for additional credit required for high school graduation and may be repeated. Admission is by audition only.