



Fairfield Warde High School **ORCHESTRA HANDBOOK**

September, 2016

Kathy Conner, Director of Orchestras

The purpose of this handbook is to provide students and parents with a description of the programs available to students in the Fairfield Warde High School Orchestra Program. It is not a substitute for the official "Program of Studies" published by Fairfield Warde High School. In the event of any conflict or discrepancy between this Handbook and the Program of Studies, the Program of Studies shall prevail.

Fairfield Warde High School Music Department, 755 Melville Ave, Fairfield, CT 06824

Important Contact Information

Fairfield Warde High School main office: 255-8449
Fairfield town wide music office and resource center @ FWHS: 255-8454

Email is always the fastest, easiest way to contact faculty.

Music Department Faculty

Kathy Conner – Orchestras and Lessons

Scott Marsland – Bands and Lessons

Susanna Bryan – Orchestra Lessons

Lauren Verney-fink – Choirs, Piano class

Sam Eckhardt- Music Technology

Sara Hofer – District Music Coordinator

Kathy Gabriel – District Music Secretary @ FWHS

Adam Cyr – Music Theory

kconner@fairfieldschools.org

smarsland@fairfieldschools.org

sbryan@fairfieldschools.org

lverneyfink@fairfieldschools.org

seckhardt@fairfieldschools.org

shofer@fairfieldschools.org

kgabriel@fairfieldschools.org

acyr@fairfieldschools.org

MUSIC DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

“The Music Department offers a wide-range of courses that develop the three artistic processes of creating, performing, and responding at all levels. Students are encouraged to continue their study of a musical instrument or voice throughout their high school years...”

ORCHESTRA OFFERINGS

CONCERT ORCHESTRA

This course includes all ninth and tenth grade string players who desire training in instrumental techniques, ensemble playing, and music reading. Eleventh and twelfth grade string players may also be included in this ensemble. Select members of the Concert Band will be added to complete the instrumentation of the Concert Orchestra. Instrumental lessons are required for this course. Participation in all scheduled rehearsals and performances is required.

SYMPHONIC ORCHESTRA

The focus of this course will be on developing advanced instrumental techniques, ensemble playing and music reading. Select woodwind, brass and percussion players from Band will be added to complete the instrumentation of the Symphonic Orchestra. Orchestral literature of various periods and styles will be studied and performed. Instrumental lessons are required for this course. Participation in all scheduled rehearsals and performances is required.

MATERIALS

- All Students: instrument and case, rosin, extra strings, metronome, tuner, pencil (stand for home use)
 - All students will be issued a folder and sheet music. Any music or folder lost will be charged to the student to whom it was checked out on a real cost replacement basis.
- Lower Strings: will also need a rock stop

UNIFORMS

Uniform fitting dates are noted in the calendar portion of the Music Department Calendar & Handbook.

Male students in all performing groups:

- Tuxedo (supplied), which includes;
 - Black jacket
 - White shirt
 - Black bow tie
 - Cumberbund
- Black dress shoes & black socks (students must supply)

Female students in all performing groups:

- Black concert dress (supplied)
 - dresses must be hemmed
- Black dress shoes & black stockings (students must supply)

Please refer to the uniform rental contract in the Music Department Handbook for uniform rental costs and care.

Students not properly dressed or prepared for any performance or rehearsal may receive a loss of credit or dismissal from the event.

GRADING POLICY

It is the policy of the FWHS Music Department that students be assessed on the basis of class performance, participation, attendance, and test grades. Each student is expected to contribute to the success of the group through his or her demonstrated dedication, commitment, maturity, and diligence during rehearsals and performances. The music faculty members believe that every student, regardless of musical ability, can achieve high levels of excellence. Orchestra grades are determined using this weighting:

40%	Ensemble and Rehearsal Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom performance and rehearsal technique • In-class assignments
40%	Individual/Small Group Performance Skills (including Lessons) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assessments
20%	Ensemble Performances
<hr style="width: 100%;"/> 100%	Quarter Average

**** Students not properly dressed or prepared for any performance or rehearsal may result in a loss of credit or dismissal from the event.**

LESSONS

Students are required to attend weekly lessons either privately or in school. Students who study privately will perform at the end of each marking period for assessment and grading. Private students will need to have their private teacher fill out the attached evaluation form at the end of the 1st and 3rd marking periods.

Students who take lessons during school must attend weekly lessons. Students are excused from a lesson if they are absent from school (field trip or illness). All other misses will be unexcused and makeups (with partial credit) will be at the discretion of the teacher. If a conflict arises it is the responsibility of the student to notify the teacher prior to the lesson. We will try to do our best to schedule an alternate time for lessons. Students who do not notify the respective teacher of a conflict **PRIOR** to the lesson will receive a 0 for the lesson. Lesson attendance and preparation of assigned materials comprises 20% of each marking period grade.

SMARTMUSIC

Smartmusic is software developed to assist students in practicing their instruments as well as providing assessments for the teacher. Throughout the year students will be given assignments to be completed and submitted using this software. These assignments are designed to assess concert repertoire and technical skills, as well as provide assistance and feedback for practicing. Smartmusic is available for home purchase but is not required. Students will be able to use this software on school computers within the music department during free time or after school hours.

FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE

There are band-aides, rubber bands, sponges, rosin, cloths and other materials in the container marked "supplies" for student use. Please use sparingly before or after class; our supplies are very limited. If you don't find what you are looking for then we are out of it. Always put things away exactly where you found them/where they belong.

Ensemble and Rehearsal Skills Scoring Rubric

This is the criteria that will be used to evaluate students' Ensemble and Rehearsal Skills:

NAME _____

QUARTER: 1 2 3 4

Date: _____

PIN _____

	Advanced 20 points each	Proficient 15 points each	Basic 10 points each	Minimal 5 points each
Performance	<i>Consistently exhibits proper playing position and posture.</i>	<i>Almost always exhibits proper playing position and posture.</i>	<i>Occasionally exhibits proper playing position and posture.</i>	<i>Rarely exhibits proper playing position and posture.</i>
Rehearsal Preparedness	<i>Is consistently ready to begin class on time with all materials</i>	<i>Is ready to begin class when prompted.</i>	<i>Is not ready to begin class on time after repeated prompting; often needs to retrieve music after the start of class.</i>	<i>Does not attend class on time; is not in the room at the start of instruction; tardiness is not excused.</i>
Tuning	<i>Demonstrates proper tuning procedure.</i>	<i>Almost always follows proper tuning procedure.</i>	<i>Follows proper tuning procedure only when reminded.</i>	<i>Does not follow proper tuning procedure; socializes during tuning, warms up or practices during tuning.</i>
Response to Conductor	<i>Is consistently ready to play when requested.</i>	<i>Is usually ready to play when requested.</i>	<i>Is often not ready to play when requested; needs reminders.</i>	<i>Is not ready to play when requested; needs frequent reminders.</i>
Productivity	<i>Demonstrates concentrated focus; refrains from side conversations & other distractions.</i>	<i>Demonstrates strong concentration with little distraction.</i>	<i>Demonstrates weak focus; needs to be reminded to stay on task.</i>	<i>Inconsistent focus; is often off task, engages in side conversations; plays instrument during instruction.</i>

Total Score: _____

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Concert Orchestra, Symphonic Orchestra, and Chamber Orchestra are performance-based classes: participation in these ensembles is similar, in many ways, to an athletic team, except that in Orchestra, no one "sits the bench". Every member is vitally important to the whole group, so absence will affect everyone. Performances and dress rehearsals are the most important part of what we do in the Music Department, so absences should be avoided as much as possible. All performances are mandatory. The only acceptable excused absences for concerts are religious observances, personal illness, approved family emergencies, or participating in a state-level playoff game. Excuses for dress rehearsals are the same as for concerts with the exception of athletic games and matches. Work is not considered a valid excuse for absence.

MUSIC and ATHLETICS are important to our school community. Occasionally, there may be an unavoidable conflict after-school and this is the hierarchy of acceptability, which has been accepted by our administration, teachers, athletic director, and coaches:

Sports practice	→	go to after-school rehearsal or performance
Sports game	→	go to concert;
	→	miss after-school music rehearsal;
	→	do alternate assignment as necessary
State playoff game	→	go to game/match;
	→	miss after-school rehearsal or performance;
	→	do alternate assignment

Notice from a parent regarding absences of a special nature must be submitted as soon as possible or at least one week before an after-school rehearsal and at least one month prior to any concert. All conflicts regarding performances and dress rehearsals will be resolved on a case-by-case basis and the communication of all parties is the key to a successful resolution. In the unlikely event of an extended illness, an appropriate amount of time will be given for the student to make up any work missed when they return to school. Each case will be handled individually.

Students will receive a copy of the 2016-2017 FWHS Music Department Calendar, which should be compared against their home calendar. Students may also access a complete listing of all Music Department activities and events by going to the calendar section of the FWHS Music Department and Orchestra webpages (coming soon). Please inform your director of conflicts by submitting a note as soon as possible.

** If a student has an excused absence, they must complete an approved alternative assignment within a week of the missed performance or rehearsal to receive credit.*

INSTRUMENT/EQUIPMENT STORAGE

It is the responsibility of all orchestra students to keep the practice rooms and music rooms safe, clean, and orderly. **Except for water, there is no food or drink allowed in the orchestra room, unless approved by the director.** Instruments should go home regularly to maintain a consistent practice schedule.

INSTRUMENT ROOM HOURS

Morning drop-off 7:20-7:30 a.m.
Afternoon pick-up 2:20-2:30 p.m.

DAILY PROCEDURE

Students are expected to be inside the orchestra room by the bell. Within **three minutes** after the bell, students should be ready to play in their assigned seat with instrument and music needed for class. Students should warm-up quietly and tune their instrument with proper technique. Any student who comes tardy to class must have a pass.

“The sanctity of the podium” – once the Director or anyone designated as a teacher steps on the podium all playing and talking ends abruptly. Always maintain a quiet, professional atmosphere during instruction, performing, or announcements. Once instruction has begun, there is to be no more individual playing or talking unless indicated.

Students should use the lavatory or get a drink of water before or after the class period. In case of an emergency, students may use the restroom. Students must ask the director before leaving the room. Have a capped water bottle handy at your seat if you get thirsty while playing. Too many emergency lavatory visits may incite a student-teacher “conference”.

Students should use their time wisely as extra time is given after the second bell to be in your seat. This time is not for socializing, but for preparing your instrument, tuning, and warming up. Every effort will be made to release students one to two minutes before the end of the class period for the purpose of proper instrument, equipment, and music storage.

STAYING INFORMED

Listen In Class

Read the boards daily for announcements, additions and changes to rehearsal schedules, meetings, upcoming events, etc.

Handouts and brochures are available on the table. You may help yourself to any of the handouts or publications.

Message Center

If you have a question or message for me, please write a note and place it in the basket. I will place notes in your folder periodically so....**ALWAYS CHECK YOUR FOLIO!**

OTHER ORCHESTRA OPPORTUNITIES

CMEA Western Region Festival

The CMEA (Connecticut Music Educators’ Association) Western Region ensembles are comprised of students from the Southwestern corner of the state. Students who audition for Region are eligible to be chosen for these ensembles: Band, Orchestra, Jazz Ensemble, Choir. The appropriate solo, scales, and sight-reading or improvisation must be prepared ahead of the November 19, 2016 audition date. The CMEA required music list and sign-ups are found in the student information section of the orchestra room. Please see Mrs. Conner or your private instructor for more detailed information about the audition.

CMEA All-State Festival

All-State ensembles are comprised of Region students from throughout Connecticut. Students must audition at the All-State Solo Audition Festival to be eligible for All-State ensembles. The appropriate solo, scales, and sight-reading or improvisation must be prepared ahead of the January 28, 2017 audition date. An invitation to perform with any All-State ensemble is a great honor as only 600 students are selected from a total pool of 6,000 candidates. “All-State” is a wonderful opportunity to perform with the best instrumentalists in our state under the direction of conductors from across the country. The CMEA required music list and sign-ups are found on the white board in the band room. Please see Mrs. Conner or your private instructor for more detailed information.

HELPFUL HINTS FOR SUCCESS

Check your folder slot daily.

Observe posted notices and reminders in the orchestra room and on the Music Department and Orchestra web pages.

Keep your music organized and orderly for easy access during rehearsals.

Carry pencil(s), rosin, and tuner for every rehearsal and performance.

Put away music, instrument, equipment, and personal belongings after every rehearsal or performance. Do not assume someone else will take care of your stuff. Never leave music out on the stands or your instrument outside its cubby or proper case, unless you are told to by a teacher.

Do your best to help keep the orchestra room clean and orderly. Please, no food or drink in the orchestra room at any time, except with permission of the Director. Put stands and chairs back after moving them. Don't leave personal items in your instrument cubby or on the floor overnight. The Orchestra Room is not a locker room.

Only play your instrument at the appropriate time or when instructed to do so.

Stay focused during rehearsals and always keep a professional atmosphere.

Most music forms needed throughout the year can be found next to the music folder folio cabinet.

ORCHESTRA CALENDAR

The dates included in the Music Department Handbook and Calendar, handed out the first month of school, are accurate and complete as of September 2016. Additional dates may be added to the calendar throughout the year and will be posted on the white board as well as on the bulletin board in the hall. Please remember that performances and any after school rehearsals are significant summative grades so plan your calendar accordingly.

PRIVATE LESSON VERIFICATION FORM

FAIRFIELD WARDE HIGH SCHOOL
 Pequot House Office
 755 Melville Ave
 Fairfield, CT 06824-5064
 Phone: 203-255-8450 Fax: 203-255-8212

Dear Music Instructor:

The purpose of this report is to maintain communication with the private teacher and to obtain an evaluation of the students' progress in lessons.

I ask that you take a moment to complete this form or simply email me. Your input will show me that the student is studying privately and continues to make musical progress during the school year and/or the summer. Either return this form or email me with the pertinent information. Thank you for your time. Please contact me anytime with any concerns about your student.

Sincerely,

Kathy Conner, Orchestra Director
kconner@fairfieldschools.org

Student Name _____ Instrument _____

Private Teacher's Name _____ Phone # _____

Private Teacher's Email _____

Frequency of lessons: (example) weekly, biweekly, monthly, etc. : _____

Length of weekly lesson: ½ hour _____ ¾ hour _____ hour _____ other _____

Attends lessons: Regularly _____ Misses Occasionally _____ Misses frequently _____

Lesson preparation: Excellent _____ Good _____ Fair _____ Poor _____

List method books, technical materials and solo materials used.

What significant progress has the student made recently?

What specific problems is the student presently working on?

Any additional comments?

NOTE TO STUDENTS: In order to be exempted from in-school lessons for the 1st quarter, this form needs to be completed and returned by Friday, September 16, 2016.

PIN _____

FWHS ORCHESTRA HANDBOOK RETURN FORM

**I have read the Orchestra handbook and understand
what is expected of me in the
FWHS Orchestra.**

Name _____
(Please print)

Signature of student

Date

Parent Signature _____

Let's have a great year!

