

Band and Choir Handbook

Participation in a music ensemble can be an incredible enriching experience musically, artistically, socially and emotionally. In the NWSS music department we strive to provide a supportive, enriched experience for all student participants. This takes commitment from all involved, including teachers, students, parents, administration, staff and the greater community.

The NWSS Bands and Choirs provide opportunities for students to acquire skills that are technical, artistic and social. Participation in music provides the foundation for creative exploration and personal expressiveness. Music participation and formal music education help young people hone skills that enrich their life experiences.

Students are offered the opportunity to prepare themselves to be both competent and reliable members within a variety of exciting performance groups at NWSS. Membership in these groups calls for strong character as well as strong musicianship.

It is hoped that the following will be informative to parents and students.

Teacher Contacts

Ms Proznick kproznick@sd40.bc.ca
Vocal Jazz, Chamber Choir, A Block Concert Choir, Senior Choir, Musical Theatre

Mr Clements sclements@sd40.bc.ca
Gr 10 Concert Band, French Immersion 9/10 Concert Band, Senior Concert Band, Gr 9 Jazz Band, Gr 12 Jazz Band, Musical Theatre Orchestra

Mr Sykes jsykes@sd40.bc.ca
Gr 10 Jazz Band, Gr 11 Jazz Band, Music Composition and Technology

Mr Paterson jpaterson@sd40.bc.ca
Gr 9 Concert Band, Gr 10 Concert Band, Guitar, String Ensemble

The NWSS Music Auxiliary

The NWSS Music Auxiliary is a group of parents, teachers, students and community members who meet once a month to support activities related to the NWSS performing music ensembles. The commitment is minimal, but the impact is great. We meet regularly on the first Wednesday of each month in the band room at NWSS from 7pm to usually around 8pm. Meetings rarely go longer than one hour and fifteen minutes. This group advises teachers regarding trips and department policy. They are an advocacy group in for music education, and help to recruit volunteers for NWSS Music Department concerts and events. They also organize and administer several fundraisers throughout the year.

Please consider joining us on the NWSS Music Auxiliary. We have 8 meetings throughout the year. Only 8 hours of your time would make a huge impact on the lives of many for many years to come. Whether you can attend one, a few or all of the meetings, your presence and support is invaluable to the music students at NWSS!

First meeting of the year will be ????

Supplies

Specific supplies for music classes vary depending on what instrument the student is playing. Please refer to the equipment lists located on the homepage at www.nwssmusic.com for specific supplies based on instruments/classes.

In general, band students need:

- Instrument and any supplementary equipment needed for the instrument (see list on website)
- Method Book (Grade 10 to 12 “Foundations for Superior Performance”)
- Pencil (must have on the music stand for every rehearsal)
- Music Folder

BE SURE YOUR CHILD’S INSTRUMENT CASE IS MARKED WITH THEIR NAME

AND THE SCHOOL NAME. We have many instrument cases that look the same, and sometimes students grab and use an instrument that is not their own. To avoid this, instruments must be properly labelled.

In general, choir students must have:

- a dedicated black choir folder or 3 ring binder (Black only please)
- a pencil (in your hand for all rehearsals)
- music. Each choir student will be assigned a number for their music. Original music copies will be handed out and students must, at the end of the term, hand back all their music. A fee will be charged for lost or damaged music.

Attendance and Punctuality

Band and choir classes are a graded courses, and students are expected to attend all classes. As with many other subjects, frequent absences and tardiness can easily result in a lower mark.

In an ensemble, a musician has a responsibility to the other members to be present and punctual. Students who are constantly absent threaten the musical and social fabric of the ensemble. Frequent tardiness disrupts rehearsals and results in members missing key information or not being properly prepared, thus affecting the outcome of the group. Along with following regular school procedure for frequent absences and lates, students who are consistently late may also be asked to speak to their music teacher in private. They also may be required to address the group in person. In extreme cases be students may be asked to leave the group.

Music students should be confident that if a member's attendance or punctuality is a problem, it is being addressed in confidence by their music teacher.

Finishing homework, preparing for a test in another subject or needing to sleep in are not a reasonable excuse for missing rehearsals, particularly morning or after school Z Block rehearsals. With proper planning students should be able to manage their schedules to allow time for both academic preparation, proper sleep schedules and ensemble responsibilities.

Preparation and Practice

Musical skill and ability takes time, effort and dedicated practice. Students should be practicing regularly, 30 minutes at least 5 times a week. This is individual practice time, not ensemble rehearsals. If a student practices on weekends, that leaves only two weekdays on which to schedule dedicated practice time. Students who practice at least 30 minutes a day 5 days a week will find themselves easily able to meet the expectations of the ensembles. We hope parents/guardians will encourage organized, routine individual practice times.

Proper individual practice requires:

1. A room free of distractions where the musician can practice both loudly and softly
2. A music stand
3. A metronome and tuner

Students who are not able to practice at home can practice at lunch or after school in the band rooms.

Concerts and Performances

Look at the calendar on the music department website at www.nwssmusic.com for the dates for all concerts, trip, workshops, festivals and fundraisers.

The scheduled Winter Concerts, Spring Choral Concert and June Revue Concert are assignments, and as a result any missed performance will affect a student's mark in the course. Parents should contact their son/daughter's music teacher directly if there are any conflicts with these dates. Communication in advance is a key in these situations, so please let us know in advance so we can make arrangements.

Spring tours

Trips, workshops and festivals are the most important community experiences we have during the year. It is often where we synthesize all the information and work we've been doing in regular rehearsals. It is incredibly important to us that every student has the opportunity to participate. Students who are in good standing at school and who have demonstrated an effort to raise money for their trips using our Music Auxiliary organized fundraisers can apply for a trip bursary. The music auxiliary has funds available to distribute to families needing assistance. Please contact your child's music teacher if you would like more information, and know that this information is kept in strictest confidence.

Student Accounts and Fundraising

Each band and choir student has a student account with the music department. When students participate in a fundraiser, all or a portion of the profit goes **DIRECTLY TO THAT STUDENT** for use towards the cost of the spring tour. So if your child participates in fundraising, it benefits your family first.

Here is a list of fundraisers organized by the NWSS Music Auxiliary for 2014-2015

- Entertainment Book Fundraiser- September to mid October
- Fan Of The Bandathon
- Meat Sale- usually late October until early December, dates TBA
- Clothing Drive (year-round)

Visit the NWSS Music Department Website for more details on fundraisers.

Do you have a fundraising idea?

Any student or parent wishing to help provide opportunities for fundraising is welcome to present ideas to the Music Parent Auxiliary. Attend a meeting on the first Wednesday of every month from 7pm to 8pm in the band room.

