

Music Lesson Structure & Policies

Specialized Music Instruction

Overview

Specialized Music Instruction provides focused, small-group instruction necessary for students to be successful in their performing ensembles. These lessons are a vital part of the music education experience and ensure that students receive individualized instruction on their specific instruments or voice-type.

Structure

To minimize disruptions, music lessons operate on a rotating schedule, meaning students do not miss the same class repeatedly. This approach allows for balanced participation in both their academic classes and music instruction. In the case of an exam, review-session, or other significant conflict, students should communicate with their teacher.

Grading Policies

Participation in these small-group lessons is mandatory for students who are part of ensembles (band and chorus). These lessons are essential for students to develop the specific techniques required for successful ensemble performance.

Please refer to the policies provided by your child's teacher, which were distributed at the beginning of the school year and are attached on the following pages.



SEAFORD MIDDLE SCHOOL CHORUS 2024-2025

Ms. Ferguson aferguson@mail.seaford.k12.ny.us



IMPORTANT DATES

Monday, December 16 Middle School Concert Part 1 (6th grade chorus performs)
Tuesday, December 17 Middle School Concert Part 2 (7th & 8th grade chorus perform)

Middle School drama production: March 28 & 29

Auditions and rehearsals will start in late fall
NYSSMA will be IN SEAFORD April 23 & 24

Wednesday, May 28 – Middle School Concert Part 1
Monday, June 2 – Middle School Concert Part 2

CONCERT INFORMATION:

Students should wear black pants and a black shirt with black dress shoes
All concerts take place at Seaford High School. Students should be in the high school chorus room by 6:30 pm. The concert starts at 7 pm; it is usually just over an hour long of awesomeness.

SUPPLIES: folder or binder, pencils, highlighters

There may be a few days when you need your computer or headphones for class;
I will announce on Teams and/or Parentsquare if you do.

RULES AND EXPECTATIONS FOR REHEARSALS AND LESSONS

- (1) Be prepared with your folder/binder, pencils, and highlighters
- (2) Be at your assigned seat on time. (I give a one minute grace period for 9th period).
- (3) Engage in the full rehearsal by singing, listening, or taking notes all period.
- (4) Show respect for every musician in the room by allowing them to speak or sing without fear or disruption. I take it very seriously when one singer's behavior endangers another singer's voice, self-esteem, or ability to grow as a musician.

GRADING:

50% rehearsals (every other day)

40% weekly small-group lessons (schedule to follow)

10% in-class assignments/concerts

GRADING RUBRIC FOR LESSONS AND REHEARSALS:

PREPARATION (2 points): Singer has their own folder/binder, pencil, and highlighter

POSTURE (2 points): When standing, singer has feet shoulder width apart, chest high, and spine aligned. When seated, their spine is aligned and music held up so that they don't have to look down at it.

SAFETY (1 point): Student is not chewing on anything during lesson/rehearsal

SILENT PARTICIPATION (5 points): Singer listens silently when the teacher/a designated student speaks, and they mark any requested notation in their music. When a section other than the singer's section is supposed to be singing, they are respectful of those students. Singer is attentive to instructions and ready to sing when Ms. Ferguson gives a cue.

SINGING PARTICIPATION (5 points): Singer sings to the best of their ability whenever their section and/or the whole chorus is supposed to be singing, and it does not do other work during class

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WEEKLY SMALLER-GROUP LESSONS

Students who are in chorus (but not band) are expected to attend a smaller group lesson. Their lesson group will meet on the same day each week, but the the period will change. This year, we'll "rotate" through periods 1, 2, and 4 for lessons.

Please make every effort to attend your assigned lesson day and period. I have two fewer lesson groups for Quarters 1 & 2, so I'm not going to be as flexible about attending different lesson groups.

If you are absent from school at the time of your lesson, you will not receive a grade for the lesson, and you do not need to make it up. If you forget your lesson, or you have a full-period test the same period as your lesson, you will need to make it up.

Everyone gets one "freebie" (missed lesson with no "0") each quarter. I will also provide one take-home make-up assignment each quarter. Missed lessons beyond that will negatively impact your grade.

EXTRA HELP

IS 2:50-3:20 IN THE CHORUS ROOM ON WEDNESDAYS!

Middle School Band (6, 7, 8)

Grading Criteria

Quarterly grades will be weighted as follows:

20% Classwork

40% Lessons

40% Rehearsal/Performance Grade

Band Grades will now be in the form of a letter grade and still count in your overall grade along with all other exploratories.

A = 100, B = 90, C = 80, D = 70, F = Failing

Classwork: 20% of grade

Book exercises

Concert music selections

Rhythm activities

Written activities

Classwork is graded on the following criteria:

- Rhythm – accuracy of values, duration, pulse, steadiness of beat and meter.
- Tone Quality – resonance, control, clarity, focus.
- Notes – accuracy of printed pitches and - within the appropriate range.
- Articulation – accuracy and fluency of attacks and releases.
- Musicianship – expressive elements, interpretation, dynamics.
- Posture – proper playing position of body and instrument.

Lessons: 40% of grade

Students will be graded during lessons in the following areas

Rhythm

Pitch

Tone Quality

Articulation (sticking for percussion)

Musicianship

Posture

Rehearsals/Performance: 40% of grade

Performance/Participation:

- Participation in warm-up activities and preparation of concert music.
- Use of proper posture and hand position.
- Intonation and technique.
- Balance and blend within each section and entire ensemble.
- Ability to perform and improve performance with each rehearsal.
- Attendance and participation in two annual concerts.

Preparedness:

- instrument, percussion sticks and mallets, pencil, and music at each rehearsal.
- All accessories: reeds, valve oil, etc.

Posture:

Students will use the proper playing position for their bodies in relation to their instruments.

IMPORTANT DATES:

*December 16, 2024 – Winter Concert Part 1
(Woodwind Ensemble, 6 Band, 6 Chorus, 7 Band)*

*December 17, 2024 – Winter Concert Part 2
(Jazz Band, 8 Band, 7/8 Chorus)*

NYSSMA – April 23 and 24, 2025 Location Seaford Middle School

*May 28, 2025 – Spring Concert Part 1
(Woodwind Ensemble, 6 Band, 6 Chorus, 7 Band)*

*June 2, 2025 – Spring Concert Part 2 (Jazz Band)
(Jazz Band, 8 Band, 7/8 Chorus)*

June 25, 2025 – 8th Grade Graduation