

The Pearson Music Department

Welcome to the Pearson Music Program! Our names are Mrs. Schroeder and Ms. Treggor and we will be your child's teachers if he/she is enrolled in music performance classes for the 2008 - 2009 school year. This promises to be an exciting year for individual students, as well as for the whole department, with numerous competitions and performances. We hope this "handbook" provides answers to any questions and concerns you may have about your child's participation in the program. (Topics covered include: program goals, school instrument rental information and forms; classroom expectations and grading; concert etiquette and attire and concert, parade, and contest dates).

Parent/teacher/student communication is essential to the success of your children and to this program. Therefore, we are asking that you read through this information with your child, and sign the contract included in this handbook to let us know that you have done so. Please return the signed contract to us as soon as possible.

PROGRAM GOALS:

1. To develop, the creative potential of the individual by providing hands on musical exposure and enrichment through making and responding to music.

- *Provide many, varied experiences in performing and listening to music*
- *Enable students to increase skills in music reading, instrument/ vocal techniques, and musical interpretation.*
- *Provide opportunities and challenges for the more advanced students*

2. To develop the student's interest in, and respect for, music as a form of lasting enjoyment, whether as a profession or leisure activity, and a desire to share the experience with others.

- *Provide a number of different ensemble experiences and opportunities.*
- *When possible, provide guest clinicians from within the community.*
- *Provide positive performance opportunities showcasing student achievements.*

3. To promote the personal and emotional adjustment of the pupil as an individual and as a member of society.

- *Provide the student with musical experiences that offer opportunities for self expression and confidence.*
- *Provide opportunities for students to work cooperatively with others and learn the value of self discipline.*

4. To develop an awareness and understanding of the many cultural and historical differences of the world's peoples.

- *Provide performance opportunities with music of many different lands and Cultures.*
- *Provide performance opportunities with music of many different composers, eras, types and sty*

CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS – INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC: (band)

- ◆ Students should come prepared for class with their instrument, music, and a pencil. (Accent on Achievement is the method book used in the class must be purchased.)
- ◆ Students should be seated in their assigned section and/or seat, with instrument put together and music out, **ready to play by 5 minutes after the start of the class.**
- ◆ Students should warm up together on their instruments under the teachers' direction.
- ◆ When a teacher or director steps onto the podium, all talking and/or playing stops and attention is given to the teacher.
- ◆ Students should show respect and consideration for each other and the teacher.
- ◆ Students should practice their assignments at home. **Practicing is considered homework!** The absolute ideal is 30 minutes a day. The minimal requirement is one hour a week. **Students should keep a practice log and turn it in as homework. It will count toward their grades.**
- ◆ **NO CHEWING GUM or CANDY!** It is against school rules and sugar will promote sticky key and valve problems!
- ◆ **No yelling, screaming, running, jumping on/over chairs or any other types of "horseplay".**
- ◆ **No blasting or playing on the instruments until class begins.**

CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS – Choir

- ◆ Students should come prepared for class with their music, and a pencil.
- ◆ Students should be seated in their assigned section and/or seat, music out, **ready to begin by 5 minutes after the start of the class.**
- ◆ Students will warm up together under the teachers' direction.
- ◆ When a teacher or director speaks or plays the piano, all talking and/or singing stops and attention is given to the teacher.
- ◆ Students should show respect and consideration for each other and the teacher. Insubordination will not be tolerated. (Insubordination is the refusal of a student to obey a reasonable request regarding student behavior made by a teacher, administrator or staff member.)
- ◆ Though parts are rehearsed during the week, students should be practicing their music at home as well as students are expected to know their vocal lines to every song.. This is especially important if a student has missed any rehearsals.
- ◆ **NO CHEWING GUM or CANDY!** It is against school rules and students cannot display good vocal technique with anything in their mouths.
- ◆ Students are not allowed to play any of the instruments in the music room during choir.

Consequences:

- Please note that participation in the Pearson Band and Choir programs should be considered an honor and a privilege. Since they are not state mandated classes, any student who repeatedly displays poor behavior and disrespect within the classroom will be referred to the administration. This may lead to removal from the class and/or additional disciplinary consequences.

GRADING – INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC: (band)

Grading is determined by total points accumulated during a nine week grading period. The total points possible may vary from quarter to quarter.

<u>Category</u>	<u>total points</u>
-Performances (Participation in concerts, parades, competitions etc.)	100 each performance
-In class playing tests	50
-Written tests	50
-Homework practice log (If student averages 60 minutes per week...if not, points are pro-rated according to their average. If practice log is not turned in...the student loses 25 point.)	25
-Parent signature on practice log	05
-Class participation	25

Class Participation:

A total of 25 points are possible if a student is able to live up to the classroom expectations. A student will lose points if they are late to class, forget their instrument, book or music, pester other students, refuse to play etc.

Practice Log:

Every student is expected to log their “homework” practice times and turn it in to me. They can use the logs supplied, or make their own. Five extra points will be given if they include a parents’ signature.

A log can be found in the back of this handbook and extra ones can be found in a large envelope hanging on the door to the music office. Students may hand them in weekly, monthly or at the end of the grading period by placing them in the appropriate envelope posted on the music office door. Please note that there will be a cut off date at the end of each grading period.

Breakfast Club:

If it is inconvenient for a child to practice at home, they can log practice times at school by practicing before or after the school day. If they elect to practice before school they may want to participate in the Breakfast Club. The Breakfast Club is a loosely organized group of students who practice before school on a regular basis. Each member is given a card with their name on it and every time they practice, a hole is punched in the card. After 9 hole punches they get to choose either a donut or muffin. Their “breakfast” choice is usually served before school on the next school day. A child can elect to regularly practice after school and still participate in the Breakfast Club. I strive to be at school in the morning by 7:10 – 7:15 am and plan to stay until 3 pm in the afternoons. *Please note that Breakfast Club members are still responsible for keeping records and turning in their practice log.

Written Test:

A written test will be given at least once every grading period. Warning will always be given days before a test and the test will be on a topic that has been stressed in the classroom setting. Topics include; note values/note names, pitch names and corresponding fingerings, measure counting, vocabulary, and key signatures.

Playing Test:

A “playing” test will be given at least once every grading period. In the last grading period the playing test is often replaced by participation in our numerous performances. Warning will always be given weeks before a test concerning the contents. Students will play in front of the other students in the class and I will score them according to rhythms, pitches, dynamics and tone quality for wind instruments and rhythm, pulse, sticking and rudiments for percussionists.

Concert, Contests and Parades:

Like games in team sports and productions for drama class, participation in concerts, contests and parades are a group effort. Unlike team sports nobody sits on the bench!!! Every student is important and critical to the end result. When a student fails to attend, he/she lets the whole class down.

Students may lower their participation points by arriving late, being dressed inappropriately (out of uniform), or displaying inappropriate behavior during the concert.

If a student does not show up for a performance, he/she will receive 0 points toward his/her grade. Lack of transportation, lack of babysitter for a younger child, broken instrument, etc. are not legitimate reasons for not attending.

If your child is ill, (vomiting, high temperature etc.) on the day of a performance, please contact me by phone or note before the concert if possible, and by the next school day at the latest, explaining the circumstances. In such a situation, the student will be allowed to make up the 100 point performance credit by preparing a special assignment and arranging a private performance for me, where I will grade the student as though it was a playing test. Any child with an unexcused absence will not be afforded this opportunity.

GRADING – Choir

Grading is determined by total points accumulated during a nine week grading period. The total points possible may vary from quarter to quarter.

<u>Category</u>	<u>total points</u>
-Performances (Participation in concerts, competitions etc.)	200 each performance
-In class vocal evaluation	50 each
-Folder checks	30 each
-Class assignments	10-50
-Class participation/behavior	200 twice a quarter

Performances:

Like games in team sports and productions for drama class, participation in concerts and competitions are a group effort. Unlike team sports, nobody sits on the bench!!! Every student is important and critical to the end result. When a student fails to attend, he/she lets the whole class down.

Students may lower their participation points by arriving late, being dressed inappropriately (out of uniform), or displaying inappropriate behavior during the concert.

If a student does not show up for a performance, he/she will receive 0 points toward his/her grade. Lack of transportation, lack of babysitter for a younger child, broken instrument, etc. are not legitimate reasons for not attending as we make every effort to give ample notice of concert dates.

If your child is ill, (vomiting, high temperature etc.) on the day of a performance, please contact me by phone or note before the concert if possible, and by the next school day at the latest, explaining the circumstances. In such a situation, the student will be allowed to make up the 100 point performance credit by arranging a private performance for me, where I will grade the student as though it were a vocal evaluation. Any child with an unexcused absence will not be afforded this opportunity.

Vocal Evaluation:

Vocal evaluations are necessary to evaluate whether or not students know their music. Usually once a quarter, students will be paired up (by their choice) with at least one other person and sing through sections of their music. They will be graded on learned aspects of the class (diction, projection, accuracy). They will NOT be given a grade on their individual voices, nor will they be graded against any other student. Each student is evaluated based on his/her individual progress.

Folder Checks:

Students are asked to bring their folders, music, and a pencil to every rehearsal. These items will be randomly checked throughout the year. Each item is worth ten points. Students will be given a folder at the start of the year. If a student finds his/her folder is falling apart, the student will have to replace it with a folder of their choice. Replacement folders will not be supplied. Students also must keep the music in good condition. If it is lost or damaged, the student may be asked to pay to have it replaced.

Class Assignments:

Most of the work in Choir is singing and other performance based efforts. On the rare occasion that a written assignment is given, it will usually be worth anywhere between 10 and 50 points. Most are between 10 and 20 points.

Class Participation and Behavior:

In Choir, this category is the most important. Participation (following directions, standing when supposed to, actively singing with the group, etc...) will be out of 100 points. Behavior during class will also be out of 100 points. These will be given once during progress reports, and again at the end of the term. No one is expected to be perfect, just to be respectful and active members of choir during rehearsals.

INSTRUMENT RENTAL:

The school owns a number of instruments which are offered for student rental. The choice of instruments is limited, so rental is on a first come first serve basis. The rental fee is \$35.00 for the entire school year. If this fee is a hardship for your family, please contact the building principal, Mr. Krevolin, and he will make arrangements according to your means. No school instruments will be given to a child until he/she has brought in a signed rental agreement, and payment. Please note that the student will be held responsible for any damage incurred to the instrument during the school year, and parents will be responsible for any needed repairs.

There are music stores in the area that have rental and/or purchase agreements available. Whenever possible, the school uses Michael Lang in Thomaston. Michael Lang services all of the school instruments and offers a weekly "pick up" and delivery at the school. The following lists just a few of the stores available:

Michael Lang Music Company
14 Park Street Suite 4
Thomaston, Ct. 06787
(860) 283-9342
www.langemusic.com

The Music Shop
14 McDermott Ave.
Torrington, Ct 06790
(860) 482-9047

George's Music
905 New Harwinton Rd (Rt 4)
Torrington, Ct 06790
(860) 496-9362
www.georgesmusiccenter.com

The Music Shop
405 Queen Str
Southington, Ct 06489
(860)628-9690

Valley Music
176 W. Main St. (R. 44)
Avon, Ct. 06001
(860) 678-9250

Music & Arts Centers
315 W. Main St
Avon, Ct 06001
(860) 674-9547
www.MusicArts.com

Beyer Music
449 Main St
Torrington Ct. 06790
(860)- 496-1289

The other option for purchase would be through local pawn shops, want ads in the paper and e-bay. Please be cautious if you purchase an instrument through e-bay. I have witnessed some very good deals and as well as some really bad ones. I am quite willing to check over an instrument before you purchase.

◆ A school rental agreement is included in this handbook.

PROGRAM AND PERFORMANCE OPPORTUNITIES:

Winter and Spring Concerts:

The winter and spring concerts offer the opportunity for students to showcase their progress to parents, friends and the community. The concerts encourage students to share their ability with others and instill school and community pride. Both concerts take place in the Gilbert High School Auditorium and are scheduled for 7:00pm. Students are usually asked to report at 6:30 pm. Dress for both concerts will be white shirts, black pants, shoes and socks. **Participation is mandatory** for all Pearson band and chorus members.

Laurel City Concert:

The Laurel City Concert is a joint concert showcasing all of the vocal and instrumental music programs in the Winsted schools. It is impressive to listen to the progress students make from the elementary programs through middle school and finally high school. It also encourages younger students to continue with the programs when they hear the older groups perform. The concert is usually in late spring and takes place at either the Gilbert High School gym or the Pearson Middle School gym. Dress for Pearson students is the standard "concert" attire; white shirts, black pants, shoes and socks. **Participation** for Pearson students is **mandatory**.

Parades (Band students only):

Parades allow the students to present themselves to the wider community. They are especially important for building school and community pride. The band will be marching in two parades in the late spring.

The first is the annual **Pet Parade** which is usually the third Saturday in May at 2:00pm. Students are asked to report to the staging area by 1:15 pm.

The second parade is only a few weeks later and is the annual **Memorial Day Parade**. It is scheduled for Monday morning of Memorial Day weekend. Again students report to the staging area 45 minutes ahead of the start of the parade.

Dress for both parades will be Music Department shirts and nice blue jeans. All shirts must be tucked in! Depending on the weather, students may wear long pants, shorts or capris. (NO short shorts, saggy baggies and or dirty, holey jeans please!)

Participation is mandatory for all Pearson band members.

Gilbert Football Game (Band students only):

Every fall the 7th and 8th grade band members are invited to kick off a Gilbert Saturday football game by performing the Star Spangled Banner. This gives our Pearson students the opportunity to observe the Gilbert band, student body and football team and encourages their interest in the high school band program. Pearson students perform from the stands and parents are welcome to come and cheer for us. Arrival time is about 45 minutes ahead "kick off" and Pearson students are encouraged to stay until after the Gilbert band performs their half time show. This is **not a mandatory performance**, but I strongly encourage every 7th & 8th grade student to participate in this fun activity.

Band Beads:

Band beads are fun to collect and show off and help build a sense of community and pride within the band. Each student will be supplied with one strip of leather or string to start his/her collection. After every performance a student will receive a specific color or type of bead and by the end of their eighth grade students should have quite a collection. Some students choose to wear their collection as a necklace or bracelet. Others choose to attach them to their purse, book bag, instrument case, or even their instrument. If your child performs somewhere outside of the school setting, (church, nursing home, family reunion etc.) please send a signed note confirming their performance so that they can receive a bead in recognition of their effort. *Lost beads will only be replaced one time after which they will need to start their collection from scratch.

CONTEST OPPORTUNITIES:

Music competition combined with amusement park visit

Northern Regional Honor Band through Connecticut Music educators Association

Music Competition with amusement park visit:

Many of you may remember that in the spring of 2007 the Pearson band participated in a competition through the "trills and Thrills" organization. It involved every band member from grades 6th - 8th and ended with a visit to Six Flags New England. The band did very well, receiving an "excellent" rating and everyone involved seemed to have a great time. However, because of various problems, the band did not participate in the competition in the spring of 2008.

Hopefully this year we will again participate in such an event. If we do, it will probably be sometime in the late spring. Please realize that there are many variables involved in the success of such an event, from student preparation to the availability of parental chaperones. Our group has almost double in size since 2007 and we are minus one instrumental director, so extra help will be needed at every turn. We will keep you notified of developments through the Pearson web site/music dept. and flyers sent home with your child.

Northern Regional Honor Band:

Through an audition process the Northern regional Honor Band &/or Jazz band is made up of the "best" middle school musicians found in Northwestern Connecticut.

Participation in the audition process is encouraged for outstanding 6th, 7th and 8th grade students wishing to improve and challenge their playing ability.

The 2009 auditions are scheduled for Saturday, January 10th 2009 from 9:00 am - 2:00 pm at King Philip Middle School in West Hartford. Auditions are heard on a "first come first serve" basis, so waiting times vary in length.

Naturally I as their teacher will be present during the audition process, (even though I can't enter the audition room with the student), and depending on the number of Pearson applicants, parents' will be needed to help carpool students to and from the auditions. In the past the audition fee has been \$7.00 which helps defray cost toward judges fees and audition site. If the fee is a hardship for you family, please contact our principal, Mr. Krevolin.

If your child is interested in auditioning, he/she should contact me and request an audition packet containing an audition form, and the required music for their specific instrument. The **form and fee** must be returned to me **by December 1st 2008**. Because the audition requirements are quite difficult I request participating students to meet with me for private lessons at least three times in order to guide their preparation and progress. Another option would be a private teacher within the community.

If your child is fortunate enough to be selected for the Honor Concert Band or Honor Jazz Band, he/she will receive a packet of music to prepare. Participation will require a one and a half day commitment. This years **rehearsal and performance dates are Friday, March 5th and Saturday March 6th 2009 at Lewis Mills High School**. The rehearsals normally start on Friday afternoon from 3:00 - 8:00 pm and continue on Saturday from 9:00 am until performance time in the afternoon. The required dress for the concert is white shirts, black pants, and black shoes. I will be in attendance and available to our students throughout the rehearsals and performance.

I hope this answers most of your questions and concerns. Feel free to contact me through the school for any audition questions.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Schroeder and Ms. Treggor

See Mrs. Schroeder if your child is interested in trying out for one of the Northern Regional bands. Some information can be found at the Connecticut Music Educators Association web site at cmea.org