

The Pearson Instrumental Music Department

Welcome to the Pearson Middle School Music Program! My name is Mrs. Schroeder and I will be your child's teacher if he/she is enrolled in 7th or 8th grade instrumental music classes for the 2009 - 2010 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)

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, instrumental techniques, and musical interpretation.
 - Provide opportunities and challenges for students at all levels and abilities.
- 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 styles

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 and 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. **Students are to fill in a weekly practice chart 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!
- ◆ **Consequences:**
 - Please note that participation in the Pearson band program should be considered an honor and a privilege. Since it is not a state mandated class, any student who repeatedly displays poor behavior 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
-Practice chart	10 pts per week
-Class participation	5 pts per class

Class Participation:

Students gain 5 points per class for participation. Students lose points if they are late to class, forget their instrument, book or music, pester other students, refuse to play, etc.

Practice Chart:

Every student is expected to turn in a weekly practice chart. Practice charts are due each Monday so the practice week begins on Tuesday and runs through the following Sunday evening. A practice chart 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 are to place their chart in the appropriate envelope posted on the music office door. .

Breakfast Club:

If it is inconvenient for a child to practice at home, they can practice at school before or after the school day and during Thursday's activity period. 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 count it toward the Breakfast Club. I strive to be at school in the morning by 7:15 am and plan to stay until 2:45pm in the afternoons. *Please note that Breakfast Club members are still responsible for keeping records and turning in their weekly practice chart.

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 violently 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.

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. I highly recommend the Music & Arts Center in Avon and The Music Shop in Torrington. The Music & Arts Center services all of the school instruments and offers a weekly "pick up" and delivery at the school every Monday. The turn around time for instrument repairs should be one week. 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

Aschen Musical Instrument Repair
Torrington, CT
860 689 5709
amirepair@optonline.net

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 can be found on the following page.

PROGRAM AND PERFORMANCE OPPORTUNITIES:

Winter Concert and Spring/Laurel City Concert:

The winter and spring/Laurel City 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 members.

Spring/Laurel City Concert:

Because so many people in the community voiced disappointment when we were unable to present the Laurel City concert in the spring of 2009, we hope make sure that it is offered in the spring of 2010. The Laurel City Concert is a joint concert showcasing all of the vocal and instrumental music programs in the Winsted schools and will replace the annual Pearson Spring Concert. It is impressive to listen to the progress students make from the elementary through middle school and finally high school programs. 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 the Gilbert High School gym.

Parades:

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:

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, 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:

Band competition combined with amusement park visit

Northern Regional Honor Band through Connecticut Music educators Association

Band Competition with amusement park visit:

Twice now a Pearson band has successfully participated in the Trills and Thrills Festival. Trills and Thrills is a festival/competition held at various Connecticut schools during the month of May and early June. After the festival/competition the band members then attend a theme park. The first time a Pearson band participated in the spring of 2007 the band received a rating of "Excellent" and attended the Six Flags theme park. The second time, in the spring of 2009 Pearson Honor band received the highest possible rating of "Superior" and attended Lake Compounce amusement park. Hopefully this year we will again participate in such an event. Please realize that there are many variables involved in the success of such an endeavor from student preparation, collection of fees and permission slips, to adequate parental chaperones. I will keep you notified of developments through the Pearson web site/music dept. and flyers sent home with you 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 2010 auditions are scheduled for Saturday, January 9th, 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' may 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 2009**. 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, Orchestra or Honor Jazz Band, he/she will receive a packet of music to prepare. Participation will require a one and a half day commitment. **Rehearsals and performances will be at Har Bur Middle School in Burlington. This years rehearsal dates are Friday, March 6th from 3:30 pm – 8:30 pm and Saturday March 7th from 9:00 am – 2:00 pm, immediately followed by the band and orchestra concert at 4:00 pm.** 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

IA list of the tryout requirements can be found at the Connecticut Music Educators Association web site at cmea.org

