



MEMBER'S  
HANDBOOK  
FOR  
INSTRUMENTAL  
MUSIC  
2009-2010

# ***POLICY STATEMENT*** ***for performing ensembles***

**Wind Ensemble, Symphonic Band, Advanced Percussion Ensemble,  
Combined Chamber Orchestra I & II, and the Eubie Blake Jazz Ensemble**

These rules and procedures are essential for the smooth and efficient operation of a class that has QUALITY PUBLIC PERFORMANCES as a primary objective. Students that use these guidelines as a means of insuring their own personal success as well as the success of the organization as a whole will gain much from the QUALITY music education that James Hubert Blake High School offers.

## ***COURSE OBJECTIVES***

### **Wind Ensemble, Symphonic Band and Percussion Ensembles**

At the conclusion of the course, students will be able to:

- Perform from memory all major scales up to 4 #’s and 4 b’s.
- Improve their ensemble skills
- Improve their individual playing skills one MBDA grade per year.
- Improve their sight-reading skills
- Have increased understandings of aesthetic considerations of various historical and musical styles

### **Chamber Orchestra I & II**

At the conclusion of the course, students will be able to:

- Perform from memory all major scales up to 4 #’s and 4 b’s.
- Perform the following Bow articulations: legato, martele, detache, staccato, spiccato, flying spiccato.
- Improve their Ensemble playing skills.
- Improve their individual playing skills one MODA Grade
- Have increased understandings of aesthetic considerations of various historical and musical styles.

## **Eubie Blake Jazz Ensemble**

At the conclusion of the course, students will be able to:

- Play in a variety of Jazz styles: Swing, Fusion, Latin, Funk, etc.
- Improvise on a blues progression as well as basic progressions in specific keys.
- Perform on increasingly more challenging levels – improve at least one-half IAJE grade each year until the level of 5+ is reached.
- Discriminate between historical styles and understand Jazz's role in 20th Century American Society.

## ***Grading Policies for Performing Ensembles (changed as per the new MCPS Grading Policy)***

### **10% of the Grade (Homework): Daily Progress**

Is the student present, prepared for the rehearsal with required materials, and is focused on the learning objectives for each rehearsal and performance? A grade is given everyday during the school rehearsal.

### **40% of the Grade (Summative): Musical Standard Achievement**

Is the student increasing in musical ability and maintaining the standards set forth by the class objectives? Formal and informal mastery objective (musical playing tests) will be given throughout the marking period, as well as ensemble development grades.

### **50% of the Grade (Formative): Performances**

Is the student on-time, dressed accordingly, and performing at his/her best ability? Missing a required performance will adversely affect the individual student's grade. Parent's please ensure the student is at all performances.

# ***EXPECTATIONS:***

**Students that participate in any of the instrumental music ensembles at Blake must agree and meet the following expectations in order to receive a high grade and continue involvement within that group.**

**Students will be expected to...**

- arrive to class/rehearsal **on time**
- Students have **three minutes** from the official time that class begins to prepare their music, instrument, and equipment for instruction. Tardy and absent students will be handled in a manner consistent with school-wide policy.
- have their instrument **EVERY DAY for EVERY rehearsal.**
- have a **pencil and TUNER** at every rehearsal
- have their **own individual copy of the music** every day. Students are not to rely on their stand partner to bring their music.
- NO student is allowed use of the Director's PHONE or OFFICE work area without specific permission.
- **ALL food and drink (and GUM!)** must be consumed OUTSIDE the Band Room except during special occasions.
- **be ready** to rehearse at the time the conductor steps onto the podium and calls for attention to begin rehearsal.
- be **SILENT** when the conductor is on the podium. All ensembles are expected to rehearse in a professional manner. Time spent waiting for individuals to get back "on task" is wasteful of precious rehearsal time. Focus is then unnecessarily directed toward issues other than music.
- **attend ALL scheduled performances** of the ensemble(s) to which they belong.
- keep all homework, books, and other distractions **PUT AWAY** during rehearsal.
- **practice the music** to the point of complete competency. If necessary, difficult parts are to be worked out with the music teachers by appointment or with the student's private teacher. Students may request sound files on tape at increasingly faster tempos to assist them with parts that are particularly problematic.
- keep their areas around their seats CLEAN, and not leave reeds, paper, tissues, etc. lying around.

- PERCUSSIONISTS are to **PUT EVERYTHING** away. Its a MUTUAL responsibility
- keep their **instrument in a cubby** WITH A LOCK. The teaching staff assumes NO responsibility for any instrument not locked securely in a cubby. If necessary, the staff will provide the student with a lock, particularly for school-owned instruments.
- If an instrument is being repaired, a **dated receipt** from the repair shop must be presented to the Director after the instrument is repaired for restoration of credit.
- **participate in musical life outside of school.**
- to **TAKE PRIDE** in their own accomplishments and progress and in the accomplishments of their peers, and their ensembles.
- Private Lessons are encouraged for all students. Private lessons are an excellent way to gain a **HIGH LEVEL** of proficiency on a musical instrument.
- BAND AND ORCHESTRA are **performance-oriented activities.** Public performances are considered EXAMINATIONS. If you are excused from a performance FOR ANY REASON, YOU MUST MAKE-UP the missing grade by performing your music for the Director in private for a grade after or before school or by appointment. Any performance NOT made-up after 5 school days in this manner will receive 0 credits for that performance. Grading of all performances is based on a 100% scale. (i.e. 2 concerts in a quarter where one is missed unexcused will result in a grade of 50%, or E for the performance component of a student's grade.)

**Students who live up to these expectations can expect in return, a hard and honest effort on their behalf by their instructors, good grades in the class, and in their Senior years, positive letters of recommendation to their prospective colleges, employers, or chosen branch of military service.**

**Students who DO NOT live up to these expectations can expect to be first reprimanded, their parent(s) advised of their negative behaviors, and then if necessary, ultimately removed from their ensemble and be offered a music class where their lack of serious effort will not negatively impact other students.**

# *ASSESSMENT IN MUSIC*

To ensure the goals of the class are met quality public performances, and the development of individual musicianship; students will be assessed both formally and informally throughout the year. Examples of informal assessment will be daily ensemble development, while examples of formal assessment include concerts, performances, and playing exams. Assessments will be based on the National Standards for Music Education and Montgomery County Policies on Art and Music.

Scoring Rubric: Grades are awarded on the following levels:

A = DEVELOPED

Excellent understanding of concepts and skills are demonstrated with consistency.

B = ADEQUATE

Good understanding of concepts while employing appropriate technical skills with few errors.

C = LIMITED

Somewhat characteristic understanding of concepts while skills may be present but contain numerous errors.

D = UNACCEPTABLE

No understanding of concepts or skill not yet apparent.

E = NO ATTEMPT OR ABSENT

Assessment will include the following concepts:

- MUSIC READING
  - Pitch Notation
  - Rhythmic Notation
  - Terms and Symbols
  - Memory Recall
- MUSICAL SKILLS
  - Rhythmic Accuracy
  - Pitch Recognition & Tonal Memory
  - Musicality and Style
- TECHNICAL SKILLS
  - Embouchure Formation
  - Proper Breathing Techniques
  - Tone Production
  - Proper Playing Position
  - Articulation
  - Fingerings/Slide Position
  - Bowings/Stickings

## ***SEATING AND CHALLENGES***

Once seating has been determined for any performing ensemble, students may challenge for a higher chair position. Challenges **MUST** be accepted or automatically forfeited. Once the challenger **AND** the challenged have **TOGETHER** brought the challenge to the attention of the Director, specific musical passages for “play-off” will be assigned and there will be a minimum of three school days allowed to complete the challenge “play-off”. This “play-off” shall be done live. Students will perform live in a secluded area where all students and the director(s) can listen. Challenges will be performed with as much anonymity as possible. Fellow ensemble members will then vote on who performed better. The director(s) do have **VETO** power after the votes have been tallied. All decisions become effective immediately. To re-challenge, the players must wait a minimum of three (3) regular rehearsals before the challenge is re-issued.\* **NO** challenges may be issued 10 days prior to of a major concert. Ties go to the challenged, and to win, the challenger must **CLEARLY** prove him/herself the superior player. If in the Director’s estimation there are extenuating circumstances necessary that part or all of the above must be precluded, he may make such a decision, but inform the students as to the reasoning behind such a decision.

\*After the 3rd challenge in any Semester, the challenged may request a three-week “relief” period from the Director.

## ***UNEXCUSED ABSENCES*** ***(READ THIS SECTION CAREFULLY)***

Unexcused Absences from concerts and performances cannot be made up. In any case, all required performances are either on the calendar included with this handbook, or are announced a minimum of 3 weeks in advance. **All requests for performance excusal must come in the form of a WRITTEN request from the student’s parent or legal guardian and must be in the Director’s office 14 calendar days before the date in question.**

### **Examples of UNEXCUSED absences:**

- Work/Job
- Sports outside of Blake Athletics. (Blake Athletic **CONTEST** conflicts are to be resolved between the Band Director and coach involved.)
- Clubs
- Did not complete homework
- Family vacations

## ***PRIVATE INSTRUCTION***

Private lessons are not required for any performing group, however, every student can benefit from the one-on-one experience of private instrument study. Because acceptance into the “higher” groups is most often by competitive audition, it is more often the students who have the advantage of private lessons who play better than those that do not and thus “win” the coveted chairs. There is a list of private teachers in our area on the music bulletin board for your perusal. It is recommended that parents interview several potential teachers before choosing the right one for your son/daughter.

## ***MARCHING BAND/PEP BAND POLICY***

EVERY WOODWIND, BRASS PLAYER, AND PERCUSSIONIST INVOLVED AT MUSIC IN BLAKE IS A WELCOME MEMBER OF THE ROARING BENGALS MARCHING BAND. Marching Band is an extracurricular activity and typically takes place during the first nine weeks quarter only, with a few community activities in the winter and spring. Marching Band is a volunteer activity which can greatly enhance your music experience while here at Blake. See the separate Marching Band Handbook for more information. Students who participate in marching band for at least one year will be eligible to audition for upper level ensembles and the Tri-M Music Honor Society

## ***CONCERT ATTIRE/UNIFORM POLICY***

### **CONCERT BAND**

- Men - TRUE White Oxford Shirt (LONG-SLEEVE)  
Long dark, conservative tie  
Black Slacks  
Black Socks  
Black DRESS shoes (Dinkles are fine)
- Women - TRUE White Blouse (LONG SLEEVE or 3/4 LENGTH)  
Black Skirt BELOW the knee  
(or) Black Slacks  
Black hose  
Black DRESS Shoes

### **SYMPHONIC WINDS & CHAMBER ORCHESTRA I & II**

- Men - Concert Tuxedo (issued)  
(blue/black bowtie, blue/black cummerbund, trousers, jacket, dress shoes/Dinkles)  
A WING-TIP COLLARED TUX SHIRT IS REQUIRED!  
All parts worn as a COMPLETE Ensemble

Women - Concert Gown (issued)  
Nude Hose  
BLACK DRESS SHOES ONLY !!!!!!!

### **PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE**

Everyone- Black dress pants, Black LONG-SLEEVE Oxford Shirt  
Black socks and black shoes

### **JAZZ ENSEMBLE**

Everyone - Formal concerts = Silver Vests/Bowties (issued)  
Black collared tux shirt  
Black Tux Pants/Skirts  
Black dress shoes  
Casual concerts = Blue Jazz Shirt  
Black dress pants and shoes

**ANY STUDENT NOT PROPERLY UNIFORMED, INCLUDING FOOTWEAR ,  
MAY BE PROHIBITED FROM PERFORMING AND THE CORRESPONDING  
GRADE WILL BE AWARDED!**

## **OTHER POLICIES**

### ***SCHOOL OWNED INSTRUMENTS***

Any student who is using an instrument which is property of Montgomery County Public Schools is required to complete a rental contract with parental signatures. The student is responsible for the instrument(s) in which he/she has borrowed from the school:

- Woodwind players please note: reeds are the financial responsibility of the student and not provided by the director.
- Damage above the normal wear and tear or loss of the instrument is the financial responsibility of the student.
- Students are responsible for the care and maintenance of the instrument while in their custody. Any repairs will be charged to the student/family.

**PERCUSSIONIST MUST ORDER AND OWN THEIR OWN STICKS AND MALLETS. SEE THE MR. EISING FOR MORE DETAILS!**

## ***STUDENT SERVICE LEARNING HOURS***

Each member of an ensemble will receive Student Service Learning Hours each year for their participation at certain activities, such as: football games, community parades, community concerts, pit orchestra for the musical, and more. Due to MCPS policy changes, please be flexible on hours awarded.

## ***FUNDRAISING***

Having exciting and progressive musical experience does cost money. Blake High School has been growing each year, and so has the instrumental music department. So far there are 50 musicians in Wind Ensemble, 70 in Concert Band, 60 in the Chamber Orchestra, 25 in the Percussion Ensembles, and 25 in Jazz Ensemble. We need to raise money for new tuxedos, gowns, instruments and other equipment. Please be prepared to participate fully in all fundraising activities as it is vital in our success. Some fundraisers will benefit the student individually when it comes to department trips, while other activities will benefit the entire department. Parents are also asked to get involved and volunteer for many activities. In addition, donations to our “Be Instrumental” Program are also welcome!

## ***TRI-M MUSIC HONOR SOCIETY***

The Tri-M Music Honor Society is the international music honor society for high school students that motivates and recognizes musical achievement. Founded in 1936 by Alexander and Frances Harley, incorporated and renamed Modern Music Masters in 1952, and in 1983 recognized as the Tri-M Music Honor Society, a program of MENC (Music Educators National Conference), Tri-M has helped young people provide years of service through music in thousands of schools throughout the world. Through more than 4,100 chartered chapters, thousands of students have received recognition for their efforts and honor for their musical accomplishments. Tri-M shares and supports the objectives of every dedicated music educator—to increase student and school involvement with music and to strengthen and unify the school music program. Tri-M offers a complete system of rewards that help motivate effort and recognize excellence in individuals and chapters. With this system, the society builds self-esteem and provides a channel of personal fulfillment. Individuals involved in Tri-M will help with concerts, recruitment, public service, and festival hosting. Interested students are selected based upon the following criteria:

Music Participation  
Leadership

Grades/Scholarship  
Service

Musical Performance  
Character

If interested in joining this outstanding organization, see the director of your ensemble for application materials. Graduating seniors will receive the Tri-M tassel to wear at the graduation ceremony in celebration of your devotion to music and our school.

## ***AWARDS AND CERTIFICATES***

Every year, we host an annual Music Awards Banquet in May to celebrate a great year in music. Attendance at this banquet is expected. More details will be available later on during the fourth quarter nine weeks.

Participation certificates are awarded to every student each year while being a member of a Blake music ensemble. Students in a performing music ensemble all years while being a Blake student will receive a special Varsity Music Letter and pins upon completion of their senior year.

Other medals and special awards will be given to students who go above and beyond the normal classroom participation. Some examples of those awards include:

Leadership Soloist Award Volunteer Award  
Tri-M Honor Musicianship John Philip Sousa Award  
Fillmore Award Orchestra Award Louis Armstrong Jazz Award

Students participating in Marching Band or the Bengal Guard will be eligible for Varsity Letters and pins each year of participation.

## ***VISIT YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD MUSIC STORES FOR ANY EQUIPMENT, MUSIC, INSTRUMENTS, LESSONS, REPAIR, OR ACCESSORIES YOU MIGHT NEED:***

**Chuck Levin's Washington Music**  
11151 Veirs Mill Road  
Wheaton, MD 20902  
301-946-8808  
[www.washingtonmusic.com](http://www.washingtonmusic.com)

**Music & Arts Centers**  
11200 Scaggsville Road  
Laurel, MD 20723  
240-568-0600  
[www.musicarts.com](http://www.musicarts.com)

**Dale Music Company**  
8240 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD 20910  
301-589-1459  
[www.dalemusic.com](http://www.dalemusic.com)

**12274 K Federal Plaza**  
Rockville, MD 20852  
301-881-6440  
[www.musicarts.com](http://www.musicarts.com)

**Potter's Violin**  
4706 Highland Avenue  
Bethesda, MD 20814  
301-652-7070  
[www.pottersviolins.com](http://www.pottersviolins.com)

