

Instrumental Music Handbook

2010-11

Course Descriptions and Goals

The members of the Bethany Christian Schools instrumental music program have elected to participate in school ensembles. By choosing to participate, the student makes the commitment to demonstrate behavior, attitude, and skills that contribute to the continued excellence of the group, as well as his/her personal growth. Students are expected to put forth their best effort each day, because they have made a commitment to the development of the group and themselves.

The instrumental music program has two qualified teachers. Mrs. Slagel is responsible for overall programming and also focuses on wind instrument and percussion instruction. Mr. Bennett leads strings group lessons and assists with the instrumental program in many other capacities. Feel free to contact either teacher with any questions or concerns you have regarding the instrumental music program.

Instrumental Ensembles

Beginning Instruments

The Beginning Instruments course is for all students in grade 6 wanting to learn to play a woodwind, brass, or percussion instrument. Students are introduced to the range of instruments available for study. After acquiring an instrument, the course begins with learning how to put together the instrument and produce a sound. It continues to develop skills in a sequential fashion. The course focuses on playing the instrument and basic skills in music literacy. Students are encouraged to develop individual playing skills alongside their ensemble participation.

Middle School Orchestra

The Middle School Orchestra program is for students who have had at least one year of experience with their instrument. Middle School Orchestra combines strings, woodwinds, brass, and percussion instruments into a performance ensemble. Students explore a variety of musical styles. The ensemble demonstrates course outcomes through specific pieces performed at the Christmas and spring concerts. Course content is concentrated around string Orchestra and wind band performance with some combined material.

High School Orchestra

The High School Orchestra is a performance-based ensemble that includes string, woodwind, brass, and percussion instruments. Students in grades 9-12 rehearse and perform various styles and levels of music. In addition to school concerts in the fall, at Christmas and in the spring, the Orchestra participates in the Midwest Regional Mennonite Orchestra Festival each spring.

1. We want to continue to grow our orchestra program over the four years that students are eligible for the class. Instead of taking the same year of orchestra four times, we'd like students to have four years of unique instruction.

2. We want to continue to improve the excellence of the orchestra to have the best performing ensemble we can have.
3. We want to improve the excellence of individual players in the orchestra so that every student becomes the best player he or she can be.
4. We would like to teach more of the state standards for music, which will give students a broader musical education that will last a lifetime.

The orchestra uses a four-year curriculum based on four eras of music, one each year. In the first year, for example, Baroque music will be the focus of the year. Each concert will have at least two pieces of Baroque music. Music from other eras will also be selected to add variety. For the first concert, the fundamentals will be emphasized (rhythm, melody, theme, harmony, texture, timbre, and tone). For the second concert, form will be emphasized, and so on as shown in the table. This model does not mean that other concepts or repertoire aren't covered, but that there is more specific focus on the historical era and the musical concepts in the model. Extra time will be spent on projects, class activities, and special studies on the era and concept.

4-year curriculum model	<i>Year 1 Baroque</i>	<i>Year 2 Classical</i>	<i>Year 3 Romantic</i>	<i>Year 4 Contemporary</i>
<i>Fall concert</i>	Fundamentals	Fundamentals	Fundamentals	Fundamentals
<i>Christmas concert</i>	Form	Form	Form	Form
<i>Festival concert</i>	Expression	Expression	Expression	Expression
<i>Spring concert</i>	Style	Style	Style	Style

All members of the Orchestra are expected to participate in a small ensemble. The director will assist in putting together ensembles based on a survey of members. Rehearsal time of ensembles will be a mixture of in-class time and time outside the school day, depending on the needs of the individual members.

Some ensembles will have very high expectations and standards of excellence. These ensembles will participate in church itineration, perform at school music programs, represent the Orchestra at school functions (as requested) and represent the school at community functions (as requested). These ensembles will also compete in District Solo/Ensemble contest at the Group I level and potentially at the State contest. These ensembles will likely need extensive rehearsal time outside of class.

Other ensembles will be for individual development and fun among members. These ensembles may or may not perform publicly or at the District Solo/Ensemble contest, depending on the wishes of the members.

Bruin Jazz

Jazz Ensemble (*Bruin Jazz*) introduces students to a uniquely American style of music. Students are given opportunities to experiment with various forms of jazz music including ragtime, Dixieland, big band, swing, bebop, cool jazz and Latin jazz styles. Opportunities will be presented for written and improvisational solos. Bruin Jazz also participates in the Orchestra festival each spring.

The ensemble rehearses on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings at 7:00 – 7:40.

Goals of the Orchestra Program

The Orchestra program is open to all students demonstrating the desire, ability, and proper attitude to be a member of the group.

1. Students will understand music as a gift of God and be able to use musical experiences in ways that honor God, both in worship and in performance.
2. Students will participate in the performance of music and learn the skills of playing an instrument, which will result in a sense of accomplishment.
3. Students will attain a mastery of the instrument and feel the satisfaction of achieving something worthwhile through concentrated effort.
4. Students will sense their natural creative abilities and be provided an avenue of self-expression.
5. Students will learn to identify and authentically perform the musical styles that developed throughout history and in different cultures.
6. Students will develop attitudes and abilities that will enable them to continue participating in musical experiences throughout life.

Grading Policies

MS Orchestra Grading

30% -- *Weekly Musicianship Assessment.* Playing tests, rehearsal preparation, participation, pop quizzes, sight-reading drills, tidiness in your space.

20% -- *Written Assignments.* Written class work, homework assignments, written quizzes, forms/permission slips, practice sheets.

30% -- *Performances.* Student performance, assigned solos, following logistical directions.

20% -- *Life Skills.* Being on time, respectful, proper rehearsal behavior.

HS Grading

Technical Proficiency and Improvement (50%)

20% -- *Ensemble playing.* Graded during the class period.

20% -- *Technical proficiency.* Playing tests from assigned orchestra pieces.

10% -- *Rehearsal contribution.* Attendance, attention, peer assessment and participation.

Critical Listening (20%)

10% -- *Self-assessment of recorded excerpts.* Assessment sheets will be provided to listen to recordings of your own playing. Complete sentences and legible writing is required.

10% -- *Performance critique following our concert.* Takes place during rehearsal. Graded on completeness, use of appropriate musical terminology, and observable analytical skills.

Two Projects (30%)

Select two of the following projects: (15% per project)

- Private study
 - Study a solo during the quarter for performance at contest or a recital (Self-assessment and reflection are required for grade.)
 - Private study of your instrument with a qualified private teacher.
 - Private study of student conducting with the orchestra teacher. Conduct a piece at a concert. (Self-evaluation and reflection are required for credit.)
 - Private study of theories of teaching and teaching of three private lessons at the middle school. Documentation of lessons and reflection are required for credit.
 - Weekly practice sheet (six total), including written details for fundamentals, etudes, practice techniques, and repertoire.

- Participation in ensembles (Self-assessment and reflection are required for grade.)
 - Participation and study of jazz through participation in a jazz ensemble.
 - Participate in a chamber ensemble for performance at contest.
 - Participation in All-state Orchestra or Youth Honors Orchestra

- Research:
 - Write a research paper using as a theme one of the styles of music we are playing in orchestra, a composer of one of the pieces we are playing, your instrument, or a selected topic as approved by the orchestra teacher. Minimum of two typed pages and one bibliography page, double-spaced, Garamond font, size 12. Appropriate footnote style, grammar, and spelling. Must use peer-reviewed sources (no wikipedia).
 - Write a letter to one of our music's publishers, composers, or arrangers. Ask any questions that you may have about the music industry, composing music, or the music we are actually playing. Present a copy of the letter to your orchestra teacher.
 - Write one or two paragraphs about any of the pieces we are studying to be read at the concert. These must be concise, but interesting, paragraphs including pertinent information about the piece.

- Community Service – play in church, at a senior center, in a Sunday School class (for children or adults). Documentation and written reflection required.

- Compose a piece of music – jazz, instrumental, piano, or computer. You may use available computer programs such as Garage Band, or Finale. Final product in the form of printed music, digital recording, or CD recording.

Classroom Expectations

Class behavior

Orchestra is a fun class. We have time to interact with each other and to make music together. However, if we do not have a few simple rules, we will not be able to function as a useful class. The classroom rules are as follows:

1. Do not distract others (includes plucking).

2. Raise your hand and wait for permission to speak.
3. Play **only** your own instrument.
4. No gum, food or pop in the classroom.
5. GO ABOVE AND BEYOND

Classroom Discipline

Consequences

If students do not follow the expectations for the classroom, consequences will be as follows for reoccurrences.

1. Name on board (Middle School) or in checkbook (High School). This is a warning and a point reduction.
2. Checkmark on board or in checkbook next to name and a point reduction. Student will be requested to stay after class.
3. Student will be sent to the hallway and a report made to the assistant principal. Contact will be made with parents.

Attendance Policy

Students receive 5 points per week for participation. An unexcused absence from class results in a *drop in grade by 1/3 of a letter grade per school policy.*

Students who forget music, instrument, pencil or other required equipment will have a 2 point reduction in grade for each incident.

Tardy Policy

Students are given one extra minute in addition to the regular passing period. One minute following the tardy bell, students must be **in their seat**, not just in the room, in order to avoid a tardy. Each student will receive 4 Orchestra passes to be used during the semester for excusing tardies, retrieval of music, pencil, rosin, bathroom, drink, etc.

Unexcused tardies will result in a 1-point deduction per week for each occurrence during the week.

Section Leadership

Leadership is an important part of being in an ensemble. Section leaders are chosen to help lead sectionals and demonstrate proper playing technique, posture and to assist other students in understanding classroom instruction. Section leaders are included in the school's Leadership Development Program. Section leaders will be selected on the following criteria (in priority order).

Leadership skills – the student must be able to focus in class and stay attuned to classroom activities at all times. The student must have the ability to coordinate a sectional practice and either lead it successfully, or assign leadership to another member of the section. The student must be able to ensure that the sectional practice is spent productively.

Musicianship – the student displays, through a playing test, the following musical attributes: tone, rhythm, pitch accuracy, posture and expression.

Participation – the student participates in music activities throughout the school, including Bruin Jazz, choir, solo/ensemble events and other music courses. The student demonstrates through participation that music is a priority for him/her.

Private lessons – the student takes private instruction in his or her instrument.

Seniority – if all other aspects are equal, section leader will be given to the student with the most seniority in the orchestra. Seniority means the student is either an older class (senior, junior, etc.), or older student (if in the same class), or has been involved in orchestra longer (has not missed any semesters of orchestra).

Supplies

Instruments and Accessories

- Instrument in good playing condition
- Cleaning cloth
- Instrument care kit (you can purchase these at Blessings or Woodwind & Brasswind)
- Pocket folder
- Pencil with eraser
- Resource book provided by director

Optional items are:

- Mute
- Electronic tuner
- Metronome (for personal practice)
- Folding music stand (for home practice)

School Instruments

There are a few school instruments available for use. These are larger or more expensive instruments. Students may **not** use a school-owned instrument without prior approval of the teacher. We do not rent our school instruments.

Use and Care of Music and Folders

Printed music is the textbook of the Orchestra program. It is also a major expense for the school. A five-minute composition averages in cost between \$50 - \$100 each. Lengthier compositions and rented music can be even more costly. All sheet music is provided to students free of charge. However, if music is lost or is damaged, there will be a charge of \$0.25 to replace the music. To avoid charges for lost or damaged music, students must take care of all assigned music. Lost or mutilated folders will cost \$25.00.

- Do not fold, tear or otherwise mutilate music.
- Do not make excessive marks on music.
- Do not draw pictures or write notes on music.
- Use only black lead pencil on music.

Uniform and Dress Code

The Orchestra has adopted a standardized uniform. No individual musician should stand out from the other musicians or distract the audience's attention away from the music. Musicians who appear on stage out of dress code create distractions.

It is a matter of group support, which is pertinent and integral towards successful orchestral performances, for musicians to present themselves in a manner of professionalism, unity and dignity. For this reason, and out of the respect for each other, the audience and, when applicable, performance adjudicators, the orchestra dress code will be strictly enforced.

High School Dress Code

Men: White long-sleeved, collared shirt or white tuxedo shirt, dark tie, black dress pants, black socks, single-tone black hard-soled dress shoes.

Women: Black dress blouse, long or short sleeved (no sleeveless), black dress slacks or long black skirt (below knee length), black hose or socks, closed black hard-soled dress shoes. A black dress is also acceptable, provided it has sleeves (long or short) and is below knee length.

Acceptable Jewelry: Stud earrings only, fine or thin necklace with a single pendant, only one fine/thin precious metal bracelet. Cuff links for men's shirt is acceptable.

Unacceptable Jewelry: Watches, large dangling or hooped earrings of any size, large flashy jewelry, multiple items of jewelry affixed to a single location, single or multiple plastic tube bracelets, hose or socks with visible holes.

Unacceptable items: Flip flops, two-toned shoes, white socks, sneakers (including black sneakers), combat boots, bright or multi-toned shoestrings, black jeans or corduroy pants. Anything that does not meet normal school dress code standards is also unacceptable.

Middle School Dress Code

Men and Women: Polo shirt purchased through the school, black pants (dress pants, black twills, or black corduroys), black socks, single-tone black hard-soled dress shoes. If women so desire, they can substitute a long black skirt (below knee length), black hose or socks, closed black hard-soled dress shoes.

Acceptable Jewelry: Stud earrings only, fine or thin necklace with a single pendant, only one fine/thin precious metal bracelet.

Unacceptable Jewelry: Watches, large dangling or hooped earrings of any size, large flashy jewelry, multiple items of jewelry affixed to a single location, single or multiple plastic tube bracelets, hose or socks with visible holes.

Unacceptable items: Flip flops, two-toned shoes, white socks, sneakers (including black sneakers), combat boots, bright or multi-toned shoestrings, or black jeans. Anything that does not meet normal school dress code standards is also unacceptable.

Performing opportunities

School events (required)

This is a list of known school events. If other opportunities arise, they will be presented to the class for review and decided upon together. Examples in the past include competitions, First Fridays, banquets, fund-raisers and church events.

October 22	Fall Instrumental Concert (HS Orchestra and Bruin Jazz)
November 30	MS Christmas Concert
December 10	HS Christmas Concert
March 12	IMEA Festival at Northridge
March 18 – 20	HS Orchestra Festival in Ohio
April 29	Bruin Jazz Coffeehouse
May 13	HS Spring Concert
May 17	MS Spring Concert
May 26	Commencement Rehearsal (8 – 11 grade students)
May 29	Commencement (8 – 11 grade students)

Other opportunities

ISSMA Solo & Ensemble Contest

January 29 – District Vocal/Piano Solo/Ensemble Contest

February 5 – District Instrumental Solo/Ensemble Contest

Youth Honors Orchestra

The "Youth Honors Orchestra" (YHO) is a full Orchestra (strings, winds, brass, percussion) made up of students from area high schools and sponsored by the Elkhart County Symphony Orchestra Association. The Orchestra rehearses at the Goshen College Music Center and Concord High School on Saturdays mornings (generally from 10:00 - noon) and performs in Elkhart venues and the Music Center's Sauder Concert Hall several times during the year. Tuition is approximately \$50 per term. If you have interest or questions, contact director Brian Wiebe at (574) 849-7173.

Private lessons

Private lessons are strongly encouraged. Many private teachers come to Bethany to give lessons during the school day during study hall or Orchestra class period. Mrs. Slagel has a list of available teachers. Please see her if you are interested in private lessons at school.

All-State Ensembles

Students are encouraged to consider participation in a number of different All-State Ensembles including band, orchestra, jazz, and percussion ensembles. Participation is by audition. Audition materials and information can be found at the www.imeamusic.org website or by contacting Mrs. Slagel. These ensembles perform at the IMEA (Indiana Music Educator's Association) which is January 20 – 22, 2011 at the Grand Wayne Convention Center in Fort Wayne.

Parental Involvement

You are as much a part of the school music program as your children are. Without your support and encouragement, the music program will not thrive. We highly value the assistance of parents in a variety of voluntary positions including music librarian, concert coordinator, sectional leader, and fund-raising. We especially value the encouragement you provide to your children at home as they practice, learn and grow.

You can also support the music program by being a part of the Fine Arts Action Group. More information will be given about the Action Group at the BCS Kick-Off Event on August 16, 2010, at the school. Please consider working with our young students.

Benefits

For the student, music participation enhances problem solving, goal-setting, physical coordination, self-confidence and esteem, poise, teamwork, self-expression, memory skills, concentration and much more.

For the family, music participation offers opportunities for shared family experiences, including musical event attendance, family music making, performing for and with family and friends, learning about the lives of composers and the cultural heritage of many civilizations. Music yields a sense of accomplishment and pride for the entire family.

Practice Time

Music achievement requires effort over a period of time. The time in Orchestra rehearsal is limited. New concepts learned at school need daily personal practice time by your child at home in order for these new skills to be developed. A few minutes each day is better than many minutes on one day. Encourage your child to practice at least 15 minutes each day. Grades for practice reflect the importance of daily practice. You can help your child by:

- Providing a quiet place in which to practice
- Remaining nearby during practice times as often as possible
- Scheduling a consistent daily time for practice
- Praising your child's efforts and achievements

Support

To give your child the best possible support, you can:

- Remind your child to bring their instrument and music to Orchestra class
- Encourage your child to play for family and friends and in church
- Offer compliments and encouragement regularly
- Expose your child to a wide variety of music, including concerts and recitals
- Encourage your child to talk with you about classes
- Make sure your child's instrument is always well maintained
- Listen to your child practice, and acknowledge improvement
- Help your child build a personal music library
- Make certain that your child is on time for all school rehearsals and performances
- Encourage your child to make a commitment to his or her music studies
- If at all possible, obtain private lessons with a qualified instructor

Avoid

- Using practice as a punishment
- Insisting your child play for others when he or she doesn't want to
- Ridiculing or making fun of mistakes or less-than-perfect playing
- Apologizing to others for your child's weak performance

Maintaining your child's interest

Talk to your child if his or her interest begins to decline. Increase your enthusiasm and involvement in your child's playing. Talk to the teacher about your child's declining interest. Consider private lessons to bolster interest.

Financial Obligations

Being a part of Orchestra entails some financial obligations. You are required to rent or purchase an instrument and keep it in good repair. Also, the student family must purchase accessory items and care items such as reed, valve oil, strings and rosin. Any damages to a school-owned instrument caused by neglect or misuse are to be paid by the student family.

Music and folders are the property of Bethany Christian Schools. Lost or damaged music will cost \$.25 per sheet. Lost or damaged folders will cost \$25.00 (excludes normal wear-and-tear). Students should be admonished to use pencil only when marking music. Students should not write on their music folders.

You will be required to pay for Orchestra Festival, which ranges from \$100 - \$140 per year, depending on a variety of factors (such as location, music purchases, guest director fees, etc.) Being a part of either HS Orchestra or Bruin Jazz in the spring results in the expectation that this fee will be paid and that the student will attend the event. Any exceptions must be cleared with Mrs. Slagel **before** registering for spring semester.

There may be other costs for Orchestra and Bruin Jazz, such as the purchase of class t-shirts or polo shirts. Costs may range from \$10 – 30 depending on quality of shirt.

What should I do if I have questions?

If you have any questions about the material in the handbook or any questions about the music program, please email Mrs. Slagel at bjslagel@bethanycs.net or call/text her at 574-361-9015 (cell) or call the school at 574-534-2567.

We look forward to a great year together and anticipate a highly successful school year together.