



Rosa International Middle School

Instrumental Music Program

Mrs. Sue Mark, Director



Course Expectations and Guidelines

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome Back! I hope you all had a restful summer and are looking forward to the new school year as much as I am. It is always nice to come back after a long break to begin another exciting new adventure.

The instrumental music program at Rosa has a lot to offer those who are interested in participating; and, as a result, I would like to get it started as soon as possible. We have concerts to prepare for, performances to attend to and a lot of musical growth to achieve. So...

Below is an outline of the Instrumental Music Course Expectations. I ask that you read this carefully with your child and be sure to complete the attached forms in order that we may get you started in this exciting venture.

PROGRAM GOALS AND PHILOSOPHY:

It is the goal of this program to offer as many opportunities to every student with an interest in the instrumental program. Whether you are a seasoned musician or just getting started, Rosa has an instrumental group to fit your needs.

Because everyone has different ideas and tastes, we will try to offer a variety of performance venues to fit the vast variety of personalities. From orchestra, to concert band, to jazz band and small-group ensembles, no one will be left out of an opportunity to explore his/her talents.

I believe that anyone who wishes to put forth the effort to be involved in a musical group is deserving of the best educational experience possible. Not everyone is a musical prodigy. Some people take their musical studies very seriously while others choose to participate simply because they enjoy it or for the sheer camaraderie of being involved in a performing group. Because I understand and can appreciate such diverse feelings, it is my intention to tailor the program to fit the needs of everyone involved.

HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS:

Orchestra and band are scheduled classes held once a week during the school day. In addition to these performing ensembles, all students will receive semi-private instruction on their instrument for a minimum of one-half hour a week. These lessons will be scheduled during the school day and are essential in order that students can develop the skills necessary to participate in the performing ensembles.

Because these lessons take place during other instruction, it is necessary to rotate times (but not days) to avoid missing the same subjects weekly. Students will receive lesson schedules for the entire academic year. As it stands now, rotating lessons require missing the same class time once every seven weeks – or, in most cases, 40 minutes out of 2100 minutes of instruction. Since there is a great deal of flexibility incorporated into the program, I ask that all students make every effort possible to attend these lessons. Anyone unable to do so due to tests or important projects will be given the opportunity to reschedule that lesson provided he/she discusses this conflict in advance, whenever possible.

Due to time constraints during the regular school day, occasional mandatory rehearsals must be held after school. Each student must make every effort to attend these rehearsals, as band/orchestra is only complete when every “teammate” is present. Students will be notified of these rehearsals at least one month in advance so arrangements can be made to attend and a late bus is available for those who wish to take advantage of it.

Students are expected to attend all regularly scheduled concerts and performances. These performances are an integral part of the overall musical experience and the main focus of most band/orchestra rehearsals.

STANDARDS FOR THIS COURSE:

It is my goal that every student meets or exceeds the standards and benchmarks set forth in the “Music Education Standards for Cherry Hill Public Schools.” In general you will perform a variety of repertoire alone and with others; improvise melodies and variations; read and notate music; know and apply appropriate criteria to music and music performance; demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between music and music history; understand and demonstrate the correct physical control of your instrument; listen to, respond to and analyze music; and draw parallels between and among music, other arts, and disciplines outside the arts.

In addition to the above, you will be expected to be prepared for each lesson and ensemble rehearsal by practicing the skills taught in prior classes. It will be your responsibility to organize your time and be sure to attend all scheduled lessons and rehearsals. If you are unable to do so, you must contact me as soon as possible in

order to make up the time you will be missing. As was stated earlier, attendance at concerts and performances is mandatory and an important part in achieving the standards.

You will discover that being a part of a music performance program involves time management skills, a strong work ethic, and the ability to work cooperatively with your peers in an effort to achieve the same goals and outcomes. Participating in such a program will ultimately help you learn good problem-solving skills, responsible behavior, and leave you with a great sense of accomplishment.

My responsibility to you and the program is to ensure that you are given every opportunity to succeed. I will always present important information in a timely manner. (Information and upcoming events will be posted both inside and outside the classroom.) I will make every effort to present a diverse repertoire in order to meet the needs of every student and make their instrumental experience as enjoyable as possible. I will present a program that will be both challenging and enriching. I will also give every student ample opportunities to succeed with advance notice of testing, fair evaluations, re-testing, and providing you with the instruction necessary to meet or exceed the standards. Whenever possible, I will make every effort to meet your scheduling needs and be available for additional help in order that we may meet my goal of achieving beyond the standards.

GRADING PROCEDURE:

All students will be graded for their participation in the instrumental program. Grades are based on a 100 point system which includes averaging attendance at BOTH rehearsals and lessons, evaluation of each lesson based on preparedness and participation, rubric scoring on advanced-notice performance and written tests, extra credit for required after school rehearsal attendance, and concert attendance. Should you need to reschedule a lesson or test due to absence or conflict, it must be done as soon as possible. Re-assessment or re-testing is always an option and will be done at the discretion of the director based on the evaluation and subsequent discussion between the student and teacher.

If you are unable to attend a graded performance (Winter and Spring Concerts) due to unavoidable circumstances and have made every effort to resolve the conflict, you must notify me immediately. You will be given the opportunity to make up the performance grade by either presenting a two-page report (topic given by teacher) or two-page written evaluation of a taped performance of the concert missed (when available) within two weeks of the performance. As with any test situation, these alternatives are the only way to make up for the missed evaluation.

Although after school rehearsal attendance is REQUIRED, it will not be included as a penalty in the actual grading process should you have to miss occasionally. However, it WILL be used as extra credit and can be very helpful to those whose grades may be waning due to lack of attendance during the school day. If you are involved in after school sports, you are expected to attend rehearsals over practices since rehearsals occur less frequently. You are excused from rehearsals for games only. It is important to know that the coaches and I will make every effort to accommodate any student who wishes to do both music and other after school activities.

HOW TO CONTACT US:

The music program has an extensive web site linked to the Rosa Home Page. It is updated weekly and includes any important information and upcoming performances. You may also contact us through this site. If you are uncertain of a specific date or event, this is a great resource. And should you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me by phone at 616-8787, ext. 121 or email at smark@chclc.org. You can reach our web site at www.cherryhill.k12.nj.us/rims then click on the Music Program link under the student drop-down box. Or you can bookmark us at www.rosamusicprogram.homestead.com/rosamusicprogram.html.

IN CLOSING:

I have been teaching music for more than 15 years (now you know how OLD I am) and each year proves more exciting than the last. Your musical experience at Rosa should be both enjoyable and fulfilling. It is my hope that every child leaves here with positive musical growth and many good memories. I am looking forward to working with you all and having another wonderful year.

In order to get started, please complete the attached form, SIGN IT, and return it to me by the date indicated. The information included in this form will be used for lesson and ensemble placement, setting up a grading database and to contact you, should the need arise. By signing this form, you are acknowledging that you have read and understand the information provided in *The Instrumental Music Course Outline*. And now you are ready to take part in an enriching experience.

Musically Yours,

Mrs. Mark