

JOHN F KENNEDY SCHOOL

PERFORMING ARTS DEPARTMENT

MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL BAND HANDBOOK

2014-2015



Middle and High School Concert and Jazz Bands

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Welcome to the John F Kennedy Band Program! The main goals of JFKS's band program is to offer a variety of opportunities to make you a better player, performer, listener, and person. JFKS's program offers one high school band, one middle school band, and this year will offer a jazz ensemble later in the day 1-3 days a week depending on student/teacher schedules! There will also be opportunities for students to audition for/into various AMIS international festivals. If you are interested in participating in an AMIS concert band or jazz band ensemble, please speak to Mr. Nelson soon and we will begin preparing for the auditions as soon as possible. Please visit <http://amis-online.org.uk/> and read the attached information sheet for additional information. I hope all parents and students will participate in the band program with a high appreciation, understanding, and commitment in mind.

Welcome to the JFKS band family!

Lewis Nelson



Middle School Concert Band (grades 7-8) is extremely important in the development of each student's musical skills. This class will set students up for success in future years as a JFKS band student. Students will review basic and advanced techniques, sound production, concert etiquette, and will learn how to appreciate and take pride in what they are accomplishing as young musicians. This class will push you as a musician and you are expected to always do your best and be prepared. As always, all of JFKS's music teachers are here to help alleviate any concerns or anxiety you may have. I am very excited to have you in my class!

High School Symphonic Band (grades 9-12) is JFKS's premier wind band ensemble. This graded ensemble will emphasize the skills learned in the middle school band and will delve into advanced techniques, repertoire and musicianship that will push every student. This class will push you as a musician and you are expected to always do your best and be prepared. As always, all of JFK's music teachers are here to help alleviate any concerns or anxiety you may have. I am very excited to have you in my class!

11th and 12th Grade Grundkurs Students have a special place in the High School concert band! In addition to participating and performing with the band, they will also have to complete one extra assignment per semester. Examples of this could be running weekly sectionals with younger students, auditioning/participating for AMIS ensemble(s), or writing a large research paper which we can discuss after school starts. You are the leaders of the band and I cannot wait to meet you!

High School Jazz Band is being offered again this year! This class will be dependent on student/teacher schedules and your commitment level. This class will focus on basic to advanced jazz theory which will lead to improvising. We will also delve into jazz standards in either a combo or big band setting and will begin preparing to gig! My hope is we will find time to rehearse 2-3 times per week.

Objectives of these courses will be:

- Perform a variety of standard music repertoire
- Have a more in-depth understanding of how theory relates to music
- Become more proficient on your instrument
- Be prepared to audition for AMIS honor bands
- Have skills to perform with outside ensembles

HIGH SCHOOL GRADING POLICY & CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS FOR ALL STUDENTS

GRADING *(It's all about consistency and participation)*

A "1" Student: has very good (on-time) class attendance (no unexcused absences); misses no performances; is always ready for rehearsal; always has their instrument out and ready early with all of the proper "gear" (reeds, valve oil, cork grease, mutes, slide grease, etc.); always has and uses a pencil in rehearsal; never chews gum in rehearsal; always participates enthusiastically in warm-ups and rehearsal; volunteers to answer questions, sight read, try solos and/or help with band business; exhibits a pleasant, energetic, disciplined attitude; completes all assignments with great quality and on time.

A "2" Student: has pretty good (on time) class attendance (no more than one unexcused absence); misses no performances; is almost always ready for rehearsal; almost always has their instrument out and ready early with all of the proper "gear" (reeds, valve oil, cork grease, mutes, slide grease, etc.); almost always has and uses a pencil in rehearsal; seldom chews gum in rehearsal; almost always participates enthusiastically in warm-ups and rehearsals; volunteers less frequently to answer questions, sight read, try solos and/or help with band business; exhibits a pleasant, energetic, disciplined attitude most of the time; completes most assignments with great quality and on time.

A "3" Student: has somewhat irregular class attendance and is sometimes late (no more than two unexcused absences); misses one performance; is ready for rehearsal some of the time; periodically has their instrument out and ready early with all of the proper "gear" (reeds, valve oil, cork grease, mutes, slide grease, etc.); has a pencil in class some of the time; chews gum some of the time; participates enthusiastically in warm-ups and rehearsal some of the time; seldom volunteers to answer questions, sight read, try solos and/or help with band business; attitude is very inconsistent; completes some assignments, quality is inconsistent, some are late.

A "4" Student: has poor class attendance and/or is late (including unexcused absences); misses performances frequently; is seldom ready for rehearsal; rarely has their instrument out and ready early with all of the proper "gear" (reeds, valve oil, cork grease, mutes, slide grease, etc.); seldom has a pencil in rehearsal; often chews gum in rehearsal; exhibits little enthusiasm for warm-ups and rehearsal; doesn't volunteer to answer questions, sight read, try solos and/or help with band business; doesn't exhibit a pleasant, energetic, disciplined attitude; does a poor job with class assignments.

A "5" or "6" Student: has very poor class attendance and is late (including unexcused absences); misses performances frequently; is often not ready for rehearsal; does not have an instrument or proper gear, doesn't have a pencil in rehearsal; chews gum; exhibits no enthusiasm for warm-ups and rehearsal; doesn't volunteer to answer questions, sight read, try solos and/or help with band business; exhibits an unpleasant, lethargic, and undisciplined attitude; completes few assignments, they are late.

33.4% of total grade = performances

66.6% of total grade = rehearsals and any other assignments

GRADING SCALE (*Specifics*) –for Mittelstufe

| | | | | | | | | |
|----|---|------|----|---|-----|----|---|-----|
| 1+ | = | 100% | 2- | = | 80% | 4 | = | 60% |
| 1 | = | 95% | 3+ | = | 77% | 4- | = | 56% |
| 1- | = | 92% | 3 | = | 72% | 5+ | = | 49% |
| 2+ | = | 89% | 3- | = | 69% | 5 | = | 40% |
| 2 | = | 83% | 4+ | = | 64% | 5- | = | 20% |

ADDITIONAL EXPECTATIONS

- 1) No food, drinks (other than water), or candy in class-**ESPECIALLY NO GUM!**
- 2) Have Handys turned off during class. They are very disruptive in rehearsal.
- 3) Be on time to class: In seats with materials out when class begins. The daily grade is lowered for lateness.
- 4) Have (and use) a pencil in every rehearsal. A clean score is a dangerous score!
- 4) More experienced band members should be willing to help train and guide less experienced or new band members. The continued success of a school band depends on its ability to integrate new members. Remember to **BE NICE TO EACH OTHER!!!** Mentor each other with kindness!
- 5) To make up a missed concert, set up an appointment and play the missed music for Mr. Nelson. Doctor's excuses or other legitimate excuses should be presented at the time of the make-up. Other missed assignments should be requested immediately upon returning to class and made up within one week.
- 6) Have your music, folder, reeds, mutes, **INSTRUMENT**, and pencil with you at every rehearsal and performance. Be dressed in precisely the correct outfit for each performance. Sit and stand with wonderful posture. Looking professional is extremely important if you want to be taken seriously in a performance/professional setting.
- 7) A student who misses more than two rehearsals during the preparations for a concert needs to schedule a make-up session with Mr. Nelson in order to regain the points from the missed rehearsal(s). This applies to both excused and unexcused absences. Failure to do so will not only lower the grade but may jeopardize the student's ability to remain part of the upcoming concert.
- 8) When rehearsing or performing in other JFKS locations or away from the school, all the school and class expectations apply.
- 9) Those students who wish to perform solos or in small groups should have the opportunity to do so. Auditioning for an AMIS band is highly encouraged.

BASIC PERFORMANCE ATTIRE

Women: black dress slacks or full length black skirt or knee-length black skirt with black nylons, white long-sleeved blouse, black dress shoes, black nylons or black socks.

Men: black dress pants, white long-sleeved dress shirt, black socks, black dress shoes, and a tie.

(no jeans, white socks, or no tennis shoes)

TO SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE THIS COURSE

- Have a POSITIVE attitude at all times! Be willing to try new things, be willing to fail and learn from your mistakes, and always treat each other with dignity and live by the Golden Rule.
- A commitment to practice and strive to play your instrument the best you can.
- You must understand how to treat and take care of school equipment.
- You need to choose to “Do It Right” no matter what and at all times.

TENTATIVE AND REQUIRED PERFORMANCE DATES (LIST JFKS DATES HERE)

Tentative High School Band: Friday, September 12 - Inauguration Ceremony for the new Aula @ Large Aula time TBD

Required Middle School Band Performance: Saturday, September 27 - Fun Day @ Large Aula 11:00-11:30

Required High School Band Performance: Saturday, September 27 – Fun Day @ Large Aula 11:15-12:00

Required Middle & High School Band Concert: December 4th – Concert @ Large Aula 19:00

AMIS High School Honor Band Festival: March 16th – March 22nd in Singapore

AMIS Middle School Honor Band Festival: April 14th – April 19th in Doha Quator

Required Middle School Band Concert: June 9th @ Large Aula 19:00

Required High School Band Concert: June 12th @ Large Aula 19:00



Please cut and return to Mr. Nelson by September 10th.

Student and Parent Understanding

In order to be successful in this class, I (student list your name) _____ will work to the best of my ability to be a positive addition to the JFKS Band Program. I understand that being part of JFKS’s band program is an honor and I will do my part to always be prepared and will always “do the right thing” even when someone is not looking.

Parents and Students, please read the following bullets. Please sign below and turn in in order to participate in band:

*I acknowledge and understand the band handbook.

*I acknowledge and understand that students are required to attend at least 85% of rehearsals and are required to attend all performances.

*I acknowledge and understand that students will wear the correct concert attire as stated above.

*I acknowledge and understand that parents and students will not make outside appointments that conflict with rehearsals or performances.

*I acknowledge and understand that if another event comes up, we will keep our commitment to the band to the best of our ability. If I/we must miss a band commitment, please contact Mr. Nelson as soon as possible to discuss options. With this knowledge, the absence will most likely not be excused.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____



www.jfks.de



www.amis-online.org.uk

John F. Kennedy School
Honor Band, Choir, Orchestra and Jazz 2014-2015

Fact Sheet and information sheet for those students interested in auditioning for an Honor Band!

High School Jazz - October 22-26 Beijing
High School Band and Orchestra – March 18-22 Singapore
Middle School Band— April 15-19 Doha

Costs: While we don't know the costs of these trips yet, over the past few years trips within Europe have cost between 500 and 700 €. Trips to Asia or the Middle East have cost between 1000 and 1200 €. Middle School festivals are usually in Europe and are in the range of 300-500 €, partially due to the fact that housing is often provided with families. Included in these cost estimates are 1) transportation to and from the festival, 2) hotel room at the festival (high school), 3) all registration fees, and 4) music. Spending money, including local transportation and some meals, is not included in these fees.

You will be informed as to whether you made it into an ensemble by mid November (or Springtime for jazz). Then payments will come due quickly. There are often two to three separate payment deadlines, making the financial burden for families, hopefully, a little lighter. As an example, deadlines for last year were: December 13, January 15 and January 30. Please plan accordingly.

The trip is expensive. For families with a serious need, there may be the chance to apply for financial assistance through the sponsoring organization, AMIS. A letter describing the financial need and the importance of the experience would need to be submitted by the student requesting the assistance. There are no guarantees that assistance will be possible.

You are auditioning for an HONOR festival. Students should not only be among the best musicians in the school but should also be the most HONORABLE in terms of their role as a JFKS student. Important aspects of this role include good relationships with teachers and fellow students, especially relative to grades and attendance. At the time places in festivals are offered, JFKS teachers will be given a list of student names and asked about the standing of individual students. It is likely that a student with poor attendance, poor grades or perceived academic weaknesses will be called to a class conference. It is also possible that the class conference will decide that the student is no longer eligible to participate in a trip for which he/she has learned the music and already paid all of the money. **ONCE FUNDS HAVE BEEN PAID, IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO GET A REFUND.**

Be particularly mindful of the dates of your festival and all school calendar items (Klausuren, school vacations, ski trip, musicals, other performances, exchange programs, etc.) and include your parents in the discussion regarding your involvement in AMIS for the school year.

Also related to the idea of HONOR, students are responsible to learn all music for the festival and will be tested at JFKS before the festival. Extra practices may be scheduled and attendance at these is expected. Working with private teachers on the music is highly encouraged. Students who have not sufficiently prepared will not be allowed to travel with the group (don't forget, no refunds!).

Seriously working on the audition material will make you a stronger singer or instrumentalist. The time spent preparing is not wasted. If you are serious about gaining a place in an ensemble and following through with the hard work required if you get in, you are highly encouraged to audition. Ask anybody who has gone to a festival in the past; it's worth it!