



WALDORF
SCHOOL
of GARDEN CITY

Music Department Handbook
Grades 7 - 12
School Year 2017-2018

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~Welcome!~

Dear Students,

We are pleased that you are participating in the Waldorf School of Garden City's Music Program.

It is our hope that your participation in one of the School's many performance ensembles will expand your musical abilities, as well as provide you with a unique opportunity to be part of a musical group that is larger than oneself.

This booklet includes information which is vital to the success of your musical year. With that in mind, it is important that you take a few moments to read this information, show it to your parents, make note of the various performance dates, and fully understand the expectations of participants. A performance without performers is an unhappy experience for all, which is why attendance is such a strong point of emphasis!

Once you and your parents have read this booklet, we ask that you read and sign the acknowledgement on the last page, then return it to your respective ensemble director by the date specified in class. The year ahead is filled with numerous musical opportunities for you and your classmates, and we look forward to working with each and every one of you!

Dr. Dale Stuckenbruck

Mr. Andrew Fallu

Mr. Steve Debellis

Music Course Descriptions

Middle School (Grades 7-8:)

Orchestra:

Students in the seventh and eighth grade orchestra have a wider range of musical experience through the collaboration of both grades once a week. Each grade will receive an individual repertoire, along with combined works for the group. Performance material will focus on exploration of sounds and orchestra textures which benefit each class.

Chorus:

The Middle School Chorus provides students in the seventh and eighth grades with their first experience of performing in a vocal ensemble. Through consistent practice of activities such as sight-reading new music, critical listening of ensemble recordings, and development of basic sound production, students will build a strong vocal foundation. These skills are further developed while rehearsing music for scheduled performances throughout the school year.

High School (Grades 9-12:)

Orchestra:

The High School Orchestra provides a unique opportunity for students to explore their own interests when selecting musical works. Interest in world music and the music of the Americas is encouraged. Various historical styles are explored and students are encouraged to work towards their full musical potential as members of this group.

Jazz Band:

The High School Jazz Band introduces students to the language of jazz and the art of improvisation. Practicing in a small group, students work to develop a unique sound which is shared with others in performances. The ability to read music is not an initial requirement, but is developed as students experience the need to communicate with each other. The goal of the jazz player is to develop a capacity to play on his or her own instrument anything that he or she can hear. Achieving this level of ability requires that all participants in the Jazz Band also take private lessons. The Orchestra Director can assist in finding the right instrumental teacher.

Eco-Orchestra:

Students in the Eco-Orchestra have the opportunity to make instruments out of almost anything. This creates an understanding that music, throughout one's life, is only seconds away from us if we wish it to be! Exploring the musical possibilities in various parts of our environment creates a new kind of sustainability for humankind and is empowering to the students.

Chorus:

Building upon the foundations established in Middle School, the High School Chorus continues developing the musical ability of its' members through frequent performances of a varied and challenging repertoire. The Chorus performs on-campus and at various venues in the local area, for those students who are interested in further developing their performance skills.

Expectations of Middle School and High School Ensembles

Grading:

Student grades are determined based upon overall ability, effort, and attitude; all of which are closely related. Ability is a product of effort and an open, positive attitude. Students are expected to arrive to class punctually, be ready to make music together, and work to the best of their ability at all times. The music class is not to be used for making up work in other subjects. Music is a social experience, culminating in a number of shared performances, which students are required to attend. A listing of performance dates for the 2014-15 school year is listed below.

Information Regarding Performances:

Schedule: The list of performance is included at the end of this booklet and on the School's website calendar. *Please remember that not every performance features every ensemble, so it is important that you confirm which events your group is participating in!* The number of performance events increase as students progress into the high school.

Attire: Students are asked to wear a white top with a black bottom for all concerts, unless otherwise stated. **For boys:** a white button down with black slacks is considered appropriate concert attire. **For girls:** any type of white blouse or similar top, with either black slacks or a black skirt.

Behavior: School concerts and performance, by their nature, are formal events and students are expected to conduct themselves accordingly. All students are expected to remain for the entire length of the concert to support their fellow musicians.

Excused Absences: To be successful, group performance requires that the individuals who have worked and practiced together over a long period of time actually play together on the night of the concert. While attendance at performances is mandatory, we do recognize that situations may arise which make this impossible. Permissible reasons for missing a scheduled performance are:

- Illness, as verified by a doctor's note
- Family emergency, as verified by a note from the parent or guardian

These are the only reasons accepted for absence from a performance. Because participation in concerts is a factor in determining the student's grade, an alternative form of assessment will be discussed with the ensemble director (such as singing/playing test, other in class performance, etc.) An unexcused absence from a scheduled music performance will result in the students' grade being reduced for the quarter in which the performance was scheduled.

How Parents & Guardians Can Help

As the parents and guardians of young musicians, you hold a great deal of importance in the musical development of your child. It is important to be fully engaged and active in your child's musical education -- encouraging consistent practice, self-improvement, and most of all, enthusiasm and excitement for music! We have resources available to assist parents and students develop this consistency and we encourage parents to reach out to one of us, or the private lesson instructors, with any questions or concerns. A successful music program also requires parents and guardians who are actively involved in the musical activities of the school throughout the year. We thank you for your support and welcome your suggestions for improvement.

A few thoughts to keep in mind as we start the year:

- Help your child build a routine for regular practice. Most students need some assistance with organizing their time and keeping to a schedule. As music educators, we have frequently heard former students lament "how I wish my parents would have made me practice more!"
- Talk with your child about his or her musical activities on a regular basis. While it is our goal to provide parents with continuous information regarding school events and performances, your child's perspective as they prepare for these events may be entirely different.
- Attend performances and events! We fully understand the many obligations of our parents, and realize that time is a limited commodity to be treasured. However, your presence at these events is meaningful, both to the students and to their instructors.
- Engage with your children while they are practicing. Ask them what they are working on, what they are trying to improve, or if they can show you how to do something. Students need to experience the interest and support of the adults around them, and who knows, you might learn something new!

While performing ensembles rarely have written "homework," focused and consistent practice is the key element for a successful musical experience for every student. You, as the parent or guardian, are in the position of greatest influence to support that positive outcome. Please also know that we are there to support and assist your child's musical growth in any way possible.

We, the teachers in the Music Department of the Waldorf School of Garden City, are incredibly appreciative and grateful for the help and support which you provide our program throughout the year!

Off-Campus Musical Events & Activities

In addition to the regularly scheduled performances which strengthen and enrich the School's cultural spirit, the Music Department hopes to offer opportunities for off- campus performances and trips as well. This includes opportunities for our students to perform at events in the Long Island area, as well as to experience professional performances at a reduced cost, whenever possible. One of the greatest aspects of participation in a musical ensemble is the opportunity to perform in front of a live audience, especially one that goes beyond family and school!

Contact Information

We recognize that a successful music program requires to collaboration and cooperation of many. With that in mind, please know that we stand ready to work with parents – and to hear your thoughts, suggestions, questions and concerns. All music department faculty can be reached through the school's email system:

Dr. Stuckenbruck: stuckenbruckd@waldorfgarden.org

Mr. Fallu: fallua@waldorfgarden.org

Mr. Debellis: debelliss@waldorfgarden.org

In addition, private instrument instructors for any instrument can be contacted through Dr. Stuckenbruck, stuckenbruckd@waldorfgarden.org

***A current calendar of all events can be found online, at
www.waldorfgarden.org/music***

Student & Parent Acknowledgement

For students:

I have read, and understand, the information and expectations included in the Waldorf School of Garden City Music Handbook. I recognize that a strong music department depends on the efforts and commitment of every member of a music ensemble. I also understand the importance of practicing for, and attending, the performances scheduled for my ensemble group.

(Name of student)

(Date signed)

For the parents/guardians:

We ask all parents and guardian to read the Waldorf School of Garden City Music Handbook carefully and to review the responsibilities and expectations with their children. Please pay special attention to the performance dates for your child's particular ensemble, making a note of them for future planning. Please also read "How Parents & Guardians Can Help," which provides important information regarding parents/guardians role in a successful music program. We ask that parents and guardians sign, below, to indicate they have read the Handbook and that they understand the importance of the information included.

(Name of parent/guardian)

(Date signed)