



**North Farmington
High School
Orchestra Handbook**

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Farmington Public Schools Mission Statement

Farmington Public Schools, together with our community, will provide quality learning experiences empowering each student to become a thoughtful, contributing citizen in a changing world.

Farmington Public Schools Music Mission Statement

Farmington Public Schools are committed to recognizing and cultivating the individual musical abilities and interests of every student. The music staff will provide the foundation for the pursuit of life-long musical experiences.

North Farmington High School Mission Statement

The mission of North Farmington High School is to educate our students so that they will demonstrate performance and skill level commensurate with a technologically changing society, that they reach their potential for creativity and life-long learning, and that they enter the global community as productive, contributing members. We will accomplish all of this in a spirit of respect and partnership, with open communication between parents, students, staff and community.

Farmington Public Schools Music Department Philosophy

Music is fundamental to education.

Education must develop the whole person -- intellectual, moral, emotional, physical, spiritual and relational. A person's response to music and creation of music involves logical thinking and, simultaneously, the intuitive feeling that belongs to the creative nature of the human spirit.

Music education provides us with unique dimensions of experience and knowledge not found in other areas of the curriculum. It teaches us the use of the senses, fine-tuning them in qualitative ways, enhancing visual and aural perception. Music enables us to use and develop our creative potential, to see the value of our own special ideas and feelings, and to benefit from, as well as respect, those of others. Music gives us a chance to think divergently, to search beyond the boundaries of what is known, and to give us knowledge and critical ability in languages other than those that are verbal.

A love of music is universal. Music has been produced through the ages because people find delight and satisfaction in playing, singing, listening and in the performance of others. Whether expressing joy, love, sorrow, fear or faith, music affords the means of portraying all the emotions that are part of normal living. The expression of a person's feeling through engagement in creative activities is essential for the internal welfare and stability of an individual, in addition to effective participation as a member of society.

Our society depends on the ability of people to create new and better solutions to the problems that face us now and in the future. Just as the artist embraces and employs the technologies of today and tomorrow in the service of art and humanity, so should politicians, engineers, physicians, lawyers, scientists, teachers, laborers and social service personnel be artistically aware and aesthetically sensitive in their service of humanity. Our greatest resource will be individuals who are broadly educated, can see and think clearly, can hear acutely and feel sensitively and can address the future with more than a narrow technological response. These skills are no longer just desirable. They are essential if we are to survive together with civility and joy. Therefore, the fundamental role of the music program is to develop skills, knowledge, concepts and sensitivity for the sake of knowing and conveying the highest levels of human experience.

Curricular Offerings

The Instrumental Music Department of North Farmington High School strives to offer a broad spectrum of opportunities to all interested students. The orchestra program is an integrated music curriculum composed of, rhythmic, listening, analytical, and performance components, introduced through literature in a historical and multi-cultural context. The program introduces and stresses fundamental, intermediate and advanced string techniques to students, as they move through the curriculum. Students are provided with an opportunity to study and perform a variety of music commensurate with their ability level. Performances are a logical outgrowth of the music curriculum and include concerts, festivals, solos, ensembles, recitals and appearances within the community when appropriate. The following list includes all orchestral ensembles, and criteria for entrance into each group.

Concert Orchestra is comprised of all incoming freshman string players, or string players with schedule conflicts. Technical development is stressed. The group performs a wide variety of literature.

Philharmonia Orchestra is the next step up from the Concert Orchestra. The group performs more advanced literature and is open to all string players who have not auditioned into the symphony orchestra, or those who have scheduling conflicts.

Symphony Orchestra is comprised of advanced string players who have auditioned into the group. They perform very advanced string literature and full symphonic orchestral music.

Full Symphony Orchestra is comprised of Symphony Strings and top chairs from the Symphony Band. The group rehearses in Tuesday evenings at 5:00-6:30pm throughout the year.

Chamber Orchestra is comprised of the top string players (21-28) from the Symphony Orchestra. Rehearsals are set around performance dates such as the Chamber Music Festival in December. The group performs very advanced string literature and accompanies concertos.

Jazz Orchestra is comprised of 12-15 string players and rhythm section. Selection is through audition. The group performs a variety of jazz literature. Rehearsals are held from 4-5pm every Tuesday throughout the year. Performances include community events, school functions and jazz concerts.

Grading Format for Instrumental Music

Daily Participation

30%

Students receive participation points every rehearsal day based on rehearsal preparation, and proper use of class time. Required materials for rehearsal include a working instrument, a pencil, and music, and any mutes, extra reeds/valve oil, or sticks/mallets that may be necessary. It is the student's responsibility to talk to the director about a makeup assignment for any excused absences.

Musical Development

30%

Musical improvement will be evaluated through playing tests and written assignments. Categories that will be evaluated include tone production, listening skills, reading musical notes and symbols, and playing alone or in groups.

Performances

40%

Individual, small and large group performances are scheduled throughout the year (see "Concert Season- Required Events") and students are expected to appropriately schedule and participate in these events as a part of their continual progress and education. Attendance is required for all concerts and festivals on the calendar. Please follow the "Concert Season" calendar and plan accordingly. Students should arrive at functions on time and appropriately dressed.

Extra Credit

Participating in full orchestra (Woodwinds, Brass, Percussion), Jazz Band, Musicals, Solo & Ensemble, Metropolitan Youth Symphony, Detroit Civic Orchestra, University of Michigan Youth Ensembles, Livonia Youth Symphony, Farmington Community Band, written reports on an approved musical topic, musical composition, library help, instrument inventory help, uniform part help, program/poster help, or any other mutually approved project by the director(s) and student.

Grading Scale

All assignments are based on a 13 point grading system, with each assignment earning up to 13 points.

13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E	F
+	100%	98%	95%	90%	88%	85%	80%	78%	75%	70%	68%	65%	

Performance Policy

Performance Activities

Performances are a natural outgrowth of most music courses. While the music program does not exist solely for the sake of performance, music is a listening art, and the greatest musical satisfaction comes when performers feel their music has reached a listening ear. For this reason, we find occasions for a variety of performances, knowing that the opportunity to perform will stimulate conscientious effort, prompt interest in related musical learning, provide an outlet and a reward for students, and serve as a demonstration of their accomplishments. Students need to be challenged to do their best and to attain what is possible. In a music group that means a developmentally appropriate performing schedule. A general listing of programs, concerts, festivals and special performances are listed later in this handbook. Please take time to review this schedule when planning the year.

Missing a Performance

Performances are an extension of classroom learning, therefore all students are required to attend all scheduled performances. Please check the Concert Season calendar to plan accordingly. On rare occasions, a student will miss a performance. This absence will be considered either excused or unexcused. An excused absence (make up is necessary) includes, but is not limited to, illness, emergency, or unavoidable commitment such as a wedding. If a member forecasts an absence, it must be presented in writing, **in person** to the director(s) no less than 3 weeks before the date in question. In the case of sudden illness, notification should be given as soon as possible before the performance. **Please call 248-785-2015 as soon as possible so that we may be made aware of the situation.** A parent notification for a missed performance should include:

1. Student and parent name
2. Date and missed performance date
3. Daytime phone number for parent
4. **Reason for missing performance**

An actual makeup for a missed performance is, in reality, impossible, since we cannot recreate the performance experience. In the event of an excused absence, students must complete **both** of the following requirements for a comparable experience:

1. Attend a musical concert, pre-approved by the director, before or after 2 weeks of the missed event. A written critique of the concert should be turned in within one week of the viewed performance, with the following items discussed:
 - 1 A description of the event – who played, type of music performed, title of music played
 - 2 The quality of the event – what instruments were used, etiquette of performers and audience members, and overall quality of the performance
 - 3 Student's opinion of the concert – what was learned from the concert
2. Play the concert music for the director after school for evaluation. This must be completed within one week of the student's return to school.

If the student completes the above requirements, he/she will receive a grade for the missed performance based on the quality of the work.

An unexcused absence (make up is not possible) includes, but is not limited to, work schedule conflicts, oversleeping, babysitting, a private music lesson, or inability to find a ride, and results in a 0% for that event. There is no way to make up the grade for an unexcused absence.

Performance Etiquette

Each performance is an opportunity for students to showcase their hard work, and to appreciate the work of their peers in the music department. For this reason we encourage parents/guardians, other family members and friends to attend our concert performances. Additionally, we ask students to stay and listen to the entire performance.

Performance Etiquette for students:

1. Arrive on time, in complete uniform with necessary equipment.
2. Perform to the best of your ability in every concert.
3. Remain for the entire concert.

Performance Etiquette for audience members:

1. Turn off or silence all cell phones and pagers before entering the venue.
2. Refrain from talking during a performance.
3. Applaud at the end of each piece (but not between movements of a multi-movement work).
4. Sit in the auditorium and listen to other groups on the concert.
5. Enter and exit only between numbers, not in the middle of a piece.
6. Refrain from flash photography.

Classroom Expectations

As defined by the students and directors, the classroom guidelines for all instrumental music classes are as follows:

BE PROMPT – Arrive on time for class, sit in your seat for announcements, and arrive for concerts early.

BE POLITE – Treat others as you wish to be treated.

BE PREPARED – Have your instrument in working condition, your music in order, and your pencil ready at each rehearsal.

BE RESPECTFUL – Put equipment back where it was found, keep food and gum outside the rehearsal room, and refrain from touching percussion instruments unless you are a percussionist.

Classroom Procedures

Arriving to Class

Students have six minutes to pass between classes. When the bell rings, everyone should be in the classroom. Upon entering the room, students should read the board for the day's agenda. Students will then have two minutes to gather their music and put it in order, have a pencil ready, warm-up on their instrument, and sit in their chair. Two minutes after the bell, the conductor will step on the podium, and class will begin.

Students will be considered tardy if they are not in the rehearsal room when the bell rings. Participation grades will be lowered if students are not ready for warm-up when the conductor steps on the podium.

Instrument Repair

Should an instrument require repair, students should fill out an instrument repair form with their name, phone number, and a description of the problem. The instrument should be placed by the directors' office and will be sent in for repair at the next opportunity. If an instrument problem is discovered upon arrival to class, be sure to see the director about the problem as soon as it is discovered so that class time is not wasted.

Uniforms

Uniforms for the NFHS Instrumental Music Department are provided by the school in large part. Some exceptions may occur with special needs or performance requirements. Uniforms can only be distributed only **after** deposits and maintenance fees have been paid and a signed and dated contract has been returned to the Uniform Trustees.

You must fill out a new contract each year, since uniforms are collected every spring and reissued in the fall. Please return all contract copies when you sign them; one copy will be returned to you with each uniform to which you are assigned.

Hemming

Some pants and skirts may have to be shortened, however **do not cut off any fabric**. Use only needle and thread for hemming, not Stitch-Witchery, tape, safety pins or any other means. Fines will be assessed for uniforms damaged in this way.

Marching Uniforms

Pants should not "break" on the foot, but hang straight down. Suspenders should help in achieving this look. White socks should be worn with marching shoes made available for purchase through the B&O Boosters.

Concert Uniforms

Girls' palazzo pants should be 3" from the floor when wearing flats or heels desired. Wear black stockings and shoes at all concerts. The hem of the boys' concert pants should be 2" from the floor while wearing dress shoes. Gentlemen must wear black dress shoes and black socks at all concerts.

Care

Pressing uniforms inside-out prevents shiny spots in the fabric. The use of a pressing cloth is also appropriate. Please use a warm, **not hot**, iron. Excessive heat will melt the fabric.

At the Performance

Wearing the uniform properly is part of the grade for any performance. Students not properly dressed in concert attire will be provided the correct uniform when possible, and at their expense. If the appropriate uniform cannot be provided, the student will not be allowed on stage. In either case, the student will receive a lowered grade for the performance.

Lockers

At the beginning of the school year, each student will be assigned an instrumental music locker. Generally, wooden instruments and larger brass instruments are kept in the 111 rehearsal room due to humidity control and locker size. Most other instruments will be stored in the lockers in the hallway of the NFHS Performing Arts Center.

It is the student's responsibility to keep the locker locked at all times, except when gaining access to the locker. With nearly 500 lockers inside the rehearsal room and around the Performing Arts Center, the directors cannot and will not be responsible for all locks and lockers following the disbursement of locker assignments.

The lockers and special keyed locks assigned to students are the property of North Farmington High School. If lost, the lock has a replacement fee of \$10. If another lock is found on a locker, the replacement fee will be levied until the NFHS lock is returned. If a locker is found open, 30 minutes of service to the Instrumental Music Program will be required.

Lockers are to be closed and locked at all times.

Instruments

We are fortunate to have a variety of instruments for student use in our inventory. Students must fill out and turn in a contract before using a school-owned instrument. All instruments should be kept in good playing condition at all times. Percussion students are responsible for putting away any instruments, sticks, or mallets used during class time. Any damage done to percussion equipment will be charged to the person responsible or divided among the entire section. If a school-owned instrument is damaged due to negligence, the student is responsible for the entire repair cost. If a school-owned instrument is damaged due to normal "wear and tear," the repair will be paid by the school.

Sheet Music

Each student will receive their own copy of the music played in class. This music is property of North Farmington High School, and should be kept in good playing condition at all times and returned upon request so that it may be played with future North Farmington Bands. Music may only be marked with pencil and should be stored in the provided folder to avoid damaging it. Damaged music includes, but is not limited to, music that has been torn or written upon in anything other than pencil. Students who damage or lose music will need to cover the cost of its replacement.

Areas of Student Responsibility

Elected Positions

President: Conducts class or delegates responsibility in absence of director(s), assists in attendance, supervises and assists the other officers when needed. Other duties may be assigned by the director. The president will be in full charge of the band or orchestra during the absence of the director. He/she will assist the substitute teacher in any way that is possible including conducting the class and following the lesson plans. During normal rehearsal the president may assign specific added duties to other officers. The president is also in charge of writing news articles for the NFHS B/O Boosters.

Vice-President: The vice-president will assist the president in an appropriate manner and act in his/her absence with the duties listed as president. The vice-president is also in charge of concert uniform records and inventory. After the uniforms have been assigned, the vice-president will establish a procedure through section principals for checking all uniforms before and after every performance. Uniform concerns and inventory throughout the year will be the main responsibility of the vice-president. In addition, the vice-president is also in charge of organizing and maintaining the instrument storage areas. Other duties may be assigned.

Secretary: The secretary will assist the president and vice-president in an appropriate manner and will be responsible for maintaining the student records of the organization. He/she will record information on computers and handle money for the group. In case the president and vice-president are absent, the secretary assumes the duties of the president. The secretary is also responsible for maintaining supplies such as reeds, valve oil, strings, mutes, and other items for students. The business manager will be responsible for maintaining attendance at rehearsals and concerts. If a student has a prolonged illness, the business manager will be in charge of "Get Well Cards" or "Sympathy Cards" when needed. Other duties may be assigned by the director.

Librarian: The librarians will have absolute authority over the care and distribution of music and folders. Any requests for music to be copied or returned will be handled by the librarians. The library staff will prepare and copy music if necessary. Only librarians may use the rehearsal room copy machine. Other duties include the following: preparing folders, assign folder numbers, handles music distribution and collection, suggests policies for the care of all music, makes all copies on the copy machine, uses the computer for maintaining the library files, and organizes/cleans the library. Other duties may be assigned by the director.

Ensemble Representatives: One student from each ensemble will be elected by his or her peers as a representative of that ensemble.

Positions Based on Musical Merit

Section Leader: The section leader is responsible for performing any solo passages that appear in the music for his/her section. Section principals have complete authority over the playing abilities of their section. It is their responsibility to call sectionals of one person or the entire section when passages are not polished before a performance. The section leader sets the bowings and/or fingerings for his section, subject to the conductor's wishes. The section leader is the person to whom any member of the section may go with questions regarding music. All members of the section must take on all the characteristics of the section leader, from phrasing to articulation, and must conform in every way, including intonation, even if out of tune.

The section leader is also responsible for checking before and after a concert each of his section's players for uniform inventory. In the case of large sections where more than four people would be in a section, the section principal and director will establish assistants to help with the uniform checks.

Section leaders in each band are given the privilege to perform as a small ensemble when chamber music groups are formed during the year. These spots are highly coveted, as students who attain these positions exhibit extraordinary musical talent.

Orchestra Winds: Select members of the Symphony Band join Chamber Orchestra members to form the Symphony Orchestra. The designation of Orchestra Wind is a privilege given to the top players on specific instruments in the Symphony Band, and is considered one of the highest recognitions of musical achievement at North Farmington. Orchestra Winds are expected to attend additional rehearsals outside of the school day to fulfill their orchestra commitment.

Awards

The awards listed below are voted on by the students of each ensemble. Every year, the most deserving candidates are chosen. These awards are presented in May at our annual end-of-the-year banquet.

The **Most Valuable Musician Award** is given to one deserving student each Orchestra

The **National Orchestra Award** is given to a senior in recognition of outstanding achievement and interest in instrumental music, for singular merit in loyalty and cooperation, and for displaying those high qualities of conduct that school instrumental music requires.

The **Louis Armstrong Jazz Award** is given in recognition of outstanding achievement by an instrumentalist in the field of jazz, as demonstrated through superior musicianship, character, and individual creativity.

The **Carl Gippert Raider Spirit Award for Instrumental Music** is the highest honor given by the Instrumental Music Department, and is given a senior band or orchestra student for the purpose, passion, and pride of North Farmington music as exemplified in the life and leadership of long-time director Carl Gippert.

A **Directors Award** is presented to a deserving senior for talent, leadership, devotion and commitment to the orchestra as determined by the director.

Web Page

www.NFHSMusic.org

You can find all of the information in this handbook and more at our new website, www.NFHSMusic.org. Save it as one of your favorites, and check it often for updates and new information as it is posted. Help us make this website a big success!

NFHS Band and Orchestra Boosters

The purpose of the North Farmington High School Band and Orchestra Boosters is “to provide services and financial support to the programs and functions of the Instrumental Music Department of North Farmington High School,” and for many years the NFHS B/O Boosters have done just that. This group is open to any and all NFHS parents, alumni and community members who wish to aid the support of the North Farmington High School Instrumental Music Department. The ways in which this group assists the education of children is boundless, and they would love to have your support!

See our website NFHSmusic.org which describes the numerous events and activities in which the NFHS B/O Boosters need parent help, including Tag Days and the Arts and Crafts Show. Please read this letter, return it by the deadline stated, and consider donating your time to help your student as well as many others! The directors and STUDENTS appreciate your help!

Please understand that fundraisers are designed to help the overall program, as well as the individual student. The NFHS B/O Boosters endorses participation in any and all fundraising activities, but are not obligated to completely fund each student’s opportunity to participate in trips or other excursions. That responsibility falls back to the student and his/her family.

Important Contact Information

North Farmington High School Bands
32900 West 13 Mile Road
Farmington Hills, MI 48334

Main Office 248-785-2005
Fax 248-855-2060
Music Office 248-785-2015

Band and Orchestra Room – 111, Performing Arts Wing

Peter Tolia, Director of Orchestras
Direct line: 248-426-2939
peter.tolia@farmington.k12.mi.us

Michael Yoskovich, Director of Bands
michael.yoskovich@farmington.k12.mi.us

Web Site: www.NFHSMusic.org

Why Teach Music?

- I. MUSIC IS A SCIENCE: It is exact, specific and must be 100% correct - 99% is no good. It is unalterable. It demands exact acoustics.
- II. MUSIC IS MATHEMATICAL: It is rhythmically based on the subdivision of time in space into fractions which must be done instantaneously and not worked out on paper.
- III. MUSIC IS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE: Most of the terms are in Italian, German, or French and the notation of notes certainly is not English, but a highly developed kind of shorthand.
- IV. MUSIC IS HISTORY: Since music has always reflected the environment and times of its creation - - often even the country or racial feeling.
- V. MUSIC IS PHYSICAL EDUCATION: It requires fantastic coordination of fingers, hands, arms; lip, cheek and facial muscles in addition to extraordinary control of the diaphragmatic, back stomach and chest muscles which must respond instantly to the sounds the ear hears and the mind interprets.
- VI. MUSIC IS ALL OF THESE THINGS, BUT MOST OF ALL MUSIC IS AN ART.

It allows a human being to take all these dry, technically boring (but fantastically difficult) techniques and use them to CREATE EMOTION!!! That is the one thing science cannot duplicate--humanism or feeling or emotion or call it what you will.

THAT IS WHY WE TEACH MUSIC--
not because we expect you to major in music
not because we expect you to play music all your life
not so you can relax
not so you can have fun
not so you can trot around the football field in a uniform--

BUT: so you will be human
so you will recognize beauty
so you will be sensitive
so you will be closer to an infinite beyond this world
so you will have more love, more compassion
more gentleness, more good. In short, more life.
Of what value will it be to make a prosperous living
unless you know how to live?

THAT'S WHY I TEACH MUSIC.

Did You Know?

High school music students score higher on SATs in both verbal and math than their peers. In 2001, SAT takers with coursework/experience in music performance scored 57 points higher on the verbal portion of the test and 41 points higher on the math portion than students with no coursework/experience in the arts.

Source: Profile of SAT and Achievement Test Takers, The College Board, compiled by Music Educators National Conference, 2001.

College admissions officers continue to cite participation in music as an important factor in making admissions decisions. They claim that music participation demonstrates time management, creativity, expression, and open-mindedness.

Source: Carl Hartman, "Arts May Improve Students' Grades," The Associated Press, October, 1999.