

Rancho Campana High School Music Department Handbook 2019-20

Jon Sachs – Director

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Welcome to the Rancho Campana Music Department! The beginning of my second year here has been a real pleasure. We started this year off with our very first ever Summer Music Camps for Band and Choir. This proved to be very valuable as we are far ahead of where we were at this time a year before. We also received tremendous support from the district in the form of much needed instrument purchases and ALL of the music classes have grown. There are many other wonderful things going on this year such as partnerships with professional orchestras, a music festival on our campus and great fundraising opportunities.

To make the most of this year, please read this document carefully. Depending on what class a student is in different sections may matter more than others. It is not required or recommended to print this whole handbook as it will always be available on the rchsmusic.com website. Parents/guardians should only print/sign the last page verifying that they have read the whole document. Copies of the last page will be given to students if they do not have access to a printer. Hard copies of the handbook can be printed upon request.

This handbook is subject to change should the need arise. There will be an email notification should this occur therefore it is very important that we have a current email and all parents/guardians have current emails working through ParentSquare and Google Classroom. If you are not sure whether I have your email please email jon.sachs@oxnardunion.org and state your name, student's name and what ensemble(s) they are in or plan to be in (they can actually be part of an ensemble and not be enrolled in a class).

Classes offered:

At this time the courses offered are Concert/Symphonic Band, Stage Band, Concert Choir, and Guitar 1 and Guitar 2. These classes address any type of musician at RCHS and if a student is not sure which one to take they should talk to Mr. Sachs. String players are encouraged to sign up for Concert/Symphonic/Stage Band.

The following is a summary of each class:

- *Concert/Symphonic/Stage Band*: this is mainly an ensemble of woodwind, brass, and percussion instruments but string players can take this as well. This class is best for students that have a year or more of experience on their instrument and can read music, but it is open to beginners. Stage Band is the official name in the OUHSD for Jazz Band. We perform Jazz all year round so students in Concert and/or Symphonic Band should expect exposure to jazz music.
- *Guitar 1 and 2*: the focus of this class is on learning to play the guitar. The primary focus is reading music for classical guitar, but modern styles of play (i.e. rock, folk, blues and jazz) are also incorporated. These courses were recently rewritten to address a wide variety of 21st century guitar playing situations including the development of singing with guitar accompaniment, the use of pedals/amps for the electric guitar, basic recording techniques, and how to set up for live performances with electronic amplification. Guitar 1 is for beginners and Guitar 2 is for students that have taken a year of Guitar 1 (or equivalent). Students need teacher approval to take Guitar 2.
- *Concert Choir*: the focus is developing proper vocal technique in a choral setting while learning to read music. The music will be of a variety of styles from different time periods and in different languages. Students do not need formal experience or training. Students that play piano are highly encouraged to join vocal ensemble as accompanists!

Special Note: Students need to realize that music classes can only be experienced to the fullest when a yearlong commitment is made even if the class is not offered all three trimesters. Concerts take place all year long for most ensembles therefore rehearsals will as well. Although the exact plans are currently TBD, students should anticipate some form of the following (especially during trimesters a class is not taking place): after or before school rehearsal, practice at lunch or tutorial, and/or private lessons.

Chair/level Placement (Auditions):

- For the 2019-20 school year all auditions/testing will take place at the beginning of the trimester. It will continue throughout the year.
- All musicians (this includes vocalists) should be prepared to go through the process even if they are the only one on their instrument. Beginning instrumentalists are exempt in their first trimester although there will still be playing tests to assess progress.
- Chair placement (or option to perform a solo) is decided only by overall musicianship, and not by experience or leadership position (musical or otherwise).

- The director reserves the right to change chair placement (or status of solo performance) if a student has demonstrated that they are unable to fulfill the demands of a position (i.e. poor attendance, not progressing musically, etc.).
- Students can challenge a chair placement. The challenger must notify the director in writing (email okay). Both participants will need to audition again. No challenges will be allowed in the two weeks before a concert.
- This whole process is not as scary as it sounds. It is the best way to measure progress and experience growth!

Leadership: All groups must have officers that will apply for their positions and maintain a 2.5 GPA. The applications can be found on the music department website. These are extremely valuable positions to the program with very rewarding opportunities! In addition to officer positions there may also be skill-based roles (section leaders, Concert Master, etc.). Some individuals may hold more than one position or share positions as needed (or have an assistant position). It should be noted that the officers represent the entire music department and have joint meetings. In addition to a President for each ensemble, the following positions exist:

- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Librarian
- Publicity
- Historian
- Equipment Manager

Financial Contributions:

For any music program to take advantage of the experiences that are unique to music education, financial support of the program is extremely important. All students are asked to pay the voluntary contribution amount to keep the program moving and are welcome to make installments. Moneys requested go for a wide variety of things including sheet music, repairs, concert attire, transportation, festival fees, instruments and a variety of equipment. All students should plan to contribute to fundraising efforts when they arise. The contribution amount varies by class and will be addressed separately once the budget is reviewed. As other events arise, separate contributions may be requested to cover them.

Recommended Equipment:

All Musicians:

- Tuner/Metronome Combo - (Korg TM60 or Snark SN8 clip-on tuner)
- Pencils (only write on music in pencil)

Woodwind Players:

- At least 3 quality reeds (at least 2.5 strength but 3 is preferred)
- Reed guard or reed case to protect the reeds (Rico Reedgard IV or Reed case w/ humidity pack)
- Silk swabs to swab spit out of instrument after each time playing or Pad-saver
- Cork grease

Brass Players:

- Valve Oil (Hetman Synthetic or Yamaha Synthetic)
- Slide Grease
- Slide Oil (trombones only – Recommend Yamaha Slide Oil)
- Brush Snake for monthly cleanings of inside of instrument

Percussionists:

- Metronome (Boss DB-30)
- Concert Snare Sticks (Vic Firth SD1, Pro Mark SD1 or IP CL1 or LD1)
- Medium Yarn Marimba Mallets (Vic Firth M182, Pro Mark JW3 or IP WU3)
- General Timpani Mallets (Vic Firth T1 or ProMark T1)
- Drum Pad (Vic Firth Stock Pad, RealFeel 12D or Off World Invader)
- Stick bag to keep your sticks in one place

String Players:

- An extra set of strings, especially your top two strings
- Appropriate rosin
- Wood cloth or cotton cloth

Transportation Policies:

Students are not to drive themselves or classmates to any events that take place off campus during school hours. Students will also need to make sure they arrive at the appropriate call time for any rehearsal or performance that takes place outside of school hours (such as evening concerts at the RCHS PAC or at other OUHSD sites). All students will need to have a permission slip on file for any events that require school sponsored transportation (usually bus).

Concert, Dress Rehearsal, or Guest Clinician Attendance:

To maintain appropriate rigor for any high school performing arts class students will need to attend various events outside of class time. The most important of these is actual performances. These are only excused for very specific circumstances (almost always require prior notification to the director) and if excused a student will be required to do a make-up assignment to maintain their grade. Dress rehearsals and visits from guest clinicians have essentially the same policy as concerts. Other rehearsals and sectionals outside of class time are mandatory but have their own policies (see next section).

- *Examples of excused absences:* sick, funeral, wedding of immediate family member (please provide 2 weeks notice), or religious events (please provide 2 weeks notice).
- *Examples of unexcused absences:* lack of transportation, too much homework, college classes, SAT/AP prep classes, jobs, family vacations, sports commitments or other musical/theatrical performances that have not been previously discussed with the Director.
- *Sports commitments* (always keep Coaches and Music Directors informed of needs/schedules): games are more important than practices/rehearsals but music concerts/festivals/competitions are more important than games. However, if a playoff game conflicts with a performance there must be a discussion with the director to make the least disruptive decision.

Sectionals/rehearsals outside of class time (not official “Dress Rehearsals”):

Some musical content cannot be addressed to the fullest just in the classroom. For example, sectionals may be needed or rehearsals for ensembles that do not involve the whole class (for example, just strings, or students focusing on jazz). Attendance at these is mandatory (similar policies to sports practices) and the dates/times posted on the Music Department calendar (on the rchsmusic.com website). However, there are plenty of legitimate excuses for absences. In order to maximize attendance every effort is made to consult with students about their own attendance limitations.

- *Examples of excused absences:* any other school related class such as a sports team, Acadeca, Marching Band, American Sign Language (after school), a community college class, documented tutoring appointments, doctor’s appointments, or anything listed as excused for concerts. It is also understood that if a sectional is requested on relatively short notice then attendance would officially be optional.
- *Examples of unexcused absences:* (These may affect grade, however, exceptions will be made on a case-by-case basis.) Part-time jobs, transportation issues, study sessions with friends, too much homework, rehearsals with groups that are not part of a school class, or sports practices that are not part of a school sport.

Usage of music facilities or equipment by non-music department clubs or individuals at RCHS :

If students that have a club or group that is not part of a music class wish to use RCHS music equipment, the appropriate paperwork must be on file since they may be held liable for damages that occur. Since the use of music instruments adds to the wear and tear a financial contribution may be requested. Permission to use an instrument in the band room does not mean students can move the instrument from the band room. If an instrument is desired for use outside of the band room this must be addressed in advance with the Music Director. Students should be aware that certain instruments, such as percussion, may need adjustments prior to concerts and therefore the club may not be allowed to rehearse with them for a certain window of time.

The following must be addressed and paperwork filed with the Music Director in order to use any instrument that is owned by the music department.

- Instrument use form
- Signed last page of the Music Department Handbook
- Must demonstrate knowledge of how to care for the instrument they are using to the Music Director
- Approval of the club advisor, if the club advisor is not the Music Director
- If borrowing another student's instrument that is stored in the band room, the owner of that instrument must inform the Music Director in writing (electronically okay) of the situation prior to student borrowing it.

Formal Concert Attire for Concert Band and Vocal Ensemble:

For any concert where "Formal Attire" is requested students need to wear either Option 1 or 2. An opportunity to purchase these will be made available.

- *Option 1:* Black tuxedo, white shirt, black bow tie, black dress shoes and black socks. Tuxedo option will be made available for order.
- *Option 2:* Floor-length black dress with $\frac{3}{4}$ length sleeve. Black/off-black hose, black dress shoes or flats (please, no heels above 1"), simple jewelry allowed as well as subtle makeup. No décolletage (low necklines), bare shoulders, or midriffs. Primary dress option will be made available for order.

Other Policies:

- Rehearsals are not the same as practice. Practice is what you do on your own. Rehearsals are with the whole ensemble. To be successful as an ensemble both are necessary.
- *Important:* Students must have a minimum of a 2.0 GPA to participate in performances. Leadership must maintain a 2.5 GPA to be active in any leadership position.
- If you want to put a lock on your locker in the instrument storage room you must purchase a lock from the bookkeeper (same locks PE uses) and register the serial number and combination with the Music Director. No other locks may be used and are subject to removal. This is a school wide safety policy.
- NO EATING IN THE INSTRUMENT STORAGE OR PRACTICE ROOMS!!!
- If students wish to check out a school instrument they need to fill out an instrument checkout form (must be signed by parent/guardian). If a school instrument is damaged please bring it to the director first. WE CANNOT REIMBURSE FOR REPAIRS.
- Also, we have a saying in the Band Room since we acquire a wonderful library of new percussion instruments: "If it's not a table, then IT'S NOT A TABLE." Please do not rest things such as books, computers, food, other instruments, or lean on the percussion instruments.

Grades are based on the following criteria:

Class Participation (25%) This grade is determined by your enthusiastic daily participation, attendance, and rehearsal etiquette. Come to class with your instrument, music, and a pencil. You are expected to sing/play in class to the best of your ability. If there is an extenuating circumstance for which you are unable to perform, you must speak with the teacher prior to the beginning of class. These factors may affect your grade: not following setup/teardown procedures, chewing gum, eating, drinking anything other than water, using a phone at the wrong time, class disruptions, negative attitudes, music left at home, and unexcused absences.

Paperwork, Tests and Quizzes (written or playing) (25%) This grade is determined through sight-reading evaluations, music memorization, worksheets, quizzes and tests of musical knowledge, and individual or group in-class performance assessments. *It is also a chance to get credit for timely filing of paperwork.* Music should be maintained and marked appropriately (with pencil) throughout the rehearsal process. Music folders may be checked on a regular basis to see if they are being properly maintained.

Performances, Sectionals, and Dress Rehearsals (50%) This grade is based on attendance, preparation, and participation in concerts (or any time we play outside the classroom). Concerts are one of the most rewarding parts of this class! Please reference Mr. Sachs' website calendar for all required concerts. You may be excused from a concert by receiving approval from the director at least two weeks (fourteen calendar days) in advance or by verifiable emergency. Approval for EXCUSED ABSENCES IS RARE and is granted at the discretion of the director. If a performance is missed for an excused absence, you will be assigned an alternate assignment, selected by the teacher, in lieu of the concert. It will be due one week after the time of the concert. *Students will be given ample advance notification of any required concerts and date changes are extremely rare.* As a concert or dress rehearsal approaches it is important to be mindful of any notifications regarding call or performance time.

Dress rehearsals have the same policies as concerts except for dress code. Generally you wear the same clothes you would wear to school but some dress rehearsals may require full concert attire to assess lighting or to help with photos for press releases. The Dress Rehearsals are in place to address specific musical and logistical aspects of an upcoming performance. They can also help settle nerves! Like concerts, if a dress rehearsal is missed for an excused absence, there will be a research project assigned reflecting the course requirement due shortly thereafter.

If you have any questions feel free to contact me via phone or email,

Jon Sachs
jon.sachs@oxnardunion.org
Music Director
Rancho Campana High School

Print just this last page, sign it and return it to Mr. Sachs

By signing this page, you have stated that you have read and will abide by all policies stated in the Music Department Handbook 2019-20 (found on the Music Department Website: rchsmusic.com) that apply to whichever ensemble and/or role you plan to participate in. If you have any questions about the Handbook, please bring them to the attention of the Music Director. Most importantly, you promise to work hard, make friends and have a good time.

I have read the RCHS Music Department Handbook 2019-20:

Student Printed Name _____

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Ensemble(s) _____

Leadership Position(s) (if applicable) _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____