

**ACADEMICS PLUS
CHARTER SCHOOL**



**MUSIC DEPARTMENT
HANDBOOK
2009-2010**

Dear parents and students,

Welcome to the APCS Music Department! This is an exciting time for us! Each year, the music department and the music ensembles at APCS keep getting bigger and better! This year is going to be great! We will have two jazz bands and two choirs!

This year APCS has added a second music teacher for K-8th grade general music, Mr. Seth Seaton. He will also be team teaching the beginning 7th/8th grade jazz band with me. Please welcome Mr. Seaton to APCS when you get a chance!

Because our music department is getting bigger, we have put together a music department handbook. This handbook will contain information on grading, concerts, expectations and much more. Please read through it carefully, particularly the information concerning the ensemble that you or your student is participating in. This is our first handbook, so if you have any questions, always feel free to ask! Have a GREAT YEAR!

Mrs. Pool
APCS 7-12 Music Teacher
Summer.pool@academicsplus.org
(501) 743-6068

Mr. Seaton
APCS K-8 Music Teacher
Seth.seaton@academicsplus.org

APCS mission statement:

The mission of Academics Plus Charter School is to provide an academically rigorous college preparatory program for all students regardless of race, ethnic origins, national background or socioeconomic level. All children can learn when challenged by high expectations. We believe that attitude, behavior, effort and attendance, as well as ability, determine academic success.

Fine Arts Department

The mission of the Fine Arts Department of Academics Plus Charter School is to promote right brain thinking, as well as an appreciation of visual and performing arts. Students will expand their knowledge of fine arts through historical studies, cultures, and by applied and performing creative arts. Creative problem solving will extend into multiple disciplinary areas of study.

The following are descriptions of the ensembles here at APCS:

APCS Mixed Chorus: The mixed chorus will perform choral literature from a variety of styles and periods, both sacred and secular. Chorus members will improve on vocal technique, musicianship, sight-singing skills and music theory. The Mixed Chorus will perform at concerts, regional auditions, APCS Renaissance Faire and in regional choral festivals. Attendance to all rehearsals and performances is required. Prerequisite: by audition only. Grades 9th -12th.

7th and 8th Grade Choir: This choir is a performance-based class. Emphasis will be placed on developing effective rehearsal skills as well as knowledge of basic vocal technique, reading music notation, part-singing, performance and team work. This choir will study, rehearse and perform a variety of styles of music, which will include both sacred and secular works. Core Knowledge Music Curriculum will also be included in this class. Attendance to all rehearsals and performances is required. Prerequisite: by audition only.

High School Jazz Band: The APCS Jazz Band is a music ensemble based off of big band instrumentation. This ensemble will perform a variety of styles in music, not limiting to just jazz and rock. Students will gain a basic understanding in the art of improvisation. They will perform at APCS basketball games as the pep band. Attendance to all rehearsals and performances is required. Prerequisite: by audition only. Grades 9th -12th.

7th and 8th Grade Beginner Jazz Band: The Beginner APCS Jazz Band is a music ensemble based off of big band instrumentation. Students will gain an understanding in effective rehearsal skills, reading music, playing an instrument, and team work. This ensemble will study, rehearse and perform a variety of styles of music not limiting to just jazz music. Core Knowledge Music Curriculum will also be included in this class. Attendance to all rehearsals and performances is required. Prerequisite: by audition only.

Grade point requirement:

Our music programs are part of the Arkansas School Band and Orchestra Association and the Arkansas Choral Directors Association. Both of these state music programs are under the rules of the Arkansas Activities Association. The AAA requires that all students that are to participate in regional and state events are to have a 2.0 grade point average.

APCS requires that students have a 2.5 grade point average to participate in AAA activities. Because this is the first year that we are implementing this policy, choir and band students that have a grade point average below 2.5 will be put on probation until the second semester. Probation requires students to attend and participate in class time, rehearsals, and at APCS performances, but the student may not participate in regional or state events.

Music Standards and Class objectives:

National Music Standards:

1. Singing, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.
2. Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.
3. Improvising melodies, variations, and accompaniments.
4. Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines.
5. Reading and notating music.
6. Listening to, analyzing, and describing music.
7. Evaluating music and music performances.
8. Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts.
9. Understanding music in relation to history and culture.

General music ensemble objectives:

- Students will gain and develop musical knowledge, including but not limited to: reading music notation, correct breathing, and instrumental/vocal technique.
- Through solo and group performances, students will develop and improve in rhythmic, music expression, tuning, and musical performance skills.
- To instill a love and deeper understanding of the performance, theory, history, and aesthetics of all music that will enrich their lives regardless of their future professions.
- Students will understand aspects of improvisation.
- Students will understand different styles of music and its performance.
- Students will successfully perform a variety repertoire for the school and community.
- Students will acquire the skills and knowledge needed to be a positive contributing member of a music ensemble (i.e. TEAMWORK!)
- Most importantly: students will experience and appreciate the unique joy and satisfaction that comes from creating music with other people!

Rules and Expectations:

Rehearsal/Classroom Rules and Expectations:

- Students are to come in to class ready to listen and participate in singing or playing.
- Students will give respect and cooperation to others in the classroom. Leave any drama at the door!
- Students will work to improve themselves as musicians.
- Students will refrain from food, drink and gum during rehearsals.

Electronic Devices: All cell phones, MP3 players, and other electronic devices will be confiscated if found out in the open during class/school time. This is your one and only warning.

Music Room Use Expectations:

Although we are a small school and our music room is not of the highest caliber, it is still the best that we have and a lot of work has been put into it. Please respect the room and its equipment, for it is what we use for rehearsals and classroom work.

- Other than keeping your instrument in the room, nothing else should be left here. This is NOT a locker room. If you leave your bag, purse or other items in this room because you do not want to carry them around then, it is not my problem if they end up in a trash can. ☺
- If you move something, put it back. This includes chairs, music stands and music instruments. (During class, lunchtime, before or after school)
- The pianos and keyboards are not here for your entertainment. They are for the working musicians who use them in class and rehearsal. **Permission must be granted before you can play on them.**
- We are very happy when you want to “hang-out” in the music room before school, lunch and after school. But, please do not bring in friends or yourself if you are not here to either rehearse, study, or keep a polite conversation. Anything more will be a dismissal from the room.
- Trash goes into a trash can. Not on the floor.

Travel Guidelines

The music ensembles will travel on occasion for school business, performances, and fun trips. Student conduct is expected to be at the highest level on any trip.

1. Students must travel to events and return from events on the bus. Any student wishing to arrive or leave with his/her parent, must notify the bus chaperone in writing prior to the event. A decision will be rendered based on the circumstances provided.
2. Students must have all necessary forms completed and returned in order to travel on any trip with the band.
3. While on the bus, students will:
 - Remain seated at all times
 - Sit properly in a forward position
 - Keep the bus clean of food, drinks, and debris
 - Keep all body parts inside the bus
 - Only use a headset when listening to music
 - Remain silent when addressed by person in charge on the bus
 - Refrain from loud, boisterous talking, screaming, whistling, etc.
 - No public displays of affection.

If any of the above rules are broken, then director will take disciplinary measures.

Music Department Parent Responsibilities:

1. Encourage regular home practice, for it is important to the student’s grade.
2. Provide adequate maintenance and accessories for the instrument.
3. Participate in as many music boosters meetings, fundraisers and concerts as you can.
4. Provide transportation to and from after school rehearsals, concerts and other activities.

5. Pay all required fees in a timely manner
6. Read and review the APCS Music Department Handbook.

APCS MUSIC DEPARTMENT GRADING:

APCS Grading scales:

7th and 8th Grading Scale:

A=93-100
 B=85-92
 C=77-84
 D=70-76
 F=0-69

High School Grading Scale:

A=90-100
 B=80-89
 C=70-79
 D=60-69
 F=0-59

Grading per 9 weeks:

Playing/singing tests: 275 points

Written assignments and quizzes: 75 points

Daily participation/attitude: 425 points

All performances/auditions: 100 points each

Peer grading (high school only): about 140 points

Semester Exam: 100 points

Practice records (beginner ensembles): 135 points

Performance tests: At least once a week, time will be set aside for one or more playing/singing tests. These tests will come from your exercises, your concert music, or all-region audition music. Although some of the criteria to be used for grading may be changed, grading will be on good tone, and correct rhythms and notes.

Written assignments and quizzes: Although most of the time we will be singing or playing, we will have a lot of music fundamentals, terms and concepts. Sometimes this will be in the form of reading hand-outs or class work. Expect a non-singing/playing assignment or quiz at least once a week. This is not busy work. These assignments are to improve you as musicians and the music ensemble as a whole.

Daily Participation: Class participation is one of the most important aspects of your ensemble. Rehearsal is work; therefore, you receive a grade for it. Students are expected to participate and put their best foot forward. You receive 10 points daily. Failure to do any of the following leads to point deduction (2 points per infraction):

- Promptness - Be on time and be ready to sing or play. Not tardy.
 - Choir members must be in place with materials by the bell
 - Band members will have until 2 minutes after the bell to be in place, have instrument ready, stand and music ready.
- Self Discipline - No talking when your section is not singing or playing.
- Respect and Courtesy - No talking when the director is talking.

- Posture - When you sing or play use correct posture. Stand and sit tall.
- Preparedness- Binder with music, exercises and pencil (random binder checks will be done)
- Focus and work- participation in warm-ups, exercises to the best of your ability. NO Music ensemble IS BETTER THAN ITS REHEARSALS!!!!!! Rehearse as if it were a concert.
- Refraining from gum, drink and food. (water is allowed)

If you have lost all of your points for the day and you are still violating the above participation guidelines, then you will be written up.

Auditions/Performances: Being prepared, being in the correct concert attire, proper concert etiquette, and doing your best are all in consideration for your Audition/Performance/Concert grade. Performance/Concert grade includes: proper concert attire, being at concert at requested time, having your music, your instrument (band), performing your best, staying professional during performance. 20 points deducted per offense.

Peer grading: (High school only) Because you are an ensemble and in an ensemble every member is as important as the next, it becomes a struggle when only a small portion of the group are the only ones really working. I am hoping that if you are grading each other, the peer pressure will encourage everyone to work as a team even better and keep everyone practicing. Technically, we are only as good as our weakest member. If this does not go well the first 9 weeks, then I reserve the right to take this grade out.

Practice records: (beginning ensembles) Students in the beginning jazz band and choir will be expected to turn in practice records weekly. Practice records help students start and keep good practice habits. Students will be required to practice 60 minutes a week at home first semester and 75 minutes a week second semester . These practice records need to be signed by both student and parent.

Semester Exam: You will have a written and performing exam at the end of each semester. This exam will take place during finals week. It will be comprehensive/cumulative exam.

Absenteeism: If you are absent from class, and it is an excused absence you have two days to make up any missed assignments or tests. Each ensemble has its own make-up work folder to replace your participation grade. To replace your participation grade of 10 points, you must do this work.

Suspensions: If you have done something not becoming of a student and have been suspended for it, then you will not be able to make up any missed assignments during your suspension. You will receive a zero in your daily grade and any tests or assignments that were given during that time.

Extra Credit: Extra points will be given for attendance at or involvement in community music performances. Write your name on the program and turn it in WITHIN A WEEK of the performance to receive your points, 10 for participation and 5 for observations/attendance. You may have 2 extra credit events per semester.

EXTRA REHEARSALS AND SECTIONALS

It may become necessary to schedule additional rehearsals and sectionals. These will be posted well in advance to allow students adequate time to adjust their schedules. Extra rehearsals are required and may be held before or after school hours. If a student has a conflict and cannot attend an extra rehearsal or sectional, they must notify the director BEFORE THE REHEARSAL

Concert Make-Up Assignment

You are EXPECTED to attend ALL PERFORMANCES. Performing is the big test for ensembles. Why would you spend hours and days learning and rehearsing if you were not going to show what you have worked so hard to do? Why would you let the others in your ensemble down when they have been working with you? With that said, emergencies do happen. If you cannot for any reason attend a concert, you need to get an excuse note to the director as soon as possible. Then you will complete the following:

Complete the two activities explained below. Your topic for both activities must be a classical composer of your choice. Use the same composer for both activities. All work must be typed and double spaced in 12-point font. All work is due no later than three weeks after the concert date.

- I. Read about your composer in at least four different sources. At least two of your sources must be printed (i.e. books, encyclopedias, etc.) Then, complete a bibliography/works cited page for these sources.
- II. Complete a 1,200 word essay about the life of the composer you have chosen to study. Include information you have gathered from your research. Your essay should have a standard expository format with an introductory paragraph, several body paragraphs containing information about your composer (organized chronologically), and a conclusion paragraph summarizing the main accomplishments of the composer's life. The paper MUST be in APCS MLA style: <http://www.academicsplus.org/parents-students/APCS%20MLA%20Style%20Guide.pdf>

If you miss two required performances, a parent/teacher/student conference will be held immediately to discuss your future in this music department.

PERFORMANCE ATTIRE:

7th and 8th grade ensembles:

7/8 Women:	7/8 Men:
APCS Logo White button down (oxford) shirt Long sleeved (tucked in)	APCS Logo white button down (oxford) shirt Long sleeved (tucked in)
APCS Uniform Khaki skirt (APCS regulation length or longer)	APCS Uniform khaki pants (no cargos!)
Solid color white socks or white/neutral stockings/tights	Solid color white, black, brown socks
APCS Uniform belt	APCS Uniform belt
APCS Women's necktie (navy)	APCS Men's Necktie
Solid color: white, brown, black DRESS shoes (either 2 inch heel or lower)	Solid color: brown or black DRESS Shoes
Jewelry and make-up must follow APCS guidelines; Hair: Clean and out of eyes	Jewelry must follow APCS guidelines; Hair: Clean and out of eyes

Your concert attire needs to be CLEAN and WRINKLE FREE!

No Tennis shoes or flip-flops allowed!

Remember this is part of your performance grade!

High school ensembles:

High School Women	High School Men
White button down Oxford shirt (tucked in)	APCS White button down Oxford shirt (tucked in)
APCS Uniform Khaki skirt (APCS regulation length or longer)	APCS Uniform Khaki Pants
Solid white socks or white/neutral stockings/tights	Solid white, brown or black socks
APCS uniform belt	APCS uniform belt
APCS uniform neck tie	APCS uniform neck tie
Solid color (White, Brown or Black) DRESS shoes (2 inch heel or lower)	Solid color (Brown or Black) DRESS shoes
Jewelry and make-up must following APCS guidelines; HAIR: Clean and out of eyes	Jewelry must following APCS; HAIR: Clean and out of eyes
APCS NAVY BLAZER	APCS NAVY BLAZER

Your concert attire needs to be CLEAN and WRINKLE FREE!

No Tennis shoes or flip-flops allowed!

Remember this is part of your performance grade!

<http://www.customschooluniforms.com/?school=APC&itemcat=Blazer>

<http://www.customschooluniforms.com/?school=APC&itemcat=Tie>

If you are not able to afford the required concert attire, please speak to a director IMMEDIATELY so that assistance can be given BEFORE a performance comes up!

APCS MUSIC DEPARTMENT QUICK CALENDAR:
2009-2010

Music Boosters Meeting: September 3rd (Thursday) 6 pm

Music Department Video Scavenger Hunt Fun Night: September TBA

Junior High Choir All-Region Auditions: October 10th

High School Choir All-Region Auditions: October 31st

High School Jazz Band All-Region Auditions: November 16th

High School Region Honor Choir Clinic: November 21st

High School Region Jazz Band Clinic: November 20th-21st

Children's Hospital Field Trip and Performance: Early December

Winter Concert: December TBA

Caroling for Cans: December (last week of school)

Black History Month Concert: February TBA

High School All State Auditions: February 5th and 6th

Region Choir Concert Performance Assessment: March 4th -6th

State Choir CPA: April 15th -17th

Jazz Band: Region Solo and Ensemble: April 19th -20th

APCS Renaissance Faire: April 30th??

Magic Springs Music Festival: May 2010-A Saturday-TBA

Spring Concert: May TBA

APCS Graduation: May 21st

Each ensemble will get a more exact calendar. But, it is important that you support the other ensembles in this department.

Outside-of-rehearsal-support-organizations:

APCS Music Boosters:

The APCS Music Boosters is a group of volunteer parents, family members and friends to find ways to support the music department through activities and fundraisers. The Music Boosters are here to support all the music activities from Kindergarten through 12th grade. The future of the music department depends on the strength of the school-wide music program, not just the upper grades. Delegation will be made to split up duties and support for certain aspects of the music department (specific ensembles, elementary, general music, etc).

APCS Student Music Council:

The APCS Student Music Council is a group of elected students who will form an alliance between the four performing ensembles at APCS. They are a source of spirit and pride to the ensembles, and they perform valuable functions for the department.

Elections will be at the beginning of September. Elected terms will run one year:

The council will be composed of a total of 10 elected positions:

Two co-presidents:

High School Jazz Band President

High School Chorus President

General responsibilities/requirements:

- Organize and schedules council meetings.
- Oversee the general meeting and voting.
- Active in trying to further our cause.
- Report any problems or suggestions to the director
- Help organize events and fundraisers. Must work with Music Boosters.
- Must be a Junior or Senior with at least two years in said ensemble

One Secretary/librarian:

General responsibilities/requirements:

- to take minutes of the council meetings, and give a copy to director
- 2009-2010 year will be from Mixed Chorus, will alternate every year after.
- Must be a 9th -12th grader. Voting member of the council
- Help organize and decorate the music room/choose quote of the week

Jazz Band treasurer

Choir treasurer:

- Each treasurer is responsible for knowing the funds made by fundraisers for their said group
- Must be a 9th -12th grader with at least one year in said ensemble. Voting member.
- Must work with Music Boosters
- Help organize fundraisers.

One promotions/alumni secretary:

- To make flyers/signage for concerts and events to be distributed through the community. Must work with Music Boosters.
- To promote concerts and events to Maumelle Monitor, APCS News You Can Use. Take pictures at events to use in yearbook, or memory book/video.
- Will help contact alumni for music events
- 2009-2010 will be from Jazz Band will alternate every year after.
- Must be a 9th -12th grader. Voting member of the council

Two representatives from each 7/8 grade ensemble (4):

- Represent the beginner ensembles.
- Voting members of the council

Additional:

Fundraising:

Fundraising is necessary to keep any kind of program going. When the music department or your ensemble presents and hosts a fundraiser, we expect you to help out with the fundraiser to the best of your ability. We typically have at least two major fundraisers, one in the fall and one in the spring.

Helpful websites:

We believe that learning about music should never stop when the students go home! Here are some websites about music, choir, jazz, and much more:

<http://www.musictheory.net/>

<http://www.teoria.com/>

<http://www.jazzonline.com/>

<http://www.dci.org/>

<http://www.redhotjazz.com/>

<http://www.birdlandjazz.com/>

<http://www.menc.org>

<http://42explore.com/jazz.htm>

<http://www.acappellau.com/>

<http://www.choralnet.org/>

<http://www.anuna.ie/>

<http://www.ifcm.net>

<http://www.huutajat.org/>

<http://www.asboa.org>

<http://www.arkcda.org>

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

I have read the APCS Music Department Handbook. I understand what is expected of me in rehearsals, grading, performances, and trips. I understand that not abiding by this handbook, that my grade or future in the APCS Music Department will be in jeopardy.

STUDENT'S SIGNATURE: _____

Student's printed name: _____

Date signed: _____

I have also read the APCS Music Department Handbook and understand what is expected of me, the parents. I will also help my student/son/daughter to abide by the rules and requirements so that he/she can have the best learning experience possible.

Parent/guardian signature:

Date signed: _____

Contact Information:

Student's name: _____

Do you work? Where? How often?

Student's email address: _____

Student's Cell phone number: (Parents must initial for approval/high school only):

Parent's/ Guardian's Name(s): _____

Cell phone number(s): _____

Home Phone number(s): _____

Home address/Mailing address: _____

Parent's email address: _____

This information will remain confidential and will only be used by Mrs. Pool and Mr. Seaton to contact parents and students regarding music activities. Email addresses will allow us to send permission forms, concert reminders and other information directly to families, improving our communication.