

St. John's Performing Arts

Department Handbook

Mission Statement: The St. John's Lutheran School Performing Arts Department exists to nurture students' artistic abilities through standards-based instruction and give glory to God through hands-on learning and performance.

School Music Curriculum

K-4 General Music: Weekly general music classes are offered to students starting in kindergarten. With a balanced focus on both musical literacy and active performance, all students learn to sing songs both religious and secular, including seasonal, folk, and multicultural pieces. Students also get the opportunity to play drums, mallets, and other classroom instruments. Instruction in solfege and rhythm syllables, along with movement and choreography work, are incorporated throughout. In 4th grade, students learn to play the recorder and take center stage in the lead roles of our annual fall musical.

5-8 Performance Ensembles: In 5th grade, all students take a choir class, and students may also choose to start band. 6th-8th grade students select to participate in choir, band, or both. We currently offer a 6th-8th grade Advanced Band, a Lower Choir that consists of 5th-6th grade, and a 7th-8th grade Upper Choir

In beginning band, students learn how to play flute, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, trombone, baritone, or percussion. All band ensembles prepare quality wind band literature of both secular and religious nature. Band classes meet twice a week. In choir, students learn the basics of solfege singing, work on expressive performance, and sing unison, two-part, and some mixed literature that are both secular and religious in nature. Choir classes meet once a week.

Church Music Ministry Opportunities

Jaguar Singers gives students an additional musical experience during the school week and encourages greater collaboration between school children and the church congregation through regular performances in weekend worship services. This year there will be two Jaguar Singers groups, Jr. Jaguars, which will be open to interested 1st-4th graders, and Sr. Jaguars, which will be open to interested 5th-8th graders. Jr. Jaguars will rehearse on Mondays from 3:00-4:00pm and Sr. Jaguars will rehearse on Tuesdays from 3:00-4:00pm. All department attendance policies apply and notice is required at least 24 hours in advance for any absences from scheduled performances.

SPOTLIGHT! Community Drama Club & Theater Troupe is offered to interested students to discuss special theater topics, play improvisatory acting games, and prepare performances for chapel, worship services, and community events. Membership is open to families in the school, church, and community. SPOTLIGHT will rehearse on Fridays from 3:00-4:00pm

Brass Ensemble is offered to interested 6th-8th brass students and a youth **Bell Choir** is offered to 4th-8th grade students interested in melody chimes. Brass ensemble will rehearse on Thursdays from 3:00-4:00pm and Bell choir will have rehearsals on Sundays from 3:00-4:00pm (time of rehearsal may change due to church schedule conflicts) to prepare for performances in chapel and church worship services.

Performance Attire

For all major band and choir performances, students in 6th-8th grade are asked to wear plain WHITE on top (collared shirt, blouse, or sweater) and plain BLACK on bottom (pants, dress, or appropriate-length skirt). Girls may wear an all-black dress if they prefer. Please make sure that any belt, socks, and shoes are also black. Please no heels.

Elementary students will be given specific concert dress instructions prior to each performance. Jaguar Singers are asked to wear their performance t-shirt for all worship service performances.

Performance Attendance

A primary objective of the performing arts program is to establish and uphold a tradition of excellence. Through standards-based instruction and artistic performances of superior quality, we try to maintain the highest expectations for the students involved. All students undertake the obligation to appear with their music class or performing ensemble in scheduled performances as a part of the school curriculum. Public performances are viewed as a group final exam and the experience cannot be made up. Every student is important to the organization and the absence of even one member causes the need for readjustment in sound production, instrumentation, and/or choreography within the group.

Examples of EXCUSED ABSENCES include:

- Emergency beyond the control of student or parent
- Illness
- Other reasons with advance approval (see below)

Examples of UNEXCUSED ABSENCES:

- Lack of transportation (If transportation is an issue, please contact Miss Stark and we will work something out)
- Non-school sponsored sporting event
- Other reasons not approved in advance (see below)

Students receive a participation-based grade in their respective music class for each required performance, so it is important that any absences are clearly communicated to the music director in writing prior to the said performance.

Under exceptional circumstances, an UNEXCUSED ABSENCE may be EXCUSED when arrangements are made in advance of the performance and approved by the director. (Example: planned family vacation). All excuses must be made in writing to the director by the student's parent/guardian(s).

For major performances (Christmas Collage, Spring Musical, Spring Showcase, Spring Concert), notice is required 14 days in advance of the performance. For minor performances (Jaguar Singers, Lenten services, etc.), notice is required 24 hours in advance of the performance.

In the case of an unexcused absence with no parent communication, the student will receive no more than half-credit for the performance in the grade book. Adherence to this policy will insure that all students will receive the best possible experience. Please make sure all events that involve your student are marked in your family calendar, and avoid scheduling things such as doctor's appointments on those days! Any changes to the calendar will be communicated to parents and students in a timely manner prior to the event.

Use of Equipment and Facilities

Students are expected to maintain and return any school equipment in the condition that they received it and return materials to their designated storage locations after rehearsal. Students are also held responsible for replacement or repair fees if instruments or music are lost, damaged, or broken. Band students are only to store their instruments at school during the day in which their band class meets. St. John's cannot be held responsible for student-owned instruments that are stored in the building outside of school hours if they are lost, stolen, or damaged.

Handbook Family Form

ALL families of students in grades 1-8 are asked to complete this form and return it to Miss Stark at the beginning of the school year.

We have read, understood, and agree to the policies in the Performing Arts Department Handbook as they relate to performance attire, performance attendance, use of equipment and facilities.

We have also reviewed this year's performance calendar and noted all applicable performance dates.

PRINT Student Name(s): _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____