

Finn Academy: An Elmira City Charter School

# Instrumental Music Handbook

2018-2019



Mrs. Skillman  
Instrumental Director

### Required Materials:

- Instrument
- Method Book: Accent on Achievement Book 1, for specific instrument (Percussion: Combined)
- 2 working reeds and cork grease (clarinet and alto saxophone only)
- Valve oil (brass only) and slide grease (trombone only)

## Concert Dates

Spring Concert – May 30th

## Concert Dress/Attire

Please note that the below dress is required for participation in all band concerts/performances.

**Gentlemen:** white button-down dress shirt, black tie, black pants, black dress shoes and socks

**Ladies:** white button-down dress shirt, black pants, black dress shoes and socks

## Concert Attendance

Performances are an integral part of the instrumental music curriculum. As part of an ensemble, scholar attendance is not only required, but vital. Please write down all concert dates at the beginning of the year. If there is an emergency and a scholar is unable to attend, please contact Mrs. Skillman as soon as possible. A written assignment will take the place of the concert, as an opportunity to show the learning that has taken place leading up to the performance.

## Policies and Expectations

Band Participation: Scholars in 4th grade will have the opportunity to take lessons. There is no band in 4th grade. 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders will participate in band if they take lessons. Scholars must attend all rehearsals and be on time. 5<sup>th</sup> grade band is from 8:00am – 8:35am. 6<sup>th</sup> grade band is 7:45am – 8:25am. If there is an unavoidable conflict (i.e. scholar needs to ride the bus), please contact me. If a scholar misses more than 3 rehearsals or does not bring their instrument to the rehearsal, they will be put on probation. That scholar will need to improve their attendance within two weeks, or they will be no longer able to participate.

Instrument Storage: When scholars arrive to school, it is the expectation that they drop their instrument off in the instrumental music classroom. Each instrument has its own section of the room where they belong. This ensures the safety and organization of all instruments.

School-owned Instruments: Finn Academy has a limited number of school-owned instruments. Scholars must receive permission from Mrs. Skillman before borrowing these instruments. A loan application and agreement must be completed by the scholar and parent/guardian before the instrument is granted. Preference will be determined based on the application and the grade level of the scholar. For the 2018-2019 school year, priority will be given to grade levels, as follows: 6<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and then 4<sup>th</sup>. If there are not enough instruments for scholars in grades 4 and 5, and scholars are unable to arrange for use of another instrument, they may have to wait until the following year participate in the instrumental program.

Instrument Switches: If a scholar is having difficulty with an instrument, he/she may have the opportunity to switch to a new instrument during the first month of school or the first week of January. If renting an instrument, families will have to follow the rental company's policy. If using a school-owned instrument, switching an instrument depends on availability. If a scholar does not wish to participate in instrumental music any longer, they can leave the week after a marking period concludes.

Music Care and Folders: Scholars are expected to be responsible for their band music and method book. If a piece of music is lost or damaged, the scholar is responsible for replacing that piece of music. Scholars may only use PENCIL when marking any notation on their music. Scholars must keep their music organized in their band folder throughout the school year.

Rehearsal Procedure: Scholars should follow all rehearsal procedures and routines, including: arriving to lessons and rehearsals on time, entering the band room and immediately assembling their instrument and quietly finding their seat. Reed players are responsible for having at least two playable reeds at all rehearsals, while brass players need to have valve oil accessible. Scholars should prepare for rehearsal by reading the board for the order of the music to be played. When rehearsal begins, talking must stop, and scholars are expected to listen for directions.

Breakfast during band: We ask that, to the extent possible, scholars eat breakfast at home, to ensure that scholars are maximizing their rehearsal time. It is not recommended to eat before playing an instrument; if any food particles end up inside an instrument, there is a good chance mold will grow. If they must eat at school, scholars will use a breakfast timer set to 10 minutes. After that time, all scholars must be fully participating in rehearsal.

Make-Up Lessons: Each scholar must attend one lesson each week. On Monday, Wednesday and Thursday there will be Make-Up lessons offered. These scheduled times are only for scholars who missed their regular lesson. Lessons are a part of the overall grade, so it is crucial for scholars to come weekly.

Practice Requirement: It is essential for scholars to spend time playing their instrument at home, by practicing for at least 50 minutes every week. They can break this down to 10 minutes for 5 days, 15-20 minutes for 3 days, etc. We recommend creating a practice schedule at home that works for your scholar. With consistent practice comes musical improvement.

## Grading Policy

### Grading Breakdown:

30% - Lesson Grade (5 points per week)

30% - Rehearsal Grade (5 points per week)

15% - Performance and/or written test each marking period.

25% - Concert Participation/Project – Primarily this portion of the scholar's grade is attributed to performing in the concert. To continue the scholar's musical education, band members unable to perform in the concert due to illness or emergency may be given

a written assignment of equivalent length. (Example: watch a video of performance and write a critique of the concert)

Please note: Scholars who miss a concert without an approved excuse (i.e. skipping) will receive a grade of 0.

## Discipline:

It is the firm expectation that scholars participating in lessons and band will follow all Finn Academy universal norms. In the event a scholar fails to follow these norms, or does not comply with the instrumental program policies and expectations, the Finn Academy Code of Conduct will be followed, and the following steps may be taken:

1<sup>st</sup> offense: Scholar will have a brief meeting with Mrs. Skillman after rehearsal.

2<sup>nd</sup> offense: Scholar's parent/guardian will be called.

3<sup>rd</sup> offense: Referral will be written, and scholar will be sent to the office for further action.

## Probation Period:

To ensure optimal participation and engagement in the instrumental program, scholars will be placed on a two-week probation period if they:

- Miss 3 or more lessons in a marking period, with the exception of being absent from school.
- Consistently forget their instrument or music on band/lesson days for 3 or more weeks.

If the scholar's behavior does not improve after two weeks, they will be asked to no longer participate. Finn Academy's instrumental program is a privilege, and as such, we ask that scholars need be responsible to fulfill all requirements.