

September 10, 2020

Dear parents and students:

Welcome to the 2020-2021 school year and to the Scarsdale HS Band program! We have a record 185 students enrolled in our band program this year, and there are many opportunities available for extraordinary music making in and out of the classroom (virtually and in other ways). Please review this welcome letter and note the pertinent upcoming dates. Please save a copy of this letter to assist in remembering important dates during our first semester together. This year will be different for all of us, as we navigate through a global pandemic that has lasted for six months as of this writing.

I spent nearly every day of the summer working virtually with other teachers and leaders in the field of instrumental music/band education who are all facing the same challenges we face. Our challenges are not unique to Scarsdale. We are part of a globally-connected network of large performing organizations seeking to provide the very best possible experience for you.

VIRTUAL ORIENTATION – MONDAY EVENING, SEPTEMBER 14, 2020

You are invited to a Zoom webinar Virtual Orientation for the Scarsdale HS Band Program. All students from all classes are invited to this program, which will introduce all band students at Scarsdale HS to the 2020-2021 year, with an overview of plans, 2020-2021 concerts, future travel plans, our lesson programs, and a question/answer session. If you cannot attend virtual orientation, an archival recording will be provided and posted to my Google Classroom.

NOTE: Monday A/B cohort classes for grades 9/10 will not meet on Monday, September 14, 2020, so that we can present the year's plans and orientation agenda to the entire 185-member organization. I would like for all Freshmen/Sophomores scheduled for a virtual class to log-on to test your ZOOM connection during your class time on Monday, September 14, however.

When: Sep 14, 2020 07:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Topic: Scarsdale Bands Virtual Orientation 2020-2021

This webinar is open to both students and parents. By joining, you agree to be recorded for the sole purpose of providing an archival recording to those who may not be able to attend live.

You must register in advance for this webinar at the link below:

https://scarsdaleschools.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_T2__GsLpSLGnS64LZrjxhg

GOOGLE CLASSROOM – Required Sign up information

All students in all classes are required to sign up for Google Classroom, which will be the primary method of delivering the asynchronous portion of our classes. Please see the codes below, and please ensure that you are registered by 7:00 PM on Monday evening, September 14, 2020:

Symphonic Band:

<https://classroom.google.com/c/MTY0MjM1ODI1MTA1?cjc=4r2o5z5>

Class Code: 4r2o5z5

Wind Ensemble:

<https://classroom.google.com/c/MTY0MjM1ODI1MTUw?cjc=pqyul6l>

Class Code: pqyul6l

Percussion Ensemble:

<https://classroom.google.com/c/MTY0MjM1ODI1MTU5?cjc=5o5ek77>

Class Code: 5o5ek77

Jazz Band:

<https://classroom.google.com/c/MTY0MjM1ODI1MTg3?cjc=7fwnqiw>

Class Code: 7fwnqiw

Digital Music:

<https://classroom.google.com/c/MTY0MjM1ODI1MTc1?cjc=r2fsbjo>

Class Code: r2fsbjo

Instrumental Ensembles (all sections):

<https://classroom.google.com/c/MTY0MjM1ODI1MjA5?cjc=ympkg4s>

Class Code: ympkg4s

NEWS OVERVIEW FOR 2020-2021 (THIS WILL ALL BE DISCUSSED IN OUR VIRTUAL ORIENTATION)

- **First Semester – Virtual Work and Virtual Concert**

All of my classes will be meeting as a virtual class during the first semester of 2020-2021. You will attend synchronous (live) sessions at home on a “flipped” A/B cohort schedule. I will discuss this process, explain it in detail, and provide you with all the tools to be completely successful during the Virtual Orientation. It is important to note that during the time of your originally scheduled in-person class, you will be reporting to the Brewster Road commons area (the “old” commons) rather than the Gyms as other classes are doing. Please check your email regularly for any changes that may occur.

VARSITY BAND 2020-2021

- Varsity Band will be offered with a virtual option that involves contributing to school-life, school spirit, school community, and social/emotional wellbeing. If you wish to sign up for Varsity Band, please see your Dean. This item will be discussed in our Virtual Orientation.

If you are an Honors Wind Ensemble member, you are generally expected to contribute to Varsity Band unless you have a sport that is meeting during the fall semester. If you are a Symphonic Band member, you may sign up for Varsity Band as long as you can submit the video/audio materials needed for the recordings and virtual support for our school community that we will be providing. To sign up for Varsity Band, please email your Dean. The music is very easy and fun, and it is a great opportunity to provide community service to the school and to support our outstanding athletic teams. You will receive

an automatic A+ grade (4.4 GPA) and separate class credit for “Varsity Band” for participating in Varsity Band.

CONCERTS AND PROCEDURES

All members of Symphonic Band, Jazz Band, Instrumental Ensembles, and Wind Ensemble will perform a virtual concert as the culminating experience of your first-semester work in our courses. Because this will not be a traditional, large, in-person concert, you are not required to purchase the usual concert attire. When we return to full, 100% in-person instruction with 100% in-person concerts, our usual concert attire policy will apply. Please save this section for future use: There are two options you may choose: 1) a black tuxedo, or 2) a black concert dress. Please visit the Performing Arts Department webpage at <https://www.scarsdaleschools.k12.ny.us/Page/13812> for more information on how to order and pay for concert attire.

EARLY MORNING REHEARSALS – HOW THESE WILL BE HANDLED VIRTUALLY

Our band classes (in a normal, pre-COVID world) hold early morning rehearsals from 7:25 AM – 7:55 AM before school weekly. This is part of the **curricular requirement** for the course (it is not optional), and it ensures that we have all students together at least once per week. Early morning rehearsals only run from early October to early December during the first half of the year. During the second half of the year, they run from mid-January to late April. In lieu of an early-morning requirement, we will be hosting special seminars (“webinar” format). All freshmen will attend “Freshman Band Seminar” and receive the attendance credit that you would have received for our early morning program. Upper classmen will serve as volunteers to present musical excerpts and materials to the Freshman Band Seminar in an effort to foster the sense of community and family that is so important in our band program. The early morning program will not resume until we return to 100% in-person instruction and 100% in-person concerts.

SPECIAL EVENTS

I have arranged for internationally-renowned musicians from the New York Philharmonic, the Metropolitan Opera, the New World Symphony, Columbia University, NYU, and the Boston Symphony Orchestra to present special master classes and seminars. These will be announced at least 3-4 weeks in advance, and you will be excused from your regular synchronous class.

SECTIONAL PROGRAM

Symphonic Band will continue our sectional program (a once-weekly small section rehearsal that separates brass, woodwinds, and percussion). Details on this will be shared in the Virtual Orientation.

APPLIED MUSIC CREDIT

All students are strongly encouraged to take private lessons so that you may excel at the highest level on your instrument. If you are taking private lessons regularly, you may also receive credit for Applied Music. Applied Music will provide you with a 4.4 grade in band (A+, versus the usual 4.0, A). Please visit the Performing Arts Department website at <https://www.scarsdaleschools.k12.ny.us/Page/13784> to sign up for Applied Music. I do not administer this program, so all questions should be sent to the Department at 914-721-2485. It is your responsibility to get the forms/paperwork in to the Department office in time to receive credit. The lessons may be conducted virtually or in-person as each student prefers.

WINTER CONCERT

Our first public concert of the year will be **Tuesday evening, December 15th, 2020 at 8:00 PM** and will be held as a free webcast concert. The concert will feature the Scarsdale Jazz Band, Symphonic Band, select solo works from students and small ensembles, and the Scarsdale HS Honors Wind Ensemble.

SPRING CONCERT

Our final public concert of the year will be **Tuesday evening, April 20th, 2020 at 8:00 PM**. The format of this concert will be decided by the end of the first semester.

PATRIOTIC PERFORMANCE FOR MEMORIAL DAY/SCARSDALE VFW

All bands normally perform in the annual Scarsdale Memorial Day Parade on Memorial Day. This performance usually serves as 50% of your final 4th quarter grade in Symphonic Band or Honors Wind Ensemble. We will present a special “America, the Beautiful” performance for the members of the Scarsdale American Legion/VFW in order to receive credit for this performance. Please see my teacher page and course syllabus for details.

GRADUATION DAY PERFORMANCE

All bands (grades 9-11) perform in the annual Scarsdale UFSD Graduation on Friday, June 25, 2021. This performance serves as 50% of your final 4th quarter grade in Symphonic Band or Honors Wind Ensemble. At the time of this writing, we are unsure if this will be an in-person or virtual event. But you will be updated as soon as we know. Please see my teacher page and course syllabus for details.

REQUIRED CLASSROOM MATERIALS

All students in Symphonic Band and Honors Wind Ensemble are expected to have an appropriate mouthpiece, reed, or ligature for your instrument. This is your textbook for our class. Please see my teacher page and course syllabus for details.

FRIENDS OF MUSIC AND ART

If you have not joined this organization, please consider doing so. They are a wonderful group of parent volunteers who assist our programs in so many ways. Please visit their website at <http://www.scarsdalearts.org/> to become a member. There will be a FMA open house at a private home (location and time TBA, please see Friends of Music and Art via their webpage for details).

I am so excited for another year of music making. The world and our school may TEMPORARILY look different, but our spirit and enthusiasm for music making is stronger than ever.

Please feel free to reach out to me via email at jnoble@scarsdaleschools.org at any point with any questions. I look forward to seeing you all at our Virtual Orientation on Monday evening, September 14, 2020 at 7:00 PM.

Musically,

Jason Noble

Director of Bands