



The Orchestra

Henry James Memorial School

Directed by JoAnna Ferrari

Being an orchestra member means students will be performing, listening, creating, and responding to music. With thorough instruction and skills practiced with repetition, students will have ability in a fine art. The orchestra becomes an outlet for expression, innovation, and self-assurance. Through musical artistry we forge friendships and become a community of talented musicians.

General Information

Orchestra Classes

There are two 7th Grade orchestras and two 8th Grade orchestras at Henry James Memorial School. The groups are split according to instrumentation and scheduling of other courses. These orchestras meet during school two-three times per week on A, C and E days. For students that desire a more challenging and advanced level of orchestra music, there is our select group, The Henry James Chamber Orchestra. The HJCO (Henry James Chamber Orchestra) is for selected students by audition and meets after school on Thursdays from 2:10-3:35pm.

Sectional Lessons

Students in the orchestra are required to take sectional lessons which meet during different periods throughout the school day. These lessons provide an opportunity to get instrument-specific instruction. In our lessons we focus on correct technique, solos, scales, orchestral repertoire and continue skill-building on our stringed instruments. Lessons are fun, positive and motivate students to practice. Students that take private lessons outside of school may “test” out of taking small group lessons at school. Many students also come in during their homeroom to practice with their friends or receive extra help from Miss Ferrari. They find this is a fun way to practice their music and be with their orchestra friends. Students are excused from their classes to come to their sectional lesson as long as they get their homework assignment ahead of time. Students that have tests scheduled do not miss their class and do not come to their sectional lesson. More details and information about sectional lessons can be found on the HJMS orchestra website.

Practicing

Students are expected to practice at home three-four times a week. In class students are taught that “*ability is skill times 1000.*” This quote by Shinichi Suzuki means that when a skill is taught in class, once they practice it at least 30 times a week, it becomes an ability. Students will be motivated to practice by fun rehearsals in school and performing exciting repertoire. Many students improve quickly in the seventh grade. Students will have assignments and monthly playing exams in front of the “flip” video camera. Their growth is documented by video and written assessments. With an appointment, these videos can be seen at any time by parents.

The Orchestra Website: a vital resource

The orchestra website is an important and supportive resource for parents and students. On the HJMS Orchestra website you will find concert dates, general information about what is happening in orchestra, guest artists, practicing requirements, combined rehearsal information, photos taken in class, and links to the orchestral repertoire being performed in class. Listening to the repertoire is vital for learning and practicing the music. I encourage all parents to please visit my website. Go to: www.simsbury.k12.ct.us and search: JoAnna Ferrari.

Concerts

Concerts are combined in the winter and the spring with the Simsbury High School Orchestra at Simsbury High School Auditorium. Many orchestras will perform and the finale of the concert is a combined 7th-12th grade ***grand finale!*** Concert attendance is mandatory as it is a performing ensemble. Parents are urged to record concert dates in early September on their family calendars and to give notice of any scheduling issues two months prior to the concert. In addition, there is one mandatory dress rehearsal before every concert with all 7th and 8th grade students at Simsbury High School auditorium.

Additional & Special Activities for HJMS Orchestra Members:

- **Northern Regional Middle School Orchestra** – Auditions and Orchestra festival Repertoire and information is given out in early September.
- **After-School and Before-School extra help-** Some students may find they need a one on one extra help session once in a while. They can email me and schedule a time for them to come in for help.
- **Boston/NYC Field Trip Retreat-** An all day event for orchestra students on a Saturday to spend the entire day in Boston or NYC. We attend a Broadway Show, NY Philharmonic or the Boston Symphony Orchestra, accompanied by a fun activity such as a Duck-Tour, or “Top of the Rock” and end the day at a fun, kid friendly restaurant.
- **Special-Guest Artists-** Friends for Music supports our orchestra program by funding professional, talented, youthful and inspiring musicians to come in and perform for our students. For more information, check my current website with our 2010-2011 Guest Artists.
- **SAA:** Simsbury Arts Academy is a summer music and arts program directed by Cindy Rehm and JoAnna Ferrari. It’s an outstanding summer experience where students will receive bi-weekly private lessons and group lessons and are able to also take an art, guitar, theater, jazz, or dance class each day.

Townwide Orchestra Festival 2011

As many of you already know, we have a special Townwide Orchestra Festival planned for April 30, 2011. This festival will have 5th-12th grade string students performing alternative style music such as funk, blues and jazz. We are fortunate to have special guest artist **Randy Sabien** joining us this year to teach string students throughout the district and to perform for our community. To find out more information, please visit my website or go to www.randysabien.com. We encourage all community members to attend this exciting concert. The music and the energy will be very different from every other concert we have ever had.

Want to become more involved?

Parents are welcome to help out for orchestra field trips and for concerts. In addition, there is a special group of parents that help in the advocacy of our district music program called, *Friends for Music*. You can find out more information and become an active member of this group by emailing JoAnna Ferrari.

You can contact me any time for more information, questions or concerns about our string program at Henry James Memorial School.

JoAnna Ferrari, Orchestra Director

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Music & Performing Arts

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