

# LAWTON C. JOHNSON SUMMIT MIDDLE SCHOOL

Summit, New Jersey

## **BAND \* ORCHESTRA \* CHORUS**

### **MUSIC PHILOSOPHY**

The middle school years are especially critical in both the student's personal and musical development. The music a student performs or studies often becomes an integral part of his or her personal musical repertoire. Basic composing and improvising provide the student with unique insight into the form and structure of music and, at the same time, help to develop their creativity. Broad experience with a wide variety of music is necessary if the student is to make informed musical judgments. Similarly, this breadth of background enables students to begin to understand the connections and relationships between music and other disciplines. By understanding the cultural and historical forces that shape social attitudes and behaviors, the student is better prepared to live and work in a multicultural society. The role that music will play in a student's life depends in large measure on the level of skills he or she achieves in creating, performing, and listening to music.

### **BAND**

Band is an elective, performance-oriented class open to all wind and percussion students who have completed the elementary band program, or its equivalent outside the system. It is a full-year course at each grade level. Each grade-level band meets approximately seven times a month. In addition, small group lessons (45-minutes each, once a week) provide individualized attention for each student's personal music growth. Through guided practice and performance, students successfully perform a variety of ensemble literature, as well as works of noted composers, popular songs, and contemporary works.

### **Performances**

Each grade-level band performs in two concerts during the school year. Students are encouraged to participate in small ensembles, both in and out of school throughout the school year.

### **Other Performance Opportunities**

In addition to the grade-level bands, students have the opportunity to perform in several other performing groups, such as the Middle School Stage Band, the Jazz Lab Band, and many small ensembles. Band students are encouraged to audition for Regional Band and participate in the Morris-Union Jointure Commission performing ensembles.

### **Instrument Rentals**

Band students will be required to have their own instrument by the time they enter LCJSMS. They can either purchase an instrument or rent from a local outside vendor. If this becomes an obstacle for continuing in the program, however, a limited number of instruments are available for rental from the school, on a case by case basis.

### **Other Information**

Students can participate in both band and chorus, which is referred to as "Shared Chorus." Students will sign up for band, but will alternate lessons between band and chorus each week. Students will receive more information on how to take advantage of this exciting opportunity, in the spring. Students with no previous instrumental music experience can participate in the instrumental music program. These students are given a small group lesson once a week until they become proficient enough on their instruments to be enrolled in a grade-level band.

## **ORCHESTRA**

Orchestra is an elective, performance-oriented class open to all string students who have completed the elementary orchestra program, or its equivalent, outside the system. It is a full-year course at each grade level. Each grade-level orchestra meets approximately seven times a month. In addition, small group lessons (45-minutes each, once a week) provide individualized attention for each student's personal music growth. Through guided practice and performance, students successfully perform a variety of ensemble literature, as well as works of noted composers, popular songs, and contemporary works.

### **Performances**

Each grade level orchestra performs in two concerts during the school year. Students are encouraged to participate in small ensembles in and out of school throughout the school year.

### **Other Performance Opportunities**

Advanced students are encouraged to audition for the Chamber Orchestra and String Quartet. These groups meet at scheduled rehearsal times outside of the regular school day and participate in performances such as Teen Arts and Musical Carousel Festival. In addition to these school-sponsored groups, students may also audition for Regional Orchestra and are encouraged to participate in the Morris-Union Jointure Orchestra. Many students also participate in orchestras such as the New Jersey Youth Orchestra.

### **Instrument Rentals**

Students are encouraged to purchase their own instruments or rent from a local outside vendor by the time they enter LCJSMS. If this becomes an obstacle for continuing in the program, however, a limited number of instruments are available for rental from the school, on a case by case basis.

### **Other Information**

Students can participate in both Band and Chorus, which is referred to as "Shared Chorus." Students sign up for Orchestra, but will alternate lessons between Orchestra and Chorus each week. Students will receive more information on how to take advantage of this exciting opportunity in the spring. Students with no previous instrumental music experience can participate in the instrumental music program. These students are given a small group lesson once a week until they become proficient enough on their instruments to be enrolled in a grade-level orchestra.

## **CHORUS**

Chorus is a full-year, performance-oriented course which develops students' musical knowledge, emphasizes the basic principles of good singing, enhances student appreciation for a variety of musical styles, and provides students with a sense of accomplishment through participation in group musical performances. The Chorus program also instills a lifelong love of both music and singing through dedicated choral training, which includes part-singing, attention to diction, tone quality, balance, blend, and dynamics. Special attention is also given to the changing voice of the adolescent boy.

Chorus meets approximately seven times per month and is open to all students who enjoy singing. No previous experience is required. Later, students enrolled in seventh and eighth grade Chorus participate in small group instructional lessons that meet approximately once every month, or two to three times a marking period. Other opportunities for vocal students to perform include the Spring Musical, Bel Canto, the Central Jersey Intermediate Region Chorus, and the Morris-Union Jointure Commission Chorus.

Students who are enrolled in Band and Orchestra may also participate in Chorus via the Shared-Chorus program in which students come to a rotating Shared-Chorus lesson once approximately every two weeks (in lieu of their instrumental lesson) to learn their grade level's respective repertoire and ultimately perform with the larger curricular ensemble at all concerts.

**LAWTON C. JOHNSON SUMMIT MIDDLE SCHOOL**  
**Music Department**

***Shared Chorus Info***

**Do you like to sing AND play an instrument? Well, we are glad to tell you that students in Band/Orchestra have the opportunity to participate in Chorus, as well!**

- Students only miss Physical Education for their ensemble period (BOC Days) and a weekly rotating academic period for their lesson.
- This does not take up any additional time during the course of the week.
- Lessons alternate between Band/Orchestra and Chorus each week.
- In any given marking period, students should not miss more than two of the same class periods.
- Students are able to cover all of the choral material in their bi-weekly lessons with Mrs. Rhodes.
- Students also perform with their grade-level chorus at their respective concerts.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact any LCJSMS music teacher. We look forward to seeing everyone in September!

Best Regards,



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