



Music Department

COLD SPRING HARBOR CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Brent Chiarello, K-12 Music Coordinator

(631) 367-6880 Music Office

SENIOR HIGH MUSIC PROGRAM FAQ

1. Are students required to study music in High School?

New York State Education Department requires that all High School students earn 1 NYSED approved Arts credit for graduation. This can be accomplished at by taking Band, Orchestra, Chorus, Music Studio or Theater Workshop for 1 year (meets every day).

To participate in one of the High School performing ensembles (Band, Orchestra or Chorus), a student must participate in the respective Junior High School program.

2. What music courses are available at the High School?

Incoming 9th grade students may register for Band, Orchestra, Chamber Orchestra (upon audition) or Chorus. Upper level music classes include AP Music Theory, Music Studio and Theater Workshop. During ensemble classes, students prepare repertoire for performance. Music Studio is a chance for students with varied musical backgrounds to learn to create their own music electronically in Cold Spring Harbor's Music Computer Lab. Students will gain hands on experience with professional music studio programs such as Logic and ProTools, and learn the basics of creating and recording music. Music Theory is a rigorous music literacy class designed for serious music students with some previous background in music performance. Theater Workshop provides an introduction to theatre as a performing art. This course emphasizes artistic perception and creative expression. It promotes understanding of aesthetic valuing, historical and cultural awareness, and the interconnections of the arts and other disciplines.

3. What is small group instruction (SGI) for instrumental and choral students and when do they occur?

Small group instruction (SGI) for instrumental and choral students provide students with the instruction necessary to learn skills and techniques that are applied in the ensemble rehearsal. SGI is offered during the lunch periods by appointment.

4. Is small group instruction (SGI) required of all students enrolled in ensemble classes?

No. Due to staffing constraints SGI is not a required part of the HS curriculum, though it is strongly recommended and encouraged. The purpose of the small group instruction is to provide an opportunity for students to learn the instrumental and vocal techniques necessary for successful performance in an ensemble rehearsal. Rehearsal classes range from 40 to 120 students making it impossible for the music teacher to focus on individual

student technique that is crucial to the ensemble's success as a performance group. The small group instruction period is organized by instrument/voice part and proficiency level to allow the teacher to focus directly on individual student need.

5. Are students required to study privately to participate in a High School ensemble group?

No. Because the school does not require all students to study privately and because all students do not have the time and/or resources to engage in private study, all students enrolled in an ensemble group are strongly encouraged to attend SGI. We do, however, encourage those students who can to participate in private instruction because of the personal benefits of one-on-one instruction in learning instrumental and vocal technique.

6. Can students study both instrumental and choral music?

Yes! Students who play an instrument may join the Chorus that alternates with the instrumental class every other day.

7. Can students begin the study of an instrument or switch music ensembles when they are at the High School?

Due to staffing constraints, there are no beginning instrumental lessons at the High School. Generally speaking, if a student has not studied an instrument in Junior High School, they cannot register for an instrumental ensemble. Exceptions to this can occur only if a child studies privately and performs a successful audition at the appropriate NYSSMA Level. Contact the ensemble teacher in advance to provide you with guidance on preparing your child for such an audition.

8. How do students get instruments?

Parents are required to rent or purchase smaller instruments from a local music store. A list of stores will be provided by the music faculty who can also provide parents with information regarding what to look for in a quality instrument. Consult a member of the music faculty prior to purchasing an instrument online or from a local store.

9. How do students purchase an instrument?

Most importantly, do not purchase an instrument without first contacting the student's current music teacher. The instrument market is flooded with inexpensive and inadequate instruments of very poor quality. For example, one company uses a cheap alloy that renders the valves on trumpets and euphoniums unplayable because they tarnish, leak, and get stuck. Instrumental teachers are an invaluable resource for providing input on purchasing an instrument. Our music teachers are more than happy to be part of the process of this important decision.

10. What opportunities exist for auditioned, more advanced instrumental and vocal ensembles?

There are 4 auditioned ensemble groups at the High School:

- CSHHS Jazz Band gfelker@csh.k12.ny.us
- CSHHS Chamber Orchestra tjenks@csh.k12.ny.us
- CSHHS Chamber Singers agaleno@csh.k12.ny.us
- CSHHS Musical Pit Orchestra bchiarello@csh.k12.ny.us

Information regarding the audition dates packets will also be posted during the start of the school year.

11. Are students required to be registered for in-school music classes to be eligible to audition and participate in the auditioned ensemble groups?

Yes. Students wanting to participate in auditioned ensemble groups that meet beyond the school day must be enrolled in one of the in-school music courses.

12. How many performances can students expect to participate in?

Students must perform in the two major concert seasons, Winter and Spring. Because of the way concerts must be scheduled to accommodate the size of the audience and the length of each program, this could require some students to have to perform more than one night during the winter and/or spring concert season. All concerts take place at Cold Spring Harbor Jr/Sr High School PAC.

The Pep Band, comprised of all members of the Band, is required to perform at the 4 home football games. Members of the football team and Cheerleading team are excused from this requirement.

The Band and Chorus also perform in the High School Graduation Ceremony and all band/choral students, grades 9-11, are required to perform.

If your child's ensemble teacher participates in NYSSMA Majors Festival at Hofstra University in May, your child is required to attend. The performance takes place during the school day and transportation is provided by the District.

To allow as many performance opportunities as possible for students, teachers have the discretion of scheduling additional performances, as appropriate. Your child's teacher will inform you in advance when these additional performances are required.

13. What happens where there are conflicts between a student's music responsibilities and athletics schedule?

Extracurricular ensembles are scheduled in such a way as to prevent athletic conflicts to allow students to participate in both music and athletic activities. When conflicts do arise, the music and athletics faculty have a long history of working closely together to address individual student conflicts between music and athletic schedules. Students are expected to bring individual conflicts to the faculty attention as soon as possible so that solutions can be found. Sometimes, though infrequently, there is no solution to a conflict, and students must make their own choice of which event to participate in. While no penalties are imposed for these decisions, be aware that if a student must miss a required performance date for an in-school class, they cannot earn credit for participation in that particular performance. It is our experience that there are rarely any conflicts that cannot be resolved amicably between the athletics and music obligations if students are proactive in working with their teachers to discuss all options. This is another "soft skill" that prepares students for their life beyond high school.

14. Should students continue to practice over the summer?

Yes! An entire year of gains on an instrument are erased within two months of not touching an instrument. Practicing on one's own, tutoring with a private teacher, involvement in a summer program, and reviewing the year's work over the summer is highly recommended.

15. Do music teachers provide extra help to students?

Yes. Music teachers will provide information on their extra help hours at the beginning of the school year and post these hours on their teacher web page. Music teachers will also provide some input and small group instruction during extra help hours to students who participate in NYSSMA Solo Festival.

16. What can parents do to help students succeed in music?

Continually encourage your child to practice and play for you-every musician loves an audience! You can give positive feedback. You don't even have to know how to play an instrument to provide this strong motivation for practice.

Set up a convenient place and consistent time to practice.

Remind him/her to bring his/her instrument and music to school on rehearsal days.

If finances allow, consider providing private instruction. The school music faculty can provide a list of local area teachers and businesses that provide this service.