

What's Going On???

Some specifics for the Concert Orchestra

Mrs. Sharon T. Doyle, Director

I am thrilled to be joining the orchestra department at Dorman High School and look forward to meeting students and parents as we begin the 2010-2011 school journey. Please know that I have two personal goals for each student in my group: 1) To assist each student in improving their skill as a musician and 2) To enjoy playing as a member of the orchestra team. In other words, I want for each student to make individual improvement and to have fun while learning.

Working Knowledge

At the high school level, we place continued focus on certain refinements of string technique, not just “does the note come out?” Here are some of the things we will be focusing on:

- Scales: C, G, D, F, Bb major; a, d, e, g minor for Region auditions (Aug.-Sept.), then continuing with harder scales up to 4 sharps and 4 flats for mastery
- Bowing techniques: staccato/spiccato, brush stroke (Mozart stroke), louré, marcato/détaché, jeté/ricochet
- Bow control and tone production (sostenuto, tenuto, legato)
- Reading, notating and composition skills (i.e. music theory)
- Intonation, intonation, intonation...listening skills, chord formation, pitch adjustment

Grading procedures are outlined in the Orchestra Handbook. The handbook also includes the dates for 2010-2011. Mark these dates on the calendar and post them somewhere parents will be sure to look!

Seating

Seating will be rotated during the year as much as possible. Early seating auditions will be given so students know where they stand with others in their section, but seating will continue to rotate. Final seating comes a few weeks before the concert date with no rotation.

Combined Classes

The Philharmonic and the Concert Orchestra are not leveled groups – they are a class split to maintain a high level of individual attention for each student and to keep the classes more manageable in size. For certain concerts, the two classes will join forces.

Seating will be a joint audition scored by both Mr. Williams and Mrs. Doyle (the Concert Orchestra director).

Practice is important, no matter what you do in life. This year students will have practice partners/groups and will have 15 to 20 minutes each day to practice what they need to practice – techniques, audition spots, difficult sections of music – whatever is needed for the student. I understand that students have multiple interests and activities that require time outside of school. Providing practice time during the block can remedy some of the need (not all) for at home practice when the time is used wisely and effectively by the students. Practice time during class will be a part of the daily grade.

Region Orchestra auditions are open to one semester students and I encourage Concert Orchestra students to consider auditioning. The benefits of auditioning are invaluable, especially if a student has never experienced a high-level audition, and can serve to prepare students for college auditions. There is college money available for non-music majors at many colleges and universities. Please consider auditioning this year. Auditions are Oct. 2. More information can be found at www.scorchestra.net. Click on the **Region Orchestra** link on the left. I will be glad to assist students.

Private Lessons are recommended for any student who has achieved the level of expertise on an instrument of our high school students at Dorman. This can be especially beneficial for our students in the group for only one semester as it will ensure that techniques can continue to be enhanced beyond the classroom setting. We are still able to offer lessons during the school day – if this is of interest to you, please see Mrs. Doyle.