Course Syllabus and Concert Schedule

**Springboro High Symphonic and Concert String Orchestras: 2017-2018**

Director: Sarah Benedict, sbenedict@springboro.org

http://Springborostrings.weebly.com

Welcome back!

Please read this document carefully as it outlines the grading policies, concert dates and other details needed for us to have a successful year in strings! I will also pin these items on our site springborostrings.weebly.com. YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL INFORMATION BELOW.

**CONCERT DATES**: Please mark your calendars now! Formal concert uniforms are required for all performance events marked Mandatory. Mandatory means “for a grade”.

**October 5- Fall HS Strings Concert, SHS stage, 7pm.**  Mandatory.

**December 13- Holiday Concert, HS strings, SHS stage, 7pm.**  Mandatory.

**December 19-21 Semester Exams**

**January 20- HS Solo and Ensemble Contest, contest at Lakota West.** This is optional.

**January 27 or Feb 3 TBD-** Guest Judge Contest prep; exact dates and times not set yet. Mandatory.

**February 21- Contest Showcase Concert, 7pm SHS stage.** Mandatory.

**February 23/24- HS State Orchestra Contest.** This is mandatory, please keep Friday night and entire Saturday free. Symphonic will go one day and Concert will go the other day, will not know when until schedule is posted in early January.

**March 5-** **All District Strings Showcase Concert and SOA Parent Appreciation night, SHS stage, 7pm.** Mandatory for all grades 6-12- will only be an hour long. This is a recruiting tool for younger kids- vital to our program.

**April 22-29:** High School Musical production performance week. This is optional. Rehearsals will be in addition in the weeks prior.

**May 10- Final Strings Concert (spotlight on seniors), SHS Stage, 7pm.**  Mandatory.

**May 18- Strings Banquet and Awards.** Highly Recommended. There’ll be food.

**May 21,22, and 23- Final Exams.**

**May 28- Graduation (strings may perform, TBD)**

**ADDITIONAL DATES:**

We will also be doing a T-shirt spirit-wear sale at some point in the fall, TBD (October).

Annual trip to hear the symphony will take place likely in early March- we will hear the CCO in their newly renovated concert hall!

**CONTACT:**

I will be using the texting app “Remind” to help notify this year of any important information such as concert date reminders, special event reminders, etc. Both parents and students may sign up for notification on Remind, and you may receive notification (depending on how you sign up) via text or email. You can download the app free to your phone on either iTunes or Google Play, or sign up for free emails via the web. The Remind class code to sign up for Concert Orchestra is @33e7. The Remind class code to sign up for Symphonic Orchestra is @4fd71c. Please take a moment right now and sign up for this service.

I will be assigning and grading important homework and assignment documents to Google Classroom. Students will need to sign up to my classroom pages using their school email accounts. The Google classroom code to sign up for Concert Orchestra is ihyrhl. The Google classroom code for Symphonic Orchestra is 5prntm. Please take a moment and sign up for this now. If you are changing sections, please delete the old membership.

**EXPECTATIONS:**

My expectations of strings students are:

1. Have your instrument, a pencil and your music folder **every** strings class. Even if you share music, both students must have music available in the event your stand partner is absent. Loss of daily points will result from not having supplies.

2. Be on time, be polite and participate. Students are to be in their seat with their instrument unpacked and ready to tune no later than 2 minutes after the bell. Students tardy without a hall pass will earn detentions, which will accumulate into office referrals for repeat offenders.

3. If your instrument has a broken string, replace it immediately so you may fully participate and not fall behind in class. Failure to replace a string within a week will result in DAILY loss of points until this is completed (please notify me if you have special circumstances going on that prevent immediate repair).

4**. No food or drink in the strings room**.

5. No phones, ipods or other devices out and in use without specific permission. Students who use their device as a tuner may do so with my permission, but MUST put the device completely away/off after tuning. Use of phone/device during class without permission is an OFFICE REFERRAL.

6. Be supportive of your classmates…orchestra is a team effort and every part is important in order to make music. This means no talking if another section is being rehearsed.

7. Attend all concerts. This is a performing arts class therefore concerts are a vital part of the experience and are part of the Fine Arts Curriculum for Springboro Community Schools. Failure to attend concerts without notifying the teacher will result in a zero for your concert grade.

**8. Failure to arrive at concert with dress uniform will result in exclusion from the performance and will result in a ZERO for your grade.**

**BEHAVIOR:**

 If there is a particular problem, my first action is to talk with the student after class and/or call home. Repeat problems (such as forgotten instrument, unauthorized device use during class, etc) or severe behavior issues (such as verbal disruptions or insubordination) require further action such as detention or office referrals according to severity of offense, and according to standard HS building rules in handbook.

**GRADES:**

Grades are based upon several items. Attitude, participation and having materials for class as listed above in the expectations (instrument, music, pencil) are only part of your grade. Grades will also be determined via practice goal statements, performance tests and concert attendance. Below is a breakdown on grade percentages.

Daily participation and having materials is weighted to 20% of overall grade

Practice goal statements are weighted to 15% of the grade

Concert performance/ being in uniform is 40% of the grade

Playing Tests/ Music Theory work is collectively weighted to 25% of the grade

**Practice Goals**: I will be requesting students submit a weekly practice goal statement. Submitted over Google Classroom, students are to identify at least 2 specific goals for their practice that week, and log exactly what was practiced to meet that goal and for how long. Students will then summarize briefly after their last practice session any thoughts on how practice went for them that week. Students will be graded on the quality of the information on this sheet rather than a prescribed amount of practice time. Goals stated do not need to be just on class music; students in a youth orchestra or in private lessons may opt to target their goals to other music. It is recommended students spend at least 90 min a week OUTSIDE of class reviewing their music. PRACTICE GOALS MAY BE SUBSTITUTED WITH VIDEO PLAYING TESTS AT ANY TIME, AS ASSIGNED BY TEACHER.

**AUDITIONS, SEATING ASSIGNMENTS AND CHALLENGES:** Students will be placed in their sections and be able to sit with whomever to start the year, with Mrs. Benedict selecting section leaders. We will then hold formal auditions that students will upload to Google Classroom to determine actual rank order. Based upon continuing effort and class progress Mrs. B will have final say to select concert seating, REGARDLESS of how auditions pan out. Concert seating IS strategic in order to place strong players throughout the section rather than placing students in a strict ranking order.

Otherwise, seating rotation may be used occasionally during regular classes to give each student opportunity to sit in the front, middle and end of the section. We will not do seat challenges.

**Google Classroom:** All students must enroll in Google Classroom for Strings. Go to Google Drive, download the App for Google Classroom, and then enter code to join my page in Google Classroom. Symphonic Orchestra code: **5prntm.** Concert Orchestra code: **ihyrhl**. Once enrolled, you will see the announcement for the audition as an assignment and its DUE DATE. You are to submit the recording of your audition, as per the directions listed already on Google Classroom. If you have insufficient technology at home to accomplish this, notify me and I will hear you perform your audition live by appointment only. Live performances will be completed before school only on the due date of the test.

**Policy on having LONG FINGERNAILS:**

Just NO. IF you have long nails, you will be asked to remove/cut them and I will contact parents to explain why; failure to comply will result in lowered daily points until you are in compliance. Trying to play with long nails is like trying to run the mile in 6” high heels….you will have terrible form, look awkward, be slow, and create pain/strain, and unlike running- you will be super out of tune.

**Instrument Repair:**

If your instrument needs repair (broken string, bridge fell down, etc) please bring it to me first as I may be able to fix it. However, if it requires repair services that I cannot provide, you will need to take it back to the music store immediately. Students are granted two school days to get such repairs completed (most shops will loan you an instrument while yours is being fixed) and after two days, if the instrument is still not repaired or in the shop (with the replacement instrument in your possession), the student will lose all their daily points until they have their instrument in working order. If there are special circumstances at home preventing immediate repair, please contact me and I can extend the window of time before points are lost. YOU ARE EXPECTED TO BORROW A SCHOOL INSTRUMENT WHILE YOUR OWN IN BROKEN AND PARTICIPATE IN CLASS.

**Injury:**

If you become injured in such a way that prevents participation in class, you must supply Mrs. B with a doctor’s note, and will be assigned alternate assignments until you are able to play. This alternate work will take the place of daily class points. Injured students must still complete weekly practice assignments in the form of listening to Classical music. Dayton Public Radio is an excellent choice, although students may also listen to Classical stations on Sirius Radio, internet streaming, CD’s or purchases off iTunes, etc. It must be Classical music (not classic rock, but orchestral performances). Piano, vocal, musical theater or classical guitar are also acceptable selections as are live performances. Students who are injured and unable to play a concert are expected to attend our concert anyway, and will be given a task such as writing a reflection paper on the performance, or creating a video recording.

**Concert Dress:**

For all concerts, unless otherwise stated, students will wear concert uniforms. Failure to wear uniforms will result in exclusion from concert and zero on your grade.

**Concert Absences:**

 In the event you must miss a concert due to unavoidable emergencies, you must notify me as soon as you are aware of the conflict. It is up to me to determine if an absence is considered an ‘excused absence’ or an ‘unexcused absence’. A playing test or makeup assignment will be given to make up the lost points for missing the concert for an **excused** absence, but an unexcused absence (such as forgetting about the concert) will result in a 0% grade for the concert. Not having a ride to the concert is considered an unexcused absence as we can arrange a carpool ride for you. Every person is important in the success of our orchestra!

**Sport conflicts:**

If you are in a sport that has their individual level State competitions during one of our mandatory events, and you personally are competing as an individual (not just team mates), it is up to you to try and schedule around as possible to attend BOTH events. If there is a direct conflict and you opt to attend the sport rather than strings, you are obligated to submit a full recording of all concert pieces and will be graded according to a rubric- not a completion grade but a grade based upon quality. It will be due no later than one week past the concert date or you will get a zero for a grade.

I will not accept sport conflicts for regular season games- you are to ask your coach to play strategically in other games and miss your sport the night of our concert. This is a graded course for graduation credit, sports are extracurricular and therefore Strings outranks sports in such a situation. If you still choose to attend the sport, no makeup assignment will be available.

**Private Lessons:** I strongly suggest taking private lessons so your child can learn solo literature and have undivided attention with a teacher. You can take lessons from any of the area music studios such as That Music Place or McCutcheon's. Lessons are arranged on an individual basis and there is a fee. The benefits of taking lessons are numerous including the fact that students who take lessons are better at their instruments because of the extra time they spend playing and the one-on-one, tailored attention. Please contact me for a list of recommended teachers.

**Youth Orchestras:**

The Lebanon Youth Symphony Orchestra is a great first youth orchestra for students to become a member (rehearses Tuesday nights). This orchestra is string instruments only and is entered via audition in the fall. You may search their website for audition and rehearsal updates: http://www.musicinlebanon.org/.

If you would like help preparing for an audition, I am more than happy to help students after school.

There are also competitive youth symphony orchestras associated with the Dayton Philharmonic and the Cincinnati Symphony (Sunday afternoon rehearsals). You must take private lessons and audition to enter these groups, and they are for the dedicated and driven student. Belonging to one of these groups is highly recommended if you plan on making music your college major or career. Please ask if you want more information- auditions are in the spring so start preparing now (use your Solo and Ensemble piece for your auditions!)

**Springboro Orchestra Association (SOA):**

Our strings program is supported by a group of dedicated parents and staff who help to plan fun activities and raise money to pay for music and instruments. We meet monthly and need your talents to help our program be successful! Please plan to attend at least four of our meetings this year and help us make it a great year for your student!

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**Please sign, DETACH and return this page and the attached Emergency Medical Form.**

**“I have read and understand this syllabus and am familiar with the grading policy. I have placed the concert dates on my calendar, I have enrolled with both REMIND and GOOGLE CLASSROOM and understand I am completely responsible for knowing these dates and being present at these events. I understand the website springborostrings.weebly.com will have important class information should I need to find something.”**

**Parent/Guardian signature\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Email(s) for any correspondence\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Students Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES: Mrs. Benedict would be forever grateful if you could help the orchestras with your time or talents for any of the following:

\_\_\_\_ I am willing to assist in recording concert events and posting to Youtube so students can watch their concert.

\_\_\_\_ I am willing to assist with being a concert chaperone\*, helping students get tuned and settled in audience or on stage for events at SHS.

\_\_\_\_I am willing to assist the SOA with fundraising efforts\* (Butterbraids, T-shirts, or other).

\_\_\_\_ I am willing to assist with chaperoning\* State Orchestra Contest in February, helping with loading the instruments on the trailer, helping with snacks for kids, or helping students at the event site (I need parents from BOTH orchestras).

\_\_\_\_I am willing to be our official event photographer\* and take photos at all concerts/events for yearbook submission.

\_\_\_\_ I am willing to help plan and decorate the SHS commons\* for the Strings Awards Banquet in May.

\_\_\_\_\_I am willing to become active with SOA meetings this year and help plan events that financially take care of district-owned instruments and supplies and help plan fun events for students. (Many current SOA board members have students who will soon graduate- please consider helping!)

\*Parents who help by working directly with students will need to have fingerprints on file with Central Office and be a BOE approved volunteer. Please contact me for details, or call Central Office.