

Music is Instrumental

News of Sacajawea Bands and Orchestras

March 10, 2008

Welcome

This is the fourth issue of the *Music is Instrumental* newsletter for the 2007-08 school year and the first of the second semester. The newsletter will be published about every other month throughout the year. To save paper, it will be sent to families by e-mail. Printed copies will be available for homes without e-mail addresses. It will also be available to read online at the Sacajawea website: www.fwps.org/sac. In this newsletter, you will find information about upcoming events, concerts, grades, fundraisers, classroom activities and anything having to do with Band and Orchestra.

Calendar Update

Below is the remaining performance calendar for all bands and orchestras this school year. If you haven't already, please mark these dates on your calendars at home. Students are required to participate in all performances of their group as part of their grade. Performances are like final tests and cannot be made up.

Saturday, March 15, 2008	7:30 A.M.	Frontier Jazz Festival (Jazz Band only)
Thursday, March 20, 2008	7:00 P.M.	FWHS/SAC Band Concert (All Bands)
Friday, March 28, 2008	All Day	T.Y.S.A. Orchestra Festival (7/8 Orchestra)
Saturday, May 10, 2008	All Day	League Orchestra Contest (7 th /8 th Orchestra)
Saturday, May 31, 2008	All Day	League Band Contest (7/8 Concert Band)
Monday, June 2, 2008	7:00 P.M.	Spring Band Concert (All Bands)
Tuesday, June 3, 2008	8:15 A.M.	School Assembly (All Groups)
Wednesday, June 4, 2008	7:00 P.M.	Orchestra/Choir Concert (All Orchestras)

Frontier Jazz Festival

The Jazz Band will be participating in the Frontier Jazz Festival on Saturday, March 15th. This is a great annual event specifically for Middle and Jr. High schools. We will be performing for a big audience of other young jazzers and will be critiqued by three great judges. We will also have the opportunity to hear some of the other great young bands from around the area. At noontime, the festival includes a special clinic presented by Ingrid Jensen and Jon Wikan a jazz trumpeter and drummer from New York.

Jazz Band members have already received information and a permission slip for this trip. Permission slips must be returned no later than Thursday, March 13. The schedule for the day is 7:30 A.M. to about 2:30. Parents are needed to accompany us. Please email me if you are able to join us on Saturday.

Federal Way H.S. Band Festival

Our next band concert is Thursday, March 20. This is our annual concert with Federal Way High. During this concert, we put everyone together, from 6th to 12th grade to form one big massed band! This has always been one of the highlights of the year. You don't want to miss this concert.

All bands from Sacajawea will perform at this concert, including Beginning Band (6th grade), Concert Band (7th and 8th grade) and Jazz Band. In the next two weeks, we will have one or two combined rehearsals for the 7th and 8th grade bands during the school day. Both bands are sounding great right now and combined they should be amazing!

Solo/Ensemble Contest

The Solo/Ensemble Contest is over for this year and boy am I glad. Since SAC hosted the event this year, I was responsible for coordinating the day's activities for close to a thousand students from 17 schools. It is a huge undertaking that includes scheduling all performances, hiring adjudicators, arranging performance and home rooms, bringing in pianos, printing certificates, providing lunch for the judges and directors, etc.

Luckily, I had a lot of help from students, parents and other SAC teachers during the day to make everything run smoothly. I especially want to thank all of my students who came to school on a Saturday and assisted judges, collected rating sheets, posted student ratings, monitored performance rooms and gave directions to visiting students, directors and parents. I received many comments about how helpful and courteous my students were. Thank you all for giving your time to help make it a successful day!

Concert Band

The 7th and 8th grade bands will be combining for all of our remaining performances. The reason for combining is that each band has students playing instruments that the other band lacks. Combined, both bands will be able to cover all the parts. Plus, we will have a big, full sound with both groups together!

A very important date when the two bands will be together is **Saturday, May 31, the Valley League Concert Band Festival**. We must have everyone there for that event, so please mark your calendars now for May 31.

Practicing

Everyone knows that to get good at a musical instrument requires lots of practice. Those students who are practicing regularly at home are showing great musical progress. Those who are practicing little or not at all are probably having difficulty keeping up with the material we are covering in class.

Parents, you can be the difference between a happy, enthusiastic, successful musician and a frustrated, discouraged student who wants to quit. This is the time to offer a little extra encouragement. Ask your student what he or she is working on and have him or her play something for you. You may need to be a little more insistent about putting in enough practice time, but a little extra effort will pay off with a more successful and happier musician. Your enthusiasm and commitment will make a difference.

Sixth graders are required to turn in weekly practice logs signed by parents. 7th and 8th grade students only need one practice log per month to show that they are using good practicing techniques.

Grades

It is almost time for the six-week progress report for the second semester. Check grades online to make sure the music grade is where you want and expect it to be. Practice logs are the biggest reason that students have a lower grade. We have had six practice logs due for sixth graders this semester. Some students have turned in zero out of six and the grade is an F. It is not too late to turn that around. Sixth graders are required to turn in 12 logs during the semester. They have 18 weeks to complete the 12 logs. So, if they start now, they can still get in the required 12 logs before the semester ends.

It is the student's responsibility to keep track of his/her grade and to make up any assignments that are missed due to absence or not having a working instrument on test day.

Note to Parents

We are starting the registration process for next year and students and families have the decision of whether or not to continue with Band or Orchestra next year, either here at SAC or at high school. If you are continuing in music, congratulations! I'm pleased you will keep making music a part of your life. If you are considering quitting, please think about a couple of things that might impact your decision.

First, playing a musical instrument is something that can be a source of joy and involvement for your entire life. Many adults are involved in community bands and orchestras long after their knees no longer allow them to play sports. I've never heard an adult tell me they are glad they stopped playing their instrument, but I'm always hearing from people who tell me they wish they had kept it up.

Second, college admissions officers are looking for students who are involved in music because they know that musicians know about commitment, hard work and follow through. Students who study music score higher on SATs than non-musicians. Students are much more likely to be offered a music scholarship than a sports scholarship.

Finally, music is fun! Students build friendships through music that last a lifetime. In high school, music students travel to festivals all over the country and sometimes overseas. I was able to do things in music groups that never would have been possible otherwise, including trips to California, New York, Hawaii, and Europe.

Before your child decides to take music out of his or her school schedule, please call me. We may be able to find a way for your student to stay in music.

Parents, please contact me at any time if you have any questions about our music program or your child's progress. Thanks for your ongoing support of music at Sacajawea Middle School!

Dan Haeck, Director
Sacajawea Bands and Orchestras
(253) 945-4938