

# Semiahmoo Music Department Handbook

**September 2017**  
**Grade 10-12**

*The Directors and Music Society Members would like to welcome everyone back to what promises to be an especially exciting year for Semiahmoo music students. . This year promises to be another exciting year for Semiahmoo music students with new educational experiences and a full calendar. Please take the time to read through this Department Handbook to familiarize yourselves with the program and the expectations for our students. Looking forward to meeting all of you soon!*

*Dagan Lowe  
Kevin Lee  
Sarah Kennedy*

## **PHILOSOPHY**

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The philosophy of our Music Department is for students to develop abilities and attitudes that will assist them in acquiring skills that are technical, social, and artistic, that in turn will facilitate their participation in the world of music throughout their entire lives.

Students are offered the opportunity to prepare themselves to be both competent and reliable members within a variety of exciting performance groups. Membership in these groups calls for strong character as well as strong musicianship.

## **MUSIC DEPARTMENT CURRICULAR OUTLINE**

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Semiahmoo Secondary Music courses follow provincially prescribed curricula. Strong emphasis is placed on developing proficiencies that are useful and indeed recognizable in post-secondary musical endeavours of all kinds. Elements of this curriculum are common at all grade levels with an appropriate degree of mastery set for each level. Supplementary materials and activities such as small ensemble assignments and written reports will be added with increasing frequency as the grades progress.

The elements of this curriculum are as follows:

### **A. ENSEMBLE INTEGRITY**

- “getting under baton”
- proficiency at following conductor
- vertical clarity

### **B. RHYTHMIC FLUENCY**

- use of rhythmic counting system for use in fluent reading and effective self-correction of rhythms

### **C. NOTATIONAL FLUENCY**

key signatures, accidentals  
 fingerings, alternate fingerings  
 development of speed with accuracy

#### **D. INSTRUMENT PEDAGOGY**

embouchure, mechanics of the breath  
 hand positions, posture  
 instrument mechanics and maintenance

#### **E. TECHNIQUES AND EXPERIENCES**

- retention and transfer concepts
- concentration techniques
- school, community, regional, national, and international concerts and festivals will be undertaken

#### **F. PITCH AND TUNING**

- instrument / mechanical
- embouchure and air direction
- tuning characteristics of individual instruments
- ear training

#### **G. STYLE AND MUSICALITY**

- note shape as it relates to a broad range of musical styles  
 historical and stylistic perspective as it relates to repertoire and to an overview of traditional music history

#### **H. QUALITY OF SOUND**

- instruction that relates to instrumental tone: embouchure, air support, mouthpiece, reed management and equipment quality

### **SUMMARY**

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Students should expect significant and identifiable progress in each of these areas of the curriculum with each advancing year in the Semiahmoo Music Program.

### **EVALUATION**

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Students demonstrate proficiency in the curricular areas outlined above each time they rehearse and perform. The directors are constantly assessing each student throughout the learning and rehearsal process. Individual playing tests are not used as the major basis for achievement grading but are occasionally required as classes are quite large and each student needs an opportunity to “show what they can do”. Written tests are used for partial assessment, particularly of rhythmic counting proficiency.

Recorded Assignments:

Students will be required to submit video recordings throughout the year. This is the most effective way with large classes for the directors to evaluate each student's individual progress. *Students must submit video recording to be eligible to go on tour.*

*Get started now and find out how to video record yourself with your computer. If you are having trouble with this, ask a friend to help or ask your Director.*

Students or parents may, at any time, request an interview with a director to review the progress of their child.

*Performances are an important element of the learning process and are mandatory for all members.* It is also very important for parents to attend concerts so they can see and hear the results of the practice they hear at home and be able to share in the excitement of their son's or daughter's success. It is very important for both students and parents to see and hear the other performance groups in our program. More experienced groups provide an important model that serves to help younger musicians know what they are striving for and what is possible for them. *This greatly helps younger students to have the excitement to practice on their instrument.*

To facilitate this it is most important that both students and parents  
*stay until the conclusion of all concerts.*

## HOME PRACTICE

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Students are expected to practice 40 minutes per day 5 days of the week. This is most easily accomplished by making sure the instrument goes home each weekend. The weekend accomplishes 3 of those days leaving only 2 days in the Mon-Thurs. part of the week when there is a need to transport the instrument back and forth from school.

Students are encouraged to use good practice habits, which include:

- Working on the hard parts rather than playing over parts already mastered
- Using a pencil in rehearsal so you can practice the "music" as well as the notes and rhythms.
- Working hard on reading the rhythms rather than playing by memory.
- Remembering that being a musician is "physical" as well as "artistic" and that if the muscles aren't strong then you can't express yourself the way you would like.

A Home Practice Record will be used as an individual assignment if deemed appropriate for a student.

## SECTIONAL REHEARSALS

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Beyond attending band classes, each student is require to attend two section (the instrument section they play in) rehearsals a month. These rehearsals will be held either before school, during lunch or after school. In these rehearsals, student section leaders will work with the

members of their section on areas that require attention such as technique, tone, or difficult passages. Students unwilling to attend these sectionals may lose privileges to go on tour with the band. Attendance at these sectional rehearsals are part of each students mark.

## SUMMARY

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|--------------------------------------|-----|
| • Observation during rehearsal       | 50% |
| • Recorded submissions/playing tests | 35% |
| • Sectional Rehearsals               | 15% |

### **Semiahmoo Music Department Teaching Staff**

Mr. Dagan Lowe	Music Director and Department Head	lowe_d@surreySchools.ca
Mr. Kevin Lee	Music Director	lee_k@surreySchools.ca
Ms. Sarah Kennedy	Music Director	kennedy_sarah@surreyschools.ca

**Communication by email is most efficient for the Directors and is preferred.**

Band Room Direct Phone: 604-542-5255

## **TEACHING ASSIGNMENTS:**

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### **Concert Bands**

<b>Grade Eight Concert Band</b>	Ms. Kennedy Mr. Lee and Mr. Lowe
<b>Grade Nine Concert Band</b>	Mr. Lee Mr. Lowe and Ms. Kennedy
<b>Senior Wind Ensemble</b>	Mr. Lowe and Mr. Lee

### **Jazz Bands**

<b>*Jazz Band 8</b>	Ms. Kennedy, Mr. Lee and Mr. Lowe
<b>Jazz Band 9</b>	Mr. Kennedy and Mr. Lowe
<b>Jazz Band 10</b>	Mr. Lee
<b>Jazz Band 11</b>	Mr. Lee
<b>Jazz Studies 11</b>	Mr. Lee
<b>Jazz Band 12</b>	Mr. Lowe
<b>Jazz Studies 12</b>	Mr. Lowe

\*Jazz Band 8 is open to all Grade 8 music students on all instruments after school Mondays and Wednesdays from 3:05 pm to approximately 4:20 pm

### **Small Ensembles and Jazz Combos:**

Each year we have numerous extra-curricular ensembles and jazz combos that are put together by students with the assistance of the Directors. These ensembles offer an excellent opportunity for the further development of jazz improvisation.

**Combos at the Gr. 9, 10, 11 and 12 levels will have an assigned practice time in the band room each week. Directors will often be on hand for practices.**

## **COURSE EXPECTATIONS:**

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Band members are expected to perform at a superior level at all concerts and festivals. Students must strive each year to increase their skill and proficiency with their instrument. This progress will be achieved within a highly focused rehearsal atmosphere in a supportive ensemble setting strengthened by consistent individual home practice. *Instruments must go home for practice each weekend and at least once or twice during the week.*

Students are expected to have a good quality instrument that is maintained in good repair. Suitable accessories (reeds, neck strap, valve oil etc.) are the responsibility of the parents.

Class participation missed due to lack of proper supplies or the instrument is “in the shop” can result in great harm to a student’s progress and learning momentum. *The directors offer assistance and indeed insist upon assessing all instruments thought to be in need of repair.* If professional attention is necessary, this will be advised and parents should undertake this immediately.

All technique books and sheet music will be provided. The Directors insist that these materials be kept in the music folder that is provided. Protecting these materials properly insures the best possible use of our resources and enables the directors to expand our library of exciting and current repertoire rather than see these resources used to replace damaged or misplaced materials.

### **Instrument Cases:**

Labeling:

First and last names, as well as the school’s name must be clearly labeled on all instrument cases.

Instrument Storage:

Instruments can be kept on the shelves in the band room storage room during the school day.

**Please note:** Parents are advised that the school does not assume responsibility for loss of student owned instruments. Please add the instrument to your family household insurance if this sort of loss is not already covered. Before securing extra private insurance for instruments rented from a music company, check the terms of your rental contract to see if loss due to theft is already included.

Instruments on loan from the school **MUST** be insured against loss or damage of any kind as a pre-condition of their use.

## FIELD TRIPS AND TOURS

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In past years the directors and the parents have been very supportive of the benefits of music ensemble travel. Previous tours have included:

- New Orleans
- Canadian Anaheim Music Festival – Disneyland, California
- Canadian Rocky Mountain Music Festival – Banff
- Hawaii
- Las Vegas Jazz Invitational
- New York City
- MusicFest Canada – Calgary, Vancouver, Edmonton, Toronto, Hamilton, Ottawa, Montreal
- Lionel Hampton Jazz Festival – University of Idaho in Moscow, Idaho
- San Francisco
- Okanagan Concert Band Festival – Penticton
- Cuba
- Atlantic Music Festival – Halifax

## RATIONALE FOR UNDERTAKING A TOUR

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- provides opportunity to perform for non-captive audience i.e. adjudicators who evaluate and suggest improvements and/or general public that don't have to like us for any other reason than our performance competence
- provides opportunity to learn about music in an intensive setting (music festival or working with educator and other musicians in another city)
- strengthens and confirms, in a positive way, the musical, organizational, and emotional interdependence between group members
- provides focus for Directors to plan for organizational and disciplinary structures that remain in place throughout the year(s)
- provides a long term focused communal project for students that in turn fosters stability and enjoyment of school life in a general sense for the entire year and for future years as well
- enhances students' ability to plan and manage finances through fund-raising credit system and personal money

Students must maintain sufficient academic and behavioral standards to successfully receive permission from subject teachers to be excused from class to Tour. The Directors will, of course, be very concerned about how such problems will affect the ability of the group to fulfill performance, travel, and financial commitments.

The “Band Tour” has proven again and again to members and their families to be a very powerful life changing experience for our members and that it is an experience that will be cherished for a lifetime.

**Planned Tours for this year include:**

- Senior Program Tour – Senior Wind Ensemble, Jazz Bands 10, 11, & 12 **Cuba**
- **Lionel Hampton Jazz Festival** – Jazz Band 11 and 12
- Grade 9 Tour – **Whistler Cantando Music Festival**

Unlike other “educational tours” Music Department tours include *all members* otherwise performances are not possible. Members and their parents must think carefully about this at the beginning of the year so that tour integrity is protected for all members.

