



# **Abby Kelley Foster Charter Public School**

## **K-12 Music Ensemble Handbook**

**2019-2020**

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# ATTENTION PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

- **If you have more than one child in the program, you and your children only need to review and sign ONE handbook.**
- Please read each page of this handbook with your child(ren).
- Please sign and have your child(ren) sign the Handbook Acknowledgement on the last page after reviewing the handbook.
- Please send the Handbook Acknowledgement page back to school with your student no later than **FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2019.**
- The original signed Handbook Acknowledgement page will be kept on file with your child's Ensemble Director.

# K-12 Music Staff & Contact Information

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# **AKFCS Music Ensemble Program**

Since it opened its doors in 1998, Abby Kelley Foster Charter Public School has prided itself on the musical opportunities it has been able to provide for its students. Our mission statement highlights “musical competency” as one of the three main goals that guide the school’s vision. To this end, the Music Department is dedicated to providing students at AKFCS with a comprehensive musical education that encourages individual and group success in the musical arts. The ensemble program at AKFCS has grown substantially in the last nineteen years, and begins with band, choral, and string offerings in 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Beginning in 6<sup>th</sup> grade and continuing through 12<sup>th</sup> grade, students can elect to take ensembles as a daily class. The ensemble program is supported and supplemented by the general music and elective music courses available to students from kindergarten through twelfth grade.

## **Policies & Procedures**

Being in a music ensemble at AKFCS is a choice and privilege. The students and staff of the Music Department take pride in our performances, and in the hard work, dedication, and responsibility required to accomplish our musical goals. It is expected that students that choose to participate in the program do so willingly and with a clear understanding of what is required of them.

## **4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Ensembles**

Participating in an ensemble during 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> grades provides students with opportunities to explore their musical interests and build the fundamental skills needed to be successful musicians in the future. Students that participate in music ensembles in Grades 4 & 5 attend weekly rehearsals, with band and strings students receiving additional sectional lessons as needed. Rehearsals occur as pull-outs during the day or after school, and are not graded. Students in these ensembles are expected to attend each rehearsal if they are in school that day, and perform in each scheduled concert (typically two per year).

## **6<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Ensembles**

Participating in an ensemble during the Middle and High school years can be an incredibly rewarding experience for students and in addition to the continued development of musical skills teaches them a great deal about responsibility, time management, and teamwork. Students that elect to participate in band, choir or strings in grades 6-12 attend daily in-school rehearsal classes. Students can participate in one ensemble - Band, Choir or Strings. Any student wishing to perform in more than one ensemble must submit their interest to the Music Department Head in coordination with the Ensemble Directors. Permission will be granted on a case-by-case basis.

Ensembles for Grades 6-12 are a graded, elective class. Students that choose to take Band, Choir or Strings as a class are expected to remain in the class for the full school year. However, students in 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> grade will be permitted to drop or add band, choir or strings for two weeks after the Winter Concert. After the two-week add/drop period has ended, students will no longer be permitted to add or drop the class. Extenuating circumstances will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis with administrative permission.

Students in grades 8 - 12 wishing to drop the ensemble must wait until the end of the semester, and will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis with the High School administration.

## **Grading**

Students in Grades 6-12 taking a music ensemble as a class are graded on the following:

### **Rehearsals (50%)**

- Participation and cooperation as an ensemble member (on time, contributes positively to the rehearsal, stays on task, completes tasks when asked by the Ensemble Director, etc.)
- Preparedness (responsible for instrument, folder, music, pencil, etc.)
- Attitude and behavior towards other musicians and Ensemble Director

### **Individual Practice (25%)**

- Completion of in-class and homework assignments, practicing music on their own in preparation for assessments, or other assignments as given by the Ensemble Director

## Performances & Evaluations (25%)

- Quarterly performance evaluations on musical progress
- Mandatory concert attendance (two per year)
- Mid-term and final exams or assessments as assigned by the Ensemble Director

The criteria and rubrics used to grade students, including behavior and performance expectations, can be found in the student's course syllabus and/or at the end of this handbook.

## Equipment & Materials

### Instruments:

- Students are responsible for buying or renting their own instruments. A limited number of school-owned instruments are available, and may be given out to students that demonstrate responsibility and promise academically, behaviorally, and musically. The Music Department will host a band and string instrument rental event at the beginning of every school year to assist families in choosing and renting/buying instruments. The Ensemble Directors will also be available to connect families with local resources, music stores and other facilities to assist with instrument purchase or rental.
- **PARENTS PLEASE NOTE:** Students are responsible for the maintenance and care of their instrument whether it is rented, personally owned, or loaned by the school. Ensemble Directors will assist the students in any way that they can with basic repairs, maintenance and other care, but it is ultimately the responsibility of the student and their parents to make sure their instrument is taken care of properly.
- Students are responsible for keeping track of their instruments at all times. Students must bring their instruments to all rehearsals, school concerts, or other performances. The Ensemble Director is not responsible for transporting instruments to and from the Middle or Elementary School to the High School Concert Hall for performances or rehearsals. Additionally, the Director will not retrieve instruments forgotten at the Middle or Elementary School on the evening of a performance.

## Sheet Music and Music Folders:

- All sheet music will be provided by the Ensemble Director. Students are expected to keep their music in a music binder or folder, which must be brought with them to each rehearsal, or kept in the room where the ensemble practices.
- Students are responsible for the care of their music, and are expected to keep it clean and orderly for future use by other ensembles.

## Rehearsals

- As stated in the Policies & Procedures section of this handbook, students in grades 4 & 5 are expected to attend rehearsals if they are in school that day. If a student is unable to attend rehearsal, they are expected to check in with their Ensemble Director and to practice on their own in preparation for the next group rehearsal.
- Students in band, choir and strings in grades 6 – 12 are required to attend daily rehearsal classes as a part of their class grade. Students that miss rehearsal without permission from the Ensemble Director (skipping class) will receive a detention. If a student chooses to skip class more than once, an appropriate consequence will be assigned. This may include a meeting with the principal, a phone conference with parents, additional detentions, or other consequences as determined by the building administration and/or Ensemble Director.
- Student behavior during rehearsals directly impacts the musical success of the group. Students in AKFCS music ensembles will be held to consistent, fair, and age-appropriate behavioral standards. These standards are outlined in each student's course syllabus and/or at the end of this handbook.

## Concerts

### Concert Schedule:

- The most up to date concert and event schedule for all grades for 2018 – 2019 is as follows. Other school or ensemble specific events (trips, performances, etc...) will be announced throughout the year.
- All concerts will be held in the High School Concert Hall unless otherwise specified.



	<b>Elementary School K-3</b>	<b>Middle School 4-7</b>	<b>High School 8-12</b>
<b>Winter Concert</b>	K/1- Reh.: 12/2, P: 12/3 2/3- Reh.: 12/9, P: 12/10 <i>(snow date for all – the following Wednesday)</i>	Thursday, Dec. 12 (Gr. 6&7) <i>(snow day Tuesday, Dec. 17)</i>	Thursday, Dec. 5 <i>(snow day Tuesday, Dec. 10)</i>
<b>Spring Concert</b>	K/1- Reh.: 5/26, P: 5/27 2/3- Reh: 6/1, P: 6/2	Thursday, June 4 (Gr. 6&7)  Tuesday 6/9 (Morning Perf. Gr. 4&5 )	Thursday, May 14
<b>Other Events</b>	Instrument Rental Night Friday, September 20, 2019  *Artfest 2020 - TBD, April	Instrument Rental Night Friday, September 20, 2019  *Artfest 2020 - TBD, April	Instrument Rental Night Friday, September 20, 2019 *HS Graduation - May 27 *Artfest 2020 - TBD, April

### Concert Attendance:

- Students in grades 4 & 5 that are participating in a music ensemble are expected to participate in both the Winter and Spring concerts. Circumstances that prevent students from participating in a concert will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis by the Ensemble Director.
- Students enrolled in a music ensemble in grades 6-12 are required to attend and perform at the Winter and Spring concerts as a portion of their ensemble grade. Circumstances that prevent students from participating in a concert will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis by the Ensemble Director.
- Examples of excused absences from concerts are: a major personal event (marriage, religious holiday, funeral or death of a family member or friend, etc...) or illness or injury that prevents the student from performing.
- Examples of unexcused absences from concerts are: forgetting the date, not being able to find a ride, another extracurricular event, etc...
- Extenuating or unique circumstances will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis by the Ensemble Director.
- Students must be dropped off for concerts, and picked up from all concerts in a timely manner. The Ensemble Director will communicate with the students and parents what time students need to arrive to warm-up and prepare for the performance. All evening concerts start at 6:00 PM and end at approximately 7:30

PM unless otherwise indicated by the Ensemble Director. Students must be picked up no later than 15 minutes after the end of the concert.

**Concert Attire:**

- Students must arrive at the Concert Hall in their performance attire at the time designated by their Ensemble Director.
- If a student is unable to obtain the appropriate concert attire, it is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to notify the Ensemble Director as soon as possible. The ensemble director will, in some situations, be able to assist the student in obtaining performance attire.
- Students will be required to wear the following attire to all performances unless otherwise indicated by the director:

**HIGH SCHOOL (Grades 8-12)**

	Band, Chorus & Orchestra
	<p>Solid black dress (3-finger width straps or wider; knee-length or longer)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>OR</b></p> <p>Solid black blouse or collared shirt (must cover shoulders, chest and stomach; tucked in preferred)</p> <p>All black dress pants (no jeans) or skirt (knee length or longer)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>WITH</b></p> <p>Belt (if pants have belt loops)</p> <p>Black tights or socks (if needed)</p> <p>Black shoes (no sneakers; heels 3” or lower in height)</p> <p>Colored/themed scarves, headbands, belts, ties or other accessories per director’s request</p>

## MIDDLE SCHOOL (Grades 4-7)

	Band, Chorus & Strings
	Solid black dress (4-finger width straps or wider; knee-length or longer) <b>OR</b> Black and/or white blouse or collared shirt (must cover shoulders, chest and stomach; tucked in preferred) All black pants (no jeans) or skirt (knee length or longer) <b>WITH</b> Belt (if pants have belt loops) Black tights or socks (if needed) Black shoes (no sneakers; heels 2” or lower in height) Colored/themed scarves, headbands, belts or ties per director’s request

## ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (Grades K-3)

\*Students in grades K-3 will not be required to wear specific concert attire on performance days. Students will perform in their school uniforms unless otherwise indicated by the Elementary School Music Teacher or Principal.

## Additional Performances & Individual Lessons

Student participating in performing ensembles at Abby Kelley Foster Charter School are fortunate to have the opportunity to perform at festivals and community events outside of school.

### Community Performances

Throughout the school year, Abby Kelley Foster ensembles perform at a variety of community and public locations. These performances are scheduled by the Ensemble Director and Executive Director of the school. Past and upcoming performances and events include:

- Students in grades 7-12 participating in the Hanover Theater’s annual “Nutcracker” ballet as choir members.
- High School instrumentalists perform in large scale community orchestra outreach concerts, such as the Worcester Youth Orchestras “Four Orchestras Concert”.
- Instrumental groups performing at Barnes & Noble Book Fairs.
- High School choral groups performing at local sporting events.
- Solo and small group performances at area festivals, coffee houses, and other venues.

## Central Massachusetts District Music Festivals

Students that participate in our 7<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade instrumental and vocal programs are eligible to audition for the Junior or Senior Central Massachusetts District Music Festivals. These festivals recognize students with advanced interest and skill in their instrument. Auditions consist of the following:

- Memorized scales for instrumentalists
- Vocal exercises to test range for singers
- A solo piece of music for performance
- Sight-reading (playing or singing a piece of unfamiliar music after looking it over for the first time)

If students are accepted by audition and choose to participate, they are expected attend two mandatory after school rehearsals with the festival director (locations vary), and one full-day rehearsal and concert performance.

District-level high school students who score exceptionally high qualify for the Massachusetts All-State Festival, and have the opportunity to audition for the All-State Ensembles.

## Other Music Festivals

The Abby Kelley Foster Music Department is always exploring options for our students to compete in competitive and evaluation festivals around the region. These could include annual performances at:

- **MICCA Festival (Massachusetts Instrumental & Choral Conductors Association):** an educationally based, non-competitive festival experience where ensembles are judged against a performance standard by nationally acclaimed adjudicators. Students also participate in a clinic and observe other ensemble

performances. This performance opportunity is available for students in grades 6-12.

## **High School Tour**

In April 2016, the AKFCS High School Choir, Band and Orchestra embarked on their first national tour. Over a period of four days, the students performed in and around Washington, D.C., while taking in the sights of our nation's capital, and then to Philadelphia for April of 2019. For more information, please contact the Music Department Chair.

## **Individual or Group Lessons**

If you or your child are interested in individual or small group instruction on a specific instrument or voice, please contact your child's Ensemble Director for more information.

# AKFCS Music Ensemble Handbook

## Acknowledgement

*Please return this page of the handbook to the Ensemble Director by:  
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2019.*

**Ensemble:**    Band                  Choir                  Strings/Orchestra

**Grade Level:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student:**    My signature indicates that I have read the online handbook and understand what is required of me if I participate in an AKFCS music ensemble.

PRINT Student name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian:** My signature indicates that I have read the online handbook and understand what is required of me and my child if he/she participates in an AKFCS music ensemble.

PRINT Parent/Guardian name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_ Work phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred method of contact: \_\_\_\_\_

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**\*FOR FAMILIES WITH MULTIPLE CHILDREN IN THE PROGRAM\***

**Please include the names and signatures of additional children on the back of this paper.**

**Student:** My signature indicates that I have read the online handbook and understand what is required of me if I participate in an AKFCS music ensemble.

**Ensemble:** Band                  Choir                  Strings/Orchestra

**Grade Level:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PRINT Student name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Student:** My signature indicates that I have read the online handbook and understand what is required of me if I participate in an AKFCS music ensemble.

**Ensemble:** Band                  Choir                  Strings/Orchestra

**Grade Level:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PRINT Student name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Student:** My signature indicates that I have read the online handbook and understand what is required of me if I participate in an AKFCS music ensemble.

**Ensemble:** Band                  Choir                  Strings/Orchestra

**Grade Level:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PRINT Student name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_