

ACALANES HIGH SCHOOL MUSIC DEPARTMENT

2018-2019

Lauren Gibson, Director

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August 20, 2018

Instrumental Music Students and Parents,

Welcome to our new students and welcome back to those of you returning to the program! I have had the opportunity to meet many of you and I am so excited to start this year.

For those of you I have not yet had the chance to meet, my name is Lauren Gibson and I am the new Instrumental Music Teacher. I grew up in Seattle, WA and completed my Bachelors of Music at the University of Montana with a double major in Music Education and Flute Performance. I then returned to Seattle where I taught K-5 General Music for four years at West Mercer Elementary. I then decided to continue my professional development and accepted a position as a Graduate Assistant at the University of the Pacific in the sunny state of California. Last year, I was the Instrumental Director at Las Lomas High School. I am thrilled to become a part of this community and make music at Acalanes!

At Acalanes, we offer a full program of performance opportunities and activities for our instrumental students, and take great pride in the high musical level of our performance ensembles. Our students enjoy participation in three Concert Bands, Jazz Band, Orchestra, Symphonic Orchestra, CMEA Solo and Ensemble Festivals, County and State Honor Ensembles, Pep Band, Chamber Ensembles, community outreach events, and many more.

The beginning of any school year is exciting and we will settle into a groove throughout the first couple weeks. This is especially true for the music department as we make adjustments to personnel, instrumentation, music selection, equipment assignments, locker assignments, etc. If you have any questions about the program or placement, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Please read over the following handbook during the next week. This is an excellent resource for all information about what will happen during the school year. It details class requirements, materials needed, as well as the calendar for this year. Take a few minutes to integrate the performance schedule with your family calendar. All performances are required and this will help everyone stay organized!

Please contact me anytime via phone or email if you have questions. I look forward to all of the expression, creativity, cooperation, and growth that occurs in the music classroom.

Go Dons!

Ms. Lauren Gibson
Instrumental Music Director



ACALANES INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC HANDBOOK

Grading and Participation

"Qui audet adipiscitur."

Basic Grading Scale:

- 60% Daily Participation and Concert Participation
- 20% Practice/Sectional, Tests, and In-Class Written Work
- 10% Semester Project
- 10% Final Exam

Daily Expectations:

1. Always put forth your best effort in class.
2. Bring all necessary music, instruments, and supplies to class.
3. Work diligently on your individual parts outside of class in order to be ready for rehearsal.
4. Attend all prescheduled performances.

Monthly Participation Grade

You will receive a monthly participation (40 points) grade based on attendance. A tardy results in a one-point deduction. You are excused for any school activities, religious events, and emergencies. Any illness or medical note will only result in a two-point deduction. Attendance and participation is extremely important in our music classroom to make sure that we have a full ensemble because every member of our ensemble counts. If you miss class, you can make up points by:

1. Bringing in a program from an outside concert.
2. Volunteering in the music room to help Ms. Gibson.

Practicing and Projects

"Hard work is a two-way street. You get back exactly what you put in."

There will be one semester project. There are many choices to choose from (Pep Band, concert reflections etc.) that I will discuss more in detail in the coming weeks. You must submit a written evaluation (roughly 1 page double spaced) detailing the project you chose and what you learned through the experience. More details will be given in the first few weeks.

Concerts

"Opportunity dances with those who take the floor."

Each day in class, we work together to create a balanced and specific sound. Our daily work means that each musician's contribution is unique and critical to our sound. To have one missing voice disrupts the balance of the ensemble. Because of this, all performances on our calendar are mandatory.

Failure to attend a scheduled performance without advanced acceptable notification will lower a student's grade. Please be aware that work is not an acceptable excuse for missing concerts, and you need to be up front with coaches about our performance schedule to avoid conflicts. Please come see me well in advance regarding scheduling. **MARK YOUR CALENDAR TODAY! Every effort has been made to avoid conflicts in scheduling concerts.**

Rehearsal Expectations

"Success is like a garden, it always needs tending."

- **RESPECT** everyone: musicians, directors, substitutes, etc.
- Always have your music and a **PENCIL** as well as reeds, oil, etc.
- Be on time: "To be late is unacceptable; to be 'on time' is to be late, to be early is to be on time."
- Minimize talking, maximize playing
- Show your fellow students patience and understanding
- **Display a positive attitude** 😊

*Forgetting your instrument, music, mouthpiece, reeds, etc., is the same as going to class without your books, binder, and writing implements. **DO NOT** forget your instrument or music folder. By high school, I know students can maintain this level of responsibility.*

Cell Phone Policy

"Just do it."

During class, it is not appropriate for you to have your cell phone out. Keep any electronic devices in your backpack so they do not distract you or those around you during class. Occasionally, we will use electronic devices for a particular lesson. In these cases, I will let you know when it is appropriate have them out. Before rehearsal starts, you are welcome and encouraged to use your tuning apps/metronomes/musical dictionaries on your phone but phones need to be away before rehearsal begins.

Concert Dress Requirements

"One never has to apologize for looking nice."

Please see the information below for your performing ensemble:

- **Concert Band:** Black pants/skirt (below knee), sleeved white shirt/blouse, long tie (men only), black jacket (optional for men), black socks, black dress shoes. No athletic wear or jeans.

- **Orchestra, Symphonic Band, and Wind Ensemble:**

Men

1. Tuxedo (preferred), or black suit
2. White dress shirt that buttons at the neck
3. Black Bow Tie
4. Black dress shoes and black socks

Women

1. Recommended: Purchase concert dress from the Instrumental Music Boosters
2. Or: black full length dress/slacks and black blouse
3. Your dress/skirt/slacks need to cover your knees when seated with your instruments
4. Black dress shoes

- **Jazz Ensemble:**

Men: Black suit, solid colored dress shirt, long tie, black socks, black shoes.

Women: Black or solid colored blouse with black pants/skirt (below knee), black shoes.

If you have any questions, please make sure to contact me well in advance of any performance!

Instruments

"When you take things for granted, the things you are granted get taken."

Keeping your instrument in good repair is your responsibility. As with all equipment, your instrument periodically needs adjustment from a professional. The best time to get it "tuned up" is the summer or winter break. If you need help in locating a repair person, see Ms. Gibson for suggestions. **Please do not take your instrument for granted; it is a very expensive piece of equipment. Treat your instrument with respect.**

Do not leave your instrument in your ball locker or in your car for any extended time. When coming to school, wait for the jazz ensemble to finish rehearsal (7:50am TR; 8:30am MF), and then bring it in yourself. If you are participating in after school sports, please do not leave your instrument in the locker room. Ask your coach if you can store it in the coach's office. **Do not leave your instrument or music folder unattended.**

School Instruments

Musical equipment, instruments, and sheet music owned by the Acalanes Music Department are for the exclusive use of Acalanes instrumental music students for school-related music activities, and **NOT** for "out-of-school" performance groups. Equipment and instruments checked out to individuals in the Music Department may **ONLY** be used by that particular individual and are **NOT** to be "shared" with others for any reason. When a school-owned instrument is checked out to you for the year, the responsibility of **maintaining** that instrument is transferred to you and your parents for the remainder of the school year. This includes replacing it at the current **REPLACEMENT COST** if it is lost or damaged in any way. Failure to abide by these rules will forfeit any future privilege of borrowing school instruments.

Music Room Lockers

"I have far too much storage space. Said no one ever."

- The lockers are for instruments and music folders **ONLY**.
- Private combination locks are permitted as long as Ms. Gibson has a copy of the combination.

Instrument Storage Disclaimer:

The Acalanes Union High School District, Acalanes High School, Music Department, and Director are not responsible for private instruments left overnight or on weekends. We will insure that the room doors are locked, however, the ultimate responsibility for your instrument is yours and yours alone.

Pep Band, A Period, Private Lessons, Honor Ensembles

"The difference between ordinary and extraordinary is that little extra."

Pep Band:

Pep Band is an exciting group open to all band students. We perform at home football games, community events, and promote school spirit. Membership in the Pep Band is comprised of our Wind Ensemble Students (**required**) plus any additional students from the Symphonic Band and Concert Band. It is fun and highly encouraged! There is a great tradition of student leadership. Go Dons!

Private Instruction:

All students are highly encouraged to find a regular private teacher on their instrument. Private instruction enhances a student's competence, ultimate enjoyment, and contribution to their ensemble. If you need help locating a competent private teacher, see Ms. Gibson for suggestions.

Extra-Curricular Youth Bands & Orchestras:

See Ms. Gibson for more information and recommendations regarding youth bands and youth orchestras in the East Bay and greater Bay Area. There are a great number of wonderful groups in our area and can provide a fantastic supplement to our school program. These include the San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra, Young People's Symphony Orchestra (YPSO), Oakland Youth Orchestra (OYO), and Diablo Wind Symphony (DWS). If you are interested in outside Honor Groups, more information will be coming throughout the year (All-State, County Honor Groups, etc.).