Symphonic Band 2020-2021
Burlington High School
5th Period, Band Room and Google Meet
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I. Course Overview
Symphonic Band
Tuesday (68 minutes) - 7 students in-person, 15 students at-home
Wednesday (30 minutes) - 22 students at home
Friday (68 minutes) - 9 students in-person, 13 students at-home

Tuesday/Friday (68 minute class period)
Because the live-stream on Google Meet will take place synchronously, students from both cohorts will be able to attend class on both class meetings.

As of 9.4.20, the current guidelines from the state do not allow wind instruments to be played safely indoors in a public setting. As a result, when students are in-person, they will be expected to bring their instruments and safely “finger along” with the class rehearsal without physically blowing air or making sound. Thus, on the day when their cohort is safely at home without any restrictions on playing, students in that cohort will receive more individualized attention on those days. For example:

Cohort A students in Symphonic Band on Tuesday will be in the classroom with their instruments, but would not receive playing feedback as they will not be able to blow into their instrument. They would receive feedback regarding physical aspects of playing such as posture and instrument placement, as well as the ability to offer feedback to their peers playing at home.

Cohort B (or C) students that are safely at home will receive more specific playing feedback as they would be able to “ unmute” themselves on Google Meet and play in a typical fashion.

Both of these responsibilities will factor into a student’s “Ensemble Skills” grade, which strives to reward a student’s individual contribution to our ensemble.

What would a sample class period in this structure look like?
Warmup/Fundamentals (30 minutes)
  • Similar to most band classes at BHS over the last several years.
  • Includes instrumental technique, fundamental exercises, musicianship development, and builds on elements of music theory.

Theory/Listening Assignment (15 minutes)
  • Non-Playing Time; provides a deeper insight into specific music theory concepts or elements of music listening (solo, chamber, and large ensemble).
Repertoire (20 minutes)
- For ensemble repertoire, this would be a good time to work on common motives, hear important parts by at-home group.
- “Band Buddies” - partner up at-home and in-person students. One practices while the other listens and provides feedback, questions, etc.

It is vital that all cohorts participate on all scheduled class periods. This will allow students to have **at least** 2 block periods per week where they are playing their instrument and developing the necessary muscle memory and coordination to progress on their instrument.

**Wednesday (30 minute class period)**
30 minute “all-play” rehearsal. The goal would be to have students playing **AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE**, since it is our 1 time during the week where we can just play.

**What would a sample rehearsal in this structure look like?**
Treat this like a 30-minute guided practice session:
- Mr. B could play for the entire session and students follow along on mute.
- Eventually once we have a structured routine, a student could play for the entire session while the class follows.
- Two students could divide the session into 15-minute blocks (or 3 students into 10 minute blocks, etc).

**Full Remote Flexibility** - Because students would be attending all class meetings, both band classes would be able to pivot to a full remote capacity, should circumstances regarding COVID-19 change. One important element of this attendance policy is that it allows the two bands to continue to meet as a complete unit, despite the separation of BHS into different cohorts. This is vital as our ensembles would maintain their integrity from the standpoints of instrumentation, balance, and togetherness.

**II. Successful Learning**
Through the experience of performance through music, band members will cultivate skills and philosophies, such as leadership, goal-setting, teamwork, dedication, and organization, that will prepare them to maximize their potential in life. Therefore, successful learning in Band is dictated by the student’s growth and development through the process, just as much (if not more) than the musical product that is achieved.

**III. Student Learning Expectations and Expected Outcomes**
The band curriculum is intended to be a comprehensive and progressive program of study in individual and ensemble technique and musicianship. While the success of specific outcomes depend on the student’s age and ability level, all students will be able to make significant growth on their instrument in all of the topics listed in Section IV.
IV. Topics/Content
The musical concepts that will covered throughout the curriculum include (but are certainly not limited to):
   - Tone, Timing, Tuning, Dynamics, Phrasing, Musicianship, Articulation (staccato, marcato, legato, slurred, accents), Rhythm, Balance, Blend, Attacks, Releases, Duration, Range, Endurance, Technique, and Tone Color.

V. Assessing Progress
Symphonic Band will be graded using the following weighted system:

Music Performance (25%) - The biggest change here will be the reduction of performances that the program traditionally does throughout the school year. At the moment, there is still a plan to have a “major concert” during Quarters 2, 3, and 4. Performance grades for those three concerts would come from the successful completion of an audio/video file to contribute to 1 “virtual band” piece per ensemble.

   While only one piece would be selected as the “virtual band” piece for a given concert, each band will have 1 or 2 other pieces of repertoire that will help to support class goals and fundamentals. Performance grades will come from individual student recordings of either class fundamentals or repertoire excerpts. These will be recordings submitted either via SmartMusic or Google Classroom or Flipgrid that demonstrate a student’s understanding of the material. Because of the smaller cohorts/class sizes, these could also come from an in-class playing test where the playing and grade is recorded live. **2-4 of these recordings per quarter.**

Music Reading (25%) - SmartMusic “Levels” and assigned repertoire (etudes or solos). THIS IS NEW. In order to help motivate individual student practice, students will be responsible for submitting individual reading assignments. At the beginning of each quarter, students will meet individually with Mr. B to set individual goals based on where they currently are in their music reading abilities on their instrument. **It is important that each student meet with Mr. B to establish a realistic goal that will challenge them but will be attainable primarily with individual practice.**

As a baseline, if a student starts the school year on SmartMusic Level 1, they would be expected to perform and record the 2 exercises in Level 1 with at least 90% accuracy by the end of Quarter 1. If a student wanted to progress at their own speed and complete all 4 levels by the end of the first quarter (assuming that Level 1 was a good starting point), that would satisfy their Music Reading grade for the rest of the school year.

Some students might decide that a more appropriate goal is to complete two levels/quarter or some other modification to their reading abilities. For students auditioning for district bands, they could also substitute their district repertoire for a quarter in the place of a SmartMusic level.

Beyond Level 10, student can do any of the following for their music reading grade:
   - “Furthering Exercises”
   - Etudes from an Instrument-Specific Etude Book
   - Solo Repertoire
Music Analysis (25%) - Listening and reflection assignments would become part of the curriculum to break up the 68-minute classes. Students would be expected to submit these via Google Forms. Focus primarily on guided listening (solos, chamber groups, large ensembles) during this time. Students will develop a deeper understanding of vocabulary used to analyze and discuss music. 

*~8 of these per quarter, students will be allowed to drop 2 and submit at least 6.*

Ensemble Skills (25%) - Our ensemble skills contract would need to be slightly revised and adopted by classes at the start of the school year. After this occurs, the weekly ensemble skills grade can continue as usual. *Ensemble Skills grades will be recorded every two weeks.*

Honors Credit (Changes all percentages to 20%) - Due to COVID-19, the format of the honors credit will change for this school year.

For the research project, this will be our schedule for the year:

*Quarter 1 - Select Topic and Outline*
*Quarter 2 - Completion of Paper and Video Presentation*
*(No Research Component in Q3 or Q4)*

For the jury performances, this will be our schedule for the year:

*(No Jury Component in Q1 or Q2)*
*Quarters 3 and 4 - Hopefully, we will be allowed to play in person by this time. If not, then it would be replaced with a live virtual performance.*

VI. Classroom Expectations

Class and Rehearsal Rules/Guidelines

Band classes will take place in the Band Room and simultaneously on Google Meet. In the Band Room, there will be an X on the ground as well as a music stand and chair. All locations will be socially distanced from one another. Students will wipe down the stand and chair before they use both.

Safety Considerations - As is the current policy with all BHS in-person classes, masks will be required throughout the duration of the class period. Wipes for music stands, chairs, and equipment will be available at the start of each class. All doors will be left open at all times to allow air to circulate throughout the music department.

In addition to all school rules, there are three guidelines to behavior in band class:

1. If you would like to talk, raise your hand and get permission first.
2. Stay in your seat, unless you have permission to get up.
3. Only play your instrument when we play together.
Classroom Materials:
All students need the following materials for band class each day:
- *Habits of a Successful Musician* by Scott Rush and Rich Moon (available for purchase)
- Hard, black, three-ring binder with sheet protectors for music
- School-issued iPad or Chromebook with Google Drive
- Tonal Energy Tuner App
- Pencil
- Instrument and accessories
- All music and handouts used in class

All students should have headphones (as required by BHS) that allow them to participate in online rehearsals.

*Currently for at-home playing only:*

Woodwind Students: *All woodwind players (except flute) should have at least three extra reeds in their cases at all times. This will prevent a student from running out of reeds. A student without working reeds cannot play their instrument, and will not be able to fully participate.*

Brass Students: *All brass players should have valve oil and/or slide grease in their cases at all times (rotor oil for French horns). Keeping valves oiled and clean will prevent many common problems. This will also save money on repairs and maintenance.*

MOUTHPIECES AND INSTRUMENTS: Please consult the list of BPS Recommended Mouthpieces by Level and BPS Recommended Instruments by Level to determine which equipment is appropriate for your grade and ability level.

**Lockers** - Plan for lockers to be determined.

School Instruments
All school-owned instruments must be checked out through Mr. Buchsbaum by filling out an Instrument Rental Form. Once issued, the instrument becomes the responsibility of the student for proper care, maintenance, and protection from damage or theft. The student will be responsible for and charged for any damages or loss incurred to the instrument during the rental period.

**VII. Homework/Makeup Policy**
Aside from specific assignments, the expectation for class homework is:

*Students will be responsible for all assigned music; the amount of time required to practice is the amount of time that it takes to be prepared to perform all music accurately during rehearsal.*
VIII. Additional Information
Private Lessons and Honor Bands

- **Private Lessons** are strongly encouraged. The value of one-on-one instruction with a professional on a student's instrument cannot be overstated. Private instruction is key to the advancement of individual skills and integral in achieving students' highest potential.

**Current Recommended Online Lesson Teachers:**
Flute - Allison Lacasse (allisonlylacasse@gmail.com), Javier Castro (jim.castro97@gmail.com),
Alison Hoffman (ali@alisonhoffmanflute.com)
Oboe - Danielle Marine (danielle.marine8@gmail.com)
Clarinet - Nancy Radnofsky (nancyradnofsky@icloud.com)
Saxophone - Kyle Mechem (Kylemechmet@gmail.com), Wilson Poffenberger (wilson.poffenberger@gmail.com)
Trumpet - Jason Prover (jprover@gmail.com), Chad Miller (millerchad78@gmail.com)
French Horn - Megan Riccio (riccio.megan@gmail.com)
Trombone - Philip Hyman (philhy2000@yahoo.com), Sean Brelan (Seanbrelan@aol.com)
Euphonium/Tuba - Jobey Wilson (jobeywilsonii@aol.com), Bill Muter (bill@tubavisionary.com)

- There is also an excellent Private Lessons Program offered through the Lexinton Community Education Program:

- **MMEA All-State Ensembles** – Auditions are held in November each year. Students who qualify will travel to the Massachusetts Music Educators Association Conference in Boston in March. They will rehearse with top students from across the state and present a concert on the last day of the conference.

- **MMEA Northeastern District Ensembles** – Students will have the opportunity to represent Burlington in our district's ensembles each year. Ensembles include a Concert Band, Jazz Band, Orchestra, and Chorus. Junior District includes students in Grades 7-9, while Senior District includes Grades 9-12.

- **Honor Bands** – Auditions for both local and national Honor Bands will be offered to students throughout the year. Students should check the bulletin board in the band room for updates on Honor Band opportunities.

**Plan for School Year** - 2020-21 Concerts and Repertoire Cycle

*“Formal Concert” (Chamber Recital + Virtual Recordings)*
January
- Solos
- Small Ensemble videos
- Virtual Ensembles (one each for ~6 ensembles)

**Coffeehouse Concert**
1. Early November Coffeehouse
2. December Coffeehouse “Holiday” Themed
**Digital Content/Community Outreach**
1. Pre-recorded holiday 15-20 min. video to share with community (BCAT)
2. If Marching Band happens, content to share at end of season (November)

**Coffee House Performances**
We are pleased to offer a series of “Coffee House” performances that will give students an opportunity to perform as soloists and small ensemble members. These evening performances will be free and open to the public. **Due to COVID-19, these are currently planned for an online format.** These performances will be completely student-planned and student-run, although Mr. Buchsbaum and Mrs. Weller will require an audition and “check-in” in order to be selected to perform.

**Other Considerations for the Band Program** -
Marching Band - Pending the application of the program, all marching band related activities would take place outside of class time. This means that for this school year, any student who wants to participate in the “online marching band curriculum” can do so. Additionally, the online marching band rehearsals would be optional for all students currently enrolled in Wind Ensemble, Symphonic Band, and Percussion Ensemble.

The basic framework for the 2020 Virtual Marching Band would be:
- Season lasts from whenever approved to November
- Rehearsals would take place online in the early evening for 2 hours.
  - 1 rehearsal each week (Monday) would be for the entire ensemble. It would operate as a traditional rehearsal structure. Similar to Band Camp, each section would rehearse a “product” that would be compiled digitally at the end of the season.
    - Visual Ensemble would include recruitment to Grade 8 students.
  - 1 rehearsal each week (Wednesday) would be an optional workshop session.
    - This would be more like a marching band class than a rehearsal. Examples of classes would be:
      - Basic Drill Design with Scott, Advanced Marching Technique with Mr. B, Guard Solo and Ensemble Coaching with Staff, Percussion Solo and Ensemble Coaching with Staff (For solo and ensemble performances, these would be submitted to the USBands circuit for judging evaluation).

Jazz Band - Also pending the application and acceptance of this program. If marching band is approved, Jazz Band activities would not begin until the decided end to the online marching band season. Jazz Band (along with Winter Guard and possibly Winter Percussion) would take the rehearsal timeframe established by marching band: 2 evenings rehearsals per week. The curriculum for Jazz Band would be similar to the approach from Spring 2020. The group would meet and continue to develop jazz technique and concepts through ear training, playing standards, and working on improvisation. The biggest difference is that like the Wind Ensemble and Symphonic Band, Jazz Band would also submit audio/video recordings of 1 “virtual band” piece for each of our major concerts. As always, Jazz Band is open to all BHS students, including those not in our marching/concert band program.