

**Markham District High School
Music Department Handbook**

Greetings from the department,

September 2018

The music program at Markham District High School has had a very long and proud history. Our tradition of excellence in performance is the result of the dedication of our students and their commitment to achieving the highest possible standards. With the start of another school year comes the chance to renew our commitment and strive to equal or surpass what we have accomplished in the past.

If you are new to MDHS, let me take this opportunity to welcome you to the MDHS Music Department where we strive for creating musical excellence in a family atmosphere. You are about to become part of a large musical family, which will serve you well during your four years at Markham. If you are a returning musician we would like to wish you a sincere “welcome back”! We hope you had a wonderful summer vacation and are very excited to make music with you for another school year. In either case I hope you decide to take full advantage of the many musical opportunities we present here.

Mark Caswell (Head of Music)

The Value of Music Education

For centuries, music and art have been recognized as disciplines, on equal footing with mathematics, language, and the sciences in regards to the development of the mental process. More recent research has shown that the study of music, and in particular performance, actively involves more domains of the brain than any other discipline. Music, particularly in ensembles such as band or choir, requires more of the brain- both left and right- to be utilized than any other activity we experience in formal education.

Dealing with the demands of ensemble performance and individual performance simultaneously requires that the performers manipulate visual symbolic information, interpret visual instructions from a conductor, analyze and synthesize aural information being received, constantly exhibit manual skill with the instrument, regulate the volume level and style of playing in concert with many other performers, and many other factors that all combine to become “making music”.

PLATO: “Music training is a more potent instrument than any other, because rhythm and harmony find their way into the wayward places of the soul.”

SHAKESPEARE: “The man that hath no music in himself ... let no such man be trusted.”

MDHS Music Department Website & You Tube channel

The MDHS Music Department [website - www.mdhsmusic.com](http://www.mdhsmusic.com) as well as our **You Tube channel - mdhsmusic** (and look for the black & white photo of an alumni alto sax player). These are both excellent resources for students and parents alike. Be sure to visit both sites often!

TEAM WORK, COMMITMENT & DISCIPLINE - three core elements

Most music courses require participation in a large ensemble, and all such courses have policies regarding attendance and punctuality. Be sure to ask your teacher if you are unsure of these rules. Department policy states that all wind players must be strong members of their grade band before entering other instrumental groups. Vocalists and those performing with vocal ensembles must first and foremost be members of their primary ensemble before joining other vocal groups.

Participation in an instrumental or vocal ensemble requires a real commitment on the part of each student. Our department believes strongly in the three core values - team work, personal discipline and commitment - and strives to develop these values through your growth as a musician and a member of a performing ensemble.

Student participation in extra music ensembles is highly encouraged for all students, however with this involvement comes the expectation of a full commitment on the part of the student. Acceptance into an

ensemble is an honour and each student is expected to support his or her peers and conductor with 100% effort.

MDHS PERFORMING GROUPS

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Mornings (6:50 am start)	Music Council & Chamber Ensembles	Grade 10 Symphonic Band	Grade 9 Jazz Band (grade 10 jazz on select mornings)	Wind Symphony	Wind Symphony & Grade 9 Concert Band
Lunch	Grade 9 extra help or grade 9 Jazz (occasional)				
After School	Chamber Ensembles	Wind Symphony & Resonance Vocal	Chamber Choir & Grade 9 Concert Band	Gr 10 Symphonic Band	Grade 10 Jazz Band
Evenings		Senior Jazz band	Third Stream		

PERFORMANCES

While performance schedules will vary from group to group, there are some that are common to all. These performances should be considered part of your course and are not to be missed under normal circumstances. Keep these dates free!

WINTER CONCERTS - Wednesday December 5th and Thursday December 6th, 2018

SPRING CONCERTS - Wednesday May 8th and Thursday May 9th, 2019

Some other important events:

- Guest composer Robert Sheldon (September 27th) - bands
- Markham Fair (September 28th) - Wind Symphony
- Grade 9 Music Retreat (October 11/12) - all grade 9's and music council
- Guest conductor & Benefit concert (October 16 and October 18th) - bands
- Remembrance Day - grade 12 Wind Symphony
- Music Enrichment day (November 21st) - all seniors, elementary and York University music students
- Music Department Xmas Social (December 18th) - all music students
- Invitational festival (early February) - grade 9's
- York University Invitational Music Festival (February 9th) - grade 10's
- OBA Concert Band Festival
- York Minster Invitational Music Festival (February 22nd) - grade 11's
- Ontario Vocal Festival (late February/early March) - Resonance & Chamber Choir
- GTI Invitational Music Festival (March 1st) - grade 12's
- Europe Tour (March 6 - March 15) - senior tour ensemble
- Cabaret Night (April 11th) - all music students
- Ontario Vocal Jazz Festival (April) - vocal jazz students
- Washington Tour (April 3rd - April 7th) - all grade 9 students eligible

CONCERT DRESS

Instrumental students: Band Sweater, white shirt with tie (men), black shoes, black socks, and black dress pants or skirts.

* *Band sweaters are available for purchase during the month of September. Mr. Simmons will coordinate this activity. Both new and used sweaters are available.*

Choral students: Resonance singers - a custom designed t-shirt.

Chamber Choir singers - ladies; a black dress ordered to size - men, a dark (black) suit.

Other Ensembles: Vary from year to year - see your conductor!

TRAVEL

Each year the music department sponsors a number of trips designed to allow music students to experience the culture and customs of other lands while acting as musical ambassadors of our country. Past groups have visited Germany, Austria, Britain, Italy, Greece, Slovenia and Hungary as well as New York, Boston, Washington, Chicago and California. Last year our senior students experienced a wonderful tour of Vancouver.

Grade 9 Music Students - Washington Tour:

Once again the grade nine students will have the chance to visit Washington D.C. in April. This location has provided our grade nine band/singers with both excellent historical sights and remarkable performing venues. All grade nine students are eligible to attend.

Grade 10 - 12 Music Students - Europe Tour:

This is an opportunity not to be missed! This year our senior students will be preparing for a visit to Austria, Slovenia and Italy during March break 2019. This tour is open to all instrumental & vocal students.

FIELD TRIPS

Music students also take part in field trips around the Toronto area. Besides the performance opportunities listed earlier, field trips include the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Broadway shows, etc... In order to take part in these field trips, parental permission is required. A field trip permission form, signed by parents or a guardian, will be required for each field trip.

FEES & THEORY MATERIAL

This year, there is no Administration Fee for any course at MDHS. However, the costs of individual trips are still the responsibility of participants. *If you have financial concerns or questions, please contact Mr. Caswell at mark.caswell@yrdsb.ca*

Woodwind players - you will be issued a free reed at the beginning of each term. Subsequent reed purchases are priced as follows:

clarinets - \$3.00	tenor sax, bass clarinet & bari sax - \$3.00
alto sax - \$3.00	oboe & bassoon reeds - \$12.00

Suggested Music Stores

Harknett Music (905) 477-1141

- ✓ Local dealer with extensive knowledge of concert band & jazz ensemble needs
- ✓ Excellent source of music books & play along CD's for each instrument
- ✓ Offers student to intermediate level of instruments and equipment

COSMO Music (905) 770-5222

- ✓ One of the largest selections of instruments, mouthpieces and accessories in all of the GTA
- ✓ An incredible new store - truly worth the visit
- ✓ Offers student to professional level of instruments and equipment

St. John's Music (416) 785-5000

- ✓ One of Toronto's most reputable and diverse music stores
- ✓ Excellent service and a great source of music, instruments and accessories
- ✓ Offers student to professional level of instruments and equipment

Long & McQuade Music (905) 209-1177

- ✓ A very convenient location
- ✓ Great for rental of beginning level instruments and some pro instruments
- ✓ Excellent for electronics - guitars, keyboards, basses, drums

INSTRUMENT SIGN - OUT

Instruments are available for sign-out every afternoon except Tuesday afterschool (Wind Symphony night).

Students who sign out an instrument must fill in the sign-out book completely and return the instrument to its appropriate place prior to first period on the next school day. **STUDENTS ARE TO SIGN-OUT ONLY THEIR ASSIGNED INSTRUMENT**, unless permission is granted to borrow another from a music teacher.

Students who fail to return their instrument have sign-out privileges removed. Signing out an instrument constitutes accepting responsibility for that instrument while it is in your care. Loss or damage due to carelessness is the responsibility of the student. If you find that the instrument you have been assigned is missing, report it to your teacher immediately.

Occasionally instruments require repair. If you should have a problem with a school-owned instrument report the problem to a music teacher. They will ask you to fill in a repair form and place the instrument in the repair area. Do not take another instrument- your music teacher will assign you to an instrument that will not conflict with someone else in your class.

MUSIC DEPARTMENT GENERAL POLICIES

1. The music rooms should always be left in a neat, organized manner.
 - a. All instruments are to be kept on the instrument storage shelves.
 - b. Music or personal items are not to be left on the instrument storage shelves.
 - c. Music and music folios are to be left in the music folio cabinet.
 - d. Percussion equipment should always be put away properly, covered or set aside, and handled with care.
2. Vandalism of instruments, equipment, and school property will not be tolerated. *Offenders will be held financially responsible.*
3. Gum-chewing, candy-eating, food, beverages, etc., are not permitted in the music rooms unless specifically authorized. Food is never allowed in practice rooms.
4. Be in your seat (or spot) warmed up, and ready to begin on time for all classes and rehearsals.
5. Students must ask permission from a teacher before entering the Music Office to use or borrow equipment or materials
6. Guidelines for Use of Electronic Devices in Classrooms - during class time, the use of cell phones and electronic devices (including MP3 players, iPods, Smartphones, pagers, Bluetooth and all gaming devices) are restricted. During classroom instruction and any assessment or evaluation, all cell phones and electronic devices are to be powered off and secured out of sight. They are not to be used to make or receive phone calls, send or receive text messages, send or receive emails, access the internet, watch TV, listen to or download music or download files for any other purpose.

MUSIC Staff

Mark Caswell - Head of music

Mark Caswell has been teaching at MDHS since 1990 and has been the head of music at MDHS for almost 10 years - his second home. He pursued his undergraduate music studies at Wilfred Laurier University and York University. He earned his Music Specialist at the University of Toronto and has continued with his studies in Wind Band teaching at the University of Minnesota and the University of Toronto. Mr. Caswell is both a founding member and a Past-President of the Ontario Band Association. For the 17 years, he has been the festival coordinator for the OBA Concert Band Festival - an annual festival hosting about 8,000 students a year. Mr. Caswell is an active adjudicator, clinician and has been a guest conductor at several schools, community bands and music retreats. He is a strong advocate of student leadership and has been a teacher facilitator at the Ontario Education Leadership Centre for six years and has presented workshops at the annual OMEA conference on student leadership. Mr. Caswell has also published several articles in music journals across Ontario and Canada. When not at school, he loves to spend time playing with his beautiful wife and two amazing daughters.

Dawn Caswell - Music staff

Dawn Caswell has been teaching vocal music at MDHS since receiving her Bachelor of Music and Education degrees from Queen's University in 1991. Mrs. Caswell has developed a strong vocal program within the high school, conducting chamber, concert, vocal jazz choirs and our combination choir Third Stream. In addition to her vocal responsibilities, Dawn has taken the podium for the Grade 10 Symphonic Band where the ensemble has won GOLD awards at the OBA for many years. She has also produced and directed a number of musical theatre productions at MDHS. As an active member with the Ontario Vocal Festival since 1995, she has served as the executive director for many years. Along with teaching, Mrs. Caswell has also involved herself in an abundance of performing opportunities. She has performed in countless small jazz combos around the city as well as a long time gig with the Blackboard Blues Band. She has recorded her own independent jazz CD "Dream Come True" with many of Toronto's finest jazz players. Mrs. Caswell loves teaching almost as much as her two lovely girls - Faith and Madison.

Chasen Simmons - Music staff

Mr. Chasen Simmons joins us this year at Markham District High School as the newest member of the music department. He is a multi-instrumentalist reed player who majored on Alto Saxophone while completing his B. Mus. from Western University. Following his studies at Western, he completed his B. Ed. At Nipissing University. Mr. Simmons plays with big bands around the GTA, and loves to perform in musical pit orchestras. Over the last few years, he's had a lot of fun playing saxophone, clarinet, and flute in the pit orchestras for The Full Monty, Anything Goes, The Music Man, and Chess. In addition to saxophone, he has a strong passion for baroque recorder music. He primarily plays Alto Recorder, but he does play everything from the Bass up to the Garklein Sopranino. He's had many amazing opportunities to perform recorder music, including the tribute to Nicholas Goldschmidt at Roy Thompson Hall, on Classical 103.1fm, at Heliconian Hall in Yorkville, and at various museums and concert halls. When he's not teaching or performing, he's enjoying newlywed life with his beautiful wife.

David Iannou - Music staff

DAVID IOANNOU has been an educator for over ten years, most recently he has had the privilege of teaching at Markham District HS. He is also a professional jazz & rock singer, and classical musician. A graduate of The University of Toronto with a Bachelor of Music in Jazz Vocal Performance, David has performed at many of Toronto's jazz & rock venues, including The Rex, The Mod Club and The El Mocambo and was a member of the Downbeat Award-winning U of T Vocal Jazz Ensemble.

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Acknowledgement and Agreement

I have read and understand the guidelines and policies as outlined in the MDHS Music Department Handbook. I realize that conscientious attendance and preparation for classes and rehearsals are essential to my success. I will support the initiatives and policies of the MHDS Music Department to the best of my ability.

Student Name (Please print)

Student Signature and Date

Parent/Guardian name (Please print)

Parent/Guardian Signature and Date

