

# The High School for the Performing and Visual Arts Grammy Award-Winning Music Department

## *Student Handbook*

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Welcome to the Music Department at HSPVA. We are glad that you are here to help us begin our new year, and we hope that the year will be productive for you in your art area and academic classes.

**Music Department Phone Number:** (713) 942-1967

Because our school is constantly before the public eye, and very often we are hosts to visitors from across the nation, it is important that we do nothing to encourage negative attitudes toward our school or our department. To assure our having a good, productive year, several department and school policies are discussed below.

Please **Read** and **Keep** this Document in your Music Notebook or Folder. Please be sure that you and your parents sign the attached Acknowledgement Form and return it at the Music Department Meeting on Monday, the first day of school (Or Wed., following the first Monday of school, if you received your packet after early registration.)

Return only the acknowledgement form. Do not return the documents.

**Students:** Please keep the handbook in your music folder and refer to it often. You may also view it on the HSPVA website, <http://www.hspva.org>, under music department.

## *Music Department Policies*

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1. All rules, regulations and grading procedures established by HISD are in effect at HSPVA. You have signed a contract pledging to uphold these policies and other policies that are established within the department. A copy of the contract is in this handbook and in your time tracker.
  - a. **Attendance**
    - Students must report to the attendance office if they have been absent. They should bring with them a written excuse from the parent or doctor if the absence is excused. If a student must leave school early for **any reason** he/she must bring a note to the attendance office by 7:50 a.m., classes begin at 7:55 a.m. The note must have the phone number of the parent/guardian. The attendance clerk will call the parent/guardian to verify the note.

- Under no circumstances can a student leave the campus without checking out through the office-even if the student is ill. Ill students should report to the office or clinic so that a parent/guardian can be called.
  - Students are expected to arrive at school and in every class on time. No one is excused from period 1 and everyone--including seniors-is expected to arrive on time. Habitual tardiness and unexcused absences will result in a student being placed on a growth plan (probation) and performing privileges (including the Senior Recital) may be suspended.
  - **HSPVA is a closed campus!** See related information in the department rules.
  - For some unknown reason some students think that the attendance policies do not apply to them. The policies apply to all students. There are severe consequences for a student who leaves campus without proper authorization! This includes the suspension of performing privileges. Please note that this means students may not leave the campus after they have been dropped off here by the school bus or their parents.
- b. **Religious holidays** may be excused only if a written request for the excused absence is received in advance of the holiday absence.
  - c. **College visitation:** HSPVA will excuse a maximum of two days for college campus visits if the student is a senior and verification of the appointment is provided by the college and the parents in advance of the absences. Additional days, approved in advance, will be counted as excused absences for the purpose of determining final exam exemption and class attendance credit. Students are asked to check the department calendars of performances before arranging for college visitations.
2. Punctual attendance is expected at all classes, rehearsals and performances. Unexcused absences and tardiness will result in the lowering of the grade and/or conduct. Excused absences and tardiness (in the form of written notes, in advance-where applicable, from the parent, guardian, or doctor) will be weighed against the student's daily performance and attendance, and, in some instances, might result in the lowering of the grade. "Remember: you can not make-up a performance or a rehearsal!
  3. Habitual tardiness and absences will be referred to the attendance office and might result in performing privileges being suspended! It is the student's responsibility to contact or send a message to the music faculty if an emergency arises and the student will miss a performance or after school rehearsal. The phone number in the music office is 713-942-1967, and the phone number in the main office is 713-942-1960. The main office phone is answered during school hours only. \*Have available the phone number of two or three students in the department, and if you are unable to reach a faculty member you should call another student and ask that student to give us your message!

4. A Music Department calendar is attached. Each student is expected to keep a calendar on which all of his/her performance and rehearsals are listed. This helps avoid conflicts with outside activities. **(No student is excused from a major concert at HSPVA in order to perform with an outside group.)** Rehearsal and performance schedules (and extra rehearsal and sectionals) for individual ensembles will be posted and/or distributed by your ensemble directors. Give these dates to those involved with your outside groups.
5. Students are financially responsible for all music, folders, costumes and other performance attire which are issued to them. Do not leave these items unattended in the halls or on the benches outside. Also, please use great care when handling equipment and other department possessions, which include the rehearsal halls, the classrooms, the practice rooms, the desks, carpet, music stands, chairs and the recital hall, in addition to instruments and performance attire. No music stands may be taken home!
6. Each student is responsible for arranging make-up work and tests if an academic or art area class is missed. If the class is missed because of an authorized HSPVA performance, students should get permission from their ensemble director to make up the work during that art area time-where possible-before or after the performance, if the academic teacher agrees. Otherwise, students must make arrangements for the make-up work to be done before or after school. The official make up day is set by each dept. so be sure that you make arrangements with your ensemble director and the academic teacher so that you can avoid conflicts. Note: If a student is performing poorly in an academic class, he/she may not be allowed to miss that class to attend a performance or special Master Class. It is very important that students keep up their grades in all of their classes!
7. Students may not argue with their instructors about class assignments, ensemble placement, or class policy. If there is a point with which you disagree or which you feel needs additional explanation, you can raise your hand, and in a polite tone, ask for an explanation. If you are told to see the instructor later for that explanation, please arrange to see the instructor before or after class or at another agreed upon time. Students who disrupt class by arguing with a teacher will receive a "p" in conduct in that class and will be referred to the assistant principal.
8. Because we have had instruments, carpets, clothing, shoes and desks ruined with gum, absolutely no food drinks or gum will be allowed in any room or halls of the music wing or in the recital hall-before, during or after school. ("S" in conduct for first offense; "P" in conduct and lunchtime detention for subsequent offenses.) Please do not deposit garbage in any classroom trash can. Put all garbage in the large cans in the halls or in the commons. Be respectful of our building and put all lunch time trash/leftover food in the garbage cans which are located in the commons and in the halls. Remind others around you to do the same.
9. No smoking is allowed on the HSPVA campus or at any HISD or HSPVA activity in or out of the city! The use of any tobacco product is strictly prohibited. Possession of tobacco by a minor is illegal.

10. The use of profane or vulgar language is strictly forbidden at HSPVA and at school activities off campus. See HISD Code of Student Conduct.
11. Each student is expected to have music, folder and a sharpened pencil at every rehearsal. Even if you are slightly ill (sore throat, sinus problems, headache, etc.,) you are expected to mark your music and follow your score in every rehearsal. If you are too ill to do this, you should be in the clinic or at home.
12. Students may not come into the music office unless they have been asked to do so by a faculty member this means: Students may not come in to use the phone, pencil sharpener, or the copy machine unless you have permission from a faculty member. Phone calls will be limited to real emergency phone calls-not for arranging rides, calling for forgotten materials at home, etc. These arrangements should be made by you in advance.
13. Only faculty members and assigned student assistants may use the department copy machine. Do not come to the office to make copies of anything. See your instructor if copies are required for a music class.
14. Return library books! Please! If you still need a book or CD, ask the librarian if you can renew the material.
15. If you have a problem or conflict with a student or faculty member, go directly to that person and try in a civil tone, to resolve the conflict. If that fails ask for a conference with Ms. Bonner or the Counselor. If you have a problem in an academic class and you know that it is of such a nature that it will be reported either to the office or to Ms. Bonner or Mr. Seible, let us know immediately so that we can try to help you resolve this problem. Note: Over 95% of the problems which we have encountered could have been avoided if the student had followed the instructions of the teacher, or had conducted himself/herself properly in the classroom (refraining from excessive talking or other immature behavior, not arguing with the teacher or a classmate), or if the student had arrived for class on time with the proper materials and homework.

### ***Detention***

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Students receiving multiple detentions (including Saturday detentions) may also face art area consequences which could include any or all of the following:

- (1) Suspension of performing privileges;
- (2) Removal from trip/extra curricular participation;
- (3) Forfeiture of the senior recital;
- (4) Forfeiture of the art area certificate.

### ***Concert Attire***

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Because ALL students in the Music Department perform at some time as Ensemble Members, a certain standard of dress is required for performances. This includes certain restrictions on hair styles, jewelry, shoes and socks/hosiery, hats, skirts, etc. Students are expected to follow the guidelines set forth for each performance by the director of the performing ensemble. Failure to follow the established concert attire guidelines will result in the student not being allowed to perform.

## ***Conduct***

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Students are expected to maintain excellent conduct in all classes! Conduct cuts ("S", "P", and "U") will not be tolerated. Persistent conduct cuts will result in a warning letter being issued to the student. Failure to improve will result in the student being placed on a growth plan and/or having his/her performing privileges suspended.

- Note: Good ethics require that a student neither gives nor receives help nor in any other manner cheats on an examination (during class or in the make-up exam time).
- If you are caught cheating you will receive a "zero" for the exam and this will affect your grade significantly. Also you will be referred to the assistant principal for possible disciplinary action. Cheating is a mark against your character and if you are eligible academically for the National Honor Society this will affect the ratings you receive under "character".
- Problems with drugs and alcohol will be handled by the HSPVA administration and/or the police. Students who are caught using or in illegal possession of or under the influence of alcohol or controlled or illegal substances will not be allowed to travel with groups from the Music Department and will not be allowed to participate in any off-campus events sponsored by HSPVA, HISD, Region 23, UIL, TMEA or any other organization. Do not put yourself or your ensembles in jeopardy!

## ***Department Policy for Art Area Certification***

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All music students who expect to receive the HSPVA fine arts certificate cannot have received more than a total of three (3) failing grades during the six-weeks grading periods, in any art area classes, during their 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade years. The music academic classes are very important to your musical growth and to your placement in music classes at the various universities and conservatories. You are expected to take these classes seriously and to make good grades in them. Students entering as new sophomores or juniors this fall also fall under this policy.

- Students may still present a recital if they are otherwise eligible.
- Seniors should read the information in the senior recital handbook.

Students may be put on a growth plan (probation) or released from HSPVA for the following reasons:

- a. Persistent Discipline problems or poor conduct/attitude within the art area, academic area or outside of school while excused for performances.
- b. Failure to progress in the art area and maintain a Minimum 77 average.
- c. Failure in two or more academic subjects and the inability to remain on grade level.
- d. Poor attendance at school or performances/rehearsals.
- e. Multiple violations (and, in some instances, one violation) of the HISD Code of Student conduct.

- Under no circumstances should you think that you can skip school or leave campus (unauthorized) without getting caught. Many have tried and all have failed! You are allowed to leave the campus only if you have a permit from the attendance office or from the assistant principal-even if you are ill or upset!
- This Includes You!
- HSPVA is a Closed Campus!

### ***Music Department Souvenir Program***

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Each year parents tell us in November that they were NOT informed by their child of the opportunity to purchase or solicit Ads/Patrons for our wonderful souvenir program which we issue at each concert. Students solicit these Ads as a fundraiser for their various tours and other ensemble needs (such as master classes, instrument repair, payment of region fees, and recording of concerts). A complete packet is available which gives the cost and guidelines for the ads and patron listings, and you may request one from your major instructor.

- If you are new to the Music Department you may want to request a copy of last year's program. Returning students may request one, also.
- **Note: This fundraiser is optional!** No student is required to solicit ads or patrons!
- The souvenir program is a quality production and businesses are proud to advertise in it.
- In order to have the program ready for our first concerts in November, we must set a deadline for the ads. See the first day handout for specific dates. Please do not ask us to extend the deadline.
- If a company has to wait for a check, ask the person in charge to let you have the Ad now and you can get the check later.
- All Ads must be camera ready and, preferably in black and white. There are additional charges if the Ad has to be prepared by us.
- Ads also may be submitted by disk (.jpg) which is really the preferred method.
- Ads must be clean/sharp because we can not re-do one of poor quality.
- Please submit Ads with print on one side only! Please check the spelling!
- Checks should be made payable to HSPVA music dept. and should be submitted to your major instructor.

## **ADDENDUM TO THE MUSIC DEPARTMENT HANDBOOK**

**Please read this information several times to be sure that you are aware of this policy.**

Any music student who purposely defaces, destroys, hides, steals or in any manner is responsible for the defacing, destroying, hiding or stealing of any wind, percussion, string or keyboard instrument, any music stand, chair or desk, amp, chalk board, computer, audio equipment and bulletin boards will have his/her performing privileges suspended immediately. This includes but is not limited to performances with large ensembles, chamber groups, region and UIL activities and the senior recital. The student and his/her family will be responsible for repairing or replacing the destroyed or defaced item.