



String Orchestra **Syllabus**

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Location: Band Room (rm 190)

Credit: 0 for students in Grades 6-8; 1.0 for students in Grades 9-12 (can be repeated for credit)

Date this Syllabus was last updated: 08/25/2025

NOTE: This syllabus is subject to change throughout the year.

A. Course Description

The Founders Academy Band Program consists of sequential, performance-based classes and progressive course levels. Through 'hands-on' in-class learning and routine homework, students will develop instrumental - executive skills, conceptual knowledge, and readiness for ensemble performances, solo performances, improvisation and composition.

The String Orchestra is designed as the next step after the level 1 school band and extends through high school levels of proficiency. Students in this group will have demonstrated advanced level fundamental skills on their instruments, as well as appropriate level musical literacy.

As readiness for music reading, writing and performance, students will learn to Audiate. Audiation is to music as thinking is to language. Developing audiation skills will involve listening, singing, movement and playing without music notation. Students will learn how to play everything they sing on their instruments. Subject matter topics will incrementally include music reading, music writing, music theory and music history.

It is important to understand that String Orchestra is not a private lesson program. Consequently, to ensure adequate, and direct instructional time on their instrument, **it is highly recommended that all students also take private lessons from an adequate teacher to help further their growth and receive more 1 on 1 guidance.**

B. Course Objectives

- *Demonstrate proper performance techniques for their instrument
- *Demonstrate and discuss conduct that promotes learning in a large music ensemble
- *Sing twelve or more folk tunes in tonal syllable language
- *Play (on their instruments) the tunes that they sing
- *Understand and utilize audiation as a prerequisite for music performance
- *Create and perform an original tune on their instrument
- *Notate eight tonal patterns in major tonality
- *Identify pitch letter names as represented on their music staff
- *Chant prescribed rhythms with rhythm syllables
- *Count prescribed rhythms with traditional counting system
- *Play via notation several songs from the class method book
- *Understand the distinction between major and minor tonality

C. How this Class Supports Founders' Mission and Themes

Band classes naturally develop leadership skills in students via solo modeling and ensemble instructional opportunities. Every band class encourages students to lead by presenting their best musical and character qualities. Rigorous study through the band program supports a

balanced classical education by providing students skills, knowledge, experiences, and a way to learn unobtainable from any other discipline. At the same time, band classes integrate knowledge from other subject areas both directly and via analogy. The history and significance of music in our Western culture is increasingly examined as student's progress through the Program. Elements of The Founders Academy leadership Code of Conduct are routinely referenced, reflected, and reinforced via band classroom activities.

Mission Statement:

The Founders Academy is a public charter school encompassing grades 6-12 that is free and open to all New Hampshire students. The academy develops citizens and leaders, who understand and apply the lessons of the past, demonstrate exceptional character, participate knowledgeably in community activities, and lead by example. The Academy recognizes the importance of balance in the development of each person and respects each student's individual journey.

Principled leadership and good citizenship are fostered by means of a curriculum of classical studies that includes analyzing the lives of great men and women of history, mining the rich classical ideals of the Western tradition, and tracing the evolution of the precious and costly idea of liberty.

The Vision:

The Founders Academy prepares wise, principled leaders by offering a classical education and providing a wide array of opportunities to lead.

Leadership Code of Conduct:

The students at The Founders Academy created and adopted the following "Leadership Code of Conduct" in January, 2015:

1. Be responsible
2. Be respectful
3. Be honest
4. Be lawful
5. Be determined
6. Be polite
7. Be open-minded
8. Be courageous

9. Be confident
10. Be helpful

Policy: As outlined in the Student Handbook, students are to follow Section 3.0

D. Texts and Class Supplies

1. A quality instrument in excellent playing condition
2. The Tradition of Excellence method book 12, or 3 for their specific instrument and level
3. A music stand for home use (do not bring stand to school)
5. A pencil for each class (**NO PENS**)
6. A dedicated folder to organize and hold written band materials (this will be provided)
7. An electronic device / computer capable of Zoom classes, YouTube type studies, recording and posting class points in Google Classroom.

** For clarinets/saxes/oboes/bassoons – You need multiple reeds at the ready.*

**For trumpets/french horns/ euphonium/tuba - you need valve oil*

**For trombones - you need slide cream*

**For Percussionists: Sticks, Mallets, additional materials will be announced as needed*

Note: Instruments, books and other band class supplies may be rented/purchased at Music & Arts in Manchester, sweetwater.com, and/or amazon

E. Grading Scheme, Homework, Mid-Term and Final Assessments

		<u>MS</u>	<u>HS</u>
- Class Participation	-	10 %	10 %
- Preparation	-	20 %	20 %
- Performance Exam	-	25 %	25 %
- Concert Performance	-	35 %	35 %
- Homework	-	10 %	10 %
		100 % total	100 %

"The academic year is divided into four quarters. The school will email end of quarter report cards only to 'primary contacts' and students on @tfanh.org email addresses." See Student Handbook, section 2.2.

For classes not eligible for high school credit, mid-term and final assessment grades will be factored into quarters 2 and 4 and graded according to the testing standards set by individual faculty.

Quarter 1 – 25%
 Quarter 2 – 25%
 Quarter 3 – 25%
Quarter 4 – 25%
 Full Year Grade – 100%

For classes that are eligible for high school credit, mid-term and final exam grades are factored into final grades as follows:

For Full Year Courses:	For One Semester Courses:
Quarter 1 – 20% Quarter 2 – 20% Mid-Term – 10% Quarter 3 – 20% Quarter 4 – 20% <u>Final Assessment – 10%</u> Full Year Grade – 100%	Quarter 1 or 3 – 40% Quarter 2 or 4 – 40% <u>Final Assessment – 20%</u> Final Grade – 100%

The Grade Scale used at Founders is as follows:

A+ - 98–100%	A+ = 4.33
A – 94-97%	A = 4.0
A- - 90-93%	A- = 3.67
B+ - 87-89%	B+ = 3.33
B – 84-86%	B = 3.0
B- - 80-83%	B- = 2.67

C+ - 77-79%	C+ = 2.33
C – 74-76%	C = 2.0
C- - 70-73%	C- = 1.67
D+ - 67-69%	D+ = 1.33
D – 64-66%	D = 1.0
D- - 60-63%	D- = 0.67
F – 59% and below	F = 0

See The Founders Academy Student Handbook, section 2.2 for more information

F. Mastery

Definition of Mastery at The Founders Academy

Mastery is the acquisition of a deep level of knowledge through meeting content specific benchmarks. Students develop a thorough understanding of the subject matter by consistently applying their skills and demonstrating strong command of the material.

Why “mastery?”

Mastery ensures that the goal of a rigorous curriculum and high expectations are maintained at The Founders Academy. We do not simply require that students “pass” a course, but that they “master” the content of each course. Additionally, the process allows students whose mastery is in question at the end of a quarter or course to continue to work towards mastering the content, and to demonstrate their mastery for the purpose of moving forward to the next level of instruction in a particular subject area.

What is the “process?”

1. The process includes benchmarks for assessment. This includes an assessment of mastery at the end of each quarter; students who earn grades of a B- or above are considered masters of the content automatically. Mastery must be demonstrated in all courses in order to pass the course or to receive high school credit. The only exceptions to this policy are in middle school art, band, or chorus courses.

2. Students who earn cumulative grades of C- to C+ may still demonstrate mastery by completing additional work, at the teacher's discretion. The additional work must be completed within a specified window of time.
3. The process includes both teacher and student reflection. Quarterly benchmarks allow students, parents, and teachers to address any deficiencies in progress as the school year progresses. All should work to monitor student progress towards final course mastery through the school year.
4. Supplementary instruction is pivotal in this process. Students who do not demonstrate mastery with a semester or course grade of a B- or above may have the opportunity to demonstrate mastery at the end of the course by completing supplemental instruction, provided by the teacher.

Course Mastery:

At the end of a semester-long or full-year course, students who earn a grade of a B- or above will be considered masters of the content and automatically be promoted to the next level within that course's subject area (if there is one).

Students who earn a grade of C- through C+ will only pass the course/receive high school credit, and be allowed to proceed to the next level (if applicable), by completing additional work at the teacher's discretion to demonstrate mastery. The only exceptions to this policy are middle school art, band, and chorus courses.

For semester-long courses that are completed at the end of Semester 1, attempts for Mastery must be completed within 2 weeks of issuance of quarter 2 report cards. For courses that are completed at the end of the school year, mastery work must be completed within two weeks of the issuance of end of year report cards.

If a student demonstrates course mastery through completing supplementary work, their cumulative grade does not change.

Forms of demonstrating mastery may include:

Projects, Oral Exams, Written Exams, Exam Re-takes, Khan Academy, After School Tutoring, and other assignments deemed appropriate by teachers.

Necessary Steps to Success of the Mastery Process:

- Teachers must explain Mastery to their students clearly and frequently during the school year. It should be emphasized even more than the numeric value of the grade the

student earns, as only mastery is used to determine if students progress to the next level in a subject area.

- Students must understand that a letter grade of a B- or higher at the end of the course determines whether mastery is automatically recognized.
- At the end of the course, only students who have earned a grade of C- through C+ may complete additional work to demonstrate mastery.
- Students are highly encouraged to initiate the request to do extra work to demonstrate mastery by emailing their teachers once they have received their report cards. Student initiation demonstrates student responsibility and commitment to their academic success.
- By the deadlines mentioned above, teachers will determine if mastery has been achieved through the supplemental work completed by the student.

The letter grade "I" (Incomplete) may be assigned to a student who has been absent due to extenuating circumstances and has not had enough time to complete the necessary work in that marking period. Students are responsible for making up all incomplete work within two weeks of the end of the marking period. If the work is not completed, the grade may be calculated with zero credit given for the missing assignments. Written requests for extensions may be submitted by parents/guardians stating the reason for the request (for example, severe illness). Approval of extensions is not automatic. The letter grade "NG" (No Grade) may be assigned to a student who has not completed enough of the course to receive a grade.

Music Mastery and Promotion Note: Achieving Mastery in a Chorus or Band level does NOT guarantee promotion. Promotion to the next level will be decided by many factors including, but not limited to: Singing/Playing Ability, Classroom Behavior and Maturity, Evidence of Practice, Balance of the Ensembles, Concert Dependability, and the student's schedule. While uncommon, it is also possible for a student to be moved down to a lower level if he/she does not meet the standards and expectations of their current level or if they would be a better "fit" at the lower level. The idea of the different levels of ensembles is to allow each student to succeed and excel, in the environment that will foster the most growth and development.

See The Founders Academy Student Handbook, section 2.1.

G. Attendance and Make-Up Work

When a student is absent (either excused or unexcused) it is the responsibility of the student to make up all work missed, including in-class assignments. The teacher will decide on the appropriate amount of time for make-up work. Work which was assigned prior to the absence and due on the day of the absence must be passed in upon the student's return to class. Missed assignments and class work should be obtained from Google Classroom or Alma, or if further clarification is needed, the teachers.

Students absent on the day of a quiz or test must make arrangements with the teacher on the day of return for make-up. Students may not be given tests or quizzes in advance of an absence without prior permission.

The Founders Academy regulations in relationship to attendance, absenteeism and truancy are based on the following New Hampshire statutes and administrative rules, as well as additional rules as needed:

Legal References Related to Attendance:

RSA 189:34, Appointment

RSA 189:35-a, Truancy Defined

RSA 193:1, Duty of Parent; Compulsory Attendance by Pupil

RSA 193:7 Penalty

RSA 193:8, Notice Requirements

RSA 193:16 Bylaws as to Nonattendance

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed 306.04 (a)(1), Attendance and Absenteeism

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed 306.04 (c), Policy Relative to Attendance and Absenteeism"

With regards to making up performance and playing based assignments for band classes, retakes will be allowed openly. As students grow and learn on their instrument, they may find challenges once difficult have become easier. So long as the intent for the retake is clearly communicated, it will be accepted.

See The Founders Academy Student Handbook, section 3.2.

H. Scope & Sequence

Units covered in this class will include but are not limited to:

- *Members of the concert band*
- *The families of instruments*
- *Assembly and maintenance of instruments*
- *The major scale*
- *The minor scale*
- *The chromatic scale*
- *The pentatonic scale*
- *Beginning composition*
 - *Intermediate level composition*
- *Improvisation*
 - *12 bar blues*
- *Transposition*
- *Chords and Arpeggios*
 - *Intervals*
- *Key signatures*
 - *Modes*
- *The Circle of Fifths*
- *Reading basic rhythms*
 - *Increasing the difficulty of the rhythms*
- *Reading sheet music*
- *Vocabulary*
- *Conducting*
 - *Simple and Compound time*
- *Beginner to intermediate level music theory*
- *Concert repertoire*

I. References and Videos

References and Videos will typically consist of YouTube performances of our concert music.

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