

CHURCHILL JR. HIGH SCHOOL PIANO SKILLS HANDBOOK



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Welcome to Piano Skills Class! As your instructor, I promise to give my best effort to create a successful and positive learning environment. If you, the student, will agree to bring a good attitude as well as your best effort, we will not only create beautiful music, we'll have a lot of fun in the process!

This class provides students with an opportunity to explore the fundamental methods and techniques of piano and piano music. Students will also learn aspects of music history, sight-reading, and music theory.

This booklet should answer any questions that students or parents have regarding expectations for Piano Skills. After reading, if you still have questions or concerns, please contact me using the information provided above or via the Churchill website.

Please take special note of the Recital date because performance attendance counts for a LARGE portion of the grade. Of most importance is your daily effort and contribution to the class!

There are three sections of Piano Skills that meet daily:

2nd Period - 8:49-9:33

3rd Period - 9:37-10:21

5th Period - 11:13-11:57

PIANO STUDENT EXPECTATIONS and GRADING POLICY

Participation - 40% of your overall grade

What is expected from you as a participant in the piano classroom? These are the things you are graded on when you earn points for participation every week in Piano Skills.

- Sitting in your seat at the beginning of class with all materials.
- Attempting to participate and follow all directions at the best of your ability.
- Sitting at the keyboards with good posture and putting forth a solid effort.
- Raising your hand to speak.
- Assisting the teacher when needed.
- Assisting fellow students when needed.
- Taking part in all classroom activities, performing or otherwise.
- Completing all worksheets and homework.
- Giving your best on all tests and quizzes.
- Being attentive during class.
- Taking notes when appropriate.
- Behaving in such a manner and maintain an attitude supportive to the learning environment.

Homework and Quizzes - 40% of your overall grade

I will frequently assign worksheets and other homework, and most of the time we complete all written assignments in class. These sheets will contribute to your knowledge of music symbology and theory, and will directly affect your musical literacy (reading and understanding).

Piano Recital - 20% of your overall grade

Attend the Piano Recital dressed in the proper performance attire.

- Perform to the best of your ability.
- Sit quietly while your peers are performing with no disruptive behavior.
- Display proper concert etiquette.

MONDAY QUIZZES

Every Monday, students will be quizzed on material from the previous week. Students are REQUIRED to turn in quiz corrections (on a separate sheet) the day after the quizzes have been returned. For these corrections, they will receive back 50% of the credit for questions missed.

PIANO RECITAL

The final project in this class will be the end-of-semester Piano Recital. This performance is required of all class members, and will showcase the amazing talents and skills you will be learning throughout the course! Each student will select and prepare an ability-appropriate piece to be performed for an audience of their peers and parents. Our recital will be held on:

WEDNESDAY, December 16th at 1:00pm in the Churchill Auditorium

PIANO SKILLS RULES, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES

1. Come prepared: mentally and physically. Be on time and in your seat with required materials before the start of class. Do not be tardy!
2. Be respectful of all materials given to you (pencils, paper, books, music). Music is your textbook. YOU are responsible for the care and use of your music. Any missing or misused music will become your financial responsibility to replace.
3. Materials not needed for class must be kept AWAY from the Keyboarding Lab. We have limited space to work in. There is no need for a book bag, a purse, or other items that you will not need.
4. There is absolutely NO gum, food, or cell phones allowed in the Piano Skills classroom.
5. You will be given 2 bathroom passes for each quarter. Unused passes will NOT roll over to next quarter. If you choose not to use your passes, I will add an extra **3%** per pass toward your quarterly grade.
6. Display a positive attitude! We all have bad days from time to time, but leave the luggage of the day outside the classroom if at all possible. Always speak positive things, never negative things.
7. Respect yourself and others. Be respectful of your teacher and fellow students by raising your hand to speak and not speaking over your teacher or fellow classmates. Never argue with your teacher. Problems can always be handled in a fair and calm way. Your teacher is always in control of the class. Only talk when you have permission to do so.
8. Show a positive contribution every day. Piano Skills is a participation class. Each member is expected to uphold his/her responsibility of participation in all activities. If you have a day where you feel you cannot positively contribute, sit quietly and do not disturb the rest of the class. Disruption of the learning environment will have consequences. All I ask is that you do your best to participate. "Try" is the magic word!
9. Remain on task and follow all instructions.
10. Improve the world.

KEYBOARD LAB RULES

- The keyboarding lab is for *Piano Skills class members only*.
- No glissandos (*running fingers up/down keys*) EVER!
- Enter and leave with extreme caution... watch for cords.
- If you want to practice before/after school, first get permission.
- No food, gum or liquids in the lab EVER!
- If you find something not working, troubleshoot it first. If you cannot solve the problem, then report it to Mr. Debes.

DISCIPLINE PLAN

Since class time is valuable, none can be wasted. If I have to stop class on account of a student violating any of the above rules, they will be met with appropriate disciplinary action.

1. I say your name
2. Warning
3. 20-minute detention and possibly phone call

RECITAL PERFORMANCE ATTIRE

The minimum required recital attire for all Piano Skills students will be "business casual". Dress how you would for a job interview. Closer to the recital, we will discuss specifics.

FIND TIME TO PRACTICE!

The way to get the most out of this class is by practicing frequently. The Keyboarding Lab is open to students currently enrolled in the class, and can be freely utilized BEFORE or AFTER school. If you do not own an acoustic or electric piano at home, I HIGHLY encourage you to take advantage of this. If you do not own one, and you cannot find the means to practice outside of school, I do have a LIMITED stock of loaner instruments. If you are in need of one, ask me for details.