

During 2017-2018, the Hopkins Jazz Ensemble received the highest possible Superior ratings at the Campana Jazz Festival and the CMEA Jazz Festival, and a 1<sup>st</sup> Place award at the Music in the Parks Festival in Anaheim. Students at Hopkins are extremely lucky to have the opportunity to study jazz at the junior-high level in a very high-caliber program. The following answers the frequently-asked questions about participating in the group.

1. Why does Jazz Ensemble meet so early in the morning?

Because of the way that the school schedule is designed, before school is really the only opportunity for the Jazz Ensemble to meet regularly. This may be an inconvenience to some, but it is outweighed by the benefits of participating.

2. Why should my student participate in Jazz Ensemble?

Playing in the “award-winning” Jazz Ensemble will give the student many more opportunities as a musician. The Hopkins Jazz Ensemble is a very active performing group and is the school’s “flagship” ensemble. This group allows students to shine more as individuals than they might otherwise would in their other music classes. Playing in Jazz Ensemble is a very different type of music class, where the students learn to be more independent. Not all students are given the opportunities to play in this group, so those invited to audition are the ones considered by the Music Department to be the best students.

3. Will playing in Jazz Ensemble hurt my student’s grades?

No! Students in Jazz Ensemble usually get higher grades than other students. It is believed that participation in Jazz Ensemble actually enhances the student’s academic experience in a way that will allow them to have success in all of their endeavors, both during and outside of school! (In fact, most students actually see their grades INCREASE in their other classes when taking Jazz Ensemble!)

4. Why are there so many performances?

One of the goals of the Jazz Ensemble is to get as many performance opportunities as possible. The Jazz Ensemble is the representative of the Hopkins Music Department for many school events such as Open House and 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Parents Night. These types of performances allow the Hopkins Music Department to continue to receive the much-needed support from the community and the district. The Jazz Ensemble also participates in two Jazz Festivals where they are rated and critiqued by other professional jazz educators. This is found to be the most valuable experience that a music student can have. Because the Jazz Ensemble is the elite performance group at Hopkins, it naturally follows that they should represent the school as often as possible.

5. Does my student have to attend class every morning?

Jazz Ensemble generally meets Monday to Friday mornings from 7:15-8:10 a.m. Because of the limited class time, students will need to be at all classes as scheduled, barring illness and other emergency.

6. Why does the Jazz Ensemble miss school classes?

Students will miss their regular classes only once this year for Jazz Ensemble performances. Teachers are always given advanced notice of students' absence, and encouraged to arrange their classes so as not to penalize Jazz Ensemble students. Should any problem arise, the music director would be pleased to discuss this with the other teacher and work things out. This has never been an issue academically with previous Jazz Ensemble students.

7. Are all performances mandatory?

Because the Jazz Ensemble is such an "elite" group, there is only one player on each part of music. If one person is missing, the music will not sound full. In most cases, the ensemble will not be able to perform if students are missing. If there is a major conflict with an event, it might be possible to recruit a substitute; however, this is very difficult, considering the amount of music to be covered.

8. Does Jazz Ensemble conflict with sports (basketball or volleyball)?

No! There have been Jazz Ensemble students on all of the different sports teams at Hopkins. It has never been a problem for them at all. Any occasional conflict with a sports practice before school has always been resolved. Playing on a sports team should not prevent a student from playing in Jazz Ensemble!