

# CONESTOGA JR./SR. HIGH SCHOOL GUITAR HANDBOOK 2020-2021

Cassi Vallis, Director

**Welcome to Guitar at Conestoga! It's a pleasure to have you as part of this organization!**

This handbook outlines procedures and activities that make up the Guitar class at Conestoga. It is provided to each student so that they and their parents/guardians are aware of the expectations and goals of the class. This handbook is a guide to reasonable expectations of behavior, conduct, and contribution. This should answer any questions you might have about your music experience. All students and parents/guardians should fully read this handbook.

If you have any further questions or concerns about instrumental music policies, please do not hesitate to contact me at (402) 235-2271 or by email at [cvallis@conestogaps.org](mailto:cvallis@conestogaps.org).

## I. COVID-19 PROTOCOLS

This year is unlike any other we've experienced. All performances, rehearsals, can come to a halt at any moment depending on the decisions made by the National Association for Music Education and Conestoga Jr/Sr High School. In order to keep students, instructors, and families safe and healthy, necessary changes have been made to the structure and set-up of the music program:

1. The music department will follow the stated COVID-19 Protocols provided by Conestoga Jr/Sr High School.
2. Class and rehearsals will be held outside whenever possible to provide fresh air and more space to social distance.
3. The music room is a mask mandated room. Guitar students will wear masks at all times.
4. Students will be expected to sanitize their area at the conclusion of each rehearsal with school provided materials.
5. If at any time a student or parent has questions or concerns, do not hesitate to reach out to Mrs. Vallis

## II. TEXTBOOKS AND INSTRUMENTS

Students will receive a school textbook for guitar. We will be playing from the First and Second Year Guitar Manual. These textbooks contain all lessons, work sheets, and reference material that will be used throughout the year. Conestoga Music Department is very fortunate to have fabulous guitars for our music students. These guitars are to be taken care of and respected. A huge amount of time has gone into re-stringing, tuning, and cleaning the guitars. These school-owned guitars are to be checked out by each individual student. These guitars may be checked out for home practice use (along with a case), but **the student must sign out the guitar after school, and check it back in first thing in the morning**. Failure to return guitar to school the next day will result in a loss of the

check-out privilege. Students do not have any fees to enroll and participate in the guitar program. **Students will be responsible for paying a fee if they DAMAGE THE GUITAR or lose materials (capo, pick, and method books).**

### **III. GENERAL EXPECTATIONS**

1. Students are expected to be on time. Tardies will be issued to students who are not in their assigned seat, with their instrument and music ready, at the sound of the bell. Visiting will stop and we are ready to rehearse.
2. Treat teachers, accompanists, substitute teachers, and other students with respect. Talking during class instruction and rehearsal is disruptive to the learning environment.
3. Food, gum, and drinks are not allowed in the classrooms. Water is permitted in a sealed container.
4. Bring any supplies that you may need with you. Students are not to wander the room getting capos, picks, etc.
5. Maintain respect for the music room, the instruments, and the equipment. This includes your music and folder. If they are damaged beyond normal wear, you will be required to pay for their replacement. All class materials must be stored at the end of each period. Keep the room clean and orderly. Do not use any equipment (piano, sound system, etc.) unless you have received permission from the director.

### **IV. REHEARSAL EXPECTATIONS AND PROCEDURES**

1. Follow instructions and ask questions when in need of assistance.
2. When the director is working with another student, your job is to be studying your music.
3. Guitars are to be treated with care and respect. Without these guitars, students would not be able to express their musicianship.
4. Use only the guitar assigned to you. The owner may only use personal guitars.
5. ALWAYS have your music, folder, and pencil.
6. At the end of each rehearsal, students are expected to put all instruments away, and return the room to any designated set-up per the director.
7. Rehearsals are not over until the director dismisses the class. Do not begin to put materials away until instructed to do so.

### **V. DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

Students who are unable or unwilling to follow classroom rules and procedures or persist in disruptive behavior will be subject to the following disciplinary sequence:

1. For most episodes of disruptive behavior or breach of rules, the student will receive a verbal warning.
2. Upon further disruptive behavior, the student will schedule a conference with Mrs. Vallis to review the expected behaviors listed in the handbook. Parents/guardians will be contacted.

3. After three instances of disruptive behavior, a conference will be held with Mrs. Vallis, Mr. Geise, said student, and parents/guardians. Together we will come to an understanding of expected behavior in the music classroom.

**\*\*Severe Clause:** A student who is constantly disrupting class, insubordinate, uses inappropriate language, is abusive or is in any way violent will be immediately referred to the office. Parents/guardians will be contacted. In extreme cases, whether the student's involvement in the instrumental program will continue, will be evaluated between Mrs. Vallis, Mr. Geise, and Dr. Johnsen.\*\*

## **VI. CHAIN OF COMMUNICATION**

Open, honest, and respectful communication is essential to the success and positive experience for our students, parent(s)/guardian(s), and staff. The following list are examples of the types of appropriate communication:

1. Email: [cvalis@conestogacougars.org](mailto:cvalis@conestogacougars.org). I will respond to emails within 24 hours of the received message and within the hours of 7am-7pm.
2. Phone #: The Conestoga Jr./Sr. High School phone number is (402) 235-2271. My personal cell phone number is (402) 269-0304. This number should only be used in the case of emergencies and within the hours of 7am-7pm.
3. TeamApp and ParentSquare: All handouts of information will be sent out through these electronic forms of communication. Join TeamApp by searching "Conestoga Guitar" to receive notifications. All parents should be enrolled in ParentSquare through the school.

I encourage everyone to reach out with questions, comments, and/or concerns throughout the school year. When there is an incident of concern, the chain of communication is as follows:

- First conference: Parent(s)/guardian(s) and/or student conference with Mrs. Vallis. This can be done in person by scheduled meeting, or over email to discuss the incident of concern.
- Second conference: Parent(s)/guardian(s) and/or student conference with Mrs. Vallis and the Secondary Principal, Mr. Geise. This conference will be conducted in person at a previously scheduled meeting to discuss the incident of concert.
- Third conference: Parent(s)/guardian(s) and/or student conference with Mrs. Vallis, Mr. Geise, and Conestoga Superintendent, Dr. Beth Johnsen. This conference will be conducted in person at a previously scheduled meeting to discuss the incident of concert.

## **VII. GRADING**

Grading in choir is different than in other subjects. Students will be graded in 4 areas:

1. Performances. 40% of total grade. School concerts, individual assessments, and uploaded recordings.
2. Projects. 25% of total grade. Compositions, music technology collaborations, created art.

3. Worksheets. 20% of total grade. Assessments over notation, rhythm, history, and vocabulary.
4. Rehearsals. 15% of total grade. This is your daily contribution to the class. 5 points are given per rehearsal, and a point will be taken away for each instance of lack of effort, disruptive behavior, loss of materials, failure to follow instructions, and removal from class.

## VIII. PERFORMANCES

STUDENTS MUST ATTEND ALL CONCERTS IN THAT THEY ARE TO PERFORM AND REMAIN UNTIL THE END OF THE CONCERT. WORK IS NOT AN EXCUSED ABSENCE. Please take a copy of our schedule and hand it to your employer to avoid scheduling conflicts. If they have questions, they may contact me at the school. *A schedule of all concert/contest performances can be found on the Conestoga activities calendar.* [https://www.nebraskacapitolconference.org/g5-bin/client.cgi?cwellOnly=1&G5statusflag=view&schoolname=&school\\_id=4875&G5button=13&G5genie=475&vw\\_schoolyear=1&vw\\_agl=20479-1-0,&manual\\_access=1](https://www.nebraskacapitolconference.org/g5-bin/client.cgi?cwellOnly=1&G5statusflag=view&schoolname=&school_id=4875&G5button=13&G5genie=475&vw_schoolyear=1&vw_agl=20479-1-0,&manual_access=1)

**Definition of an “EXCUSED ABSENCE”** - Illness, family-related emergencies, and planned family trips. A note or phone call from the parent/guardian must be submitted to the director well in advance for review and consultation with the student. In the case of sudden illness, a note, phone call, or email from the parent/guardian should accompany the student’s return.

**Definition of an “UNEXCUSED ABSENCE”** – Work, social activities, and non-school related activities.

### Concert Performance Alternative Assessment

If students are unable to attend a concert for whatever reason, students will complete an individual performance assessment. Students will sign up for one of the following times, and individually perform the music repertoire they would have performed at the concert. This policy gives students the opportunity to express their knowledge of the content matter and receive direct instruction and immediate feedback from the director. **Failure to complete an individual performance assessment will result in a zero percent.** Listed below are the individual performance assessment dates and times for each concert.

## IX. CONCERT DRESS

All members will wear concert black. Men must wear black dress shirt (tie optional but highly encouraged), black dress pants, black shoes (not tennis shoes) and black dress socks. Women must have black closed-toed shoes (no sandals or tennis shoes), black knee-length skirt or pant, and a black blouse, and minimal jewelry.

### Winter Concert and May Concert

For the Winter Concert, students will be able to wear clothing that is Red, Green, Black, White, or an APPROPRIATE ugly festive sweater. For the May Concert, students are simply to wear nice dress clothes. Knee length dresses/shirts, dress blouses, sweaters,

polos, shirt and tie, black dress pants, khaki pants, and dress shoes are a few of the examples. Students are encouraged to ask Mrs. Vallis if their concert attire is appropriate before the night of the concert.

#### All Members

Please avoid using perfume, cologne, and heavy hair products before concerts, as these can cause severe allergic reactions in a concert setting. Students who are not able to provide concert dress will need to visit with Mrs. Vallis prior to the performance. **Failure to abide by the concert dress policy will result in a percentage loss of grade.**

### **CONCLUSION**

The performing arts have always been a vital part of our society. YOU have been given a very special talent. You now have the obligation and responsibility to use that talent for the betterment of our community, and for the development of yourself as an individual. The accomplishments of the Conestoga Guitar program depend on each member of the organization. Even if just a few members do not cooperate fully, the group becomes an inefficient organization. It is our hope that each guitar member will assume an immediate obligation to do his or her part in making our year in the Conestoga guitar family a memorable one for all.

Sincerely,  
Mrs. Cassi Vallis  
Music Director  
Conestoga Jr./Sr. High School

# GUITAR CONTRACT 2020-2021

DUE August 25, 2020

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**STUDENT:**

I have read and understand the Conestoga Guitar Handbook governing my participation in the Conestoga Guitar Program. I accept my personal responsibility and obligation to the program and I pledge my support to other members of this group in meeting their responsibilities.

**PARENT/GUARDIAN:**

I accept my responsibility in supporting and assisting my son/daughter in living up to the responsibilities and obligations as outlined. I understand that any questions about department procedures can be found in the Guitar Handbook and any further questions should be directed to Mrs. Vallis.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ I have read the following handbook and understand all of its policies and expectations for this ensemble.
  
2. \_\_\_\_\_ I realize the importance of this group, and will follow all of the expectations and guidelines presented in this handbook.
  
3. \_\_\_\_\_ I understand the repercussions, responsibilities, and alternative assessment That follow an excused **AND** unexcused absence from a performance.
  
4. \_\_\_\_\_ I am aware that I am liable for any damage done to the Conestoga owned Guitar. I understand that I am responsible for paying \$189 to Conestoga in the event of a destroyed instrument.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Please check the lines for the following statements, sign both student and parent/guardian and **return this page only** to Mrs. Vallis.