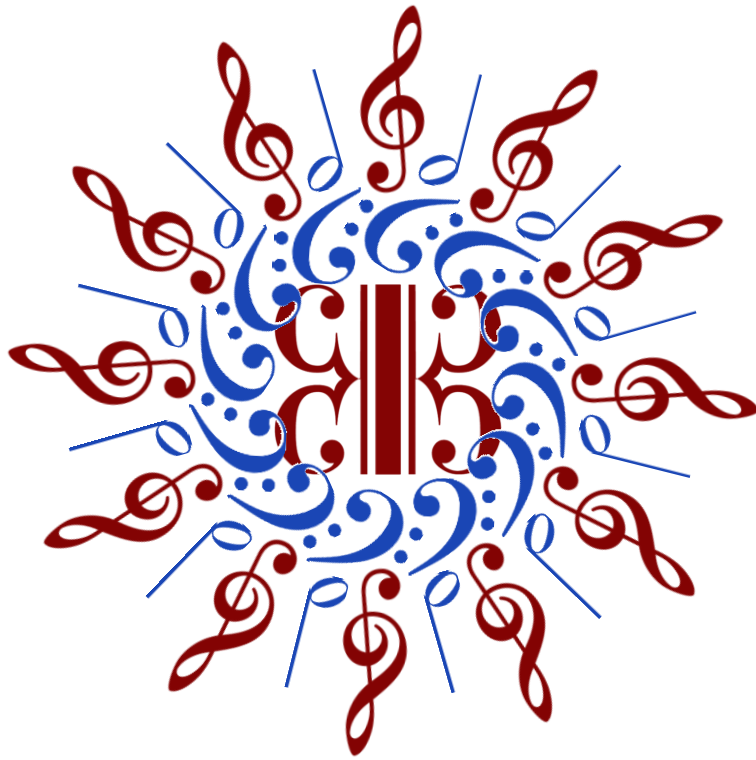


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WEST FLORIDA HOME EDUCATION MUSIC ASSOCIATION

WFHEMA

Band & Strings



PARENT/STUDENT **HANDBOOK**
AND **CALENDAR 2024-2025**

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WFHEMA Board of Directors

Glenda Jones – President (Founder)

Alicia Blum – Vice-President

Dawn Colbert – Treasurer

Amanda Cameron – Secretary

Don Snowden – Parliamentarian

Parent Board Association

(serving on Board of Directors)

Alicia Blum – President

Dawn Colbert – Vice-President

Melody Overman – Treasurer

Alana Dutson – Secretary

Music Instructors

Jennifer Schuler

Beginner and Intermediate Strings

Daniel Blomdahl

Beginner Band

Tom Savage

Intermediate Band and Chamber Orchestra

Staying Connected

WFHEMA has two primary forms of communication for orchestra families.



The band website at www.homeschoolbandandstrings.com provides essential details about the band program, the audition policy along with pertinent downloads, the orchestra registration forms, and the orchestra calendar, which lists important dates to note.



Details for upcoming events and other information are sent via email from homeschoolbandandstrings@gmail.com. *Please check your email regularly, specifically before orchestra rehearsals, for any changes.*



Be sure to “like” us on Facebook *Homeschool Band and Strings*.



Please call **(850) 777-8442** if you will be late or have to miss rehearsal.



Our History

As the Homeschool Orchestra celebrates its 33th year of existence, I am amazed to reflect on the ways God's providential hand has been on this organization from its inception. He has always provided the people, skills, talents, and resources needed at just the perfect time, even as He is currently providing these things to a new generation who are continuing forward for the great benefit of many future generations of homeschooled students.

The band has gone through several phases. Starting out small in church facilities to growing to four bands and three strings ensembles, the program has developed over the years to provide excellent music instruction to students in both Santa Rosa and Escambia counties. The band was incorporated in 2010 and has brought on many music instructors to teach students ages 8-18. Opportunities for performance assessments individually and as a group have been a part of the program through the state affiliation. The association has been blessed to use many church facilities for rehearsals, performances, and banquets. We continue to operate with reaching students in music education to ultimately bring glory to God.

— Glenda Jones, Founder

[for a more detailed history, please see the website]

Purpose

The primary objective of WFHEMA is to provide students with quality group music instruction, performance outlets, and competition opportunities, all while fostering a love of musical excellence in a positive atmosphere.

Statement of Faith

Our mission is to give praise and honor to God through His Son, Jesus Christ, in all that we do. As such, it is required that all offices and leaders agree to accept the Ten Commandments and Judeo-Christian principles as guidelines for behavior in carrying out their duties and for the setting and execution of all corporation policy, written and unwritten.



Meet the Instructors

Tom Savage started playing the trumpet in the fifth grade. After graduating high school, he went on to get his Bachelor of Science degree in Music Education from Salisbury State University and his Master of Arts Degree in Performance from Pensacola Christian College. He eventually taught elementary music, private lessons, concert band, jazz band, symphonic band, and marching band at many other schools, including Sims Middle School and Pensacola Christian Academy, and also as an Adjunct Professor of Trumpet at the University of West Florida and Pensacola Christian College. On the side, he enjoyed playing in the Pensacola Symphony for 25+ years, the Northwest Florida Symphony Orchestra, the Pensacola Civic Band, the Perdido Brass Quintet, the Four Seasons Brass Choir, and the Olive Baptist Church Orchestra. Besides being a teacher, he was the orchestra director at Olive Baptist Church for fifteen years, where he directed the orchestra, handbells, taught brass and percussion lessons, coordinated the performing arts program, and led several musical missions trips in the U.S. and overseas. He hopes to instill in the next generation the power of music and the techniques he has learned throughout his long musical career. Besides music, he also enjoys drinking coffee, being with his family, traveling, and attending sporting events.

Daniel Blomdahl started playing clarinet in fifth grade after hearing the Seattle Symphony perform Prokofiev's Peter and the Wolf. Mr. Blomdahl completed a Bachelor's and Master of Science degrees in Music Education with an emphasis in piano from Pensacola Christian College in 2013 and 2015, respectively. Throughout his college career, he played a variety of band and orchestral instruments in PCCymphony, Symphonic Band, woodwind ensembles, brass ensembles, and string ensembles. While teaching full-time, he also completed his Master of Music Education from Bob Jones University in 2020. Mr. Blomdahl has over fifteen years of experience teaching private lessons to a variety of ages, skill levels, and instruments, as well as almost ten years of experience leading beginner bands. He has also had experience leading intermediate and advanced bands and orchestras. When he is not involved in a musical event or practicing, Mr. Blomdahl loves reading, cooking, and drinking coffee.

Jennifer Schuler joined WFHEMA in 2020 as director of Beginner and Intermediate strings. She studied under Dr. Alberto Jaffe, a former artist in residence of Pensacola and author of the Jaffe Strings Method. She graduated from Pensacola Christian College with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Music Education, violin proficiency. She holds fourteen years of teaching experience in both private and group lessons. In addition to teaching for WFHEMA, Mrs. Schuler teaches private strings lessons in her personal studio. She also performs as a violinist with the Northwest Florida Symphony Orchestra and the Panama City Symphony Orchestra. Jennifer is also a homeschooling mother of two. Whenever she is not teaching or playing violin, she loves making memories with her family and spending time in the kitchen cooking and baking.

Financial Information

WFHEMA aims to offer a quality music program while keeping costs to a minimum. Payments can be made monthly over eight months or paid in full upon registration.

Registration: \$100 per student (no more than \$200 per family)

Tuition: \$80/month or \$720/year first student per orchestra

\$60/month or \$540/year each additional sibling

\$40/month or \$360/year second orchestra for student

Online payments are accepted via an invoice sent by WFHEMA, and monthly tuition payments are due by the 1st of each month.

A reminder will be sent by email on the 15th of each month that payment is due by the 1st. *If payment has not been received by the final class day of the month, the student will not be permitted to the first class of the next month unless the payment is brought with him/her that day.*

Please make all checks payable to WFHEMA. It is preferred that payments be made by dropping them in the red box located in the WFHEMA office. You may also mail them to WFHEMA using the address on the back cover of this pamphlet.

If you are unable to continue in WFHEMA for any reason, you must notify in writing either the Parent Board President or Treasurer. You will be billed for all classes up to the time your official withdrawal is received. This information is also included in your signed registration agreement.

Fundraising Commitment

Two fundraising opportunities will be offered throughout the year. The tentative dates for these events are listed in the WFHEMA calendar. Details will be emailed via homeschool-bandandstrings@gmail.com. Students have the option to participate in one or more of these opportunities to help reach the **fundraising commitment of \$125 profit each year per family**. If you would prefer not to participate in fundraising, you may pay the commitment as outlined in the registration agreement. If there is a fundraising profit shortage, the difference will be due by the end of March.

Registration, Tuition, and Fundraising Income Use

The majority of the monthly tuition income covers the salaries of our talented music instructors. The money collected from registration and fundraising is used to cover operational costs including association dues, insurance, uniforms, orchestra music, brochures, ink and copy expenses, website fees, etc.



Uniforms

Each student will be provided with the following items during the designated uniform fitting; however, **students will need a pair of black dress shoes to accompany the provided uniform.**

Beginner and Intermediate Band & Strings

Boys: Tuxedo pants, white shirt, black buttons, bow tie and cummerbund, cuff links

Girls: Black formal floor-length dress

Wind Ensemble and Chamber Strings

Boys: Tuxedo jacket and pants, white shirt, black buttons, bow tie and cummerbund, cuff links

Girls: Black formal floor-length dress

Uniform Return Policy

It is expected that uniforms be returned between May 1st and May 8th. However, advanced students and selected intermediate students will not have to return their uniforms then, as they will be performing for the WFHESL graduation. Specific uniform return days for those students will be announced at a later time.

You are no longer required to dry-clean uniforms before returning them. Moving forward, parents will only be required to pay a \$25 cleaning fee per uniform, and WFHEMA will dry-clean all items. Uniforms must be returned in a plastic bag with the student's name attached. Black buttons, cuff links, cummerbund, and bow tie must be returned with the uniform. If there are any problems with the uniform, such as missing buttons, broken zippers, or resistant stains, please alert a parent officer. Unreturned uniforms or uniforms not returned per the policy requirements will be subject to a \$5 late fee.

Important Note

Our host church is gracious to allow us to use their site at no charge. It is our responsibility to leave the site with rooms in equal or better condition than the way we found them. Please make sure all personal items are removed from the building following rehearsal. **Parents, please keep siblings with you upon entering the building.**



Orchestra Rules

- Kindness and respect for instructors and fellow students are expected at all times.
- There is zero tolerance for bullying or physical contact between students.
- Inappropriate language is not permitted before, during, or after rehearsal.
- *Subdued* talking is permitted before and after rehearsal; **no** talking allowed during rehearsal.
- **No cell phone use is permitted during rehearsal.**
- No writing on chalkboards or whiteboards on church premises at any time.
- No chewing gum, eating, or drinking during rehearsal.
- No running, skateboarding, or horseplay of any kind in the church parking lot.
- No smoking is allowed in or around the church premises.

Dress Code

- Dress modestly. Be considerate of others when choosing clothing.
- Undergarments should not be visible at any time, even when bending or playing.
- No swimsuits, halter tops, bare spaghetti straps, short skirts/shorts, or inappropriate logos or slogans are allowed.
- Shorts, dresses, and skirts need to at least reach fingertips when arms are straight down along the sides of the body.
- Leggings alone cannot be worn as pants.

Classroom Disciplinary Procedures

WFHEMA aims to provide a positive learning environment for all students by maintaining order, limiting interruptions, and fostering a love of musical excellence. Eph. 4:32, 5:3-4. Please note the orchestra rules. Disciplinary matters will be handled by the instructors using an incremental approach as follows:

First offense: Student will be asked to stop the behavior immediately.

Second offense: A verbal warning will be given stating that the student will be asked to leave the classroom if the behavior continues.

Third offense: Student will be sent to the WFHEMA office for the remainder of class. Parents will be contacted to discuss the behavior.

Tardiness and Absentee Policy

Each student is a member of the orchestra team, and their presence is an important part of the success of the orchestra. Students are expected to attend practices each week. If your student will be late or will be unable to attend a practice, please email, text, or call your student's instructor ahead of time **or call the WFHEMA cell phone: (850) 777-8442.**



Tardiness and Absentee Policy (cont.)

If your family has a medical or family crisis that will prevent your child from participating in WFHEMA for an extended period of time, please contact the parent officer president and the student's instructor.

It is imperative that students arrive to practice **on time and ready to go** (music in place and instrument ready to play). A student's tardiness or absence affects the entire group. If a student is late or misses multiple practices, it may impact the group's ability to play key pieces during performances. **If a student has missed too many rehearsals, it is at the discretion of the director whether or not they are able to perform in the outreaches and concerts.**

Rehearsal Times

Orchestra programs meet on Monday and Thursday afternoons at the following times:

- 3:30 p.m.–4:30 p.m.** — Intermediate Band and Strings
- 4:45 p.m.–5:30 p.m.** — Beginner Band and Strings
- 4:30 p.m.–5:30 p.m.** — Chamber Orchestra
- 5:30 p.m.–6:15 p.m.** — Wind Ensemble and Chamber Strings Sectionals

In Case of Weather

If there are storms threatening the area, please check your email and social media before you leave for rehearsal. If there are storm warnings in your area and it is not safe to travel, please notify your student's instructor or the parent board.

Audition Procedures

Rising intermediate and advanced students will be re-auditioned each school year regardless of intent to advance. Auditions will include prepared musical selections, scales and arpeggios, and sight readings.

The audition process will consist of a panel of three instructors and one assisting parent officer. Each music instructor will cast a vote on whether a student should advance on the audition form. A majority music instructor vote determines student placement. Instructor comments will be included on the forms, which are collected by the parent officer, compiled, and provided to the student for review. The music instructors will make every effort to balance the composition of each orchestra to promote optimal musical growth for all students. The parent officers will make the list of students comprising each group available to students and music instructors following auditions.

WFHEMA has been designed for most novice students to spend one to two years at the beginner level (2nd grade and up) and at least two years at the intermediate level before advancing to the Chamber Orchestra (6th grade and up). The music instructors will base their decision on a variety of factors when determining a student's group placement including, but not limited to, the audition performance. Parents are welcome to place audition-based concerns in writing and send them to either the panel of instructors or to the parent officers for review.



Home Practice Procedures

Practice is the key to mastering an instrument, and specific home practice expectations for each group have been outlined below. In addition, music instructors will provide weekly homework assignments.

The music instructors are given discretion regarding a student's ability to maintain and perform with their group. If a director determines a student is falling behind, the following measures will be taken:

- First:** The director will inform the student that more practice time is required.
- Second:** The director will inform both student and parent that more practice time is required. Private lessons may be recommended if practice alone is insufficient.
- Third:** The director reserves the right to transfer the student to a lower-performance group for the remainder of the semester. The student will be eligible to audition for their original group at the start of the next semester.

Intermediate Band and Chamber Orchestra with Mr. Savage: Advanced students will need to practice 45 minutes a day, intermediate students will need to practice 30 minutes a day, and both at least 5 days a week. The first 15 minutes should consist of warm-up and should also include long tones (or bowing technique for Advanced Strings), scales, and etudes. The remainder of the practice time should be spent working on assigned pieces. A metronome is required for home practice.

Beginner and Intermediate Strings with Mrs. Schuler: Students must practice a minimum of 25 minutes (beginner strings) and 35 minutes (intermediate strings) for a minimum of five days per week.

Beginner Band with Mr. Blomdahl: Students should practice at least 30 minutes per day 5 days per week. Those who want to be a top performer should practice 6-7 days a week for 45-90 minutes. A tuner or metronome is highly recommended. Specific practice instructions are listed below, but don't forget to listen to yourself as you play. Hearing is not necessarily listening, so always tap your foot as you play!

- Warm-up: Practice what we do in class for a warmup. (For example, B \flat Major scale in whole notes, quarter notes, eighth notes, triplets, and sixteenth notes.) As you learn scales, they are good for warmups. Mouthpiece buzzing and lip slurs are also good. The warmup should take about 10-15 minutes.
- Play some lines from your book or solo that you can already play pretty well. Play old pass-off lines and non-pass-off lines. Spend about 5-10 minutes doing this. It will simply get you into the flow of things.

(cont. on next page)

Home Practice Procedures (cont.)

- Pass-off lines/Concert Music/Solos: For the next 25-30 minutes take your next three pass-off lines and work on these one at a time. Break the line down into smaller parts until you can put the whole line together correctly. Do not practice mistakes over and over. Stop if you make a mistake and figure out what is going wrong. Once you have successfully played the line, you are ready to practice the line. If you can play the line five times through with no mistakes, then you've got it!
- Finishing up: Spend the last 5-10 minutes playing something that you really enjoy!

Required Rehearsal Supplies

Beginner and Intermediate Band

- Instrument and several pencils with erasers
- *Habits of a Successful Beginner Band Musician Book I** (beginners)
- *Habits of a Successful Middle School Band Musician Book** (intermediates)
- Students will receive a folder with rehearsal copies of all other needed music
- See next page for instrument-specific supplies needed

Beginner and Intermediate Strings

- Pencil with eraser
- *Artistry in Strings Book I*†* (beginners)
- *Artistry in Strings Book II*†* (intermediates)
- Students will receive a folder with rehearsal copies of all other needed music
- See next page for instrument-specific supplies needed

Wind Ensemble and Chamber Strings

- Pencil with eraser
- *Habits of a Successful Middle School Musician* by Scott Rush and Rich Moon*
available at www.giamusic.com/habits
- Students will receive a folder with additional rehearsal copies needed
- See next page for instrument-specific supplies needed

Parents, please remind your student to bring music to each practice.

*Book series is instrument-specific

†Parent guide and CD highly recommended

Instrument-Specific Supplies

- Violins:** Rosin, cotton cloth, shoulder rest, extra strings as necessary
- Violas:** Rosin, cotton cloth, shoulder rest, extra strings as necessary
- Cellos:** Rosin, cotton cloth, rock stop, extra strings as necessary
- Basses:** Rosin, cotton cloth, rock stop
- Flutes:** Silver polish cloth or soft cotton cloth, cleaning rod
- Clarinets:** At least four working reeds with reed guards at all times. Reeds should be Rico or Vandoren 2½ strength at least. A cleaning swab. Mouthpiece cap.
- Saxophones:** At least four working reeds with reed guards at all times. Reeds should be Rico or Vandoren 2½ strength. A cleaning swab. Mouthpiece cap and end plug. Neck strap.
- Trumpets:** 7C size mouthpiece preferred. One bottle of valve oil. A container of tuning slide grease. A soft cloth to wipe fingerprints.
- Horns:** Yamaha 30C4 or Schilke 30 mouthpiece preferred. One bottle of valve oil. A container of tuning slide grease. A soft cloth to wipe fingerprints.
- Trombones:** 6½ AL size mouthpiece preferred. One container of slide cream or slide oil. Slide cream is preferable and works better. It is also more economical. If you are using slide cream, you will need a water spray bottle (like a hair spray mist bottle). Tuning slide grease.
- Baritones:** 6½ size mouthpiece preferred. One bottle of valve oil. A container of tuning slide grease. A soft cloth to wipe fingerprints.
- Tubas:** 24AW, Bach 18 or Conn Helleberg 7B mouthpiece preferred. One bottle of valve oil. A container of tuning slide grease. A soft cloth to wipe fingerprints.
- Percussion:** Everything is provided in Bell Kit for beginners. 2B drum sticks.

Assessment/Competition Opportunities

Qualified students are highly encouraged to participate in at least one competitive event per year. Music instructors will assist in making recommendations regarding a student's music level as well as determining music selections.



Expenses for Assessments/Competitions and Day/Overnight Trips

Please note that the cost to participate in these events is the responsibility of the parent and can include the following:

- *Competition Registration:* All fees must accompany registration forms for particular events.
- *Music Cost:* WFHEMA has a limited library of music, which will be made available prior to assessment events. Music copies may be checked out with a parent officer or instructor. Original copies are not to be removed from the orchestra room except by a WFHEMA instructor who will keep original music selections until the assessment event. Students are welcome to purchase their own music for these events if they prefer.
- *Accompanist Fee:* Each orchestra member is responsible for securing and paying for their own accompanist. WFHEMA instructors will have recommendations for accompanists.
- *Transportation and Accommodations:* Parents will be responsible for the transportation, accommodations, and meals for their child for competitions and overnight or day trips unless otherwise noted. Music instructors will be unable to act as chaperones for students on these trips.

You must be currently enrolled and participating in WFHEMA classes to be eligible for Assessments/Competitions.

Performance Opportunities

WFHEMA sponsors two concerts per year. In addition, WFHEMA performs for various outreach and community events throughout the year. All students are expected to attend these important events. Family and friends are always welcome to attend. Our orchestra year closes with an awards banquet where we recognize each student for their hard work. Parents are expected to provide supervision for their students at the awards banquet. Student rehearsal obligations and financial accounts must be in good standing in order for students to perform at WFHEMA events.

Concert Information

TBA Students arrive fully dressed for the concert; dinner is provided for all students (groups rotate in and out to eat and do a pre-performance rehearsal). Parents will be emailed the arrival times prior to concert day.

6:30 p.m. Concert

Parent Volunteer Opportunities

While the parent officers assume many of the responsibilities for the day-to-day tasks, we need volunteers to help in several areas. Please look over the job duties of some of these positions and sign up for a position that would work best for you. Thank you!

Social Crew (2/semester)

Social crew will help set up and facilitate the two social gatherings, one being held in the fall and the other in the spring.

Concert Parents (4)

Concert parents will assist with the meals on concert days and help students with any needs in preparation for the concert.

Sanctuary Crew (4)

The sanctuary crew is responsible for staying after the performances and restoring the stage and sanctuary. This job involves some heavy lifting.

Picture Day Assistants (2)

Volunteers will assist the parent officers in organizing the students and their picture orders so that picture day runs smoothly and efficiently.

Awards Banquet (6)

Volunteers will assist the coordinator in pre-planning, preparing, decorating, setting up, and cleaning up for the May Awards Banquet.

Appendix

FMEA – Florida Music Education Association

All-State – audition and honors bands in Tampa each January

FSMA – Florida School Music Association (*WFHEMA is a member*)

FOA – Florida Orchestra Association (*Music Directors are members*)

FBA – Florida Bandmasters Association (*Music Directors are members*)

MPA – Music Performance Assessments for FOA and FBA

Solo & Ensemble

Concert Festival

Marching Festival (*we do not participate*)

All-County – A small local version of All-State; student audition

Calendar of Events 2024-2025

Note: tentative plans, subject to changes

August

- 1 Orientation – 6:00 p.m.
- 5 Auditions/Uniform Fittings
- 8 Auditions/Uniform Fittings
- 12 Classes Begin

September

- 2 Labor Day – **No Class**
- 7 Culver’s Fundraiser Starts

October

- 17 Fall Social

November

- 4 Picture Day – **Wear Uniforms**
- 11 Veterans Day – **No Class**
- 25–29 Thanksgiving Break – **No Class**
- TBD Fall Outreach

December

- 12 Last Day of Classes
- 16 Christmas Concert (*see p. 12*)

Dec. 17 - Jan. 5 — Christmas Break

January

- 6 Classes Resume
- 18 Krispy Kreme Fundraiser Starts
- 20 MLK Day – **No Class**

February

- 13 Spring Social
- 17 Presidents’ Day – **No Class**

March

- 17–21 Spring Break – **No Class**

April

- 21 Day after Easter – **No Class**
- 24 Spring Outreach –
Homeschool Festival
- 24 Last Day of Regular Classes
- 28 Spring Concert (*see p. 12*)

May

- 1 Awards Banquet
- 1, 5, 8 Uniform Returns
- 5, 8 Graduation Rehearsals
- TBD WFHESL Graduation
(*Chamber Orchestra only*)

COMPETITION/ASSESSMENT EVENTS

The dates for these events have not been determined yet; both the parent and the student will be informed of performance times prior to the event.

Solo & Ensemble

- Strings Event
- Band Event
- Band State Event
- HS State Event
- MS State Event

MUSIC PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENTS

- Strings Event
- MS Band Event
- HS Band Event
- Band State Concert
- Strings State Concert

ALL-STATE

- Applications/Auditions
- All-State Event

WFHEMA classes meet at:

First Baptist Church of Pensacola
500 North Palafox Street
Pensacola, Florida 32501

Contact Information



www.homeschoolbandandstrings.com



homeschoolbandandstrings@gmail.com



(850) 777-8442



Homeschool Band and Strings



P.O. BOX 2880 PENSACOLA, FL 32513

West Florida Home Education Music Association, Inc. is a nonprofit corporation and is able to receive tax-deductible gifts. WFHEMA serves students from Escambia and Santa Rosa counties in the Florida panhandle. Contact us for more information if you would like to make a contribution.