

Mercer Middle/Senior High School Vocal Music 2023-2024

Contact Information

For questions or concerns regarding these or any vocal music issues, please contact:

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RULES FOR CHORAL REHEARSALS AND FOR THE CHOIR ROOM

- ♪ Work Hard #SavetheExcuses
- ♪ Follow Directions #KeepCalmand FollowOn
- ♪ Be Respectful, Kind and Responsible #Treatothershowyouwanttobetreated
- ♪ Raise your Hand #Thinkbeforeyouspeak
- ♪ Listen #Tunein
- ♪ Come to Class Prepared #Priorities
- ♪ Have a Positive Attitude #attitudedeterminesdirection
- ♪ No Cell Phones in Class #Notexts #nopictures #Nogames
- ♪ Trash Goes in the Can #Notyourmaid
- ♪ No GUM

Mercer Middle/Senior High School Vocal Music

Grading and Assessment Criteria

Students earn a nine-week grade determined by the following:

- ♪ Daily Participation: 50%
- ♪ Co-curricular rehearsals/performances: 30%
- ♪ Written work, Performance Assessments: 20%

Daily Participation

The student's overall effort and enthusiasm in rehearsal and performance are considered. Attentiveness, contribution to rehearsals and discussions are important. The ability of the student to follow classroom expectations as set forth in the document "Classroom Expectations" is also considered. Class attendance is considered vital in choral music due to its participatory nature. If a lack of attendance becomes evident in a student's choral experience, the instructor may request that the student explore other educational experiences that are less dependent on student interaction and attendance.

Middle School Behavior System:

The middle school choir is a perfect opportunity for the middle school singer to explore and discover their voice. It can be a wonderful opportunity not only for singing, but forming a community and being proud of the musical performances we create. Behavior issues WILL NOT be tolerated. We are here to make music. YOU NEED TO BE HERE TO MAKE MUSIC! The Middle School behavior system is as follows:

- We have an in-class behavior policy that will be explained in class the first week. If a student is interrupting rehearsals they will receive a detention. If a student is continually being a disruption, they will be asked to leave choir and receive an F for the year. Parent phone calls will be made. I am a firm believer in open parent teacher communication.

Co-Curricular Performances/Rehearsals

Students are required to attend all performances. A student's absence not only negatively affects his/her overall musical experience, but also impairs all other students' effectiveness at rehearsals and performances. Each student is encouraged to be a vital member of the ensemble. Therefore, it is critical that all members attend all performances and rehearsal as scheduled unless previously excused by the instructor. All conflicts should be presented to the instructor in writing immediately upon the discovery of the conflict. It is the student's responsibility to notify the instructor. Failure to do so will result in the absence being considered unexcused. Work conflicts are not considered an excused absence. Dates for major performances including The October Concert, The Christmas Concert, and Spring Concert are currently available.

See Attached sheet. These performances are a part of the student's grade. If not in attendance a make up sing will be arranged with Mrs. Christy. Just like missing a math test the concert will need to be made up.

Written Work/Performance Assessments (a.k.a. "voice tests")

Each student will be required to demonstrate musical skills through one minute theory, tests, and performance-based evaluations. Some assessments will be written and some will be performance-based. Performance-based assessments may include, but are not limited to, familiarity with rehearsed literature, ability to sing or recognize intervals, or sight-singing.

General Information

The purpose of this policy is to define what is expected of every student in the vocal music program. These guidelines allow everyone to have an opportunity to understand what must be done in order to be successful.

Attendance At Performances

The Music Department of Mercer High School requires attendance at all performances for all academically enrolled members of each performing group. Students electing these courses hereby accept the responsibility of attending all required rehearsals and performances. **By electing to take chorus, the student is committing to staying for the entire performance. Leaving early is not permitted.**

Counties, Honors, Districts, Regionals, and States

There are many opportunities to perform out side of the Mercer District. For 7th – 12th grade, one would have an opportunity to be selected for County Chorus. To be selected For Middle School our High School Counties, one must show intense dedication and maturity to be able to receive the honor of participating in this chosen group. An audition may be required. To audition for Honors Chorus 9th- 12th grade, one must prepare 2 selected pieces of music, sing them acapella in a blind audition, if chosen they will travel to Westminster College for a 3 day festival. In order to be considered for District chorus and therefore be able to audition for Regionals and States, one must audition for Honors Chorus. Each of these extra activities requires the district to pay a fee. **If for any reason the student is unable to keep their commitment to attend the festival selected for, the student and parents will be required to pay back the district in full of festival fee.**

School Rules In Effect In And Out Of Class

All school rules are in effect during all trips by any performing groups. These include school penalties for offenses including, but not limited to, illegal drugs, alcohol, smoking, destruction of school property, fireworks, harassment of fellow students, insubordinate behavior, and other serious offenses. Any infraction of school rules will result in the appropriate action as outlined in the student handbook.

Conflicts With Co-Curricular Required

Rehearsals/Performances

The following will be considered EXCUSED absences from required events: Death in the immediate family, severe illness of the student, or any extenuating circumstances (to be agreed by parent and director). **IMPORTANT!** Student jobs, sports, and work schedule conflicts are **UNEXCUSED ABSENCES**. Performance activities are CO-CURRICULAR and graded. The coaches here @ Mercer High School are wonderful and we have a good working relationship. It is unprofessional of you to keep us in the dark. If given proper heads up we usually can work something out. Therefore, arrangements must be made to resolve conflicts well in advance.

Conflicts With Sports

Frequently, students enrolled in a vocal music course will encounter scheduling conflicts outside of the school day. Portions of some rehearsals can be considered excused absences. Absences from performances, however, are not allowed. In the event of a conflict between a choir rehearsal/ performance and an athletic practice/game, the student athlete is

responsible for notifying both the choir director and the coach of the athletic activity of any potential conflicts well in advance. If there is an athletic game vs. a choir rehearsal, the students will go to the game. If a performance is occurring over an athletic practice, it is expected that the student attends the performance. If a game and performance occur at the same time.... The coaches and vocal instructor need to work together. If the student encounters any difficulty in attempting to resolve the conflict, the conflict will then be resolved by the director and the AD.

Make-Up Assignments when a concert is missed

An appropriate make-up assignment will be required in order for a student to receive partial or full credit for an absence. Despite the legitimacy of the absence, a make-up assignment cannot compensate for the experience gained in a practice or performance. A make-up assignment will be a solo sing of the concert for Mrs. Christy. This is just like missing a test in any other subject. If you miss the day of the test you will make it up. Therefore, if a student misses a concert the student will sing the concert for Mrs. Christy as a make-up test. If a student chooses not to they are accepting a 0 for their grade. Please understand that if a 0 is submitted and chosen it is very likely that the student will be unable to get anything other than a D- maximum for the 9 weeks grade.

Music

All music distributed is the property of the Mercer Area High School vocal music department. It is the student's direct responsibility to care for assigned materials. Students will be charged a replacement fee for failure to return music in reasonably good condition after using it. Students will be issued choral literature throughout the year. You may leave your folder in the music room in your designated areas, however, it is at your own risk. You are expected to have materials for class at all times. Students are expected to arrive at every rehearsal well-prepared.

Uniforms/Costumes

Each student will be provided with a choir t-shirt sponsored by the Mercer VFW. This shirt is free, and should be well taken care of. All Middle school students will wear it for each of the 3-4 choir concerts and adjudications. Senior high will wear it for the first show. If for any reason a student loses this shirt, they will need to purchase a 2nd one. The shirt cost is \$10. No student will be denied permission to take part in choral activities solely for financial reasons.

- Students should NEVER clean costumes without specifically being directed as to how to do so by their choral director or seamstress (except for shirts, which should be laundered after each use).
- Many costumes have specific cleaning instructions and may be ruined if they are laundered incorrectly. **Students should not wear costumes except for use in choral events.**
- Students will be responsible for replacing ruined costumes. Students should polish shoes before all performances. ALL NEW TUX SHIRTS should be laundered and pressed BEFORE use. Shoes will be specified by the director.
- Students are directly responsible for the care of their costumes. Any costume piece left on the floor may be considered trash and may be discarded by the custodial staff. It will be the student's responsibility to pay to replace it.
- ALL costume pieces should be securely tagged with the student's name. This includes: Shirts, ties, vests, pants, dresses, hose, undergarments, and BOTH shoes.

Extra Performances and Rehearsals

There are times when extra performance or rehearsal opportunities present themselves. Sometimes, full attendance by all members will be required. Other times, only some members will be needed. This takes place during the ADVISORY period. Attendance is highly encouraged. After school practices only apply to advanced /chamber choir members and show choir/ jazz choir members.

Fund-Raising

Fund-raising opportunities will be provided for all choir students. Some fund raisers allow students to raise money for individual accounts while others support the general fund. Individual accounts will be provided to allow students to

fundraise money towards trips, adjudications, etc. All students are expected to turn in all money from all fund-raisers. The money gained for choral events can only be used towards choral events. If a member should choose not to participate or move from the district the money does not go to the student. Likewise, when a student graduates all monies not used are returned to the booster account. This is not a student's bank account, it is money provided for the student through the generosity of the choral boosters.

A NOTE - If a student has outstanding money due to a prior fundraiser, the student will not be permitted to participate in the fundraiser until all past due money is handed into the director. If 1 month passes after the due date of fundraiser money the choral boosters will redeem the money out of your account. If you do not have enough in your fund to cover the cost of overdue money you will be posted on the dues list. If you are on the dues list and do not pay, you will not be permitted to graduate/walk until all fees are paid in full.

During Performances

Family and friends who attend performances should be aware that the choral area, as well as the hallway leading from the choral area, are only for use by performers and directors during performances. Family and friends should not expect to visit students before performances, immediately after performances, or during intermission. **Students are required to stay for the entire performance. Middle School students will not be permitted to leave after they perform.** We are a group that will support each other. It is a great learning experience to observe the higher level choirs and is a great way to learn more about singing and performing. Also, most of the time there is a combined song at the end of each concert. Students are required to stay to perform the last number. Again, Just like a sport the JV team stays to support the Varsity. Same applies in on our team.

Equipment/Closets

Students should not touch pianos, electronic equipment, synthesizers, drums, or any other equipment in the choir room or theater unless specifically directed to do so by the director. **No exceptions. Students are not permitted to open or use closets or other storage spaces found in the choral area or theater unless specifically directed to do so by the director.** When moving equipment (including chairs) students should move things with care. Do not throw chairs or stack them in an unsafe manner. Students should never step on or otherwise damage chairs.

Communication - We will be utilizing google classroom in and out of class. Please know your individual class code. Individual codes will be posted in class, on the website under choir and on the syllabus. Students will have access to my google classroom websites for announcements and information. Parents and students are encouraged to sign up for the remind app for their child's class. I will be using the remind app this year. Please refer to the individual syllabus to get codes for each class. I will send weekly reminders and concert reminders throughout the year and some pictures of what we are up to in class. It is a great way not only to communicate but to see what we are up to in the choir department. I will be sending schedules and performance reminders. Links are found on the syllabus for each class.

Attached is the VOCAL DEPARTMENT AT A GLANCE. This gives an over view of events, concerts, fundraisers and other opportunities in the choir department.

VOCAL DEPARTMENT AT A GLANCE~

August

- 23 - Marianna Sub Fundraiser Begins
- 24 - First Show Choir Rehearsal 3:15- 5:00
- 25 - Open House and Meet the Mustangs
- 31 - Sub Forms due

September

- 2 - NYC deposit due for Chamber and Show Choirs
- 6 - Honors Chorus Audition Music Available
- 8 - Marianna Subs Delivered - Pick Up During Advisory
- 26 - Show Choir Sing Star Spangled Banner at the Penn State Shenango Volley Ball Game
- 29 - Honors Auditions - Westminster College

October

- 3 - Liberty Lights Candle Sales Begins
- 19 - Fall Chorus Concert 7:00PM
- 12 - Liberty Light Candles Due
- 20-22 - Honors Chorus Westminster College
- 22 - Honors Concert 2:00 PM \$5

November

- 3 - County Chorus
- 7 Liberty Candles Delivered
- 18-19 Madrigal Dinner 6:00 PM
- 27-28 - NYC Trip
- 28 - Rockette Performance 2PM

December

- 1 - Show Choir @ Mercer Light up night
- 3 - Breakfast with Santa 9:00 AM Café, Cottage Gardens, Buhl Park and Rotary Christmas Party
- 12 - Christmas Party Community Building
- 17 - Christmas Concert 2:00 PM
- 19 - Chamber And Show At the Courthouse
- 20 - Show Choir Elementary Performance, Staff Luncheon

January

- 3 - Musical Auditions
- 11-13 District Chorus Seneca Valley
- 16 - Talent Show Submissions Due
- 20 - Jr High District Chorus - Seneca Valley
- 24 - Show Choir Sings SSB at Penn State Shenango Basketball Game
- 26 - Talent Show 6PM

February

- 17 - Mystery Dinner Theater - Theater Arts 5PM
- 23-25 Regional Chorus Gateway

March -

- 30- 31 Musical

April

- 1 - Musical

May

- 3 - Spring Concert
- 31 - Baccalaureate 7:30PM

June
2 Graduation