

Lake Shore Middle School



Choral Handbook 2019-2020

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LAKE SHORE CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

LAKE SHORE MIDDLE SCHOOL



Welcome to the Middle School Vocal Program! The following guidelines are to provide you with information about the program that you will need to know and understand. Parents and students are urged to read these guidelines and review the content together. The last page is an informational sheet to be filled out. Please read it carefully as it indicates your knowledge of the guidelines and the responsibilities of all involved.

The last page is to be filled out, signed and returned to your teacher by Friday, September 27, 2019.

Should you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact me by phone (926.2152) or email (anna.agro@lscsd.org). Once again, welcome and I'm looking forward to a great year!



Chorus Rehearsals

Chorus rehearsals take place during the following periods in the 6 day cycle.

Grade 6 will meet Period 4 - Days 2,4,6	(43 minute periods)
Grade 7 will meet Period 8 - Days 1,3,5	(43 minute periods)
Grade 8 will meet Period 9 - Days 2,4,6	(43 minute periods)

Students should **REPORT TO THE AUDITORIUM** with their pencil, folder, and take their assigned seat.





Course Prerequisites: **NONE!** Chorus is open to any student who is interested in singing in a group and developing their singing and musical skills. Students are encouraged to participate in chorus as well as other musical ensembles consistently throughout their academic careers from grades 6-12.

Course Rationale: Participation in a performing ensemble affords the student many unique opportunities for growth. Some of those include:

- The ability to consistently use good technique in singing.
- The ability to sing within a group—to be part of the whole.
- The use of the performance group as an outlet for individual and communal creativity.
- The development of a sense of community within the student which leads to an awareness of individual responsibilities, the need for self-discipline, appropriate conduct.
- The acquisition of skills, both technical and musical, that contribute in a positive way to the overall quality of the student's life: poise, posture, aesthetic sensitivity, multi-cultural awareness, ability to sing on pitch, sight-read, collaborate on a project with others, etc.
- An understanding of the theoretical, historical, cultural, emotional, and aesthetic facets of music.

COURSE OBJECTIVES: The vocal student will be able to:

1. Demonstrate correct individual singing techniques including breathing, posture, diction, intonation, articulations, dynamics, etc.
2. Demonstrate music reading ability (rhythmic and tonal skills) by accurately reading and performing choral music.
3. Demonstrate correct group singing technique including entrances, cut offs, vocal modification, intonation, etc.
4. Perform music from a wide range of styles in a variety of performance settings.
5. Demonstrate his/her consciousness of the esprit de corps within the ensemble through dedicated participation.





REHEARSAL PROCEDURES



Each Chorus Rehearsal will consist of:

Warm-Ups

1. Technical exercises (breathing, posture, sound quality, etc.)
2. Sight-reading exercises (for music literacy)



Literature Study

1. Practice and study of pieces of vocal literature from various genres/styles.
2. Technical exercises will be based upon technical difficulties within the chosen literature.
3. Rehearsals involve listening, analyzing, studying and performing.

Additional Rehearsal Events(may include but are not limited to)

1. Guest performances/speakers
2. Listening
3. Demonstrations
4. Assemblies/Field Trips
5. Written work

GENERAL CONDUCT AND COURSE EXPECTATIONS

Attendance:

- ♪ Students are expected to attend all rehearsals, evaluations, and performances scheduled for the ensemble, except in situations involving legal school excuses.
- ♪ It is imperative that group members plan ahead and clear their schedules on concert dates. The music department works with the athletic department to try and minimize any sports conflicts on concert dates. All dates are included on the District and Middle School Music Department Calendars and on the school calendar. *(also on the school's website: www.lakeshorecsd.org)* as well as my teacher website.
- ♪ Our Rehearsal period is not to be used for other academic make-ups or extra help. *(Don't even ask!!)*

Preparedness:

- ♪ All students are expected to be prepared for every rehearsal. Being prepared means the student is in class on time, in his/her assigned seat with a pencil and the correct folder.

Behavior:

- ♪ Students are expected to employ the self-discipline necessary for participation in a large group. This includes:
 - ♪ Following directions the first time they are given.
 - ♪ Talk only at appropriate times.
 - ♪ Keep your hands, feet and any other property to yourself.
 - ♪ Start and stop with the director.
 - ♪ Use proper posture when singing.
 - ♪ Be courteous, kind, and supportive to those around you.

Music:

Students are financially responsible for all lost or damaged music and/or folders. Students may not use pen or highlighter to mark any original copies of music.

Individual Performance Opportunities: Chorus members are encouraged to take advantage of the County and State Solo Festivals offered each year. These events are open to all members interested in participation. Students choosing to participate are required to attend a weekly lesson in preparation for the festival. If a student is unable to attend a lesson, it is his/her responsibility to reschedule the lesson. These lessons take place after school.

Advanced Performance Opportunities:

- All Chorus members participating in NYSSMA Solo Festival are eligible to be considered for participation in ECMEA All-County and NYSSMA Area All-State Choral Festivals. Selection for participation in these groups is based on the Solo Festival adjudication scores from the previous year. The student and their parents/guardians will be notified if he/she is selected.
- Students in grades 7 and 8 have the opportunity to audition for the Middle School Select Chorus. Rehearsals will take place one day a week, during the afterschool period, in room 337. Should a student be selected by audition for this group must plan on attending all scheduled rehearsals.

Literature: Music for both groups is selected from a variety of styles, forms and time periods.

- Broadway and Popular
- 20th Century and Jazz
- Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic
- Ethnic and Novelty

Technical considerations also affect the selection process. These could include the voicing of the ensemble, range, harmonization, and the need to focus on specific areas of instruction, such as dynamic contrasts, melodic leaps, and articulation.



STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES



1. Be **on time** to rehearsals.
(“On time” means in your seat **WITH** your folder/pencil and ready to begin warming up.)
2. Leave your gum, candy, etc. in the trash can. NO EXCEPTIONS!!!
3. Keep your folder in order, making sure it is stored in the right place.
(“In order” means that all music is stored neatly in a folder pocket along with your pencil. I will check folders periodically.)
4. Participate. Make a commitment to attending all rehearsals and concerts. Give 100% of your effort all the time.
5. **Attendance at concerts is mandatory.** We will be performing at least 3 concerts this year. (See calendar for more info.). **Unless you have a legal school excuse, you are expected to be there.** Let me know in advance if I can help you to resolve any conflicts, arrange for rides, etc. **Failure to attend a scheduled performance will result in a failing grade for that marking period.**
6. Take responsibility for your attitude and actions.



**YOUR ATTITUDE, ACTIONS AND CHOICES
DIRECTLY AFFECT THE SUCCESS OF THE ENTIRE
GROUP.**



GRADING POLICY

Report card grades are based on ensemble participation, attendance (in school and at concerts), preparedness, and effort. **Attendance at performances is MANDATORY.** Students will be exempt from a performance **ONLY** in circumstances involving legal school excuses. Excuses must be cleared through the music director. **Unexcused absences from a scheduled performance will result in a failing grade for that marking period. Please note the concert dates and make any necessary arrangements to avoid conflicts such as appointments, etc.**

The **Chorus Course Average** consists of the following components:

Quarter 1,2,3,4: 25% each and may include a quarterly assessment/singing exam

Your **Quarterly Average** in Chorus consists of the following components:

PARTICIPATION: (a.k.a. During rehearsal, what am I doing?) **50%**

You will be graded for each class period based on the **5 point scale** below.

Rubric Grade <i>% Equivalent</i>	4 <i>(100%)</i>	3.0-3.9 <i>(90-99%)</i>	2.0-2.9 <i>(80-89%)</i>	0.0-1.9 <i>(79% and below)</i>
1. Student respects himself, the director, and the other students.	Student behavior is appropriate at all times and follows the classroom rules.	Student behavior is appropriate most of the time and follows the classroom rules.	Student behavior interrupts classroom activities on multiple occasions.	Student behavior often significantly interrupts classroom activities.
2. Student sits/stands with good posture.	Student sits/stands with good posture without reminder	Student sits/stands with good posture with an occasional reminder	Student sits/stands with good posture with multiple teacher reminders.	Student sits/stands with poor posture despite constant reminders from teacher.
3. Student sings with energy, enthusiasm, and proper vocal technique	Student sings using these elements without reminder.	Student sings using these elements with an occasional reminder.	Student sings with a weak sound, little energy, and poor vocal technique	Student makes no apparent contribution, uses no energy and has poor technique
4. Student participates in rehearsal discussions and activities.	Student leads section/class vocally and musically along with answering questions and volunteering.	Student answers questions and volunteers yet vocally and musically follows leaders in their section.	Student rarely answers questions and volunteers; No audible vocal or musical contribution.	Student never answers questions or volunteers; No audible vocal or musical contribution.

PREPAREDNESS (a.k.a "Do I have my stuff?"):**50%**

	100 (1)	50 (.5)	0 (0)
1. Student arrives on time to class.	Student is on time to all classes.	A grade of .5 occurs when 1 of the 2 components is missing from the rehearsal.	Student is late and without a pass.
2. Student brings all required material. (pencil, folder, agenda, etc.)	Student comes prepared for all classes with folder, pencil, etc.		Student is unprepared for class (no folder, pencil, etc.)

Chorus F.A.Q.'s (Frequently Asked Questions):

What if I am absent from class? If you are absent from class you be able to make up the material during the rehearsals that follow. We will always review previously learned material.

What if I am late to class? If you are going to be late to class for ANY REASON, you must obtain a pass from the teacher/counselor/administrator you were speaking with. **NO EXCEPTIONS.** Students reporting to class late and without a pass are subject to having to stay during 10th period help class.

What if I am feeling sick on the day of rehearsal? If you are feeling ill in any way on the day of or during rehearsal PLEASE let Mrs. Agro know immediately (or prior to the start of rehearsal).

What if I don't have a way to get the concert clothes I need? If you are in a financial situation that prevents you from being able to have the concert clothing needed for the performances please see the teacher so that she may work to find you the materials you will need for the concert. (*We've got plenty of extras!!!*)

What about cell phones? As per school policy, any cell phone that is confiscated will be turned in the main office and you will have to see them to retrieve it.

*** "I was just checking the time." IS NOT a valid excuse...Don't even try it!!!!*

Can I have a drink in class? With teacher permission.

Can I have cough drops/lozenges, gum, etc? With teacher permission.



ALL ABOUT CONCERTS.....

CONCERT NIGHT:

Students will be asked to report to the Middle School approximately 30 minutes prior to the start of a concert. Information will be communicated home close to the concert that will state the specific times students are to report (Remind, website, Google Classroom, etc.) Students must be in the room and ready for warm-ups at that time. Please plan accordingly.

CONCERT ATTENDANCE:

Failure to attend or perform in a concert will result in a lower overall grade average, as previously described. Concerts are to be viewed as final exams that, by their nature cannot be made up. They are the culmination of all the material covered in weeks and/or months of rehearsals.

In the event of a legal school excuse, (such as personal illness or a death in the family), please inform your choral director immediately with a **written note, email, or phone call.** In the event of a concert absence for one of these reasons, the student will be provided the opportunity to complete a course related written assignment in lieu of the missed concert. **Students may be required to stay after school to complete such an assignment.**

In the rare event that a student is forced to miss a concert for another reason, a note from a doctor and/or parent is required as an official explanation. Prior knowledge of such an anticipated absence is needed **at least two weeks in advance.** This will provide the necessary time to reassign parts if needed and make any other needed changes for the concert performances.

CONCERT DRESS:

Just like our sports teams require members to wear a uniform, members of the chorus are to be as uniformly dressed as possible. Uniform dress enables our audience to concentrate on the music we are creating rather than be distracted by any one individual. The following guidelines for concert dress are chosen with these ideals specifically in mind.

LADIES: *(See handout in the back of this book.)*

TOP: Solid White Shirt

BOTTOM: Solid black skirt knee length or longer **OR** Solid black dress pants.

Black dress shoes *(No sandals/flip-flops...Be extremely careful of high heels. While style is always of paramount concern, you will be standing for a length of time so look great, but BE COMFORTABLE.)*

Minimal jewelry

GENTLEMEN: *(See handout in the back of this book.)*

White **button down** dress shirt

Black dress pants










Black socks and dress shoes (**NO** sneakers, flip-flops, shoes of a casual nature)

Tie (Bow Tie or Straight Tie is acceptable)

***Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns in regards to concert attire.*



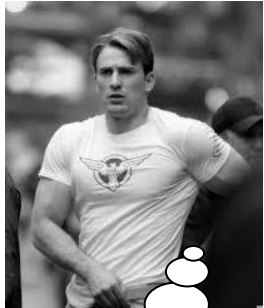






Concert Dress

“Should I wear this? Or, “Should I wear that?”
(Girls Edition)

Article of Clothing	Absolutely! Definitely!	It's Acceptable But Not Preferred	Don't Even Think About it
Top (Shirt)			
Bottom (Skirt or Pants)			
Shoes			

Concert Dress

“Should I wear this? Or, “Should I wear that?”
(Boys Edition)

Article of Clothing	Absolutely! Definitely!	It's Acceptable, But Not Preferred	Don't Even Think About it!
Top (Shirt)		<p>I need a tie, maybe a regular one, or maybe a bow tie!</p> <p>Just wear this!</p> 	 <p>Good for saving the world, not a concert performance!</p>
Bottom (Pants)		<p>Just wear these!</p> 	
Shoes			 <p>It's a concert performance, not a basketball game...</p>

LAKE SHORE CHORUS CONTRACT

I am aware that my son/daughter is participating in Chorus during the **2019-2020** school year. I have read the ensemble handbook and am aware of the commitment and requirements involved.

I have specifically looked over the following pages:

Concert Dates - *(see attached calendar)*

Grading Policy - p.8-9

Participation Expectations - p.7

Concert and Concert Dress Expectations - p.10-12

My son/daughter is in: (circle) 6th 7th 8th Grade

STUDENT CONTACT INFORMATION

PARENT/GUARDIAN _____
(Name – Please Print)

PHONE NUMBER: _____
(Please provide at least one phone number where you can be contacted)

PARENT/GUARDIAN EMAIL: _____
(to be used for music department reminders - i.e. concerts, special events, etc.)

STUDENT EMAIL: _____
(to be used for music department reminders - i.e. concerts, special events, etc.)

****Throughout the year opportunities may arise for students to be considered for advanced performance opportunities and/or scholarship opportunities. Your signature below indicates your permission to allow the teacher to utilize the necessary student data to apply for these on behalf of your son/daughter.**

PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE

DATE _____

In signing this contract the student and his/her family are COMMITTING TO A FULL YEAR of participation in chorus.

(Student Signature)

(Parent/Guardian Signature)

