Browerville Senior High Choir Handbook

2018-2019

**A Post-it from the Director:**

Hello! My name is Miss Granby. I am very excited to be teaching the Browerville High School this school year. I know I am new, but that doesn’t mean we can’t have a good time. I am so excited to get to know all of you in the next few months and make some great memories.

Our collective job in choir is to show dedication and achieve excellence as an ensemble. To do this, we will always need to help one another and be supportive**.** Anything less will not be tolerated. Music is different than any other class subject because we have an opportunity to work together and create something beautiful. So, please, check your “baggage” at the door, and use this class as an escape from the struggles and stresses of your everyday life. By doing this, we will achieve our goal of greatness as a choir, remain focused, and be successful as a community of singers.

If you have any questions or concerns about this coming year, please do not hesitate to ask. Let us push ourselves and each other to do and be our very best and to make choir a rewarding experience for everyone. I look forward to working with you all this year and growing with each of you as young musicians.

**The National Standards of Music Education:**

1. Singing, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.
2. Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.
3. Improvising melodies, variations, and accompaniments.
4. Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines.
5. Reading and notating music.
6. Listening to, analyzing, and describing music.
7. Evaluating music and music performances.
8. Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts.
9. Understanding music in relation to history and culture.

**Curriculum Goals:**

1. Perform choral literature at an appropriate skill level.
2. Develop and execute musical literacy and fluency.
3. Improve sight-reading abilities in terms of pitch and rhythm.
4. Develop age-appropriate vocal abilities, including appropriate singing posture.
5. Develop ear-training abilities.
6. Interpret the intent of a composer through proper musical expression.
7. Appreciate the aesthetics music offers as an art form.
8. Develop professionalism by utilizing time, and focusing on the task at hand.
9. Represent Browerville Public Schools within the community and beyond.

**Rehearsal Guidelines:**

1. All ideas are welcome, so long as they help the group, and do not distract from the music making.
2. If you raise your hand and make suggestions/comments/ask questions politely, you will be listened to.
3. Be respectful to everyone in the room, including yourself.
4. Sit in your assigned seat and have your music, pencil (**NO PENS**), and folder ready **BEFORE** the bell rings.
5. No food, gum, or drinks in the choir room. (Water is the only exception to this rule.)
6. Cell phones are absolutely **NOT ALLOWED** to be out during rehearsals. If I see or hear them, they are mine until the end of class. If you are a repeat offender, your phone will be kept until the final bell. Consider this your one and only warning.
7. When the director is talking, you are not. If someone else is talking or being distracting when they should not be, take leadership and fix it in a non-disruptive way.
8. **See “What To Do When I’m Not Singing” poster.**

**Performance Guidelines:**

1. Rehearsal guidelines apply to performances when applicable.
2. Concerts are school events; therefore, all school expectations and policies remain the same.
3. Call times must be strictly adhered to for all performances.
4. Students must wear appropriate concert attire. (*See* ***Performance******Dress****)*
5. Take all concerts seriously. Be respectful and focused. You are not just representing yourself, but also your school, your classmates, your choir, and, me, your director.
6. Concerts are graded and are therefore required.

**Important Dates:**

Please mark these dates in your calendar. Concert attendance is, again, MANDATORY! If you have an event that has ALREADY been planned and is a direct conflict with a choral event, your parent/guardian must contact me IMMEDIATELY.

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| **Date** | **Event** |
| November | Veterans Day Program |
| Wednesday, December 12 | Christmas Concert |
| March? | Contest |
| April? | Contest |
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| May | Spring Concert |
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| Sunday, May 19 | Class of 2019 Graduation |

**Performance Dress:**

Please wear **CONCERT BLACK**. This means that **ALL** clothing items must be black. That includes shoes, socks/tights, dresses/skirts/pants, and shirts. Please do not wear jewelry or make up that is over the top. The way you dress for the concert is part of your grade. You are not only representing yourselves, but also your school, choir as an ensemble, classmates, and your director and thus want to make the best impression possible. Lastly, as some people have a sensitivity to perfumes and other scents, please refrain from wearing too much cologne, hair spray, or other perfumes. But please WEAR DEODORANT.

**Choir Policies:**

Folders and music will be provided to you as a student, and all must be returned by the end of the year. The student must provide his/her own pencil to use during rehearsal. Music and folders which are not returned will result in a charge for replacement. Otherwise, grades will be withheld until these items are accounted for.

The choir room is a precious space, and yours is not the only class that is held here. Please treat the room with respect. Please use the appropriate waste baskets for any trash. Do not put your feet on the chairs in front, beside, or behind you. They are not foot rests. Do not lean back in the chairs (Four-on-the-floor, and that does not mean two chair legs and two of your legs…)

If we are working on a piece of music, THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO TALKING. Talking distracts from the music making that is trying to happen. We will be working on pieces that challenge what you think you are capable of. With side-chatter and excessive goofing-off, we will not be able to achieve what I know and firmly believe you are capable of achieving. Be respectful and understand that I will give you a chance during rehearsal to rest, chat, and reset your mind. However, when I am ready to rehearse again, I expect you to be ready as well. (SEE ALSO “*What To Do When I’m Not Singing”* POSTER)

**Grading:**

The major part of your grade in choir will be dependent on your daily effort, participation, and improvement during the regular rehearsal. Unlike a traditional core-subject class, your grades will not be based on paper-and-pencil homework and tests. What this does mean is that your grades will be decided during the class period, and you are required to participate and give your fullest every single day. Here is how your final grade will be determined:

**Daily Rehearsal Points:**

Every day, each student has rehearsal points that he/she could earn. These points are based on the following expectations:

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| **Category** | **Points** | **Description** |
| On Time in Assigned Seat | 2 | In the room and in your assigned seat when the bell rings ready to make music. |
| Folder & Pencil | 1 | Has folder, music, and pencil in possession and uses them during rehearsal. |
| Posture | 1 | Maintains appropriate posture in sitting and standing positions. |
| Follows Directions | 1 | Follows instructions given, both musical and practical. |
| Attentive | 2 | Pays attention during the entire rehearsal. |
| Observable Musicianship | 3 | Shows involvement with music making. IE: holding music up, showing best effort, participating, etc. |

If daily points are missed, please see me for make-up. Tasks may include: signing up for a lesson, re-aligning rehearsal chairs, erasing and cleaning whiteboards, stamping/filing music, etc. Below is a break-down of other expectations for the letter grade you are receiving:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **A** | \*The student’s attention never waivers from the rehearsal.  \*The student exhibits exceptional behavior, providing a model for others.  \*The student shows a continuous effort to master course objectives.  \*The student is inquisitive, often asking questions out of necessity as well as interest.  \*The student always has required materials in class.  \*The student is always prompt, in assigned seat and ready to learn at the start of class. |
| **B** | \*The student is usually attentive, needing few or no reminders to listen attentively, refrain from talking, and/or follow rules for participation.  \*The student works consistently to achieve the course objectives.  \*The student sometimes asks questions and participates in class discussions.  \*The student occasionally forgets required materials.  \*The student is usually prompt. |
| **C** | \*The student often needs repeated reminders to pay attention, stop talking, participate in rehearsal, and/or follow the class rules.  \*The student often disrupts the rehearsal.  \*The student often forgets required materials.  \*The student rarely participates in classroom discussions.  \*The student is late for class several times throughout the grading period. |
| **D** | \*The student is off-task most of the time.  \*The student disrupts the rehearsal and has a negative effect on the learning of others.  \*The student shows no attempt to achieve class objectives.  \*The student rarely has required materials.  \*The student is rarely on time for class. |
| **F** | A FAILING GRADE (F) WILL BE GIVEN WHEN:  \*The student is a detriment to the learning of others.  \*There has been no attempt to master class objectives or contribute to the rehearsal.  \*Timely parent contact has not had a positive effect on the situation. |

**Performance Points:**

Once again, all performances are MANDATORY and you will be required to make-up or receive a zero for unexcused absences. A zero would have a detrimental impact on your grade. I do not want to give out zeros but will if I have to. Here is what you are graded on:

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| **Category** | **Points** | **Description** |
| Arriving on Time | 30 | Meet in the choir room by the required time. This could be 30 minutes or more before the concert begins. |
| Respectfulness | 40 | Follow all school and choir guidelines. Remember: you are representing more than just yourself. |
| FULL Attendance | 20 | Do not leave as soon as you are done performing. If any other groups are performing, you should watch and support them. |
| Appropriate Concert Dress | 10 | You are required specific clothes for concerts. Please where the appropriate clothing as specified earlier in the Choir Handbook. |

**Assessment Points:**

Throughout the semester, you will be responsible for individual points that are outside what you receive during rehearsal or concerts.

*Voice Lessons:* Since you are in the Senior High Choir, my expectations are a little different from Junior High Choir. Each quarter, I am requiring you to sign up for and attend 2 lessons for credit. Each lesson will be 15 minutes long and I will have sign-up sheets hanging in the music room. These lessons will be used to better not only you, but the whole choir as we will work on choir music during these lessons. We can also use this time to prepare for the Solo and Small Ensemble Contest. These 2 lessons CANNOT be used as make up for missing a concert or daily class rehearsal. Lessons are worth 20 points each.

*Daily Sight-Reading Exercises:* Every day at the beginning of rehearsal, we will be doing a variety of exercises to better ourselves as musicians. The expectation here is that you enter the classroom, grab your folder, find your seat, and begin working on what will be written on the white board. There will be a few items including, but not limited to: random notes, written intervals, chords, key signatures, rhythm patterns, and sight-singing material. All these items will be explained in full during the first week of school and throughout the semester. Of course, if you are having trouble understanding something, please feel free to ask me anytime that is appropriate. Points for this activity will be given as part of your “Observable Musicianship” daily points.

*Part Test*: Once a quarter, you will be asked to perform a section of the music that is being rehearsed. This will be done during class time. I will choose 8-10 measures of a song for the assessment which I will tell you ahead of time, so you are able to practice on your own time. This is an assessment of how well you, as an individual, know the music we have been working on. I will evaluate you on a 50-point scale, assessing clarity, freedom, diction, phrasing, and intonation.

*Concert Evaluation:* After each concert, we will watch our performance and you will be required to fill out a worksheet. The worksheet includes elements such as: what can the group do well, what could be improved, how did we look, etc… This is your only written assignment in choir, so it will need to be done well. I also use these as a tool to help chose music for future concerts. The more detail you have on your concert evaluation, the better I am able to choose music.

**Parent/Guardian Involvement:**

Since parents/guardians are incredibly important to the support of a music program in the community, I encourage any parent/guardian to help the choral program here in Browerville however possible. Here are a few opportunities:

* Chaperone choir events and trips
* Be an usher for concerts
* Help with fundraising
* Assist with decorations for concerts

If you would like to help with volunteering, or simply would like to stay in communication with me about upcoming events, please check the box and leave your email address under your signature on the next page that will be handed in for credit and kept on record. If you wish, you may leave a note stating what you would be interested in assisting with.

Lastly, I encourage any parent/guardian that would wish to observe an average day of choir to arrange a time with me that works best for everyone. Your support is crucial to the well-being of this choral community. If there are any questions you would like to ask me, do not hesitate to call me at school. Our communication is important.

I look forward to working with the Browerville community and the students at Browerville High School this year!

Sincerely,

Brianna Granby

Choir Director

bgranby@browerville.k12.mn.us

**Please sign and return to Miss Granby by Friday, September 14.** If returned by this date, you will receive 5 pts. Every day it is late, the value will be reduced by .5 pts. I will no longer accept this page for points after Friday, September 28.

I have read and fully understand the information provided in the Browerville Senior High Choir Handbook.

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Student (signed) Date

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Parent/Guardian (signed) Date