



Beagle Middle School Choir Handbook 2021-2022

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Dear Student and Parent/Guardian,

Welcome To Beagle Middle School Choirs!

I hope this handbook contains all the information you need to make your participation in choir here at Beagle Middle School pleasant and rewarding. I have provided an explanation of the **grading system, concert expectations and uniform, and general class information.** Please read the handbook carefully, it will prepare you for being a fantastic member of the Beagle Middle School Choir Program. If a problem arises, consult the handbook first. If you do not find the answer there, don't hesitate to ask Mrs. Burton.

Students in the Grand Ledge Choir Program are challenged to grow musically to their greatest potential. In order to achieve our greatest potential, students must respect their fellow musicians, the music they perform, and the work each of us must do to become the best choir experience possible. Students are also required to show responsibility for their individual contribution by trying their best at all rehearsals and performances.

By following the requirements of this handbook, your reward will be an experience unlike any other you have in school, encompassing pride, joy, feelings of accomplishment, success, fun and self satisfaction!

Mrs. Kristen Burton

Purpose/Course Description

In all choirs, students will learn a variety of choral music and be given the opportunity to showcase their singing development through performance. Music history, theory, listening, and appreciation, as well as vocal pedagogy and music reading skills are taught.

Materials Needed

Printed music and sight-reading materials will be supplied, as well as a choir folder. Students are responsible for a pencil and required concert uniform (page 3) Water bottles are strongly recommended.

Methods of Instruction

Group rehearsal, sectional rehearsal, physical movement, listening exercises and modeling. Traditional lectures and assessments will also be present, but less often than traditional academic classes.

Assignment Expectations

Assignments are expected to be the student's **own** work with full effort, and turned in on time. Late assignments will be accepted until three days before the end of the trimester.



Topics, Concepts, or Units of Study

At the end of the year, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate knowledge, understanding, and application of basic choral music.
- Produce an age appropriate choral sound.
- Demonstrate proper choral rehearsal and concert etiquette.
- Demonstrate an age and level appropriate knowledge of music theory.
- Demonstrate an age and level appropriate knowledge of solfege.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the text of choral pieces studied.
- Listen critically to a piece of music and participate in discussion.
- Participating with physical movements as it relates to music.
- Experience several genres of music through choral music singing and other venues.

Grading Criteria

Your grade in choir will reflect many aspects of your role as a member of this group. Each of the following is an element of your grade with descriptions of grading criteria.

Choral Rehearsal Participation Points (40% of total grade)– Students will be awarded a weekly choral rehearsal participation grade. Students will be given a rubric that they are to follow outlining the expectations of a choral rehearsal. At the end of each week, students will assess themselves on their choral rehearsal participation and do a reflection explaining why they think they deserve that grade. If Mrs. Burton does not agree with the grade the student gives themselves (low or high), she will first talk with the student about expectations outlined in the rubric one on one. If a difference of opinion in participation grade continues, a parent contact/meeting will be requested.

Concert Performances (40% of total grade) – Concerts are **REQUIRED** for every choir student. Students must arrive at the designated warm up time, be dressed in the appropriate uniform, **and stay for the entire duration of the concert.** Concerts are equivalent to major tests in academic classes.

Written Assignments and Quizzes (20% of total grade)– Most worksheets are completed during class, however, **very** occasionally there *are* homework assignments. Each assignment varies in point value. All music theory, sight reading, listening, and other tests will be announced ahead of time.

Classroom Procedures

- **Behavior Consequences:** Consequences for inappropriate behavior include (but are not limited to) lunch detention, parent contact, referral to the appropriate administrator, in-school suspension, and out-of-school suspension for severe behavior.
- **Cheating:** Defined as the act of obtaining answers or completing assignments in a fraudulent or deceitful manner. Staff and administrators will determine disciplinary action. Possible failing grade for assignment.
- **Absences:** If a student is absent they will be granted an appropriate amount of time to make up the work they have missed.



- **Tardy Policy:** A tardy is defined as not being in the room when the bell completes ringing. A tardy cannot be excused unless students have permission from Mrs. Burton or have a hall pass signed from another staff member.

Concert Performances

Performances are extremely important and occur after extensive amounts of rehearsal. It gives the students a chance to showcase the skills that they have acquired through working with the music. **It is REQUIRED for every student to attend each performance.**

- **Excused Performance Absences:** An excused absence is granted only in the case of illness, emergency, communicated before the start of the concert, or notification of a planned absence at least two weeks in advance. Mrs. Burton must receive an email from a parent for a concert absence for it to be excused. When absent from the concert, students must complete a make-up assignment. Failure to complete this assignment will result in a zero for the concert grade. This will be detrimental to the trimester grade. **Make up assignments must be completed one week from the concert date.**
 - *Some emergency absences that happen suddenly are understood and can be communicated to Mrs. Burton following the concert.*
- **Unexcused Performance Absences:** Unexcused absences from concerts are not acceptable and will result in a reduction to your concert grade and inability to attend the Cedar Point trip at the end of the year. Unexcused absences means that a student does not show up to the concert and Mrs. Burton is not notified in advance. Excuses such as, "I didn't have a ride," "I couldn't find my uniform," "I forgot," are not acceptable excuses. Students who receive an unexcused absence will not have the option to do the make up assignment and will receive a zero. This will be detrimental to the trimester grade.

Concert Uniform

The purpose of the concert uniform is so that we all look like a unified ensemble. **For concerts students will need to wear:** black long sleeve shirt, black pants, black socks and black close toed shoes with this for all concerts and festivals. Hair must be out of your face (using hair products, bobby pins, hair ties, headbands, etc.)

No large hoop earrings or excessive jewelry

NO YOGA, ATHLETIC PANTS, OR LEGGINGS

Those who identify as male are asked to have a black button down dress shirt with black buttons. Beagle Middle School will provide ties the day of the concert.

Those who identify as female are asked to have a black long sleeve shirt which is either a v-neck or crew neck. Beagle Middle School Choirs will provide accent scarves the day of the concert.

Dressing appropriately for concert performances not only *looks* professional, but also makes a student feel they are part of the ensemble. Please make sure that your son/daughter is dressed appropriately for all concert performances. This includes locating and ensuring all concert uniform pieces are well maintained and ready to go at least 48 hours in advance. If your family needs financial assistance in purchasing items, please reach out to Mrs. Burton.



Trips:

Beagle Middle School Choir/Band take a trip to Cedar Point every spring. 8th grade choir students also have an opportunity for a trip every year to a different city to see a professional musical production. Beagle Select Ensemble also will travel for performance opportunities. If a student is ever sent down to the office or ISS for behavior issues more than once, or if they are given OSS for any reason they are no longer welcome to travel with Beagle Choirs. If a student is sent to ISS for the first time and s/he still wishes to travel with Beagle Choirs, they will have to come speak to Mrs. Buton regarding their behavior and make a plan for it to not happen again. Parents will also be contacted anytime a child is sent down to ISS. If they are sent down to ISS for a second time they will no longer be welcome to attend any trips.

Festival:

In March, Beagle Choirs will attend the District 8 Choral Festival. This is a chance for our choirs to sing in front of a panel of judges for a rating, and get a workshop experience with an expertly trained adjudicator. This festival is held at Holt High School in Holt, MI and requires students to travel on school busses with chaperones to and from the festival. Performance times are typically during the school day but may require students to arrive to school, or be picked up after normal school hours.

Music With A Sacred Text

Some of the music that will be sung this year will contain sacred text. Quite often this music is taken from the Michigan School Vocal Music Association recommendations. It is my intent to expose students to as many cultures and varieties of quality music as possible. It is not my function or my desire to impose a system of beliefs upon a student or group of students. Sacred music of any kind will be examined **from a musical standpoint only**. This statement is supported by materials printed in the MSVMA Handbook, the ACDA Journal, as well as Grand Ledge Public Schools administration.



After you have read the choir handbook information, and agree with the policies stated please sign below and return the last page only for the first assignment grade by Wednesday September 15th, 2021



This signature also gives your child permission to ride the bus with Beagle Middle School Choirs for District Choral Festival at Holt High School in March 2022.

Student Last Name : _____

Student First Name: _____

Please circle the hour the student has choir:

1st

2nd

3rd

4th

5th

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date _____

Parent Name: _____
(printed)

Please indicate any medical concerns you would like to make Mrs. Burton aware of for our March trip to District Choral Festival:

I would be interested in being a parent representative at the Grand Ledge Music Boosters Meetings. Meeting times are TBD for this school year but typically occur one Monday a month around 7 p.m.

Yes

No