



JOHNSTOWN MIDDLE SCHOOL

VOCAL MUSIC DEPARTMENT

MELODY COX, DIRECTOR

2018-2019 HANDBOOK

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THIS HANDBOOK HAS BEEN PREPARED FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE FOR YOU TO REFERENCE THROUGHOUT THE COURSE OF THE SCHOOL YEAR. IT CONTAINS ALMOST EVERYTHING THAT PARTICIPATING STUDENTS AND PARENTS NEED TO KNOW TO ACHIEVE SUCCESS IN THE JOHNSTOWN -MONROE VOCAL MUSIC PROGRAM. IT IS STRONGLY RECOMMENDED THAT YOU KEEP THIS HANDBOOK WITHIN REACH SO THAT IT CAN BE REFERRED TO IF A QUESTION OR ISSUE SHOULD ARISE. PARENTS AND STUDENTS SHOULD READ ALL ITEMS IN THE HANDBOOK BEFORE SIGNING AND RETURNING THE CHOIR CONTRACT.

HELLO!

WELCOME TO THE JOHNSTOWN MIDDLE SCHOOL VOCAL MUSIC PROGRAM! I AM THOROUGHLY EXCITED TO MAKE BEAUTIFUL MUSIC WITH ALL OF YOU AND FOR THE OPPORTUNITIES THAT THIS YEAR HOLDS FOR ALL OF US! IT WILL BE BOTH AN EXCITING AND CHALLENGING YEAR FOR US! IN ORDER FOR US TO BE SUCCESSFUL, IT WILL TAKE DEDICATION AND HARD WORK FROM EACH ONE OF YOU BEGINNING TODAY. AS YOU CAN EXPECT 100% OUT OF ME EACH DAY, I WILL ALSO EXPECT 100% FROM EACH OF YOU. YOU WILL HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN VOCAL TECHNIQUE, IMPROVE YOUR MUSICIANSHIP, MAKE LONG-LASTING FRIENDSHIPS, WORK HARD, HAVE FUN, AND BE A PART OF A TEAM! I AM ABSOLUTELY DELIGHTED THAT YOU HAVE CHOSEN TO BE IN CHOIR, AND I AM DEFINITELY LOOKING FORWARD TO SINGING TOGETHER THIS YEAR!

MUSICALLY YOURS,

Mrs. Cox



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PHILOSOPHY OF CHORAL MUSIC

It is the philosophy of the Johnstown-Monroe Vocal Music Department to provide students with a well-rounded choral music experience. Through participation in choir, students learn musical skills such as literacy, history and culture, vocabulary, improvisation, technology, and many more. These skills not only develop the student's musical competency, but help to shape the student non-musically as well by helping them to develop skills that they can reflect on and use in different situations throughout their lives. These include, but are not limited to social skills, patience, teamwork, responsibility, accountability, risk-taking, leadership, pride, and self-respect. Through a variety of choral music experiences, students will receive a quality learning experience where student ownership of learning is stressed daily. It is the philosophy of the Johnstown-Monroe Vocal Music Department to provide students with an outlet of expression through the singing and performance of choral music. The musical skills learned in the classroom are important; however, when those musical skills are combined with non-musical skills, the learning experience becomes holistic and helps to create a better, more knowledgeable child and society.

STATE STANDARDS OF MUSIC EDUCATION

While at Johnstown, choir members learn a wide range of quality choral repertoire ranging from classical and jazz to spirituals and multicultural music, spanning from the Renaissance to Contemporary pop. In addition to learning strong choral repertoire, choral rehearsals are centered on the three academic content standards of music education as determined by the Ohio Department of Education:

1. Perceiving, Knowing and Creating
2. Producing/Performing
3. Responding/Reflecting

To be able to teach these objectives well, I must select music of the highest caliber and representative of many styles and origins. Through selection, rehearsal, and performance of diverse repertoire, the choral music experience in Johnstown promotes diversity both inside and outside of the schools. By doing this, the students will be exploring music of other cultures and countries, which will involve singing music in other languages. We will also be singing music from different time periods, both sacred (religious) and secular (non-religious), to be able to explore how music has developed and has been an integral part of different cultures over time. After much hard work, the students will display their musical achievements in concerts to be held in the Performing Arts Center at Johnstown High School. Jazzy Johnnies students may be required to perform at other community and church venues.

SOLO AND ENSEMBLE COMPETITION

Participation in Solo and Ensemble Competition is optional, although highly encouraged. Music selection will begin in January.

FEES

Soloists must pay a registration fee of \$13.00 in order to participate. Soloists who have not paid by the deadline will not be registered to perform. If a soloist does NOT perform on the day of contest, for whatever reason, the registration fee will not be refunded as it is paid to OMEA at the time of registration. The Johnstown Choir Boosters will pay for ensemble participation and there will be no extra charge for students.

REHEARSALS

Mrs. Cox will utilize *some* class time to prepare solos for contest, but soloists are responsible for rehearsing their piece at home on their own time. Soloists will not be permitted to participate in solo and ensemble if they are unprepared at the discretion of Mrs. Cox. Soloists that take private voice lessons from an outside teacher should consult with Mrs. Cox.

GRADING POLICY

Your student's grades will reflect what he or she knows and can do in relation to the State of Ohio content standards. Grades based on standards help to improve students' achievement by driving educators to focus on four critical questions:

1. What do students need to know and be able to do?
2. How will we know that they have learned it?
3. What will we do when they have not learned it?
4. What will we do when they already know it?

Grades based on curriculum standards help me to plan my instruction so that I can challenge and support all of my students. They also help you as parents know the academic and performance areas in which your student meets or exceeds expectations, needs challenges, or needs support. There are 3 different types of assessments used in my classroom.

DIAGNOSTIC ASSESSMENT (Pre-test) takes place prior to instruction to determine a student's skills or prior knowledge in order to identify students' needs.

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT provides direction for review, re-teaching, and other adjustments for individual students or for the whole class. These assessments are for learning (class activities, quizzes, homework, questions during instruction, etc.).

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT provides information to use to judge a student's achievement at the end of a period of instruction. These tests, exams, final performances, projects, etc., are assessments of learning. Students will have the opportunity to improve their grades by reassessing and providing me with evidence of higher levels of performance.

Keeping progress on formative assessments separate from summative assessments gives a more precise picture of student achievement. While feedback on an assessment of a student's formative work are important, these scores will not be reflected in the student's grade. Also, student behaviors (effort, participation, adherence to school rules, etc.) will not be included in the student's grade. Grades will only reflect their achievement in relation to the Ohio Content Standards. Reporting achievement separately from behaviors means that everyone can know as accurately as possible what a grade means in terms of achievement.

REASSESSMENT

Students must complete interventions assigned by Mrs. Cox before reassessment. If reassessing, the highest score a student can receive on a summative reassessment will be 90% (Note: During reassessment, the higher of the two scores will be used as the final grade for that summative). Students will have only one opportunity to reassess. It is at the discretion of the teacher as to whether all or part of the original assessment will be reassessed. Reassessment format (written, oral, etc.) will also be at the discretion of the teacher.

USING ZEROS IN SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENTS

Zeros will not be given for summative assessments. In the past, zeros were given when students missed a performance or another summative assessment. In standards-based grading, a grade of "incomplete" will be assigned until the assessment is completed. Students may be assigned to interventions before, during, or after school in order to make up the incomplete assessments.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY POLICY

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Students will redo any assessment that involves academic dishonesty, which includes both plagiarism and cheating. Plagiarism means submitting (as one's own work) words, ideas, images, or data from another author/creator. Cheating can include, but is not limited to, possession of unauthorized material, submission of another student's material (whether graded or not), false claims or fabricated references, copying someone else's exam/test/quiz, or passing answers from an exam/test/quiz to another student.

When an incident of cheating or plagiarism occurs, the student, along with parent/guardian, may meet as needed with a principal and the involved teachers. After discussion, one of the following sanctions will be imposed:

- The student will redo the assignment or complete another substitute assignment on his/her own time (lunch intervention, before or after school detention).
- The student may be denied participation and/or membership in academic and non-academic activities, groups, teams, and events. Offenses that occur in the final

nine-week period of the school year will carry over into the next school year.

Second offenses will warrant more severe consequences.

- The student may be suspended in school or out of school.
- The student may be expelled.

Students may appeal any academic dishonesty charge against them within one week of the charge. The appeal will be presented to the Principal and Mrs. Cox.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

All performances are **MANDATORY** as they are the true summative assessment of each student's mastery in Choir. If a student misses a performance, regardless of the reason, he or she **MUST** reassess their concert to earn any credit towards their grade. Excused and unexcused absences are not relevant to an achievement grade. Absences will be reported separately from grades.

Jazzy Johnnies members are required to be at many additional performances. If a student in Jazzy Johnnies misses a performance, they may be removed from the ensemble completely at the discretion of the director. Students who are considered truant will be held accountable through disciplinary measures rather than through grades. All required dates for this school year are listed on the schedule that is attached to this handbook. By signing the choir contract at the end of the handbook, you are acknowledging that you have received these mandatory dates and understand the expectation of mandatory performance attendance.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Good behavior and model citizenship should be synonymous with the Adams Middle School Choirs. These behaviors are most certainly commonplace, but when a student breaks a classroom or school rule, the following procedure will be implemented:

1st offense: Warning

2nd offense: Detention

3rd offense: Second Detention/Parent is called

4th offense: Referral to office

5th offense: Parent Conference

Any violation of school rules will be dealt with not only by the director, but also by the appropriate school officials.

GENERAL CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS

1. Follow Instructions the first time they are given.
2. No gum, food, or drinks other than water are allowed in the classroom.
3. Come prepared for rehearsal. You will be assigned a choir slot and choir music. You must provide your own pencil and have it with you EVERY DAY.
4. Be a good example for others and have a Positive Attitude! :)
5. Be responsible and show respect for others and their property. Make responsible decisions all of the time. Always do the right thing even when no one is watching. Save your conversations for the hallway. Be respectful of others and do not talk while someone else is talking or singing. Respect the classroom equipment and materials.
6. Practice makes permanent.
Learning good practice skills is critical to developing into an excellent musician. If you practice with poor technique (sloppy posture, inadequate breath support, etc.) you will make those habits permanent. Practice wisely. Memorize accurately and completely. Be a singer who is a musician.

I EXPECT THE FOLLOWING FROM EACH OF YOU:

- ♪ **A Positive Attitude**—toward the director and other students.
- ♪ **Concentration and Focus**—Both of these are essential for successful choir rehearsals. This means not talking when the director is talking and following along in your music when other sections are working.
- ♪ **Music**—All students should have their folders (with all music!), in hand.
- ♪ **Good Posture** - it's the only way to go!
- ♪ **Pencil**—Have one with you EVERY DAY.

YOU CAN EXPECT THE FOLLOWING FROM ME:

- ♪ **A Positive Attitude** toward each student and the rehearsal at hand.
- ♪ **Preparedness**—I will come to choir each day with our music well prepared and a plan for success for each rehearsal.
- ♪ **Energy**—You can expect me to give 100% every day.
- ♪ **A passion for singing and for music!**

Choir Contract

My student _____ and I have read the handbook for the Johnstown Middle School Vocal Music Program and understand the policies, rules, and expectations. I have made note of all dates on the attached schedule and understand that student participation is **mandatory** for all events as it pertains to my son/daughter. I know that my child will be singing music that is both sacred (religious) and secular (non-religious), but that the music selected is used as a means of teaching the Ohio Academic Content Standards only. I also understand that my student may be required to perform in venues outside of our community such at churches, other schools and at competitions.

Parent/guardian signature

Parent/Guardian's phone number

Student signature

Parent/Guardian's email address

Please check here if you prefer a phone call instead of an email regarding student behavior. _____

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Please be sure to bookmark our website www.jhschoir.org so that you always have access to the most up-to-date info for our choir program!

We would love to hear your ideas and have your support in Choir Boosters! Meetings are held on the 3rd Monday of every month at 7:00pm in the Middle School Media Center.

Mrs. Cox will be using the "Remind" app again this year to help with communication, which is a one-way text messaging and email system.

With Remind, all personal information remains completely confidential. Teachers will never see your phone number, nor will you see theirs. Please make sure that your student (or you!) signs up for his or her class on Remind (see attached sheet) to receive important reminders from Mrs. Cox directly via email or text message! ☺