

Brownsburg Middle Schools
Vocal Music Department Handbook
2019-2020



Mrs. Jamie Varvel
Mr. Dustin Podgorski
Directors - BEMS
317-852-2386 x2382
jvarvel@brownsburg.k12.in.us
dpodgorski@brownsburg.k12.in.us
Instagram: @bemschoir
Twitter: @bemschoir

Mrs. Teresa Fowler
Director - BWMS
317-852-3143 x2530
tfowler@brownsburg.k12.in.us
Instagram: @bwmschoir
Twitter: @bwmschoir
Website: www.brownsburgmschoir.com

From the Directors

Dear Choir Students and Parents,

Welcome to the 2019-2020 Brownsburg Middle School Choirs. We are excited that you have chosen to be a part of Brownsburg's Choir program!

Our middle school choir program is designed to give each singer a well-rounded choral experience. Brownsburg's Choirs have a long tradition of excellence. We will continue to build on that tradition by providing opportunities for each student to grow musically, intellectually, and socially. The musical foundation built in choir provides a training ground for successful life patterns. Here's an overview of what each singer will experience this year.

Musically and Intellectually:

Sight reading: Reading, Writing, and Performing

Rhythm reading: Reading, Writing, and Performing

Vocal Technique: Breathing, Sound Production, Ensemble sound, Diction, Pitch

Music Reading: Music Symbols, Note and Score Reading

Performance: Interpretation, Improvisation, Analyzing, Solo/Ensemble, Blend

Socially: Success Skills

Team work

Focus

Empathy

Self esteem

Confidence

Attention to detail

Responsibility

Multi-tasking

Leadership

Goal setting

Independence

Collaboration

Time management

Problem solving

Active listening

Coachability

As a member of the BMS Choirs, you will play a key part in helping this choral program succeed. You'll have opportunities to gain recognition in ensembles, Indianapolis Children's Choir, Solo & Ensemble, and Honor Choir. Habits built in the classroom will manifest themselves in successful performances. Choral repertoire will increase in difficulty throughout the year and by grade level. However, music is always chosen by the teachers with the students' current abilities and goals in mind.

This handbook contains valuable information about grading policies, classroom expectations, uniforms, rewards, fundraising, and more. Please *read this information closely and carefully*, and return the signed **Parent & Student Response Form** to Mrs. Fowler, Mr. Podgorski, or Mrs. Varvel by **Friday, August 9, 2019**.

We look forward to sharing the success of your singer with you! Feel free to contact us, come in for a classroom visit, or volunteer to be a part of our classes and/or performances. It's going to be a great year!

Sincerely,

Jamie Varvel & Dustin Podgorski
BEMS Choral Department

Teresa Fowler
BWMS Choral Department

Assessment

For the purposes of regular, measurable assessment, the following activities may be used:

- Classroom contribution: rehearsal etiquette, preparedness for class, level of cooperation with director and fellow singers, ability to follow classroom and departmental procedures (Please see the Daily Contribution rubric on the following page.)
- Performances: MANDATORY
- Quiz/Tests: Written or skill-based
- Written work: music theory, dictation, performance evaluation.
- Skill Checks: rhythm clapping, singing alone or in small groups, demonstrating correct technique

Grades will be weighted as follows:

Daily Contribution Points**	30%
Performances***	25%
Musical Skills	25%
Theory and written work	20%

***Students must participate in the performance to receive the performance grade

Missing Work

Students are responsible for checking in with the teacher for missing work and assessments.

Choral Office

The phone in the choral office is for choir business only.

No one is permitted in the choral office, unless they are invited by Mrs. Varvel, Mr. Podgorski, Mrs. Fowler, or Mrs. Isaacs.

Student Cell Phone Usage

Students should not have their personal cell phones during choir class or performance, unless requested by the teacher. Students may store their phones in their assigned binder slots or in their lockers. If a student does choose to use his/her phone during rehearsal, the phone will be stored in the school office and can be picked up at the end of the school day.

DAILY CONTRIBUTION POINTS FOR CHOIR

This rubric is listed on the front of each choir binder

(3 possible per day)

3 points

Student follows expectations and contributes **actively, with leadership**. (100%)

- Student positively and actively engages in classroom tasks; good role model
- Student **does not disrupt** class climate or talk at inappropriate times.
- Student **participates** with proper vocal technique, posture, hand signs, etc.
- Student comes to class with **ALL class materials** and is in seat at the bell. (Folder, passport & pencil.)

2 points

Student follows expectations and actively contributes **most of the time**. (<90%)

- Student partially engages in classroom tasks with **mediocre leadership**.
- Student **does not disrupt** class climate or talk at inappropriate times.
- Student sometimes participates with proper vocal technique, posture, hand signs, etc.
- Student needs reminded to have proper class materials, be in seat at the bell.

1 point

Student **does not, or refuses** to contribute with proper behavior. (less than 50%)

- Student does not engage in classroom tasks.
- Student behaves with **some disruption** of class climate or talks at inappropriate times
- Student does not participate or use proper technique, posture, hand signs, etc.
- Student disrupts class to get class materials and/or does not use them correctly.

0 points

Chewing gum, cell phone/electronic device use during class, missing class materials, not sitting in assigned seat, inappropriate physical contact with others, destroying property, talking back to teacher inappropriately, inappropriate teasing, screaming, defying authority, etc.

Choir Room Procedures & Policies

Do's

- Practice good vocal habits
- Have a pencil, passport, and choir binder everyday
- Be in your assigned seat with all materials before the bells rings
- Contribute positively by working hard, listening
- Respect the people around you and be kind to everyone
- Store all electronic devices in your locker or binder storage space
- Take care of your materials; respect your binder-partner's things

Don'ts

- No talking during class and rehearsals
- No eating, drinking, or gum chewing in the classroom
- No leaving your seat without permission from the teacher
- No personal grooming during classroom hours
- No offensive language
- No disruptive behavior
- No disrespectful behavior toward students, teachers or guests
- No use of electronic devices during class unless directed by teacher
- No defacing, destroying class materials

Consequences Within One Class Period

- First offense—verbal warning and loss of contribution points
- Second offense—Conference with teacher and/or In School Suspension (ISS) for duration of class time. Parents contacted.
- Third offense— ISS for duration of class time and additional consequence, as necessary.

Escalating Consequences for Recurrent Off-Task Behaviors

All recurrent disruptive behaviors will result in student being removed from the classroom for the remainder of the period. Students may be sent to hallway or to the ISS room.

1. ISS for duration of class, Behavior Think Sheet with parent signature
2. Lunch Detention
3. After School Detention (Tuesday or Thursday)
4. Friday School
5. Referral to Administration

Positive Behavior Rewards

- Currency for school-wide token economy (Dawg Bones/Bucks)
- Classroom leadership positions (section/group leader, etc.)
- **Reward trips:** 6th Grade Recruiting Concert, 7th grade King's Island, 8th grade Chicago

To be eligible for trips, students must have:

1. No unexcused absences from performances
2. No more than 2 discipline referrals (all year, school-wide)
3. No F's at the time of eligibility
4. No OSS for any reason during the school year.

Performances & Performance Attendance

Performances allow the students to:

- Build community and pride
- Demonstrate proficiency in learned skills
- Practice performance etiquette
- Create positive energy
- Take responsibility
- Experience an accomplishment that can't be done by one's self

Performance Attendance and Expectations

Attendance is required at all concerts. See *Calendar of Events* for specific dates.

Excused absences from concerts /contest include:

Illness or surgery the day of the concert, funeral of a close family member or friend, religious holiday (see below to request an excused absence)

Requesting an Excused Concert Absence

Parents, please contact the director at least one week in advance of the concert date with a respectful written request to be excused.

Concert Make-up Credit*

Submit a video of the student singing the first 16 measures of each song to his/her teacher at:

**Make-up recordings must be received within 2 days of the concert for full credit.*

East, grades 6 and 8 contact Mrs. Varvel at: jvarvel@brownsburg.k12.in.us

East, grade 7 contact Mr. Podgorski at: dpodgorski@brownsburg.k12.in.us

West, all grades contact Mrs. Fowler at tfowler@brownsburg.k12.in.us

Performance is a Privilege

Proper concert etiquette is expected on stage. Improper behavior exhibited on stage will result in loss of concert grade points, dismissal from the concert, and/or referral to administration. Proper concert behavior will be practiced during class time leading up to the concert date.

Missed Performance due to Classroom Behavior:

Should a student's behavior in rehearsal result in an office referral within two weeks prior to a performance, that student may lose eligibility to perform. In this case, the student will record a video of each song, as directed above, and submit to the teacher in lieu of his/her performance grade.

Concert Attire

Formal concert attire is provided by the music department (*except for shoes/socks.*)

Guys: *Please provide your own black socks and black shoes*

Girls: *Please provide your own black shoes.*

Keep jewelry and hair accessories to neutral colors.

Note: No sports bras with our concert attire.

East 6th gr. Girls may wear a solid black camisole under uniform top

East 8th gr. Girls will need nude hose/ spanx-type shorts w/ dresses.

8th grade Musical Chorus attire: school appropriate jeans, black shirt (provided), athletic shoes

6th grade Recruiting Concert: school appropriate jeans, athletic shoes, purple Choir shirt (provided)

Spring Concert (only): school appropriate jeans, athletic shoes, purple shirt

Supplies

***Pencil (not pen) EVERY DAY**

***Passport EVERY DAY.**

***Choir binder (provided) EVERY DAY.**

1 box of Kleenex (to be brought in first full week of school)

*Contribution Points lost w/o required items.

Fundraising

Choir students will be asked to participate in one large fundraiser at the beginning of each year. Our cookie dough fundraiser will begin August 29th. More info will be sent home as the date approaches.

These funds are used to purchase new music, pay for accompanists, choreographers, field trips, contest entry fees, private lesson scholarships, formal concert attire, and new equipment. 8th grade students can apply 50% of their earnings to their Chicago Reward Trip. (approx. \$3.25/tub sold.)

Volunteers

We could not do what we do without YOUR HELP! Thank you!

The primary opportunities for adult volunteers are during the 8th grade musical (sign up during OPEN HOUSE), the cookie dough fundraiser, concert attire fittings, and concert supervision. As a “thank you”, volunteers will have reserved seats at the next concert.

NOTE: All parent volunteers MUST have a criminal background check on file with the BCSC Central Office, which must be renewed every 3 years. Please visit <https://www.brownsburg.k12.in.us/Volunteer> to complete your online application.

Stay Connected!

www.brownsburgmschoir.com is the best place to find all things Choir! Please check here for study guides, forms, event info, rehearsal videos, photos, and more.

Quick daily updates and reminders will be posted on the choir Instagram pages:

East: @bemschoir

West: @bwmschoir

Directors will also send pertinent information via email to the addresses listed in your PowerSchool account.

Calendar of Events

Please note that attendance at concerts is required. (See *Performances & Performance Attendance* for more details.)
Required performances are printed in bold.

Middle School Choirs—Event Calendar 2019-2020

Aug 12-16	“Aladdin Jr” Auditions-8th Grade only. <i>Sign up for audition time via website</i>	Daily, 6:30-7:30am, 2:45-4:45 pm
Aug 22	East vs. West Football Game Select 8th Grade singers only—Star-Spangled Banner Performance	4:55 p.m.
Aug 29	Cookie Dough Fundraiser Kick-off	
Oct 10	Cookie Dough Pick Up	2:45-6:30 p.m.
Nov 4	8th Grade EAST ONLY + Cast, Crew - Aladdin Jr. Dress Rehearsal	2:45-5:00 p.m.
Nov 5	8th Grade WEST ONLY + Cast, Crew - Aladdin Jr Dress Rehearsal	2:45-5:00 p.m.
Nov 6	8th Grade Cast & Crew only- Aladdin Jr. Dress Rehearsal	2:15-4:30 p.m.
Nov 7	8th Grade EAST ONLY Dress Rehearsal & Performance	2:45-8:30 p.m.
Nov 8	8th Grade WEST ONLY Dress Rehearsal & Performance	2:45-8:30 p.m.
Nov 9	8th Grade WEST ONLY Aladdin Jr. Performance	3:00-4:30 p.m.
Nov 9	8th Grade EAST ONLY Aladdin Jr. Performance	7:00-8:30 p.m.
Dec 16	EAST 6th, 7th, & 8th Holiday Concert	6:00, 7:00, 8:00 pm.
Dec 17	WEST 6th, 7th, & 8th Holiday Concert	6:00, 7:00, 8:00 pm.
Jan 31	5th Grade Recruiting Concert During school day at WMS/EMS—6th Grade Only	7:35 a.m. -10:30 a.m.
Feb 1	Vocal/Piano Solo & Ensemble Contest (Optional) Avon High School	TBA
Mar 17	EAST 6th, 7th, 8th Choral Contest Concert	6:00, 7:00, 8:00 pm.
Mar 18	WEST 6th, 7th, 8th Choral Contest Concert	6:00, 7:00, 8:00 pm.
May 9	8th Grade Reward Trip to Chicago	5:30 am - 11:59 pm.
May 16	7th Grade Reward Trip to King’s Island	7:00 am - 11:00 pm.
May 19	WEST 6th, 7th, 8th Spring Concerts	6:00, 7:00, 8:00 pm.
May 20	EAST 6th, 7th, 8th Spring Concerts	6:00, 7:00, 8:00 pm.

- All Aladdin Jr. Rehearsals and Performances will be held in the Café at East Middle School. West students will be bused to East and will need to be picked up at door 12, 20, or 7 at East.
- The concerts in December, March, and May will take place in the Café at your student’s respective school.
- The Solo & Ensemble contest, 8th grade and 7th grade reward trips require an additional fee. More information to come.
- Please be aware that the start times listed are the beginning of the performance. Your student will be given a “call time” for when to arrive for warm ups and placement prior to performances.

Stay connected! www.brownsburgmschoir.com

Please fill out the form below and return to Mrs. Fowler, Mrs. Varvel, or Mr. Podgorski by August 9. Students will receive a grade for returning this form on time.

Student Initials Parent Initials

_____ _____ Our family has received a copy of the Choral Handbook.
_____ _____ We have marked the required concert dates on our calendar.
_____ _____ We understand the grading policy and daily expectations for the classroom.
_____ _____ We will provide black shoes, black socks, jeans, and athletic shoes for the concerts.
_____ _____ We understand proper behavior in the classroom and on stage is vital to the success of the group.
_____ _____ We have access to the website www.brownsburgmschoir.com where we know we can find choir-related information including study guides, forms, schedules, rehearsal videos, and more. We will also check our PowerSchool email account for additional information sent by the directors.

Student Name (print) _____ Grade _____

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian Name (print) _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____

Telephone Number _____

We are very thankful for the level of support that our parents have shown for our musical endeavors. Please indicate any area(s) in which you would be willing to serve. In addition, watch for emails with Sign Up Genius links for your convenience. Volunteers receive reserved seating at choir performances. **For safety reasons, BCSC requires that all volunteers undergo a background check. If you are not currently a corporation volunteer, you may register on the BCSC home page under the About Us tab and then click Volunteer Home.***

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| _____ Assist at concerts with supervision | _____ Assist during class: copies and paper work |
| _____ Assist with sectionals & individual voice work | _____ Assist during class: computer work |
| _____ Help sort & distribute cookie dough (evening) | _____ Sorting and Assigning concert attire |
| _____ 8th Grade Musical (Parent Volunteer Meeting @ BEMS Choir Room, August 8 at 8pm.) | |

6th and 8th grade ONLY please circle T shirt size: Youth Large Adult Small Adult Medium
Adult Large Adult XL Adult XXL