

*Brownsburg Middle Schools
Vocal Music Department Handbook
2020-2021*



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From the Directors

Dear Choir Students and Parents,

Welcome to the 2020-2021 Middle School Choir program! We are excited that you have chosen to be a part of Brownsburg's Choir program!

As we navigate all things Covid, as it relates to Choir, things may look a little different than they have in the past. That's alright! It's our goal to provide a well-rounded experience where students can grow musically, intellectually, and socially. Our students will experience the following:

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

This handbook contains valuable information about grading policies, classroom expectations, concert attire, rewards, fundraising, and more. Please *read this information closely and carefully*, and complete the online Parent & Student Response Form by **Friday, August 7, 2020**. (You'll find the Response form links on the last page of this handbook.)

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
- 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
- At Home Assignments: including, but not limited to, choreography, sight singing, and vocal rehearsal. (Students will access these at-home assignments via Schoology.)

Grades will be weighted as follows:

Daily Contribution Points**	30%
Performances***	25%
Musical Skills/At Home Work	25%
Theory and written work	20%

***Students must participate in the performance to receive the performance grade. *Performance dates and requirements are not known at this time (7/23/2020).*

Missing Work

Students are responsible for checking with teacher and/or checking Schoology for missing work.

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 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** (binder and passport), checks the screen for directions upon entrance, and responds accordingly.

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 and check the screen.

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
- Check the screen upon arrival for daily directions
- Contribute positively by working hard, listening
- Respect the people around you and be kind to everyone
- Store all electronic devices in your locker
- Take care of your materials (Materials are provided for each student this year. Students will be expected to replace materials should they be destroyed/lost.)

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 ISS for duration of class. Parents contacted.
- Third offense— After-school detention 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. After School Detention (Tuesday or Thursday)
3. Friday School
4. Referral to Administration

Positive Behavior Rewards

- Currency for school-wide token economy (Dawg Bones/Bucks)
- Classroom leadership positions (section/group leader, etc.)
- **Reward trips: TENTATIVE!!!** 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.

DUE TO CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCES, ALL FIRST SEMESTER PERFORMANCES WILL TAKE PLACE DURING THE SCHOOL DAY, AS PART OF THE REGULARLY SCHEDULED CLASS.

THESE PERFORMANCES WILL BE RECORDED FOR AT-HOME VIEWING.

- All students are expected to participate. In the event of student absence, student will record and upload video to Schoology. *
- **Video performances will be posted for at home viewing.** Students will be asked to view and evaluate the performance at home.

Second semester performances are tentative. Dates will be shared as we know them.

Excused absences from performances 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 appropriate part to the teacher via Schoology.

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

Due to current circumstances, formal concert attire will not be distributed. Students will be asked to wear the following:

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)

March and Spring concerts: 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 late August. 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, concert attire, and new equipment. 8th grade students can apply 50% of their earnings to their Chicago Reward Trip. (approx. \$3.00/tub sold.)

Volunteers

We could not do what we do without YOUR HELP! Thank you! You'll receive info for choir-specific volunteer opportunities via email.

West Choir would love additional volunteer help in the morning, to support our social distancing and need to be in break out groups. If you are able to help between 8:20-11:30 any day, please email Mrs. Fowler at tfowler@brownsburg.k12.in.us.

*****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!

Schoology and www.brownsburgmschoir.com are the best places to find all things Choir! Please check here for study guides, forms, at-home assessment portals, info, videos, photos, and more.

Students will complete online assessments via Schoology.

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 and Remind.

Calendar of Events

Middle School Choirs—Event Calendar 2020-2021

Semester 1 performances will be done during the normal choir class. These performances will be videoed and posted for at-home viewing.

Cookie Dough Fundraiser sale is **tentatively** scheduled for late August-mid September. Cookie Dough pickup will be during the week of Oct. 5-9. Online sign ups will be provided for pickup times.

ALL 2ND SEMESTER DATES ARE TENTATIVE!!

8th grade Musical “Beauty and the Beast.” Dates TBA

Jan 29	5th Grade Recruiting Concert During school day at WMS/EMS—6th Grade Only	7:35 a.m.-10:30 a.m.
Feb ?	Vocal/Piano Solo & Ensemble Contest (Optional) Avon High School	TBA
Mar 16	EAST 6th, 7th, 8th Choral Contest Concert	6:00, 7:00, 8:00 pm.
Mar 17	WEST 6th, 7th, 8th Choral Contest Concert	6:00, 7:00, 8:00 pm.
May 15	8th Grade Reward Trip to Chicago	5:30 am - 11:59 pm.
May 22	7 th Grade Reward Trip to Kings Island (w/ band/orchestra)	7:00am - 11:00 pm.
May 17	WEST 6th, 7th, 8th Spring Concerts	6:00, 7:00, 8:00 pm.
May 19	EAST 6th, 7th, 8th Spring Concerts	6:00, 7:00, 8:00 pm.

- When scheduled, all Beauty & the Beast 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 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! Remind, Instagram @bemschoir and @bwms choir, and www.brownsburgmschoir.com

Please fill out the form below (one form for each student you have enrolled in choir) and return to Mrs. Fowler, Mrs. Varvel, or Mr. Podgorski by August 9.

East Choir parents, [click here for Response Form link. This will go to Mrs. Varvel and Mr. Podgorski](#)

West Choir parents, [click here for Response Form link. This will go to Mrs. Fowler](#)