



## **Choral Department Student Handbook**

**Ms. Elizabeth James and Mr. Stephen Brandt, Directors**

Contact information:

Ms. Elizabeth James: 317-535-7562 ext. 7108; [ejames@cpsc.k12.in.us](mailto:ejames@cpsc.k12.in.us)

Mr. Stephen Brandt: 317-535-7562 ext. 3161; [sbrandt@cpsc.k12.in.us](mailto:sbrandt@cpsc.k12.in.us)

## WCHS Choral Ensembles

**Chorale** – Freshman women’s concert choir. Concert attire: school appropriate all black dress (knee-length or longer), OR all-black blouse, black skirt (knee-length or longer), black tights, black dress shoes, plus school color related accessory.

**Women’s Concert Choir** – An intermediate concert choir for sophomore, junior, and senior girls with previous choral experience. Concert attire: school appropriate all black dress (knee-length or longer), OR all-black blouse, black skirt (knee-length or longer), black tights, black dress shoes, plus school color related accessory.

**Men’s Choir** – An intermediate concert choir for guys of all grade levels with varying degrees of choral experience. Concert attire: black dress pants, black button- down long-sleeved dress shirt with a tie (blue or orange), black dress shoes and black socks

**Choraliers** – An intermediate mixed concert choir for upperclassmen with previous choral experience. Concert attire: Concert dresses provided for girls/guys need black dress pants, black dress shoes, and a black button-down dress shirt. Ties will be provided.

**Expressions** – An advanced show/concert choir for girls of all grades. An audition is required for membership in this choir. Girls must have strong vocal and performing skills and the ability to learn basic choreography. This ensemble has a contract detailing information such as performance commitments, fees, etc. Concert attire: Expressions show choir dress

**Shades of Blue** – An advanced mixed vocal jazz/chamber choir for students of all grades. An audition is required for membership in this choir. Members must have strong vocal, sight-reading, and listening skills. This ensemble has a contract detailing information such as performance commitments, fees, etc. Concert Attire: Royal Blue and Black dress clothes, girls must be in skirts or dresses

**Rhythm Masters** – An advanced mixed show/concert choir for students of all grades. An audition is required for membership in this choir. Members must have strong singing, dancing and performing skills. This ensemble has a contract detailing information such as performance commitments, fees, etc.

# Choral Department/ WCHS

## Classroom Expectations

### The Warrior Way

1. Be Respectful
2. Be Self-Motivated
3. Be Present
4. Be Responsible
5. Be Proactive
6. Be Positive

### Consequences

*\*If any of these expectations become an issue, an entry will be made in the school discipline log.*

*\*Your 3rd tardy will result in an entry in the school discipline log. Every tardy after that will result in another entry.*

*\*Having a cell phone out in class will result in an immediate entry in the school discipline log.*

## **Grading Breakdown:**

### ***50% Daily Classroom Assessments***

- Effort, Materials, Posture, and Participation in all class activities
- See Details on page 5

### ***30% Ensemble Performance Assessments***

- Concerts (100 pts each)
  - Attendance
  - Actively engaged in the performance
  - Proper etiquette as an audience member from arrival time to release time
  - Appropriate concert attire

### ***20% Individual Assessments***

- Vocal Evaluations
- Sight-Reading Evaluations
- Written Tests & Quizzes
- Written worksheets
- Concert reflections & evaluations

## *Daily Classroom Assessment Grade*

### *Breakdown:*

1. **Punctuality**-Students attend class and are ready to learn when the bell rings.

Objective: Students will arrive to class on time and be ready to start learning once the bell rings.

Importance: Learning to be on time is a crucial life-skill. In many occupations, employees will be disciplined or terminated for arriving late to work. Everyone's time is valuable and needs to be respected.

2. **Responsibility**-Students come to class prepared with all class materials. (choir folder, pencil, chromebook, and student agenda)

3. **On-Task-Students**- Students will focus on completing tasks assigned to them when time is given in class to do so.

Objective: Students will learn to focus on completing tasks assigned to them when time is given in class to do so. Behaviors such as talking to neighbors, drawing, playing on cell phone/IPOD, daydreaming, etc. will decrease as students learn to self-monitor and self-motivate themselves to do what is appropriate and productive. Importance: Learning to stay on task is crucial in nearly every profession in today's economy. If your future boss assigns you a project to complete and notices that you are wasting company time, you could receive disciplinary actions and your employment may ultimately be terminated.

4. **Posture**- In order to achieve excellent, healthy singing, students must always use their best singing posture. (Posture is only graded when students are singing.)

Rubric: Punctuality 1 point per day Gradebook will reflect T-1 per infraction Responsibility 1 point per day Gradebook will reflect M-1 per infraction On-Task 2 points per day Gradebook will reflect O-2 per infraction Posture 1 point per day Gradebook will reflect P-1 per infraction

**Total: 5 points per day**

*\*Students are invited to check in with Ms. James and Mr. Brandt on Mondays for information about infractions received/improvements to be made.*

Concerts Each performing group will have at least four or five concerts throughout the year. Concerts take place outside of the school day and attendance is mandatory. Please see below for a more specific attendance policy.

## Attendance Policies

Attendance at after-school rehearsals is required. After-school rehearsals will be kept to a minimum. The classroom time will be utilized as much as possible, but it may be necessary to schedule a rehearsal before a major concert. An unexcused absence from a rehearsal will result in a reduction of the student's performance grade.

Attendance at concerts and ISSMA Organizational Contest is required. (See excused and unexcused absences below.) The schedule for the year will be announced at the beginning of the school year, (see enclosed schedule). Conflicts can and should be discussed and resolved in advance.

### Excused Absences are...

1. An excused illness from school. A parent note, email, or voicemail is required to insure that the director notes the excused absence.
2. A personal problem explained with a parental note and authorized by the director two weeks prior to a scheduled event.
3. An emergency problem that cannot be addressed before the event. This must be explained with a parental note or email the day following the scheduled event.
4. Another school event that has been approved by Ms. James and Mr. Brandt at least one week prior to the performance.
5. An event that has been pre-approved and turned in on the conflict form provided by **August 24th.**

*Students with an excused absence will receive a "no count" for the performance. This will not affect their grade positively or negatively.*

### Unexcused Absences are...

1. Failure to attend a scheduled event with no explanation.
2. Non-school related activities such as dance (rehearsals, competitions, etc.), sports tournaments (AAU, club, etc.), sports practices, etc.
3. Family vacations or trips that are not an emergency. These absences cannot be made up and the student will receive an "F" for the performance.

## **Strike Policy (Choraliers, SB, EXP, RM)**

1. A strike will result if a student misses a rehearsal without a week's notice emailed to the director. Family emergencies will of course be taken into account.
2. A strike will be received for violating any school policy/bad conduct throughout the school day with other academic teachers, etc.
3. A strike will be received if any misbehavior occurs during in class or outside of class rehearsals/performances
4. Illnesses that result in a student missing school need to be accompanied with a note from the parent/guardian in order to be excused. This is school policy. I will excuse all students who miss school, resulting in a missed after school rehearsal, given that a parent note is turned in with the school. If a student is in class, but gets sick after school and misses a rehearsal, a parent note/email must be received in order for that absence to be excused, not resulting in a strike. Per school policy, if a student misses more than 10 days for any reason, those absences/rehearsals are unexcused.
5. Work is not a valid excuse to miss a rehearsal. A strike will be received if a student is at work instead of a rehearsal.
6. Once a student reaches three strikes, the student will automatically be removed from the ensemble and placed in a lower level group if they choose. The teacher has the right to decide if they believe it is right for the student to continue in the Whiteland Choral Program.

# General Information

## Music

The choir department will supply music and folders. Students are responsible for taking care of their music and folder and will be assessed the replacement cost if music and/or folder is lost or destroyed. (A folder is considered destroyed if it no longer protects the music.)

## Expectations for Traveling Performances

In the case of a performance that requires bus transportation:

1. You **must** ride the bus to and from the performance. No exceptions unless you are being shared with another school related event.
2. No one outside the group will be allowed to ride the bus. (liability reasons)
3. Stay with the group at all times.
4. School rules are in effect at all times at any performance site. Failure to comply will be dealt with upon return.
5. Adult chaperones are to be respected and obeyed at all times.
6. You are representing our school and our community and are expected to exemplify a polite and pleasant demeanor while at the performance site.
7. By signing the separate sheet of paper acknowledging you have read the handbook, you also give permission for your student to travel on school buses to and from offsite, required performances.

*Failure to comply with the above travel expectations will result in potentially being removed from the group.*

## Fundraising

Fundraisers are conducted by the choral department to provide for costs, including the purchase of music, accompanist fees, accompaniment tracks, ISSMA Organizational Contest fees, etc. In order to provide the highest quality musical experiences for all choir students, fundraising is a necessity.

## ISSMA Contests

There are three contests sanctioned by the Indiana State School Music Association (ISSMA) in which we will participate this year: Solo and Ensemble Contest - This contest is for individuals to perform alone, (solo), or in small groups, (3-8 member ensembles). This contest is not required but is strongly recommended for those students taking private lessons or any student who wishes to expand his or her performing experience beyond the classroom. Parents must provide transportation to Avon High School where the contest is held. There is a fee paid in advance for each ensemble member and for each solo. Refunds are not available for this event. Music will be selected or approved by Miss James or Mr. Brandt. If you study privately and your instructor selects your music, you must still be entered for this contest through the music department at school. Your private teacher cannot do this.

**ISSMA Jazz Contest** –Shades of Blue will be the only choir participating in this event. It is held at WCHS in early March and is required for all students in these two choirs. Entry fees for this contest are paid through departmental funds.

**ISSMA Organizational Contest** – This contest is for the entire performing group. Attendance is mandatory as it is with any other performance. The contest takes place on a Saturday in April. The purpose of this contest is to require students and their teachers to perfect three numbers and have them evaluated by other educators and professionals in the field. Entry fees for this contest are paid through departmental funds.

**Membership in Choir-** Your membership in a choir depends on your willingness to be a committed member of your group. Not following these guidelines can and will result in your dismissal from the choral department.

1. Skipping a rehearsal or performance/competition.
2. Habitual absence on the day of a concert (never participating in a concert.)
3. Not paying for your performance outfit/group fees or turning in fundraiser money.
4. Being disrespectful or displaying a negative or belligerent attitude towards the choral department, your choir, individual choir members, or any staff/faculty member of the music department. Any behavior that is detrimental to your choir or the music department will result in your dismissal from the choral department.
5. Receiving a major disciplinary action from the school administration for substance abuse, stealing, violent behavior at school or being involved in any major law enforcement actions or other major incidents outside of school.
6. Other incidents that are deemed inappropriate by administrative review

# Handbook Homework

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Points \_\_\_\_\_

Please answer the following questions as completely as possible with complete sentences.

**Please list 3 WCHS/Classroom expectations that are listed in the Choral Handbook. (3 points)**

---

---

---

**Explain the grading breakdown. Which topics are you graded on and how much are they worth? (3 points)**

---

---

---

**Based on the provided calendar, list the date and time first choral concert below. (2 points)**

---

---

**What are you required to wear for your choir performances? (2 points)**

---

---

---

**A signature is *required* for this homework to be considered complete. By signing this paper, you are claiming that you have read and understood all of the handbook.**

***Student signature*** \_\_\_\_\_ ***Date*** \_\_\_\_\_

***Parent signature*** \_\_\_\_\_ ***Date*** \_\_\_\_\_

# Pre-Existing Conflict Form

This form is due August 24th

Name of Student \_\_\_\_\_ Choir \_\_\_\_\_

Date Completed \_\_\_\_\_

This form is for you to report any pre-existing conflicts with the required dates that are listed for you student's ensemble. Any dates listed on this sheet will automatically get considered for approval. However, even though the student has reported the conflict, the student will be responsible for planning a make-up performance with either Ms. James or Mr. Brandt. If the student intends to receive credit for the missed performance, this make-up assignment is required. Otherwise, the absence will not be excused.

Date of Conflict \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for absence- please briefly describe why your student will not be present at the required performance.

---

---

---

-----*Office Use Only*-----

Approved \_\_\_\_\_

Not approved \_\_\_\_\_

Director's signature \_\_\_\_\_