



JAGUAR

CHOIR

**JHHS Choir
Handbook
2011-2012**

JHHS DEPARTMENT EXPECTATIONS

We are very excited about this school year in the John Horn High School Choir Department! We have outstanding leadership in our upperclassmen singers and our incoming freshmen have been trained by the BEST in middle school. Every singer is an important part of the team. Some are stronger singers and leaders than others, but EVERY PERSON IS VALUABLE.

With an enrollment pushing 350 students, our standards are VERY high in all of the choir classes. Our choir department prides itself for the following:

1. Students who receive a music education.
2. Choirs that sing with a healthy, mature sound.
3. Choirs that perform music of varied interest that is challenging and entertaining.
4. Choirs that can sight-read at a high level of excellence.

That being said, to remain in a performing choir will require that you, the singer, do the following:

1. Pass all of your classes every six weeks.
2. Have a positive attitude.
3. Be at every performance.
4. Have excellent attendance.
5. Receive no disciplinary consequences from the school.
6. Be at every extra rehearsal.

You, as a high school singer in one of the most successful organizations at John Horn High School, need to know up front that your directors will expect and demand the very best that you have to give.

JHHS PERFORMING CHOIRS

A Cappella Choir

The A Cappella Choir is an auditioned choir comprised of freshman through senior men and women with past singing experience, a high level of sight-reading skill, and an outstanding academic record. ***Several outside-of-class rehearsals will be required to adequately prepare for performances.***

Advanced Women's Choir

The Advanced Women's Choir is an auditioned choir comprised of sophomore through senior ladies with past singing experience, a high level of sight-reading skill, and an outstanding academic record.

Beginning Men/ Women

The Beginning Men/ Women are un-auditioned groups comprised of freshman through senior students who are experiencing membership in choir for the first time. These groups meet during separate class periods.

Select Men

The Select Men is an auditioned group comprised of freshman and senior men with past singing experience, a high level of sight-reading skill, and an outstanding academic record.

Select Women

The Select Women is an auditioned group comprised of freshman and sophomore women with past singing experience, a high level of sight-reading skill, and an outstanding academic record.

ENCORE

ENCORE is a group of freshman through senior men and women that specialize in popular literature and choreography. This ensemble is active throughout the year with many performances in the community. ***Membership in ENCORE requires an audition as well as being a member of A Cappella.***

Chamber Choir

CHAMBER CHOIR is a group of upper classmen that specialize in popular classical and jazz literature. This ensemble is active throughout the year with many performances in the community. ***Membership in Chamber requires an audition as well as being a member of A Cappella.***

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Attendance Policies

Class Attendance

Unlike other academic classes, it is impossible to "make up" activities that occur in a choir rehearsal. Unexcused absences from the class will not be tolerated. Unexcused absences will have a negative impact on a student's grade.

Additional Rehearsals/Activities

Students will be given adequate notice of all additional rehearsals and activities outside of the regular class period. These rehearsals and activities are course requirements and are vital to the success of the choral program. Every effort will be made to minimize the amount of out-of-class time required. Therefore unexcused absences from these activities will be treated in the same manner as an unexcused absence from class and will affect the student's grade. Work is not an excused absence. ***In the event of a conflict with another scheduled school activity, it is the responsibility of the student to notify the sponsors of the activities. The sponsors will then determine the student's obligation.***

Concert Attendance

Concerts are the ultimate evaluation of many weeks of preparation and class work. An unexcused absence from a concert will lower the student's grade considerably. **Absences and tardy's will be excused for cases of medical emergency or death in the family only if we receive written notification from a parent/ guardian. With out this, the absence remains unexcused.** Students are held responsible for keeping up with the dates and times of scheduled activities.

REHEARSAL ETIQUETTE

The single most important factor in the overall success of any choir is the work it accomplishes during its rehearsals.

- A **positive attitude** towards director and fellow choir members is vital.
- Good **concentration** on the *present* has to take precedence over *past* classes or experiences as well as *future* classes or experiences.
- A **pencil in hand** is required. Please mark your music diligently. This allows you to be a responsible choir member by keeping up with progress of the music.
- The student **must remain in their seat** unless the director gave permission for the student leave their seat.

SINGER'S CHECKLIST

1. **Eyes** - At the top of the list is a reminder of where the student is looking at any given time during the rehearsal. The two acceptable places are the director or at the music being rehearsed.
2. **Posture** - Every choir member is responsible for maintaining good singing posture. Just as an athlete would not try to play basketball while lying down, a good singer does not try to sing while slumping in their chair, crossing their arms and legs, or anything else that inhibits them from their best performance. Correct posture allows the singer to develop and exercise a healthy and beautiful tone.
3. **Hands** - While sitting or standing, the position of a singers hands is important. Acceptable places are holding music, placed on one's own legs, or by one's side.
4. **Feet** - While sitting, a singer will have their feet squarely placed on the floor. Singers do not rehearse with their legs crossed. While standing, weight should be evenly distributed on both feet.
5. **Breathing** -This factor precedes singing because air intake is the basis of all healthy singing. Preparing to sing by taking a deep, relaxed breath will greatly improve a singer's tone and stamina.
6. **Singing** -The ultimate goal of any rehearsal is to maximize the amount of time spent singing. It is imperative that singers are demonstrating attention to items 1-5 before the director will proceed to No. 6.

CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS

1. Be in your assigned seat with folder and pencil when the bell rings.
2. Do not leave your seat.
3. Bring your supplies to class everyday.
4. Be courteous and respectful to other people.
5. Follow all school rules and procedures.
6. Keep your hands, feet, books and objects to yourself.
7. No gum, food, drinks or candy allowed in the choir room.
8. No swearing, rude gestures, put-downs, or disruptive behavior.

CONSEQUENCES

If a student fails to follow one or more classroom rules, the director is assuming they have temporarily forgotten what the rules are. The director is more than willing to remind students of what they have forgotten. After several reminders, however, it becomes apparent to the director that a student's "I forgot..." is really an "I don't care..." The following will happen to student for not meeting the director's expectations

1. Warning and Student/Teacher Conference.
2. 20-minute detention/Parent Contact.
Tuesday or Thursday before or after school.
3. Office referral.

UIL AND ELIGIBILITY

According to UIL rules, a student must be eligible to participate in UIL concert and sight-reading contest. All students are expected to participate in the Pre-UIL concert on March 6. After the concert, any student who is not eligible as of March 6 will be pulled from the choir until that student's choir returns from contest. Those students who are eligible to go to UIL will continue to prepare and will participate in the contest. Those students who are not eligible to go will be given an alternate assignment until their choir returns from contest. The assignment will consist of theory worksheets and a written report. The students will be responsible for turning in 4 worksheets at the end of every class and turning in their written report the day before their choir goes to contest. 10 points will be deducted from the student's grade for every day any assignment is late. Please understand that this is not a punishment for those students who are not eligible to go to contest. Rather, any student that is pulled from the choir because of their grades in another class will still be provided with an opportunity to learn and keep their grade up in choir.

GRADING POLICIES

The student's six weeks' grade will be averaged as follows.

I. Daily grade 35%

There are six daily grades, one for each week of the six weeks. Each week is worth a total of 100 points. If a student has class twice in a given week, each class period is worth 50 points. Likewise, if the student has three class periods in a given week, each class is worth 33 points.

The daily grade is determined by the student's 1) level of participation during class (on-task behavior, posture, singing, etc...) and 2) following the classroom rules.

Common deductions from the daily grade are.

Tardies – **10 pts.**

Bathroom - **10 pts.**

No Pencil - **10 pts.**

Sent to office – **20 pts.**

Not Sight Reading with class - **20 pts.**

Insubordination – **20 pts.**

Not participating – **20 pts.**

Gum - **10 pts.**

Food/Beverage - **10 pts.**

No Music - **10 pts.**

Not warming up with class - **20 pts.**

Not singing music with class - **20 pts.**

In the wrong seat – **20 pts.**

Office referral – **40 pts.**

II. Test Grade 20%

II. Concert 30% and rehearsal attendance 15%

Participation in rehearsals and performances outside normal school hours is a necessary part of choir courses. *Attendance is required at all performances and pre-scheduled rehearsals.*

Performances are listed on the calendar of events. Rehearsals either before or after school will be few and scheduled with plenty of advanced notice.

An excused absence from a choir rehearsal or concert will require the same criteria as an excused absence from school (Personal illness where a student has been absent from the entire school day, death in the family or family emergency.) **The absence will not be excused if the parent has not communicated with the director prior to the event.** It is imperative that the parent contact the director of the absence, as these rehearsals and concerts are a part of the student's grade.

CHOIR OFFICERS

Choir officers are selected by in application process. These students are expected to exhibit outstanding behavior, excellent leadership, and a positive attitude at all times. In choosing your officers, remember that popularity is not the most important criteria! Your student leaders should above all exhibit a desire to serve the needs of our choirs.

PRESIDENT (all choirs)

1. Preside over officer meetings. (A Cappella President)
2. Initiates and guides officer activities. (A Cappella President)
3. Supervises and delegates activities of other officers.
4. Serves as liaison between choir and other school organizations and activities.
5. Represents his/her choir in all school functions as the top leader of that choir.
6. Serves as the "right hand" to the director.

*Anyone running for the office of **A Cappella President** should expect to be responsible for the entire department directly under the director in terms of leadership and responsibility. This person should intend to call the choir room "home" and should not be involved in activities that would interfere with choir. They should be prepared to set up for all choir functions including concerts and fundraisers and be the last to leave with the director.*

VICE-PRESIDENT(S) (all choirs)

Assist the president in all activities and preside over his/her responsibilities in case of their absence.

SECRETARY

1. Assist the director with clerical duties both in the classroom as well as before and after school.
2. Assist the director with roll check during class and other functions.
3. Keeps up with lists and other items responsible for organizing of the choir.
4. Helps collect funds during choir activities.

LIBRARIAN(S)

1. Assist the director with all library functions.
2. Keep records of all music that is checked out or returned.
3. Check in and file all new music.
4. Keep the Single Copy File up to date.
5. Librarians are responsible for the condition of the library at all times.

HISTORIAN(S)

1. Responsible for taking pictures at all choir activities throughout the year including concerts, parties, fundraising activities, meetings and trips.
2. Prepare a musical slide presentation for the choir banquet in which all the choirs are equally represented.
3. Present a photo album at the end of the year.

UNIFORM CAPTAINS

1. Responsible for organizing all uniforms keeping them arranged according to their size and items included with it.
2. Assisting in distributing uniforms as well as when they are returned at the end of the year.

CHOIR UNIFORMS

The choral music department at John Horn High School provides the basic uniform for all students. Each student will be assigned a clean uniform. **The student's must pay a mandatory one-time fee of \$15.** This fee includes the dry cleaning and upkeep of each uniform. Uniforms may be altered but not cut.

Each student must have a black choir polo. The choir polo is in compliance with standardized dress and may be worn through out the school year. We will also wear them on the New York Trip as well as at the Spring concert in May. **The choir polo's are \$20. It is mandatory that every choir member owns a black choir polo.** An order form for the choir polo is attached at the end of the handbook.

LADIES: 1. Black closed toe shoes - (1 or 2 inch heel) 2. Black stockings or hose.

MEN: 1. Black socks 2. Black **dress** shoes

FINES: In case of loss or damage, please refer to the replacement cost listed below.

FORMAL DRESS - \$65.00

BOW TIE - \$7.00

TUX PANTS - \$45.00

CUFF/LINKS - \$6.00

TUX JACKET - \$95.00

CUMMERBUND - \$12.00

FUNDRAISING

Students are expected to participate in fundraising efforts we undertake throughout the year. The choir department's philosophy is that the fundraising should be kept to a minimum, but that when we do a fundraiser, we strive for maximum involvement and return on our effort.

AWARDS AND HONORS

A Cappella choir director's award

The director presents this award to an outstanding Senior who has consistently demonstrated leadership and musical excellence.

Outstanding choir members

These awards will be presented to students from each of the choirs who have demonstrated exemplary leadership and character.

Most improved awards

These awards are given to students from each of the choirs who have demonstrated the most improvement throughout the year.

Golden voice award

This award is presented to the student who, in the director's opinion, has the most outstanding natural voice in the department.

USE OF FINE ARTS EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES

Care of choir room - We need to make the care and maintenance of our choir room, its auxiliary rooms, and our auditorium a daily priority. Remember there will be no food or drinks in the room, with the exception of water.

Practice rooms - There are practice rooms in the fine arts wing. Do not enter these without permission from Mr. McCollough, Mr. Bowling and Ms Ford.

Stereo - The students with the following guidelines can use the stereo. You must use it for rehearsal purposes or for specific listening work once you have obtained the director's permission. Groups of students are encouraged to rehearse All-State music in the choir room with the stereo. Only serious practice will be allowed. The stereos are for choir use only.

Pianos - Never set your personal belongings on these instruments. Students may play the piano only before or after school and only with the director's permission.

Director's office - This is Mr. McCollough's, Mr. Bowling's, and Ms. Ford's "home away from home". PLEASE KNOCK! You will be invited in, if you do not receive a reply, it is most likely that we are in the midst of a conference or phone call. Please be respectful. Do not continue to knock and do not enter without being invited in.

CONFLICTS WITH CONCERTS

- Occasionally, a sports event will fall on the same night as a choir concert. In this event, every effort will be made to see that the student is able to do **both**. Students are expected to keep up with their schedules and it is the student's responsibility to let the choir director and their coach know about any conflicts **well in advance**. Not much can be done the day of a given conflict. Bear in mind that failing a **"co-curricular"** event could make you ineligible for an **"extra-curricular"** event.
- **Work is NOT an excuse.** The dates of each required concert are given well in advance to ensure that each family can arrange their calendars and situations so that the student and their family will be in attendance.
- Transportation problems are unacceptable reasons for missing choir concerts. Talk to Mr. McCollough, Mr. Bowling, Ms. Ford, or the other students in your class if you need a ride.
- Illnesses can be excused if a doctors note **and** a note from the parent are provided.

CONCERT ETIQUETTE

The Choral Department at Dr. John Horn High School has a goal to educate the public as well as it's own music students. In this spirit, we have outlined what are widely considered appropriate behaviors for audience members at a musical performance. In today's world, there are many types of activities in which our students participate. What may be considered appropriate at a football game is not appropriate at a concert. Please take these suggestion in the spirit they are given. It will increase everyone's enjoyment of the concert.

A Good Audience Member:

- Makes sure that all pagers and cell phones are in the silent or off position.
- Remains quiet and attentive during the performance.
- Remains seated during the entire performance.
- Listens to ALL groups performing in the concert.
- Shows his/her appreciation by applauding at the end of the performance. i.e., when the director's arms go down to his/ her sides. (Whistling and yelling are not appropriate ways to show appreciation at the concert.)
- Sits near an exit or aisle with small children in case the need to take them out arises due to disruptive behavior.
- Waits until applause begin to leave or return to seat.
- Enters and exits through back of auditorium
- Enter and exits only between numbers (not while a choir is performing.)
- Leaves all food and drinks outside the auditorium.
- Is on time for the performance.

The principles of concert etiquette are discussed in class and are an expectation of each member of the department during concerts.

MONEY PROCEDURES

There will be times throughout the year when money will be due for various things. Payment may be made through cash, money order, or check. If payment is made with a check, please be sure the following information appears on the check:

- 1. The persons drivers license number**
- 2. The students name who is turning in the check on the memo line.**

Students who need to turn in money may do so before or after class. *ALL* money being turned in must be in an envelope. Envelopes must have the student's name and the purpose of the payment on the front. Money *SHOULD NOT* be turned in with out an envelope. This is simply to ensure that the students payment is recorded to the correct account. At any given time during the school year payments will be received for fund-raising, uniform fees, trip payments, karaoke tracks, or donations. The envelopes are necessary to direct money to the proper place.

MISD MUSIC ENRICHMENT PROGRAM

Private voice lessons are available to all students at Dr. John Horn High School. These lessons are offered throughout the school day. Private lessons are scheduled during each class period and after or before school. Each lesson is 30 minutes in duration with one lesson each week. Cost per lesson is \$16.00. Time slots are filled on a first-come first serve basis. Overflow students will be placed on a waiting list.

Student responsibilities

1. Be fully prepared for each lesson.
2. Follow guideline pertaining to absences.
3. Provide documentation of required practice time each week with parent signature.
4. Supply method books and other materials as required by the music instructor.

Parent responsibilities

1. Turn in monthly payments to the voice instructors on time.
2. Encourage the student to practice daily and sign weekly time cards.
3. Provide reassurance and encouragement to the student regarding recitals, auditions, etc...

Lesson location and scheduling

1. During the school day, lessons will be taught at the school in which the student attends.
2. Lessons will be scheduled during the student's choir class. No lessons will be scheduled during an academic class.
3. **It will be the responsibility of the student to notify his/her voice instructor at least 24 hours in advance if a lesson is to be cancelled-unless, of course, a serious emergency arises.** This courtesy is also the responsibility of the voice instructor if she/he cancels a lesson. Excused absences will either be made up, or the necessary adjustment will be made for the following month's payment.
4. The music director will aid the student in advising the private instructor of concerts, programs, holidays, etc..., which would result in any interruption of the regularly scheduled lesson.