

CHURCHILL JR. HIGH SCHOOL CHOIR HANDBOOK 2015-2016



Director of Chors: Pier Debes

Contact information:

Ofc: 309.973.2565

Cell: 815.494.9169

Email: pdebes@galesburg205.org

Welcome to the Churchill Jr. High School Choir! As your director I promise to give my best effort to create a successful and positive learning environment. If you, the student, will agree to bring a good attitude as well as your best effort, we will not only create beautiful music, we'll have a lot of fun in the process!

This class provides students with an opportunity to sing in a choral setting during the school day. Students will learn about different styles of choral music through performance. Students will also learn aspects of music history, sight-singing, and music theory.

This booklet should answer any questions that students or their parents have regarding expectations for choir. After reading, if you still have questions or concerns, please contact me using the information provided above or via the Churchill website.

Please take special note of concert dates because performance attendance counts for a LARGE portion of the grade. Of most importance is your daily effort and contribution to the class!

At Churchill, Choir meets daily and is organized by grade level.

6th Grade Choir meets in room 99 during 8th period. 1:18-2:02

7th Grade Choir meets on the STAGE during 4th period. 10:25-11:09

8th Grade Choir meets in room 99 during 6th period. 12:01-12:45

CHORAL STUDENT EXPECTATIONS and GRADING POLICY

Participation - 40% of your overall grade

What is expected from you as a participant of the choral classroom? These are the things you are graded on when you earn points for participation every week in choir.

- Sitting in your seat at the beginning of class with all materials.
- Attempting to sing, move and follow all directions at the best of your ability.
- Sitting with good posture and putting forth a solid effort.
- Raising your hand to speak.
- Assisting the teacher when needed.
- Assisting fellow students when needed.
- Taking part in all classroom activities, singing or otherwise.
- Completing or attempting to complete worksheets or homework.
- Being attentive in all rehearsals.
- Marking your music when appropriate.
- Behaving in such a manner and maintain an attitude supportive to the learning environment.

Concerts - 40% of your overall grade

- Attend ALL concerts on time dressed in the proper performance attire.
- Stay for the entire concert.
- Perform to the best of your ability.
- Sit quietly while your peers are performing with no disruptive behavior.
- Display proper concert etiquette.
- Complete alternate assignments on time with quality.

Attendance at all rehearsals and performances is **MANDATORY**. Excused absences may be made up with a 300-word report. **Excused absences are considered to be unavoidable emergencies or personal illness.** Work, transportation problems, and other activities are not considered excused absences. Are there exceptions to what constitutes an **Excused Absence**? Possibly. Please be responsible and contact me *in advance* of any concert you need to miss so we can work out a solution that is fair to everyone.

NO CONCERT POLICY: A student **MAY NOT** participate in a concert if their Choir grade is **below a B-**. Singing in a concert is a PRIVILEGE that is EARNED over the course of the term. A grade falling below an "A" is *typically* the result of poor classroom behavior or non-participation. Instead, the student will be assigned to complete a written exam (approx. 1 hr) consisting of terms, concepts, theory, and history that has been covered during the term.

Assessments - 20% of your overall grade

Occasionally I will have worksheets and quizzes, and most of the time we complete all written assignments in class. These sheets will contribute to your knowledge of music symbology and theory, and will directly affect your musical literacy (reading and understanding).

CJHS CHOIR RULES, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES

1. Come prepared: mentally and physically. Be on time and in your seat with required materials before the start of class. Do not be tardy!
2. Be respectful of all materials given to you (pencils, paper, books, music). Music is your textbook. YOU are responsible for the care and use of your music. Any missing or misused music will become your financial responsibility to replace at the cost of \$3 per missing or damaged music.
3. Materials not needed for class must be kept UNDER your chair or AWAY from the rehearsal area. We have limited space to work in. There is no need for a book bag, a purse, or other items that will not help you sing.
4. There is absolutely NO gum, food, or cell phones allowed in the choral classroom.
5. DO bring a water bottle to choir every day! Your voice must stay hydrated to work properly!
6. You will be given 2 bathroom passes for each quarter. Unused passes will NOT roll over to next quarter. If you choose not to use your passes, I will add an extra **3%** per pass toward your quarterly grade.
7. Display a positive attitude! We all have bad days from time to time, but leave the luggage of the day outside the classroom if at all possible. Always speak positive things, never negative things.
8. Respect yourself and others. Be respectful of your teacher and fellow students by raising your hand to speak and not speaking over your teacher or fellow choir members. Never argue with your teacher. Problems can always be handled in a fair and calm way. Your teacher is always in control of the class. Only talk when you have permission to do so.
9. Show a positive contribution every day. Vocal music is a participation class. Each member is expected to uphold his/her responsibility of participation in all activities. If you have a day where you feel you cannot positively contribute, sit quietly and do not disturb the rest of the class. Disruption of the learning environment will have consequences. All I ask is that you do your best to participate. "Try" is the magic word!
10. Be a team player. Choir is about many voices joining into one voice to create beauty. Cooperating and working together will make us successful.
11. Maintain the appropriate posture and learn to take care of your voice. Maintaining good vocal health is of the utmost importance in Choir! If you are sick or have sore throat, **in order to be excused from singing, you must bring a note from your parent/guardian/doctor**. If you are excused from singing, this does not excuse you from the class. You must still follow your music and pay attention at all times. You will be expected to learn by listening and following the music. Remember, you must be a productive member of the class, even in silence. **If you do not bring a note, you will be expected to fully participate or receive a zero for the day.**

12. Audition and experience as much as you can! Auditioning is a part of life-lessons. There are other opportunities for you at Churchill and more than one year to audition for things if you do not make it the first time around!

13. Remain on task and follow all instructions.

14. Improve the world.

DISCIPLINE PLAN

Since rehearsal time is valuable, none can be wasted. If I have to stop class on account of a student violating any of the above rules, they will be met with appropriate disciplinary action.

1. I say your name
2. Warning
3. 20-minute detention and possibly phone call

2015-2016 Performance Dates

*Fall Concert	Tuesday, October 13th	7:00 PM	Churchill Auditorium
*Holiday Concert	Monday, December 7th	7:00 PM	Churchill Auditorium
Organizational Contest	Friday, February 26 th	PM	Germantown Hills MS
Solo and Ensemble Contest	March 11 or 12	PM	I.C.C. (E. Peoria)
*District Choral Festival	Thursday, March 17th	7:00 PM	GHS Auditorium
Cabaret Night	Thursday, April 7 th	7:00 PM	Lake Storey Pavilion
*Spring Concert	Tuesday, May 10th	7:30 PM	Churchill Auditorium

*required attendance for all choirs

2015-2016 - Other great choral events in Galesburg!

GHS Choirs	October 5 th	7:00 PM	GHS
Nova Singers Concert	October 10 th	7:30 PM	Knox College (Kresge)
Knox College Choir	November 8 th	3:00 PM	Knox College (Kresge)
Galesburg Community Chorus	November 21 th	7:30 PM	First Lutheran
Choral Dynamics	December 6 th	2:00 PM	Orpheum Theatre
HS Madrigal Dinner	December 12 th	5:00 PM	GHS
Galesburg Community Chorus	December 12 th	7:30 PM	First Presbyterian
HS Madrigal Dinner	December 13 th	1:00 PM	GHS
GHS Choirs	December 15 th	7:00 PM	GHS
Nova Singers Concert	December 19 th	7:30 PM	First Lutheran
Nova Singers Concert	February 13 th	7:30 PM	Knox College (Kresge)
Knox College Choir	February 28 th	3:00 PM	TBA
Knox College Choir	April 1 st	7:30 PM	Knox College (Kresge)
Nova Singers Concert	April 9 th	7:30 PM	Knox College (Kresge)
GHS Choirs	May 5 th	7:30 PM	GHS
Knox College Choir	May 6 th	7:30 PM	Knox College (Kresge)
Galesburg Community Chorus	May 7 th	7:30 PM	First Lutheran

** PLEASE NOTE that the Singing Streaks performance dates are not listed here, and will be posted in the Singing Streaks Handbook.

CHOIR PERFORMANCE ATTIRE

Choral attire for all performing groups (excluding Singing Streaks) will be as follows:

- Churchill Blue Polo Shirt (*order form on last page of this handbook*)
- Black pants or very nice black jeans. (no holes or dirty clothing)
- Black or dark dress shoes with black socks and belt. If you do not own black dress shoes, black tennis shoes are fine as long as they are clean and not falling apart. No flip flops!

Shirt orders will need to be placed by Friday, September 4th. Payment is asked to be turned in at time of order. Please return the last page of this handbook with payment. Shirts will be distributed the week prior to our first concert. If your child has a shirt that she's outgrown or has been damaged, please order a new one. Also, I appreciate your donation of shirts that have been out-grown. Please note that **shirts ordered after September 4th will cost \$5 more per shirt.** If you have access to a former choir member's shirt that is still in good condition, you are welcome to use it.

PLEASE do not let money be a reason for not being dressed properly for concerts. If a student or parent informs me in advance, we can assist with providing proper choir attire out of our choir closet for concerts. The choir closet contains a very limited number of choir polo shirts. We ask that they be washed and returned after use.

Students who need proper attire must notify the director in advance so that they can help that student. Waiting till the day of the concert to ask for proper attire is unacceptable.

Those students who do not wear the proper attire (and no proper attire is available) or refuse to do so may watch the concert from the audience, write a short review and receive partial credit for attire. They will receive full credit for attending. (Doing this is discouraged since students would be robbing themselves of the experience of performing which is why you take the course to begin with.)

Parents: If you have gently used black dress shoes, black dress slacks, black belts and black socks which your student has outgrown, please consider sending them for our choir closet.

OPPORTUNITIES

ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEST

This is a graded performance that is ***required*** for 7th and 8th grade choir. All students in these choirs are needed so we can be our best. This is an after-school field trip in February, where we go and sing with other competing middle school choirs. We will leave by bus from Churchill on a Friday afternoon and return later that evening. This event is free to the public and you are HIGHLY encouraged to attend and support us.

SOLO AND ENSEMBLE CONTEST

Students in 7th and 8th grade have an opportunity to participate in **Solo and Ensemble Contest** in March. Students are responsible for their own fees (\$3.00 per ensemble member, and \$7.00 per solo, *unless entry fees increase again this year*). This year the number of students I can take is limited, so those interested in participating are encouraged to let me know soon. *It is the student's responsibility to practice sufficiently for participation.*

SINGING STREAKS

Singing Streaks is an auditioned show choir made up of 6th, 7th and 8th grade choir students in District 205. The Singing Streaks perform throughout the community and have a wonderful reputation for fun and flare, combining voice, dance and theatrics. Auditions will be held in September. Once this year's members are selected, they will rehearse 3:00-5:00 on Friday afternoons **starting in October**. Members are required to keep a good academic and disciplinary standing to participate. Additionally, rehearsal attendance is required to retain membership in this group. More information will be sent home with those wanting to audition.

***A separate shirt order form will go out to students who need a Singing Streaks polo.

CHOIR VOLUNTEERS

A great vocal program involves the staff, the students, the administration and yes...our PARENTS!

We cannot do this without you parents. There are so many areas in which you could assist this year. Please review the items listed below. I encourage ALL parents to pitch in if they can, especially chaperoning on concert nights. If you are available, just send me an email and I will give you all the pertinent information.

Please let us know if you have a special interest in helping in any of the following areas:

- Assisting the director in the concerts
- Providing transportation to concerts
- Artists for posters, programs & drawings
- Photographers and Videographers for concerts and other events
- Chaperoning field trips, concerts, and contests *
- Web design to create a choir website
- Are you a certified teacher? What subject?
- Can you drive a commercial vehicle?
- Are you a musician? What do you play? How many years? Do you still play?

If you are interested, I'll need your name, your student's name and grade level, the phone number where I can readily reach you and your e-mail address. Thank you!!!!!!

*I am always in need of chaperones at these events. Please volunteer to be a chaperone on the last page of this handbook!

Churchill Choir
Parent and Student Acknowledgement

(Please sign and return this sheet to Mr. Debes by **September 4th**.
Completion and return of this form counts as your first test grade for the quarter.)

I have read and understood all the guidelines and policies that are set out in the Churchill Choir Handbook. I promise to adhere to all rules, required performances, events, and expectations.

Student's name _____ **Grade** _____

Signature _____ **Date** _____

I have read and understood all the guidelines and policies that are set out in the Churchill Choir Handbook. I will make a commitment to support my student, the director, and the Churchill Music Department in all its endeavors. I also understand that this form counts as my student's first test grade toward their overall grade for the quarter.

Parent's name _____ **Cell/Contact#** _____

Signature _____ **Date** _____

Please indicate the size of shirt your student needs for their choir attire. Make sure to allow a little "growing room". The shirts we order tend to run *fairly large*. A Medium will fit most 8th Graders. If in doubt, stop by the school and have a look at a shirt.

Adult Small _____

Adult Medium _____

Adult Large _____

Adult XL _____

Adult 2XL _____

_____ **Enclosed is \$15 for my child's choir shirt.**

_____ I will pay the \$15 pay later. (Late payment is due no later than September 15th)

_____ My student already has a Churchill Blue Choir Polo.

VOLUNTEER HERE!

_____ **Yes, I am AWESOME** © and I am willing to serve as a chaperone if I am available.