

# **NOBLESVILLE WEST MIDDLE SCHOOL CHOIR HANDBOOK**

**2020-2021**

**Alex Axsom-Director**

## Table of Contents

- Welcome from Mr. Axsom
- NWMS Choir Objectives
- 2020-2021 NWMS Choir Dates
- Choir Room Expectations
- Grading Policy
- Performance Policy
- Concert Expectations
- Concert Dress
- Statement of Acknowledgement

## **WELCOME**

Students and Parents of the Noblesville West Choir Program,

I hope everyone had a restful summer and are excited for the start of a new school year. This handbook has been prepared to answer most questions about our choir program at NWMS-from grading policies to event information. Please help me and your student(s) make this a rewarding and productive year by reading through this handbook and helping your student(s) be accountable for their success in this program.

**Please take special note of performance dates.** I would strongly encourage you to mark these dates on your calendar. Missing a performance is the most common reasons for lowered choir grades.

Participating in the NWMS Choir program can help in ways you might not realize. Through the study and practice of choral music, students acquire greater problem-solving capacity, expand ways to communicate, develop a greater understanding of other cultures, and help develop self-confidence. Choir can also help develop self-discipline, reflection, persistence, craftsmanship, and collaboration. We are looking forward to having you hear our progress throughout this year!

If you have questions or concerns please feel free to contact me at school.

E-mail: [alex\\_axsom@nobl.k12.in.us](mailto:alex_axsom@nobl.k12.in.us)

Phone: 317-776-7792 ext. 18275

Sincerely,

Alex Axsom

## NWMS Choral Department Objectives

Choir is designed as a study in vocal production and music fundamentals. Students will have many opportunities to sing for personal enjoyment and perform a variety of choral literature. Our goals are:

- To develop and nurture correct vocal techniques.
- To develop fundamental music skills in reading and writing musical notation.
- To recognize musical elements and demonstrate expressive qualities in varying styles of choral music.
- To contribute to the blend, balance, and quality of the ensemble by developing the ability to sing a part securely.
- To develop confidence in performing by practicing performance etiquette and decorum.
- **To develop rehearsal skills that encourage rehearsing and performing at the highest level.**
- To have opportunities for the enjoyment of music through active participation.
- To develop self-discipline by functioning as a responsible member of the organization.
- To experience successful achievement and pleasure through group involvement.
- To develop personal character traits of leadership, poise, and dependability as well as provide an avenue for self-expression.
- To develop a desire to continue musical experiences

## 2020-2021 NWMS CHOIR DATES

DATE	EVENT	TIMES
8/4/20	First Day of School (Miller)	
TBA	Fall Virtual Project/Concert	TBA
10/12-10/23/20	Fall Break	
11/25-11/27/20	Thanksgiving Break	
12/9/20	Winter Concert	TBA
12/21/20-1/1/21	Winter Break	
1/30/21	ISSMA-Piano/Vocal Solo & Ensemble Contest	TBA
3/13/21	ISSMA Organizational Contest Week 1	TBA
3/20/21	ISSMA Organizational Contest Week 2	TBA
3/29-4/9/21	Spring Break	
TBA	Show Choir Auditions	TBA
TBA	Spring Concert	

In addition to these regularly scheduled events, the students may be asked to perform at a couple of local events such as school assemblies, local retirement homes and community events, and by special invitation. I will give you as much advance notice of these events as possible.

### Fundraiser

The NWMS Choral Department will be participating in a variety of fundraising projects. It is not a requirement that your child participates, but it is a helpful way to raise money for the choral department. The money raised will be used for choral music, choral apparel, choreographer and accompanist fees, and technology for the classroom. Students can also earn money to help pay for their end of year reward trip. More details will be available later in the school year.

### Reward Trip

At the end of the year, there will be a reward trip for students who participated in Band, Strings, and Choir for the entire year. To be eligible for the trip:

- No unexcused absences from a concert
- No missing assignments
- No office-assigned consequences

More details about each trip will be available later in the school year.

# CHOIR ROOM PROCEDURES AND DAILY EXPECTATIONS

Each day I will expect you to meet the expectations listed below. Additionally, please make every effort to follow all the instructions given during class and stay on task. Please also understand that although we do not give a lot of homework, there may be some and we expect you to turn it in on time. And lastly, we would hope that you give 100% of your effort 100% of the time you are in choir! It will be a whole lot of fun if you do!

- The students will respect their peers and the property of the Noblesville West Middle School Performing Arts Department.
- The students will come to class on time and be ready to begin class when the bell rings.
- The students will come to class prepared with their materials every day.
- The students will **NOT CHEW GUM** during class.
- The students will use the restroom **BEFORE** coming to class.
- The students will follow all other school policies as they are outlined in the student handbook.

**If a student does not meet the daily expectations or acts in an inappropriate or disrespectful, way they will receive a check. Each check has a consequence.**

**1<sup>st</sup> Check:** Student will receive a verbal warning.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Check:** Student will stay after class to talk with the teacher and will receive 2 participation points for the day.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Check:** The student will serve a lunch detention and the teacher will make contact with the student's parents. The student shall receive 1 participation point for the day.

**4<sup>th</sup> Check:** The student will be removed from class, the teacher will make contact with the student's parents, and they will receive a behavior log. The student will receive 0 participation points for the day.

*\*\*For repeated offenses or situations that are particularly severe, the child will be sent directly to the assistant principal in the main office. \*\**

# GRADING POLICY

Choir grades are will be determined based upon a this weighted category system listed below:

1. Performance/Contests	40%
2. Rehearsal Technique	40%
3. Written or Other Assignments	10%
4. Assessments	10%

## Rehearsals/Performances/Contests (40%)

All performances are part of the choir class and are vital to the assessment of the students.

All students need to arrive on time and have the appropriate concert attire for each performance.

Please see below for the attendance policy regarding these events.

## Participation (40%)

Each day that you are in class allows you to earn “participation points”. Absent students are not eligible for daily rehearsal points, with the exception of school or illness related absences.

Students must be prepared for, participate in at an acceptable level, and not disrupt the rehearsal process. Students can lose participation points in the following ways:

- **Unexcused Absence** – Any absence deemed unexcused under Noblesville School’s policy.
- **Unexcused Tardy** – Any tardy deemed unexcused under Noblesville School’s policy. A student will be written up after three tardies.
- **Missing Music** – If you do not bring all or part of your music to rehearsal.
- **Behavior** – If you interfere in the rehearsal process in any way or if your behavior is inappropriate for rehearsal.

## Written or Other Assignments (10%)

Students will receive theory assignments appropriate for their choir. Any work that is assigned needs to be turned in on time. Work that is not turned in on time may be turned in the NEXT DAY for half credit. This excludes students who are absent from class. Those students may turn it in upon their return to school for full credit.

All homework assignments will be posted on the board and online.

## **ASSESSMENTS (10%)**

The students will be given written assessments and vocal assessments throughout the school year. Students will perform alone and in groups for the vocal assessments.

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY FOR REHEARSALS, CONCERTS, AND CONTESTS**

All Performing Arts classes are unique co-curricular courses that allow students to participate in an ensemble both inside and outside of school day. Because a performing ensemble is considered a co-curricular event, a student will receive academic credit for daily classroom activities as well as out-of-school rehearsals and performances. Additionally, participation in an ensemble is like being a member of a team. Every member of the team is important and when one team member is not present, it affects the entire team. Therefore, all members of the ensemble are required to attend all after/before school rehearsals, contests, and concerts.

Students are required to stay for the entire duration of an evening performance. The students are graded not only on their performance that evening, but also on their concert etiquette while listening to the other ensembles. Because listening to the other ensembles is an extremely important part of the concert event, students are not permitted to leave after their ensemble has performed. Please plan ahead with homework and other events so that a concert performance becomes the number one priority of the evening. Students who leave early may not receive full credit for the concert grade. If there are two concerts planned on one evening, students are responsible to attend only the concert that their ensemble is performing in. If it is absolutely necessary for a student to leave early, please contact the director before the concert with the specific situation.

### **EXCUSED AND UNEXCUSED ABSENCES**

Occasionally conflicts with out of school events also arise. As soon as a conflict arises, timely communication regarding conflicts is crucial. Please contact the director immediately so that both parties are aware of the conflicting events. At that time, the director and family will sit down to discuss possible solutions.

In order for an absence to be considered excused, a pre-arranged form is to be filled out and submitted by the parent or guardian two (2) weeks prior to the event. After the form has been submitted, the director will determine whether the absence will be excused or unexcused and return the pre-arranged form to the family. Absences will be excused for personal illness, a death in the family, religious holidays, unavoidable school activity conflicts (which have been previously discussed with the director, student, and sponsor), and other pre-approved situations. For any other events, the performing arts department will always do its best to be flexible in balancing the conflicting events. In the event that a student is not able to attend both

events and the director has had ample notification (at least 2 weeks in advance), the student may be asked to complete an assignment to make up for the missed points. The assignment will be fair and reasonable and will be determined by the director.

If a student is absent from school on the day of a performance (or the day before a weekend performance), a parent should notify their child's director by telephone or email to let him/her know. Absences due to illness will be considered excused.

Absences that are considered unexcused will result in a zero for the concert grade.

## CONCERT DRESS

**Students will provide:** Khaki dress pants (tan, long, NO Cargo Pants), black belt, black socks, and black shoes.

**Students will purchase from the school:** NWMS Choir Polo (\$10). These shirts will be worn in all 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade choirs.

Students will be fitted for a polo shirt during the first few weeks of school.

No bracelets, watches, or necklaces are to be worn during concerts and earrings should be small studs. Students must wear a black belt and have their polo shirts tucked in. Students not meeting the dress requirements will not be allowed to sing in the concert. **If anyone feels burdened by the dress requirements, please contact Mr. Axsom. Every student who wants to be in choir should be able to, and not be limited by these requirements.**