

Berwick Area Middle School Chorus Syllabus

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Course Description

Chorus is a curricular area of study designed develop an appreciation and understanding of the art of choral singing through individual and group application. Students will work together to achieve a quality artistic product while developing musicianship skills and expressivity. In chorus students will:

- Achieve musical literacy
- Develop listening and sight reading skills through singing and signing with solfege
- Develop and demonstrate a concept of a correctly produced choral sound
- Develop independent musicianship skills through singing music written for 2 and 3-part harmonies, rounds, as well as *a cappella* compositions
- Identify and apply the elements of music to their own performance
- Reflect upon and critique their own performance
- Gain an appreciation for music from various periods of Western music history
- Gain an appreciation for various types of multicultural music, including texts in languages other than English
- Listen to, and reflect upon the performances of other choral ensembles

Classroom Materials

Miss Holdren will be providing music and a folder to hold their music in the classroom. The music stays in the room unless a student has permission to sign out music to take home and practice. They will also be provided online practice track recordings that will be available on the Weebly website. The link for the Weebly site is listed below.

Students need to come to class with a pencil! It will be part of their participation grade.

Classroom Rules and Expectation

- Be respectful of the teacher, peers, and classroom materials
- Arrive on time and come prepared for class
- Enter the classroom, put your school materials in the wall cubbies, get your music, check the agenda on the board, and sit down ready to work!
- Listen to and follow directions given by director
- No food or drinks are allowed in the chorus room
 - Water acceptable with permission from teacher
- No gum
- No playing the piano, unless you are an accompanist
- Follow all other rules and expectation stated in the student handbook

Consequences for Violating Rules and Expectations

1. Verbal warning
2. Silent Lunch/Parent or Guardian phone conference
3. Disciplinary Assignment
4. Administrative Referral/Parental phone conference

Concert Dress

- Boys:
 - Black dress pants/slacks, dark shoes (preferably dress shoes), a white dress shirt (can be short sleeve or long sleeve), and a tie
- Girls:
 - Black dress pants/slacks OR black skirt (school appropriate) and a white dress shirt
 - Black and white dress (school appropriate)

- NO: jeans, sneakers, high heels, short mini-skirts, off the shoulder shirts, or spaghetti straps. All dress for the concert should be following school dress code!!

If a student has a question about concert dress, please feel free to contact Miss Holdren using the contact information provided above. She will be more than happy to answer and questions and address any concerns.

If a student's clothes do not meet the dress code requirements of the Berwick Area School District they will not be allowed to perform and will receive a grade of 0% for the performance

Concert Attendance

Chorus is a year-long curricular course, and therefore, performances are mandatory and take precedence over extra-curricular and non-school sponsored activities. Students put in much hard work and effort to achieve a quality final product. Each voice contributes to that product, which is then lessened by the absences of individuals.

However, in the event of an extra-curricular sporting event or community performance, the **student with signed parental consent** may choose which event to attend. **Games and other performances** will count as an **excused absence** should the student chose to miss their chorus concert, and the student will then need to perform his or her chorus music in order to make up their concert grade. The only other accepted excuses include missing for reasons due to illness or emergency. Students by school policy may not be penalized for missing a game for a concert or a concert for a game.

******Please note, practices are not acceptable excuses for a missed performance.******

Please notify Miss Holdren **at least 2 weeks in advance** of a conflict so that the issue may be potentially resolved. If you have any questions about concert attendance, please contact Miss Holdren.

Grading Procedure

Students will be assessed individually as well as collectively using rubrics based on the National Standards for Music Education and the PA Standards for the Arts and Humanities. Each marking period will contain a combination performance and written cumulative assessment, as well as a number of individual and ensemble performance grades. Students are expected to participate and contribute to the ensemble to the best of their ability. The student will earn his/her grade based on their participation and effort. The following is a breakdown of grades per marking period.

Ensemble Performance Grades: Chorus students are assessed daily on their ability to perform as an ensemble. Throughout the course of each marking period, students will earn a number of ensemble performance grades. Students should always be on task and participate and contribute to the best of their ability. The daily grade will be given out as follows:

4- Excellent: The student is on task and actively participating in the ensemble. They come prepared to class. They are following instructions and giving their best the entire rehearsal.

3- Good: The student is mostly on task and is participating most of the time in the ensemble. They have broken one to two of the classroom rules and expectations. They follow most instructions and give their best for most of the rehearsal

2- Okay: The student is somewhat on task and isn't actively participating for most of the rehearsal. They have broken classroom rules and expectations. They are following some of the instructions and are giving their best for some of the rehearsal.

1- Unsatisfactory: The student is not participating and is not on task. They have broken classroom rules and are not prepared for class. They do not follow instructions and are not giving their best during the rehearsal.

Individual Performance Grades: While chorus is focused on bringing individual students together to sing as an ensemble, it is the job of each individual to contribute to the best of their ability to that ensemble. On any given day, individual students will be randomly assessed on their individual ability to accurately perform the repertoire. Students will be observed during rehearsal and should always be performing to the best of their ability to earn the best grade possible. Rubrics for individual performance will be explained and give out in advance along with a filled out rubric of their individual repertoire assessment.

Concerts/Written Assessments: The ultimate objective of chorus is to perform music as an ensemble. In marking periods 2 and 4, the concert/written assessment grade will be assessed based on a combination of their performance, as well as a written assessment. In the event of an excused absence from the concert, the student will need to individually perform their concert music at the discretion of the director. Make-up performances will be scheduled by the director. An unexcused absence will result in a grade of 0% for the concert portion of the grade.

In marking periods 1 and 3, students will do singing exams on what they've learned in their chorus music. Students will receive the necessary materials for the exams, and the singing tests will be done only with the director present, and will be graded based on a rubric that will be made available to the students ahead of time.

Special Events for 7th/8th Grade Chorus:

- Columbia/Montour Junior High County Chorus— This is a middle school choral festival for the surrounding school districts in Columbia and Montour counties. The festival will be held at Southern Columbia High School on Thursday, January 11, 2017. If there is a snow day, the festival will be held on Friday, January 12, 2017. There will be 15 students selected through auditions to participate in the festival this year (more details to come regarding auditions). Please feel free to contact Miss Holdren with any questions or concerns.
- Music In the Parks Festival— The middle school music department annually participates in the Music In the Parks music festival and adjudication. Students perform for a panel of judges and receive constructive feedback on their performances. In addition, students get to spend a day in an amusement park where they later attend an awards ceremony. Participation is not mandatory as this trip requires payment. However, all students are highly encouraged to participate if possible. Chorus students will receive two opportunities to fundraise for this event, and each individual's profit will be applied to the cost of only his/her trip.

This year, we will be attending Music in the Parks at Dorney Park. Our tentative date will be Friday, May 31 2019. We will be sending out more information on trip details, chaperone information, and anything else you need to know prior to the trip.

******SPECIAL NOTICE*******

In accordance with the policy of the Berwick Area School District, any parent interested in being a chaperone for Music in the Parks will now need to obtain the proper clearances.

Social Media

Sometimes questions come up about events. Check out these sources of information:

Follow us on Twitter @BAMS_Chorus

Join us on Facebook @Berwick MS Chorus

Also, check out the Berwick Music Department's website:

berwickmsmusic.weebly.com

Notes from Miss Holdren

Hello everyone!!

I am very excited to start off the school year and start off my second year here at Berwick! We had a great time learning music and singing our concerts so I anticipate the same amount of fun and excitement this year. If you ever have any question or concerns, please don't hesitate to call or e-mail me. My contact information is at the top of the syllabus. I hope you everyone has a good school year and I look forward to seeing you all at the Winter and Spring Chorus Concert!

Thank you for the support of the students and the MS music program!

Miss Katie Holdren

By signing below I hereby verify that I have read the chorus syllabus in its entirety and am in accordance with the assessment, attendance, and performance expectations of my student enrolled in middle school chorus. I understand that any student earns their grade through their effort and individual performance ability. I also understand that chorus is a yearlong curricular course, and therefore performances are mandatory and take precedence over extracurricular and non-school sponsored activities. Failure to attend a performance will result in a grade of 0% for that performance, unless otherwise excused due to illness or emergency.

Student Name _____ Grade _____

Parent/Guardian Name _____

Relationship to Student _____

Parent/Guardian Phone No. _____

Parent/Guardian

Signature _____ Date _____

There are times throughout the school year where students' pictures may be taken for various events. Please indicate if you give your permission for your student's picture to be displayed in public forums (i.e. newspaper, bulletin boards).

Yes, I give permission for my student's picture to be displayed.

No, I do not give permission for my student's picture to be displayed.

Please detach and return this page to Miss Holdren by Friday, September 21st for a 100% participation grade.

If this page is not returned by Friday, participation grade points will be taken away.