Licking Valley Middle School
Choir Handbook
2014-2015

Jessica Myers, Director
Welcome to the LVMS Vocal Music Department. This handbook has been prepared for your convenience throughout the school year. It contains almost everything that participating students and parents need to know to achieve success in a Licking Valley Middle School Choir. A vocal music calendar is included which lists all mandatory concerts and performances as well as optional vocal music events which students may choose to participate in. It is strongly recommended that you keep this handbook within reach so that it can be referred to if a question or problem should arise. Parents and students should read all items in the handbook before signing and returning the form on the back page by Wednesday, September 3.

I am delighted that you have chosen to be a part of the vocal music department and am looking forward to working together this year. You will have the opportunity to learn vocal technique, good vocal health habits, improve your musicianship, work hard, have fun, and be a part of a team. It’s going to be great year.

Jessica Myers, Choral Director
763-2275, myersj@lickingvalley.k12.oh.us

General Classroom Expectations

1. **Be prompt.** Please be in the room, in your seat, with your folder when the tardy bell rings to begin warm-ups. Check the daily rehearsal agenda. If you are late, you must have a pass or signed agenda.

2. **Be prepared.** You will be provided with and assigned a choir folder and choir music. You must provide: a pencil, a fine point dry-erase marker & your agenda. Bring all materials to class with you every day or leave them in the choir room.

3. **Be polite.** Raise your hand to ask questions, volunteer to give answers, or add comments and feedback to the class. Save conversations for the proper time.

4. **Be positive.** Choir is a team sport. It takes everyone working together to be successful. No bullying behavior will be tolerated.

5. **Be productive.** Turn in all assignments exactly when they are due. Turn in all assignments completed fully.

**Discipline**

In the event that a student should disrupt the learning environment in choir class, the following steps will be taken.

- 1st offense – name on board – warning
- 2nd offense – name on board – call home
- 3rd offense – name on board – detention

Further offenses will be referred to the office.

**Homework & Absences**

There are very few homework assignments in middle school choir. Assignments are expected on the day they are due unless the student is absent. Assignments missing more than
five days after the original due date will receive Academic Overtime. Assignments will be considered Incomplete until they are turned in regardless of how late they are.

Class participation is essential for choir. It is how I assess the daily growth of students (similar to homework in other classes). For teamwork and growth it is extremely important that all members of the ensemble be present as much as possible!

YOU are responsible for missed rehearsals and assignments by checking with the teacher. It is YOUR responsibility to get or schedule make-up assignments immediately upon your return to class. You will have days equal to the amount of days absent to make-up any missed assignments.

**Practice**

Practice makes permanent. The acquisition of effective practice skills is critical to the development of excellence in music. If you practice with poor techniques (sloppy posture, pitch and rhythm problems, inadequate breath support, etc.) you will make those habits permanent. Practice wisely. I will begin to upload practice music files to our Google Folder so that you can practice at home once we have gotten a good start on a piece of music in class! Memorize accurately and completely. Be a singer who is a musician.

**Materials**

Singers are assigned a choir folder and music. Failure to return the folder or music in good condition or failure to return the folder or music at all will result in a replacement fee. You need to provide: **a pencil & a fine point dry erase marker**.

The music may not seem to be that big of an expense to you at $1.60 to $3.75 per copy. However, you must multiply that amount by 40 choir members to understand how expensive furnishing singers with music can be. The music is the equivalent of a textbook in any other course and is the most important material that the singers will use. Please treat it with respect and take care of it to avoid paying to replace it.

**ALL FOLDERS AND MUSIC MUST BE TURNED IN BY THE LAST DAY OF CLASS TO AVOID CHARGES.**

**Grading**

Just like other courses, choir students receive points for completing various assignments and tasks.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Assessment Type</strong></th>
<th><strong>Percentage</strong></th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>FORMATIVE ASSESSMENTS</strong></td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>weekly grade from teacher assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENTS</strong></td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>solfege assignments, singing tests, Listening critiques</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENTS</strong></td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>concert performances with concert critique, competitions with performance critique, community performances with critique</td>
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</table>

**Concerts, Performances, and Contests**

Concerts and other performances are **REQUIRED** for credit. Concerts are the equivalent of chapter tests in other courses. Without concerts there would be few goals to reach in a choir setting. All rehearsals and class assignments lead toward and are rewarded by the applause during a concert performance or the high rating from adjudicators at competitions.
Absences from Performances

If a student is absent from a concert or performance, the student must present a written explanation of the absence and complete an alternative assignment.

If you have a conflict with a concert date, contact the director before the concert or performance.

Acceptable reasons for an absence from a concert or other performance include ONLY:
1. Illness with a doctor’s note.
2. Death in the family.
3. Unavoidable sports conflict.

In order to be given an alternative assessment instead of a concert or other performance, a note, written and signed by the parent or guardian must be presented to the director before the concert or performance or in an unexpected situation, a phone call (763-2275) or email (myersj@lickingvalley.k12.oh.us) at the time of the performance followed by a note on the next day of class. Failure to present an acceptable excuse and complete the alternative assignment will result in a lowered course grade.

Concert Attire

All Choir members will wear their choir t-shirt, black dress pants (or skirt), and black dress shoes. The t-shirts are paid for by your class fee. 6th grade wears red, 7th grade wears blue and 8th grade wears black. If you misplace your t-shirt, you may order a new one for $6.00.

NO jeans. NO necklaces or beeping watches. Small earrings are acceptable. Other facial/body piercings should be covered or have clear non-shiny jewelry. NO perfume, cologne, or scented lotions. Anti-perspirant or deodorant is a must. Hair color must be of a shade that you could possibly have been born with (blonde, brown, black or natural red).

Solo and Ensemble Competition

Participation in Solo and Ensemble Competition is optional and voluntary. A more detailed packet and permission form will be sent home in February.

Fees

Soloists must pay a registration fee of $13.00 before the director sends in the registration in order to participate. Should a soloist decide not to participate after the registration deadline, the fee will not be refunded.

There is a $17.00 registration fee that will be split among the ensemble members and is due before the registration deadline. Should the ensemble decide not to participate after the registration deadline, the registration fee will not be refunded.

Rehearsals

Rehearsals will be during choir time, before or after school. SOLOISTS are responsible for scheduling at least 8 rehearsals with the director. Failure to do so will result in the soloist not being able to participate. Soloists that take private voice lessons should consult the choir director regarding rehearsals.
ENSEMBLES are responsible for 8 ensemble rehearsals with the director and 2 individual rehearsals with the director. Failure to do so will result in the entire ensemble not being able to participate.

**Large Group Contest**

The Vocal Music Department is planning on taking both the 7th & 8th grade choirs to Large Group Contest again this year. It is very different from solo and ensemble contest or a concert. At Large Group Contest the choir is required to perform one musical selection chosen from a required list of selections decided upon by a committee of vocal music directors from the state of Ohio and two other musical selections of contrasting styles chosen by the director. There are four different levels of difficulty of music that the director may choose to enter his/her choir. The most difficult is Class AA, followed by Class A, Class B and Class C. Again, these classes are based on musical difficulty not school size. The three musical selections are heard by three adjudicators that make vocal and written comments and then give the choir an overall score of Superior (I), Excellent (II), Good (III), Fair (IV), or Poor (V). These three scores are averaged together to determine the final rating. The choir then gets an opportunity to receive feedback directly from one of the adjudicators in a clinic setting.

Large Group Contest can be an extremely rewarding experience if the choir has worked hard, worked together, and is prepared to perform. The choir will have the opportunity to hear comments and suggestions from other choral directors and will have the opportunity to sit and hear other choirs from our district. However, if the choir has not worked and is not prepared the experience can be dreadful. Should the director feel that the choir is not fully prepared and would not have a successful experience at Large Group Contest then the choir will not attend.

**“Paw”sibilities Auditions and Participation**

“Paw”sibilities auditions will occur in the fall for the current school year’s group. The audition will consist of a vocal selection performed for the director and a short dance routine. The vocal selection and dance routine will be provided, taught, and rehearsed during the clinics. Vocal ability is far more important than dancing ability so don’t worry if you have never danced before. Neither have many of your fellow classmates.

All “Paw”sibilities members are **required** to buy his/her own outfit. More information will follow auditions. There will be plenty of fundraiser opportunities.

All “Paw”sibilities members are **required** to attend all outside of school rehearsals and performances in order to participate. Should a conflict arise, let the director know **ahead** of time. **Phone calls or emails to the choir office are expected in the event of any absence!** (See Absence procedures on page 5) Three **unexcused** absences from after school rehearsals will result in removal from the ensemble. One **unexcused** absence from a community performance will result in removal from the ensemble. All members must be in choir class to be in “Paw”sibilities.

Should a member quit the group after selections are finalized and outfits have been ordered, that person must still pay in full for his/her outfit.
Trip and Bus Regulations

All choir members must ride the bus to outside performances and contests. When the choir takes a trip, all choir members must be at the designated point on time or risk the chance of being left behind. Buses will leave at the appointed time. Any student who drives him/herself to the event will not be allowed to perform. If you have been unavoidably detained, call the school or the director’s office. It may be possible to wait a few minutes. In the event of a conflict, contact the director.

1. Only choir members, staff, and chaperones are permitted to ride the buses. *At the discretion of the director, children of chaperones may be allowed to ride the bus, but they (the children) will be responsible to pay for any admission costs.*
2. If the student’s parents wish to take their child home after a performance, the student’s parent/guardian must make a personal contact with the director in advance.
3. Obey the bus driver and chaperones promptly and cheerfully. Drivers and chaperones have the authority to tell you what to do.
4. Keep the bus clean. No open beverages or food will be allowed on the bus.
5. Do not move from seat to seat.
6. The emergency door is for emergencies only.
7. Be silent at railroad crossings until the bus crosses the tracks.
8. Be sure that all of your equipment is easily identifiable.
9. Be responsible for your own equipment. Do not lay it down and expect someone to put it in its proper place….Load it yourself and unload it yourself.
10. No shrill screams, whistles, or loud noises are permitted for you safety and the safety of others.
11. Keep hands, feet and arms inside the bus at all times.
12. Anything judged as “inappropriate conduct” or “obscene” will not be tolerated.
13. No intimate conduct or behavior.

Conduct

1. There is to be no tobacco use or possession in conjunction with any choir function.
2. There is to be no drinking or possession of alcoholic beverages or drugs in conjunction with any choir function. There will be no demonstrating evidence of use of alcohol or drugs at any choir function.
3. There is to be no foul language or disrespect of anyone or anything in conjunction with any choir function
4. In traveling to other locations for performances, homerooms are sometimes assigned for the purpose of securing coats or equipment. They are not to be used as changing rooms. Where changing rooms are not provided, rest rooms should be used for changing.
5. Gambling for money is inappropriate in conjunction with any choir function.
6. Learn to work with people. The success of your choir is dependent upon 100% cooperation. Remember…we are an individual group…not a group of individuals.
2014-2015 Licking Valley Middle School Choirs  
Concert and Performance Schedule

All dates listed in **bold** type are **mandatory** for all choir members. All dates in *italic* type are **optional** activities and are provided for family scheduling purposes. A full music department calendar with all rehearsals is available on EdLine and at www.teacherpage.com/lvmusic.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>EVENT</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November ?</td>
<td>all day</td>
<td>District X Honors Choir (Auditioned 8th graders ONLY)</td>
<td>Delaware Hayes HS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 9</td>
<td>7:00 pm</td>
<td>Holiday Concert</td>
<td>MS Gymnasium</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 17 &amp; 18</td>
<td>7:30 pm</td>
<td>HS Spring Musical (8th grade choir members may participate in the chorus)</td>
<td>LVHS Auditorium</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 18</td>
<td>all day</td>
<td>OMEA Solo &amp; Ensemble</td>
<td>River View HS</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 28-30</td>
<td>2:30-4:30 pm</td>
<td>Vocal Impact Auditions (8th graders ONLY)</td>
<td>HS Choir Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 8 or 9</td>
<td>all day</td>
<td>Large Group Contest (7th and 8th Grade Choirs ONLY)</td>
<td>Big Walnut HS</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 14</td>
<td>7:00 pm</td>
<td>All-District Choir Concert</td>
<td>LVHS Auditorium</td>
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-------------------------detach and return by September 3-------------------------

I have read the handbook for the Licking Valley Vocal Music Department and understand the policies, rules, and expectations. I have made note of all dates and understand that student participation is **mandatory** for all events listed in **bold** type and optional for all events listed in *italic* type as it pertains to my son/daughter.

STUDENT SIGNATURE ___________________________ DATE __________________

PARENT SIGNATURE(S) ______________________ DATE __________________

_________________________ DATE __________________

If you have conflicts with mandatory dates, please list them here.