

Welcome to Sleepy Hollow Mixed Chorus! There are many activities ahead and a lot of great music to be made. This handbook is designed as an informative guide for each chorus member and their family. The purpose is to let you know what your responsibilities are as a member of this group, and also to let you know what to expect over the course of the year. The handbook has been divided up into sections which deal with different issues. If anything is unclear, or if you have any questions regarding policies or procedures, please ask your director.

CHORUS REHEARSAL

The chorus rehearsals will take place in the atrium of the high school building due to lack of space and availability. Both choruses will be from 7:40 to 8:27. The Middle School Mixed chorus will run on even days and the High School Chorus will run on odd days. All chorus members should be in their sections and seats, with all materials, and ready to work at this time. Anyone not in their seats and ready to work when rehearsal starts is considered late. If you enter school late, please come with a note from your parent or guardian.

ATTENDANCE

Each and every member is an important part of the ensemble. Just as a basketball team cannot function without all its players, neither can a chorus. Therefore, attendance at all chorus rehearsals is mandatory unless you are legally absent from school. In case of a field trip or special class activity (this does not refer to extra help sessions with a teacher) a chorus member may be excused from a rehearsal as long as he/she informs the director of the date and event ahead of time. It is each student's responsibility to inform the director of absence (other than a legal absence from school). Attendance will be taken by the director every day! For each unexcused absence your grade will be lowered. After three unexcused absences you will be referred to the principal for further disciplinary action.

(NOTE: If you are feeling ill on a particular day and cannot sing, you are still expected to be in your section, with your music, so that you can follow along and participate in the class.)

Attendance at all concerts and chorus events is mandatory. Again, every member of the ensemble is extremely important! The chorus needs to learn to perform and function together as a group, so attendance at all concerts and chorus events is necessary! The only excuses for missing a concert are serious illness (for which a doctor's note should be provided) or a family emergency. In both cases the director should be notified as early as possible, **before the event!** Failure to notify the director prior to the event will result in a lower grade for the marking period. Concert dates are listed in the school calendar in advance so you can prepare and plan for around the dates. Any chorus member who does not show up for performances without an excuse will receive a mark of Zero for that grade.

MATERIALS

You are required to have the following material in order to successfully participate in this class:

- 1) Your music (provided by the director in the beginning of each season)
- 2) A folder to keep your music, information, announcements in.
- 3) A pencil

The music, pencil, and folder should be brought to the rehearsal each and every day. If a student shows up to rehearsal without any one of these items, they are considered unprepared for class. Two unprepared in a quarter=one unexcused absence. This will result in the lowering of your grade. Your music folders will be checked periodically throughout the year for a grade. So they need to be kept to date. Students will be given three days notice of a notebook/folder check. Failure to turning your music folder on the specified day will result in the lowering of the music folder grade by 10 points each day it is late. If the folder is not turned in by the next class day, then the folder grade for that marking period will be a zero.

CONCERT DRESS

One part of performing together as a group in a formal concert is looking neat and uniform. In order to achieve this, all students will be required to dress in the following manner for all concerts (unless instructed other wise):

Ladies:

- Floor length black skirt, with no slits up the side or mini skirts!
- Middle School Mixed Chorus- Short sleeved white blouse
- High School Mixed Chorus- Black Blouses $\frac{3}{4}$ length. NO STRAPS!!
- Black, comfortable dress shoes! Remember you might have to climb to the top riser!
- Hair: Please make sure that you hair is pulled back from your face. The conductor and the audience must be able to see both of your eyes without obstruction!

Gentlemen:

- Black dress pants
- Black belt, socks and dress shoes
- Long black tie
- Middle school Mixed chorus- just a long sleeved white dress shirt
- High School Mixed Chorus- a long sleeved white dress shirt with black vest. Black vest will be assigned and expected to be taken care of. Wash vest in cold water and line dry, if ironing is needed use a low setting.

DISCIPLINE

Since this is an elective subject, it is assumed that all students are participating in this course because they have a genuine desire to learn about and create great music. Therefore, there should not be any major discipline problems. Please remember the Sleepy Hollow Behavioral Expectations:

Be Here:

- Arrive on time or with a pass if late.
- Provide a note to the teacher when you are absent.

Be Prepared:

- Bring your music, folder, pencil and agenda book.
- Be prepared to perform (sing).

Be Respectful:

- Adhere to the school dress code, no hats and please leave coats in lockers.
- Turn cell phones and any other electronic devices off and put them away.
- Speak respectfully to one another and respect each others efforts.
- Do not eat in class.
- Leave the class area as you found it.

Be Positive:

- Perform to your full potential.
- Be proud of what you are doing!
- Take a leadership role and be a model student.
- Challenge yourself and focus on the musicality and importance of music.

Should any problem occur, they will be handled in accordance with the Sleepy Hollow Behavior Code, as posted in all agenda books. Any student causing a disruption during rehearsal will be asked to leave the rehearsal and will receive a zero for that day's participation grade.

CLASSROOM ENVIROMENT

In order to allow for maximum rehearsal time, students will be asked to restrict their usage of the bathroom facility to the first five minutes of the period. Students will be allowed to leave the room to use the bathroom in the event of an emergency or illness. Any student with a medical condition that requires frequent usage of the bathroom should inform the director at the beginning of the school year. These students will be permitted to leave the room whenever needed.

During rehearsal time, all students will be assigned an area or voice section.

GRADING POLICY

The Sleepy Hollow Mixed Choruses are expected to comply with the participation guidelines which are presented in this handbook. Your chorus grade will be evaluated as the following:

1) A grade will be given for weekly participation grade (diligence to task (singing), commitment to excellence, self-discipline, effort and initiative and being present). All rehearsals are graded. If a student attends all rehearsals then they will receive a grade of 100. For each unexcused rehearsal, an absence check worth 5 points will be deducted and an additional 5 points off the final average in the event that the class was “cut”. Keep in mind that there are only about 18 rehearsals with in a quarter.

2) A grade will be given for music folders (all music, folder and pencil present during rehearsal).

*****If** Uniforms are giving ...****

3) Uniforms will be handed out to the High School Mixed Chorus. A grade will be based on uniform condition and receiving. Their will be a date given for returning the uniform, for each day past the given date, ten points will be deducted from the uniform grade. In the event that you lose or damage the uniform, you will be responsible for payment of \$50.00. Failure to reimburse or hand in the uniform will result in your grade/transcripts/ diploma release.

4) Concert and extra performance grades

All grades are averaged in together for a final grade.

REPERTOIRE

As always, chorus repertoire is offered in a wide selection of music for experience and involvement. In the winter concert, music repertoire is geared toward art songs, classical, madrigal, holiday and multi-cultural selections. The spring program will include contemporary songs, music of counter point, pop, jazz and spirituals. Please note that songs selected are based on vocal ability of the group. Music will be selected by quality of arrangement and literature, whether it is secular or sacred work.

ADDITIONAL GROUPS AND PERFORMANCE OPPORTUNITIES

Chamber/ Jazz Singers (High School Only)

Besides the mixed chorus, students can participate in the small select ensemble. This group will perform and learn more challenging music compared to the mixed chorus. This group will consist of 8 to 12 singers depending on the male/female ratio. If there are not enough male singers to cover the parts the group will be an all women ensemble. In the winter concert the “Singers” will perform chamber and four part classical, madrigal or counterpoint songs. In the spring the “Singers” repertoire changes to vocal jazz and pop. Additional concerts for the “Singers” will be “Jazz in the Courtyard” and graduation. All performances and rehearsals are mandatory! Auditions for the “Singers” ensemble will be held during the second week of school. A sign-up sheet will be posted. Rehearsals will be once a week after school. Time and date are TBD.

This is one of the best opportunities for students to learn real independence on their given part. All students are encouraged to audition. Students need not to prepare a solo piece for the audition but it is certainly welcomed! Students will sight read, sing warm-ups for range and quality, and read potential music that will be performed for concerts.

The grade policy for the “Singers” ensemble is pass/fail status. If you are there for rehearsals and the concert you pass. If you miss more than three unexcused rehearsals you fail. You do receive a credit for this performing group.

NYSSMA

The NYSSMA festival is an event where music students sing selected music for a judge; the judge writes comments and rates your performance on several musical categories. This experience allows the student an opportunity to learn about and improve many areas of its singing by listening to the comments of other chorus/vocal teachers in the state. The students during the year can prepare a solo, duet, trio etc. and perform on a given date. The solo must be selected from the NNYSSMA manual. If you study privately, it is strongly recommend that you select a solo with your teacher. Copies of the manual are available through your director.

MATERIALS NEEDED-

1. Students will need two original copies of the song being performed, (one for your accompanist and one for the judge).
2. Students are responsible for finding their own accompanist! Name and phone numbers of reliable people can be given through your director.

In the event that a student does exceptionally well on his/her solo, their NYSSMA score will be evaluated for possible selection of ALL STATE CHORUS or ALL COUNTY CHORUS through the NYSSMA association. The school will receive a letter of acceptance and notify the student. This is a great honor and responsibility!

MIDDLE SCHOOL ALL COUNTY CHORUS-

All county chorus selections will be through the director. Since sections of All-County Chorus are restricted to two groups of SAB voicing, one group will be dedicated to the 7th grade and one group to the eighth. This means one soprano, one alto, and one male voice from each grade. Seventh grade students who are interested in performing for the all-county group will need to audition. A solo will be given and expected to be performed. The eighth grade selection will be based on NYSSMA solo ratings. The highest scores with in each voice section will be selected. In the event that we do not have students in the eighth grade that did not do a NYSSMA solo an audition will take place. Please note that if we do not have a male section (Bass) in one or both groups, we can not send students. If there are only two male singers that can go they will automatically be in, no matter what grade. If the seventh grade group does not have a male singer then an eighth grade student will go in that slot. The same will happen for the eighth grade group. The WCSMA does this to make sure all sections are balanced equally. The sixth Grade Singers will be selected on class performance and participation for the elementary division.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR ALL COUNTY MEMBERS

If you all selected for All-State Chorus or All-County Chorus please be advised that this is a great honor and responsibility. You are representing your school and music program. Only the best of the best will be chosen. Be prepared to attend at least two, three hour (or more) rehearsals after school at a given location. Also there will be an all-day rehearsal with a concert performance a PACE University. All dates, times and places will be given by WCSMA (Westchester County School Music Association). You will receive a copy of all the information by your director.

TRIP INFORMATION AND REQUIREMENTS

One of the bonuses of being in a music group is the opportunity for travel. The fact that we are able to schedule trips serves as a testimony to the success, reputation and dedication of our students. Every year the Music Department will take their students on an ensemble, performance trip. The Middle School groups will attend a one day trip of performance and amusement park. The High School ensembles will go every other year on a three day trip for performance and fun. When traveling with music groups, you serve as an ambassador for our school and community. We expect the highest standards possible at all times, both in terms of behavior and musical experience.

Please keep in mind that these trips are now becoming more expensive. This is why the High School trips are every other year. It will give students the opportunity to fund raise more money toward the “big” trip. In addition, we need you and your parents to help raise money for these events. We do have a MUSIC BOOSTER organization. We need your help to raise money to alleviate the cost of the trips. Please help us help you! I have enclosed a list of Booster Events for you convenience!

DATES OF PERFORMANCES

Winter Concerts-

Middle School-Monday, December 14th, 7:30 p.m.

High School-Tuesday, December 15, 7:30 p.m.

Spring Concerts-

Middle School Band, Orchestra, and Chorus

Monday, May 10th, 7:30 p.m.

High School Orchestra and Chorus Spring Concert-

Tuesday, May 18th, 7:30 p.m.

High School Band Spring Concert-

Wednesday, May 19th, 7:30 p.m.

Middle School- Moving Up Ceremony-

Wednesday, June 23, 7:00 p.m.

High School-Graduation

Friday, June 24th, 7:00 p.m.

PLEASE SIGN AND HAND BACK TO THE DIRECTOR

COMMITMENT LETTER

In signing this form, I commit myself to the Sleepy Hollow Chorus Program. I agree to uphold and honor all the requests that are stated within the Chorus Handbook. I will also exhibit a mature, positive and serious attitude for myself and ensemble.

STUDENT _____

STUDENT E-MAIL _____

PARENT _____

GRADE _____

VOICE _____

EMERGENCY NUMBER _____

DATE _____

SLEEPY HOLLOW CHORUS HANDBOOK



Directed by Mrs. Gail Persad