

Wheaton Christian Grammar School

Concert Choir Handbook

2019-2020

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August 29, 2019

Dear Choir Members and Parents,

I welcome each of you to Concert Choir for this school year. I am really looking forward to working with each one of you in creating the best sounding choir we can be. In this handbook you will find my policies and procedures of the choral program as well as information concerning this school year.

Concert Choir (CC) will meet from 2:43-3:25 p.m. every Monday and Thursday throughout the school year. Grading for CC will be the same as any other music class at WCGS. In other words, CC is part of our academic program and will meet the music class requirement for junior high students. Concert Choir will be an auditioned, combined seventh and eighth grade-performing group.

Concert Choir fulfills the music elective requirement for the WCGS junior high academic curriculum. CC will meet throughout the entire school year.

Please read through the following information very carefully. Students and their parents must turn in the signed sheet by Thursday, September 5.

I'm looking forward to a great year together!

Sincerely,

Mr. David Wright
Choir Director

Goals and Objectives

The main goal of the Concert Choir is to glorify God by singing skillfully to Him as an act of worship. This will be accomplished through focusing on the following disciplines: learning a variety of musical styles and genres, music theory, ear training, historical context, musical expression, vocal technique, and performance. It is our desire that students learn the joy of singing with energy, skill, and enthusiasm!

Discipline

Concert Choir is a group, which encourages unity, teamwork, ensemble, and cooperation, with everyone striving for a common goal. This all comes at a middle school student's life when individual identity is desired. As Christians, we all recognize the importance of working together cooperatively, for one goal – bringing glory to God. A very small number of students find they cannot make this kind of sacrifice and become disruptive discipline problems in the choir rehearsal. These students will not be allowed to affect the quality of learning taking place in class. Continued problems will result in that student being removed from rehearsal, and *ultimately dismissed from the choir*. Consequences may include a one on one conference with the director, after school detention, call to parents, additional assignments, and a reduction of the student's daily grade. Choir members need to accept *responsibility* for their actions, good or bad. Students should be looking to glorify God and work toward the success of our choir program.

Daily Rules and Procedures

The following rules are set in place to create an atmosphere of learning and success. Students who violate these rules are responsible for reducing the amount of time for rehearsal and consequently hurting the entire choir.

1. Be respectful to everyone at all times.
2. Enter the rehearsal room in a quiet, courteous, and orderly manner.
3. A student is considered late to class if they are not in their seat, **ready to sing by 2:45 p.m.**
4. Choir members will have the following at every rehearsal:
 - a. ALL MUSIC
 - b. PENCIL (you supply your own)
5. Good posture is of great importance at all times.
6. Absolutely **no gum**, food, or drink (water bottles are allowed and encouraged) in the choir rehearsal.
7. Concert and rehearsal attendance and participation is mandatory. A student is required to be at rehearsal if they are in attendance for the regular school day. Failure to attend any of these events will cause a **one-letter drop** in the student's quarter grade. (with the exception of family emergencies or illness)
8. Respect the rights, safety, and property of others.
9. Accept responsibility for yourself, your behavior, and your learning.

Grades/Points

Grades are based on an average of in-class singing, singing tests, homework assignments, concert performance, and the students' individual progress. Students should plan on bringing music home regularly to learn parts and memorize words. Homework will consist of memorizing music for concerts, logging at-home practice time, learning music reading skills, learning to identify musical terms and markings, and practicing proper singing technique. All students are required to practice at home. Students are required to practice at home the equivalent of **10 minutes a day, 6 days per week** Practice is most effective when it is broken into smaller practice sessions. For instance, practicing 10-15 minutes, 4-6 days a week is much more beneficial than 60 minutes at one time. *Practice records need to be entered once a week.* Practice minutes will be reported using Google forms. See the section "Practice Records" in this handbook for details. Singing tests will be given occasionally to assess the students' improvement. This is the percentage break down of the students' choir grades:

70% - Singing and participation in rehearsals

15% - At-home, weekly practice reports

15% - Singing in concerts

In addition to these activities, students may also be interested in doing the following:

Attending Concerts/Recitals

Taking Private Voice Lessons –See Mr. Wright for information concerning private vocal teachers.

IGSMA Solo and Ensemble Contest – Solo and ensemble contest will be coming up in February. Now is a good time to begin thinking about your involvement in this contest. Information will be sent home when it is available.

ILMEA District 9 Music Festival – This is a district-wide (most of DuPage county) honors ensemble for which all 6th-8th grade band, choir, and orchestra, students have the opportunity to audition. You must register to audition through Mr. Wright. The deadline for registration is September 13. Please see Mr. Wright for audition music and details.

Concert Uniforms

Since we will be performing at a number of different venues throughout the year, the band will utilize the following uniforms for performances:

- 1) A WCGS issued polo shirt for all music ensembles. The details about cost and ordering will be available in the next few weeks.**
- 2) Khaki (tan) colored pants and dress shoes.**

Please do not add your own "personal" touches to these uniform requirements. The purpose of a uniform is just that, that we are all "uniform" in our appearance. Our uniforms will be mandatory of all concert band students and will be worn for all performances.

Attendance

All students who are in regular attendance for the school day will be expected to be in (and on time to) choir rehearsal. ***It is not allowed for a student to skip choir to do homework, or make up a test or quiz.*** If a student is absent from school it is the student's responsibility to determine what material was covered in his/her absence and to make up anything that was learned that day.

Rehearsal Schedule

Concert Choir rehearses twice a week on Mondays and Thursdays, from 2:43-3:25 p.m. Be on time. Rehearsals are mandatory and may not be missed for any reason other than absence from school. If you know you will be out of school on a particular day, please see Mr. Wright ahead of time to cover what you will miss.

Practice Records

Students will be submitting their practice records by using Google forms each week. The requirement for Concert Choir is 60 minutes of at-home practice per week. Links for the weekly Google forms are posted on my blog site: wcgsmusicman.blogspot.com. After signing in, students should click on the link in the right margin titled Concert Choir. Simply click on the link that corresponds with the week you would like to update with your practice times and click the send button on the bottom of the page.

****IMPORTANT - You will have one extra week past the due date to enter your practice times. NO SUBMISSIONS WILL BE ALLOWED PAST THAT DAY.**

Parent Volunteers

We are in need of volunteers for our concerts. We need parental supervision for concerts. If you would like to sign-up to volunteer, email Mrs. Beth Wright at bwright@wheatonchristian.org as soon as possible.

Concerts and Important dates

The concerts listed below are **mandatory** and may not be missed for any reason other than illness or a death in the family. Student's grades for concerts cannot be made up with the exception of illness or death in the family. Concerts are to be viewed as a final exam. Failure to attend concerts will cause a **one-letter drop** in the student's quarter grade.

Junior High Choral Concert 7:00 p.m., December 18, 2019
Music Ministry Day March 13, 2020
(There is a cost involved in the above trip)
Junior High Pops Concert 7:00 p.m., Thursday May 12, 2020
Music Field Trip TBD, May 2020
Graduation (8th grade only) 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, May 26, 2020

All Concerts are to be held in the WCGS Commons unless noted otherwise.

In addition to the above concerts, students may **choose** to be involved in the following events:

- ILMEA Registration Deadline Friday, September 13, 2019
- ILMEA Music Festival Auditions Saturday, September 28, 2019
- ILMEA Music Festival Saturday, November 9, 2019
- IGSMA Solo and Ensemble Contest..... Saturday, February 29, 2020
- Fine Arts Solo Recitals Monday, April 20, 2020

Concert Choir Commitment Form

I have read the preceding information. I understand and accept the commitment and expectations of becoming a member of the Concert Choir. I also realize that I am making a one-year commitment for the 2019-2020 school year to the WCGS Concert Choir.

Student's Signature

Parent's Signature

**Please detach this form, sign and return to Mr. Wright
by Thursday, September 5, 2019.**