Union Middle School

**Choir Handbook**

2019-2020

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**Andrea Bolívar, Director**

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Dear Choir Students and Parents,

Welcome to Choir at UMS! I am excited that you have chosen to be part of this community, and I look forward to making music and learning with you this year.

Choir is unlike any other activity. Singing in a choir, you engage the body, mind, and soul. Choir is an art, a language, it’s historical, and best of all, it creates memorable and meaningful experiences with others.

Your performance in choir affects the outcome of everyone’s work, whether it be a positive or negative. You have a responsibility to give your best in rehearsals and performances to make choir the best it can be!

The following handbook provides important information regarding objectives, expectations, materials, dates, etc. to refer to throughout the year (in addition to any up-to-date information that is sent out).  Please read all sections of this handbook carefully, as you will be held accountable for these details.

I look forward to working together this year to create wonderful music!

Ms. Andrea Bolívar

Choir Director

**Choir Objectives**

·      Develop healthy/effective singing techniques

·      Develop music literacy skills

·      Rehearse and perform quality choral repertoire from a variety of cultural/historical contexts

·      Understand the mechanics of the human voice

·      Learn the role choral music plays in society and in our lives

·      Make meaningful connections between music and other areas of life

**Materials**

Each student is expected to come to rehearsal prepared with the following items each day:

**1.**  **2 Pencils with erasers**

**2.** **Music folder (provided)**

**3.  A bottle of water (recommended)**

**Concert Attire**

Casual Concert Attire

**⧫** blue jeans (absolutely NO RIPS)

**⧫** choir t-shirt (unless otherwise specified)

**⧫** closed toed shoes

Formal Concert Attire

**Dress:      ⧫** Black dress

* Must hit above or below the knee
* NO spaghetti straps (any “tank” style dresses must have at least a 3 inch wide strap)
* NO midriffs, strapless, halter

**⧫** Black CLOSE TOED dress shoes, flat or 1 – 2” heel

**⧫** Black nylon tights

**Pants:   ⧫** Black button up shirt

**⧫** Black dress slacks

**⧫** Black CLOSE TOED dress shoes

**Shared Costs Contribution**

Because choir is an after-school activity, each student must pay to participate in the program**. The fees you pay will cover the music, usage, director fees, as well as a 2019/2020 Choir t-shirt.** **This year the choir fee is $175.00**—(not including possible festival/competition charges.) These fees can be paid through the online UMS store. No checks or cash will be accepted this year.

**Information and Communication**

**Email:** I am available by email between the hours of 8:00 am and 5:00 pm. I will do my best to reply to emails within 24 hours. In-person meetings can be made by appointment.

**STUDENT AND PARENT REMINDER TEXTS THROUGH REMIND:**

I will be using the texting feature on Remind to send last-minute reminders and announcements to students and parents via text. This will be very helpful for getting updated info out to everyone quickly, as well as sending helpful last-minute reminders (for example: “Don’t forget to pack your choir t-shirt for tomorrow’s performance”).

**To sign up for Remind, text @umschoir20 to 81010**

**Conduct**

Members of the UMS choir program are continuously representing themselves, their ensemble, their school, and their community at various musical events throughout the year.  It is expected that students maintain professional etiquette at these events and retain an awareness of the image they convey with their actions. Behavior that will not be tolerated includes, but is not limited to: distraction from and/or interference with performances, inappropriate language, improper use of technology, and failure to follow instructions.  Inappropriate behavior at events or performances will result in disciplinary action, and in extreme cases, may include removal from the ensemble.

**Rehearsal Expectations**

* **Respect:** should be shown for your teacher, your classmates, and anyone else you might encounter along the way. Respect also should be shown for musical instruments. Instruments stored in the band room are NOT to be touched.
* **Punctuality:** You are expected to be in your assigned seat ready to go when rehearsal starts.
* **Technology:**  Smartphones, tablets, laptops and all other space gadgets must be OFF and PUT AWAY during rehearsal. If I catch you with a device I will confiscate it until the end of rehearsal. If it happens again, a parent will need to come and pick it up when you leave rehearsal.
* **Be Engaged and Willing to Learn:** If you make a mistake, that’s ok! Be willing to learn from it and figure out how you can do better the next time around. Pay attention and participate! If you are in this classroom you are expected to engage in whatever activity is being presented.

**Unsupportive behavior will result in the following consequences:**

1. Verbal warning
2. Removal from rehearsal
3. Parent contact

**Choir is a safe space for everyone.**

**Violating the safe space will NOT be tolerated.**

**Daily Procedures and Norms**

* Students that are not seated in their assigned seat when rehearsal begins will be marked tardy/absent.
* No gum or food allowed in the classroom. Water bottles, however, are recommended.
* The only items allowed at seats are pencils, music folders, and water bottles.  Bags and other belongings should be left in the designated area.
* Cell phones or other electronics are prohibited in class unless otherwise specified.
* The white board is not to be written on by students, except with permission.
* If students are unable to sing for a rehearsal due to temporary vocal impairment (illness, sore throat, etc.) but are still well enough to attend school, they will be expected to participate in rehearsal as much as possible and fill out a Vocal Rest Worksheet.

**Our Ensembles**

**All Sing Choir:**

All Sing is Open to all students who wish to participate in the afterschool choir. This choir is designed for students to build their confidence singing, and reading music, as well as enhancing their ability to sing in parts.

**Advanced Choir**

(by audition only)

This choir is composed of no less than 20 and no more than 35 singers who audition for a spot. It is a requirement for advanced choir members to participate in the All Sing as well. This choir will also have the opportunity to travel with the Symphonic Band over Memorial Day weekend. Advanced Choir rehearses right after the All Sing Choir. Students are expected to attend both rehearsals. Students must also attend the Advanced Choir retreat.

**Performances**

All concerts on the **Mandatory Calendar** are a big part of our music curriculum. Absences will be excused only under extenuating circumstances.

Excused Absences:

* Conflicting event is unavoidable and was scheduled before concert calendar was released (weddings, graduations, etc.)
* Illness or family emergency
* Notification required at least 14 days in advance, with filled out Conflict Sheet signed by a parent.

Unexcused Absences:

* Notification of absence received less than 14 days in advance
* Conflicting event is planned after concert calendar was released

**\*\*\*\***I reserve the right to remove a student from Advanced Choir after 3 unexcused absences. If you are well enough to come to school, you are well enough to come to rehearsal. **\*\*\*\***

**Rehearsal Schedule**

**All Sing**

Mondays 3:00-3:45

Wednesdays 2:00- 2:45

**Advanced choir**

Mondays 3:50-4:35

Wednesdays 2:50-3:35

The first choir rehearsal will be **Wednesday, September 4th** from 3:00- 4:35 for ALL singers. At this rehearsal, students will learn more about the program as well as go over what will be required for Advanced Choir auditions. Advanced Choir Auditions will be on **Monday September 9th and Wednesday September 11th.** Please be reminded, your child does NOT need to audition for the All Sing choir. These two dates are only for students who wish to be in Advanced Choir.

**Mandatory Choir Calendar**

Please note the dates and times on the calendar below.  Performances are **mandatory** for the participants of the groups listed. Additional details and information will be given closer to the time of performances. **Students should plan on arriving 15 minutes early to each event unless otherwise noted**.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **DATE** | **EVENT** | **PARTICIPANTS** | **DRESS CODE** |
| **September 29**  Sunday | **Advanced Choir Retreat**  UMS Band Room, 12-5 pm | **Advanced Choir** | N/A |
| **December 19**  Thursday | **Winter Concert Assembly**  UMS Gym | **All Sing Choir**  **Advanced Choir** | N/A |
| **December 19**  Thursday | **Winter Concert**  UMS Gym, 6:30pm | **All Sing Choir** | Formal Concert Attire |
| **March 7**  Saturday | **CMEA Festival**  Saratoga HS, time TBA | **All Sing Choir**  **Advanced Choir** | Formal Concert Attire |
| **March 17**  Tuesday | **Elementary School Music Tour**  Alta Vista, Noddin, Carlton  9:00am to 1:45pm | **Advanced Choir** | Casual Concert Attire |
| **March 18**  Wednesday | **Festival Music Concert Assembly**  UMS Gym | **All Sing Choir**  **Advanced Choir** | Casual Concert Attire |
| **March 18**  Wednesday | **Festival Music Concert**  UMS Gym, 6:30pm | **All Sing Choir**  **Advanced Choir** | Formal Concert Attire |
| **May 19**  Tuesday | **Spring Concert Assembly**  UMS Gym, 6:30pm | **All Sing Choir**  **Advanced Choir** | Casual Concert Attire |
| **May 19**  Tuesday | **Spring Concert**  UMS Gym, 6:30pm | **All Sing Choir**  **Advanced Choir** | Formal Concert Attire |
| **May 22-25** | **Southern California Tour**  TBD | **Advanced Choir** | Formal & Casual Attire |

**Any changes made to this mandatory calendar will be sent out via remind and/or email.**