

HH Dow High School
Choir/Chamber Singer Handbook
2013-14

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(e-mail is the most efficient way to get hold of me!)

Please check e-mail often, as this is our primary source of communication.

I am thrilled to be the new HH Dow High School Choral Director. Twenty-one years ago I returned to school with the dream of becoming a high-school choir director. For the past 17 years I have very happily taught just about every grade level of music – and now, finally, my dream has come true! I know that the Dow High choir tradition reflects high standards, and I look forward to continuing that tradition. This handbook is designed to inform both the singers and their parents of the responsibilities that come with being part of the Dow High choirs. Please take the time to go over this handbook with your singer, and make sure you send back the the contract/permission slip you'll find at the end of this handbook. Please also sign up to help with the many tasks that are necessary to the making our choir run smoothly.

What materials does my singer need for this class?

- Pencil with eraser
- 1” 3-ring binder.
- 1 large box tissues
- Uniform for performances – please see “Concert Attire”
- Water bottle. Note: Students will not be permitted to leave their seats for water during rehearsal.

Concert Attire

Just as the ensemble’s sound is important, so is the ensemble’s appearance. A well-groomed, neatly uniformed ensemble is essential for a truly professional and artistic experience.

- Tuxedos and formal dresses will be issued.
- Each student is expected to provide black dress shoes. Athletic shoes, open toed shoes, or boots are inappropriate, as are extremely high heels or platform soles. No sparkles, sequins, or glitter.
- Black socks or hosiery – *girls must wear socks or tights!*
- Hair should be groomed away from face. Girls with long hair must wear their hair UP. Hair ornaments should be black or match the student’s hair. Unusual hairstyles or hair colors are distracting to the audience, unprofessional, and should be avoided.
- Jewelry should be kept to small, subtle earrings only. There should be no jewelry visible to the audience.
- Make sure your uniform is clean and wrinkle-free, shoes clean and polished.
- **Before every performance bathe or shower, wash your hair, use deodorant, and do NOT use scented products or perfume.** You are in very close quarters on the risers and usually under hot lights. Good personal hygiene is essential to the health of the group!

Each choir student must be properly attired according to handbook guidelines. Improper dress may result in the student’s non-participation in a performance, which will count as an unexcused absence for grading purposes. *If providing any of these items presents a financial hardship for your family, please contact Mrs. Kempzell or an administrator **before September 30th**. We are happy to help you acquire whatever your child needs.*

Grading

The grading criteria in choir class are designed for student success – if they put forth appropriate effort.

- ◆ Daily Work - 50% of marking period grade, based on this DAILY REHEARSAL RUBRIC
 - **4 points** – Student is on time to class and is ready to rehearse with required materials. Student is on task. Student shows leadership and professionalism by positively contributing to the achievement of rehearsal/curricular goals and helps other students to achieve as well.
 - **3 points** – Student is on time to class and ready to rehearse with required materials. Student is generally on task and positively contributing to the achievement of rehearsal/curricular goals. Student tries to exhibit professional behavior.
 - **2 points** – Student is on time to class but may not be ready to rehearse or may be missing required materials. Student is generally on task but is unprofessional at times and distracts from the goals of the rehearsal/curriculum.
 - **1 point** – Student is late to class and unexcused.
 - **0 points** – Student is generally off task and disconnected from the rehearsal process. Student is unprofessional and behavior is often inappropriate and generally disrupts the goals of rehearsal/curriculum. Student is not achieving rehearsal or curricular goals. Student is not present in class and is unexcused.
- ◆ “Paper” Points: Sight Singing & Theory – 25% of marking period grade -- This category includes class work, homework, and quizzes in theory, sightsinging, ear training, and other material covered in class. Assignments must be turned in on time. Each day late will result in a 25% reduction in earned points. If a student misses school due to illness or emergency it is the student’s responsibility to make arrangements with the teacher to make up work missed within 2 days of their return to school.
- Performances & Extra rehearsals – 25% -- Each public performance is worth 50 points, Extra rehearsal 20 points, based upon this **PERFORMANCE/EXTRA-REHEARSAL RUBRIC:**
 - **50/20 points** – Ready to warm up at call time, in complete uniform, follows professional standards of conduct for rehearsal and performance
 - **45/15 points** - Ready to warm up at call time, uniform is not complete or worn incorrectly, student tries to follow professional standards
 - **40/10 points** – Un-excused tardy for warm up, demonstration of leadership, musicianship and focus is poor and uneven
 - **35/5 points** – Un-excused tardy for warm up, uniform not complete or worn incorrectly, unprofessional behavior
 - **0 points** – Behavior and/or appearance requires removal from performance, violation of the code of conduct for MPS or exhibits unprofessional standards, un-excused absence.
- Semester Grades are figured as 40% for each of 2 marking periods and 20% exam.
- Grading Scale:

94-100% -- A	77-79% -- C+	60-62% -- D-
90-93% -- A-	73-76% -- C	below 60% -- E
87-89% -- B+	70-72% -- C-	
83-86% -- B	67-69% -- D+	
80-82% -- B-	63-66% -- D	

Daily Attendance

Attendance at daily school rehearsals is the basis for the music curriculum at Dow High School. It is in rehearsal that the goals and benchmarks of the program are delivered and achieved. Concert performance is the proof that the students have successfully achieved the performance objectives for a

particular marking period. Academic achievement in music and vocal technique are taught and evaluated in the classroom. Because daily attendance is essential in a lab class each student will abide by the following attendance policy.

1. Regular attendance is expected of all choir members. Unexcused absence will result in loss of daily rehearsal points and reduction of the marking period grade. If daily attendance becomes a problem, a student may lose credit as per the Midland Public Schools Attendance Policy. (See Dow High handbook.
2. Tardiness will be handled as per the Dow High tardy policy.
3. Tests, quizzes, and daily assignments will be made up in a timely manner. It is the students' responsibility to make an appointment for make-up tests. Any missing assignment not made up within a week will be counted as 0 points.

Public Performances

The success of any team depends upon the participation of its members. In a musical performing ensemble all the members are starters. There are no bench sitters in this type of teamwork. The Midland Public Schools vocal music curriculum includes public performances as a very important component of the program. These performances are a reflection of the work we do every day in class.

- **Performance Attendance: Each member of the choir will be expected to attend all choir performances.**
- MPS Performance/Absence guidelines state that *the only excused absences from a pre-scheduled extra rehearsal or a performance are for student illness or serious family emergency.* Too much homework, jobs, sports events, clubs, or lack of transportation are NOT excused absences.

Because an unscheduled performance or unforeseen family commitment are a reality in the students' lives, the Midland Public High Schools and administrators have agreed upon the following in addition to the above guidelines.

1. A choir member *may possibly* be excused from a performance for certain school and family obligations (weddings, special family events). The student is responsible for completing a pre-excuse form (found in the back of the choir room), getting a parent signature, and turning the form in to the director. Pre-excuse forms must be received at least one week in advance of the performance. The student will be required to complete a make-up assignment for the excused absence. Unexcused absences cannot be made up and the credit will be lost. (Filling out the paperwork does not necessarily excuse the absence. For example, a baby-sitting job would not be an excused absence.)
2. Students are awarded points for participation in extra rehearsals and performance. See grading criteria to calculate the impact of a missed performance on the student's grade.

Please see the attached schedule for performance dates.

Dow High Choir Calendar 2013-14

October 30 – Call time 6:30 p.m. – Performance 7:30 p.m. – Dow High Choirs – Location TBD

December 19 – Call time for students 6:00 p.m. -- Concert 7:00 p.m. – All Jefferson Choirs (w/Woodcrest & Dow High Choruses) – Holiday Concert -- Central Auditorium.

February 1 – all day – optional -- MSVMA District Solo & Ensemble Festival – Location TBD

April 12 – MCFTA – attend Midland Symphony Orchestra & Center Stage Chorale performance of Beethoven Symphony #9 – 8:00 p.m. (Optional. More details to come.)

April 16 – MCFTA – 7:30 a.m. – Fourth Grade Music Celebration. School-excused absence.

April 2014 – **Date TBD** – Choral Clinic & Festival

April 2014 – **Date TBD** – MPS Choral Showcase Concert – Central Auditorium

May 21 – Central Auditorium – Call time 6:30 p.m. – Concert 7:30 p.m. – Dow High Choirs in Concert

June 5 – Call time for students 6:00 p.m. -- Concert 7:00 p.m. – Dow Choirs (w/Woodcrest & Jefferson Choruses) -- Pops Concert – Location TBD – Optional for Seniors

Please note: This schedule is subject to change.
If changes do occur, all efforts will be made to give ample notice to families.

Volunteer!!!

Student Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Names: _____

Please check any of the following for which you would be willing to help supervise students/chaperone. Feel free to check more than one! You will be contacted closer to the time of the event to confirm your assistance. Please also check the Dow High Music Parents form to volunteer to help with the activities of the organization that is so essential to the health of our musical groups.

Thanks in advance for all you do to support our singers!

If you are not already BRAVO certified, please visit the MPS website and get registered ASAP. **All MPS volunteers who work with students must be BRAVO certified.** For more information: <http://www.mps.k12.mi.us/bravo>

_____ Autumn Concert – Location TBD -- October 30 – Call time 6:30 Performance 7:30

_____ Holiday Concert – Central Auditorium – December 19 – Call time 6:00, Performance 7:00

_____ MPS Choral Clinic & Festival – MCFTA -- April Date TBD – ALL DAY

_____ MPS Choral Showcase – Central Auditorium – March/April Date TBD – Call time 6:00, Performance 7:00

_____ Spring Concert – Central Auditorium -- May 21 – Call time 6:30 Performance 7:30

_____ Summer Pops Concert – June 5 – Call time 6:00 Performance 7:00