

2023-24

Concert Choir

Mr. Charles Hopta, Director

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Office: Music Office (in the Music Hallway, two doors down from the Band Room)

WELCOME to the North Hunterdon High School **Concert Choir**! Whether you are new to the high school choral experience, a seasoned veteran, or somewhere in between, being a member of this ensemble will heighten your knowledge and enhance your love of choral music, as well as your skill in making it.

Vocal Technique

While learning to make gorgeous music, you need to learn *how to use your instrument* (your voice) correctly. Singing is a learned activity! We will explore what you need to know in order to use your instrument to the fullest.

Important Dates (so far)

Mon., 9/18, 6:30pm ~ New Student Welcome in Cafe B (for all **new** Department members)

Mon., 12/11, 6-8pm ~ combined rehearsal in the Theatre (graded)

Thurs., 12/14, 7:00pm (call time earlier) ~ Winter Concert II (graded performance)

Thurs., 12/21, during school ~ Winter Concert Assembly (graded performance)

Wed., 3/20, 7-9:45pm ~ Prism Dress Rehearsal (graded)

Thurs., 3/21, 8:00pm (call time 7:30) ~ 20th annual Prism Concert (graded performance)

Mon., 5/6, 6-8pm ~ combined rehearsal in the Theatre (graded)

Thurs., 5/9, 7:00pm (call time earlier) ~ Spring Concert I (graded performance)

SPECIAL NOTE: You are expected to check your email **DAILY** for updates, changes, information, requests from the Directors, etc. A lot of things happen throughout the school year in this Department, and you are now a member! That is exciting, but it can also be overwhelming *if you choose to become unorganized*. Do not allow yourself to fall behind. And if you do, catch up quickly! Checking email often is the first step.

Choral Music Repertoire

Your knowledge of choral music repertoire and composers will be expanded in this class. We will learn the origins, history, and random facts about the pieces of music and composers with which we experiment. In order to fully express the mood of a piece, it helps to understand where the author was coming from when they wrote it.

Elements of Music

In order to most effectively and efficiently learn your pieces, you must read and understand the notes, rhythms, and musical symbols on every page. You will learn all these things as we go. You will not simply listen to the music and copy it with your own voices; you will learn to *read* it and produce it yourselves. You will be music 'literate', and you will be vocal musicians, not *just* singers.

Sight Reading

This skill is necessary for the most efficient and effective learning of choral music. We accomplish so much when everyone commits to developing a basic understanding of it. It is the best way to be musically independent in the classroom!

Vocal Health

If you have laryngitis, or cannot sing for any reason, please continue to perform all the duties you normally would, but take the vocalising element out of them. You should still be stretching, marking your music, and even mouthing vowel sounds in order to keep your mind and your muscle memory engaged, while not doing any actual phonation (vocal noise-making). Over the course of the year, we will go over the things each singer needs to do in order to stay in excellent vocal health.

Performances

We will participate in one evening Winter Concert (December), one daytime Winter Concert Assembly, and one evening Spring Concert (May), as well as the Department-wide annual Prism Concert in the spring. We may be called on to sing in other concerts or at other events over the course of the year, but those are currently TBA. A large part of your grade is participation in concerts and any other performances in which the ensemble sings (all performances are graded, unless stated otherwise). See the Music Department Grading Policy for details.

Concert Attire

Students will purchase or rent concert attire through the Music Department, so as to display a uniform aesthetic during performances. Detailed instructions will become available shortly! (*If you already own attire from a previous year and it still fits, no action is needed on your part.*)

Exams

There may be a few singing exams, including ones where you will sing by yourself and ones where you may sing within a group. *Please do not stress over these!* We will go over the materials and requirements extensively.

Leadership Positions

Concert Choir will feature appointed Section Leaders, and members of all choirs will have the opportunity to nominate and elect one Choir President and one Choir Vice President. Details about this process will be discussed later, but here are the basics:

Section Leaders

There will be one Section Leader per voice part. These will be appointed by Mrs. C and/or Mr. Hopta, and will be chosen on the basis of attendance record, dedication, musical capabilities, connection with others, and confidence within the choral rehearsal. We trust these four people to be our eyes and ears in rehearsal, and to help us with whatever needs to be done for the ensemble over the course of the year.

Choir President

We will elect a Choir President and VP. Since these two people will represent ALL NHHS choir members, the positions will be voted on by members of *all* choral ensembles after the first few weeks (to give people a chance to get acquainted). Choir President must be a **senior**, and may be called upon over the course of the year to do the following:

- ~ Handle special projects
- ~ Organize the designing and ordering of Choir T-Shirts
- ~ Help organize items in the Department
- ~ Take on fundraising and special projects (and delegate)
- ~ Be our “right hand person”
- ~ Be well-liked and respected within the Department
- ~ Preferably this person has experience with more than just one choir, so they understand the needs of the different ensemble members

Choir Vice President

Choir Vice President may be a **junior** or a **senior**, and may be called upon over the course of the year to do the following:

- ~ Be a general assistant to the Directors and, if need be, to the President
- ~ Help organize and find items in the Department
- ~ Preferably this person has some free time in their day, during which they are available to be in the Choir Closet organizing some things for the Directors

- ~ Take on fundraising and special projects (and delegate)
- ~ Preferably this person has experience with more than just one choir
- ~ Bring any choral concerns to the Directors and/or the President

Details on how to apply and campaign for these positions will become available shortly!

Absences/Promptness

If you are absent, please email us or see us the next day to check on what you missed, *and check our websites / Google Classrooms*. There may have been notes or handouts that you will need for success. When you are here, we expect you to be in the room by the time the bell rings. *Timeliness makes for a very effective rehearsal.*

Music/Folders

You will be given black, bound music **folders that live at school** in the Choir Room (where we rehearse). If you wish, you may take your **sheet music** home (**not** your folder) with you to practice or memorize (most pieces will need to be memorized). However, if you lose your music, you will pay the price with your grade, and possibly owe money for it. Music can be expensive, so it is extremely important to know where yours is at all times. We will also frequently ask you to make certain markings in your music to help you learn and perform well. A rule for every musician: **NEVER write on music in anything but PENCIL!**

Being Prepared

As a Concert Choir member, you are expected to be prepared with your folder (which lives in its numbered slot in the Choir Room), sheet music, scrap paper, a pencil, and the proper attitude for the tasks at hand. Please bring your respect, positivity, enthusiasm, and hard work ethic with you every day. You may be surprised at the difference an attitude shift can make...

Music making is our mission in Concert Choir. Please do your eating (except in special cases where you have been given permission), gum chewing, grooming, homework, cell phone/device usage (except during those occasions where your Director specifically allows it), and everything else on your own time (except drinking water – you may and absolutely should drink water).

Welcome! Enjoy! =)