

Wheaton Christian Grammar School

8th Grade
Concert Choir
Handbook

2009-2010

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Concert Choir Handbook

September 1, 2009

Dear Choir Members and Parents,

I welcome each of you to our new 8th Grade 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.

8th Grade Concert Choir (CC) will meet from 2:35-3:17 p.m. every Monday and Tuesday 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 eighth grade performing group.

Please read through the following information very carefully. Students and their parents must turn in the signed sheet by Tuesday, September 8.

I'm looking forward to a great year together!

Sincerely,

Mr. David Wright

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, 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 oneness, 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. 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. Enter the music room in a quiet, courteous, and orderly manner.
2. Quickly get your music and take your seat.
3. A student is considered late to class if they are not in their seat, **ready to sing by 2:35 p.m.**
4. Concert attention will be observed when the director begins warm-ups and no further talking will be permitted.
5. During rehearsal, music must be out and opened to the proper page.
6. Choir members will have the following at every rehearsal:
 - a. ALL MUSIC
 - b. PENCIL (you supply your own)
7. All school books, backpacks and equipment not needed for the choir rehearsal should not be carried to rehearsal.
8. Good posture is of great importance at all times.
9. When class is over, quietly remain in your seat until you are dismissed.
10. Absolutely **no gum**, food, or drink (water bottles are allowed and encouraged) in the choir rehearsal.
11. 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.

- Students who do not attend concerts (with the exception of family emergencies or illness) will receive a maximum grade of “C” for that quarter.
12. Respect the rights, safety, and property of others.
 13. Accept responsibility for yourself and your learning.

Grades/Points

Grades are based on an average of preparation, performance, and progress that includes participation/attendance at rehearsals and concerts. Students should plan on bringing music home occasionally to learn parts and memorize words. Homework will consist of memorizing music for concerts, learning music reading skills, and learning to identify musical terms and markings. Singing tests will be given occasionally to assess a student’s improvement. In addition to these activities students may also earn extra points by doing the following:

Concerts/Recitals – Students may attend concerts or recitals to earn points. Concerts that you attend must be performed with live music and musicians.
20 points per event

Private Lessons – Students will receive points for taking private voice lessons from an approved teacher. See Mr. Wright for information concerning private vocal teachers.
30 points per lesson

Recitals – Students who participate in recitals with their private teacher will earn points.
30 points per event

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.
75 points per event

Concert Set-up/Take-down – Earn extra points by helping Mr. Wright set-up and/or take-down before and after a concert. A minimum of one hour of work is required for points.
50 points per hour

Concert Uniforms

Each student is required to purchase a uniform for performances. The mandatory concert dress code is:

Boys: White, oxford cloth, long-sleeve dress shirt with a buttoned-down collar (may be purchased through Lands End – see attached order information), a black tie (must be purchased through WCGS to insure uniformity), black dress slacks, black belt, black socks, and black dress shoes.

Girls: White blouse with three-quarter-length sleeve (must be purchased through Lands End – see attached order information), black skirt (knee length or longer) OR black dress pants, and black, low-heel dress shoes.

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 Tuesdays, from 2:35-3:17 p.m. Always 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. As already mentioned, attendance and punctuality are parts of your grading period average.

Choir Auditions

Admittance to 8th Grade Concert Choir is by audition only. Students will sign-up for an audition time in small groups (3-4). Part assignments are done to benefit the group and create a balanced choral sound, not necessarily based on individual vocal ranges.

Music Boosters Parent Organization

We are interested in starting a Music Boosters Parent Organization this year at WCGS. The purpose of this organization is to help encourage and promote music at our school. We are also looking for ways to raise money in order to provide equipment for our vocal and instrumental music groups that is not covered in our normal operating budgets. If you are interested in helping or taking a leadership role in this organization, please contact Mr. Wright at 668-1385, ext. 257, or email at dwright@wheatonchristian.org as soon as possible.

Concerts and Important dates

The concerts and events 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. These events are to be viewed as a final exam. Failure to attend any of these events will cause a **two letter drop** in the student's quarter grade.

Choir Auditions.....August 26-28, 2009
Music Department Kick-off Event.....7:00 p.m., Tuesday, September 29, 2009
Choral Concert 7:00 p.m., Thursday, November 5, 2009
Grandparents' Day(during school day) Tuesday, November 24, 2009
Yorktown Christmas Concert (during school day) Tuesday, December 15, 2009
Rockford Ministry Tour.....March 5-6, 2010
Spring Jazz Concert at WCGS.....7:00 p.m., Thursday, May 13, 2010
Graduation (8th grade only)..... 7:00p.m., Tuesday, June 1, 2010

All concerts are to be held at WCGS unless noted otherwise.

In addition to the above concerts, students may **choose** to be involved in the following event for extra credit:

IGSMA Solo and Ensemble Contest.....Saturday, February 13, 2010

Concert Choir Commitment Form

I have read the preceding information. I understand and accept the commitment and expectations of becoming a member of Concert Choir.

Student's Signature

Parent's Signature

Please detach this form, sign and return to Mr. Wright by Tuesday, September 8.