



JENISON
CHOIRS

“Building Life Skills Through Choral Excellence”

Information, Policies, and Procedures

2019-2020
Handbook

Introduction

Welcome to the Jenison Vocal Music Program! You are a part of a widely respected music program that seeks to “build life skills through choral music excellence.” Two of the biggest character traits required for being a part of the choral program this year are dedication and commitment — from the team of students, parents, accompanists, conductors, and administrators. These traits prepare all of us for the busy and fun events ahead of us this year. Most importantly, we will learn from each other to create the best choir year possible!

This handbook is designed to outline, for the musicians and their families, the standards that are pertinent to our program. I am very glad to have the opportunity to work with you and you have chosen to be a part of the vocal music program here at Jenison Public Schools.

Expressivo,
Mr. Grant Carmichael

Choral Philosophy

Each rehearsal, semester, and school year, the teacher begins with a final destination in mind, so that the program can move in a meaningful direction. This year, I begin the handbook with my choral philosophy to create a meaningful direction for this upcoming school year.

The music classroom is constructed so every individual has a voice. Similar to a democracy, my job as the teacher is to provide opportunities for the students to use their voice, in both singing and thoughtful dialogue. Our daily rehearsals promote a sense of equality where each student’s musical ability is different, but every student has the opportunity to learn and grow. Every student is a necessary part of the choir and has a responsibility to the group.

Learning is a team effort. Teamwork in choir promotes interdependence, as everyone is working toward a common goal. The team encompasses the singers, the accompanist, and the conductor. All parties are held to the highest of standards of life skills, including self-confidence, leadership, hard work, and a positive attitude.

The choral program exists to nurture both the academic and emotional intelligence of each participant. Its educational goals are of the highest caliber. The curriculum includes music theory, music history, foreign languages, and multicultural perspectives. The study of music is an advanced field with a complex body of knowledge, and our classroom’s curriculum investigates the field thorough the choral music genre, nurturing the intelligence of each participating student.

Music can affect a student's mind, body, and heart. Cognitively, students must have the vocabulary to discuss and distinguish between concepts of theory, history, phrasing, and language. Physically, we sing and move throughout most of our rehearsals. Affectively, music has the power to evoke feelings and emotions that can be different between singers. What we do in choir overlaps with many other areas of culture and learning, and students will be encouraged to make connections throughout the year.

Music goes beyond the realm of intelligence; music has the ability to exalt one's human spirit. In other words, music has the ability to aide students in expanding the depth to which music makers think and feel. Through making music, we connect not only to other singers, but also to the composer, director, audience, and the context of the work. Music has the power to unite both the participant and the listener. Music can also be a tool that transcends language—the space between the words and the unknown.

The choral classroom exists to allow every individual a chance to succeed. Success is an excellent motivator. Success can be as simple as matching pitch with the person singing next to you or as complex as performing a close harmony piece with one singer per part. Success can also be related to broader skills like singing a solo in front of peers or overcoming performance anxiety. Successes like these build both competence and resiliency. In addition to performances, daily rehearsals are another space where students can experience success since students are constantly hearing their growth and progress.

Finally, the choral classroom exists to inspire joy and build life skills. Choral singing is a form of artistic expression, and thoughtful creation of this art may foster lifelong learning and appreciation of life itself.

Course Descriptions

Male Chorus & Treble Choir

These vocal groups are open to any Jenison High School student demonstrating the ability to sing a simple melody and interested in improving his or her vocal and musicianship skills. Meeting separately on a daily basis, Male Chorus and Treble Choir may perform jointly for concert and festival performances. Emphasis will be placed on growth in the following areas: basic vocal skills, music theory, rhythm and melody reading skills, and the responsibilities and disciplines necessary for participation in choir. Members may participate in Michigan School Vocal Music Association (MSVMA) choral festivals, and individuals may be chosen to participate in MSVMA solo and ensemble festivals and All-State Honors Choir auditions.

Chorale

Prerequisite: Male Chorus 1&2 or Treble Choir 1&2; admission by proficiency or audition. A more advanced choral group, Chorale places emphasis on performing outstanding choral literature and advancing musicianship skills. The Chorale represents Jenison High School in

various district, state, national, and invitational choral festivals and competitions, and also performs in all major concerts presented by the vocal music department. Individual members are encouraged to take lessons, participate in MSVMA solo and ensemble festivals, and possibly All-State Honors Choir auditions.

Advanced Women's Chorus

Prerequisite: Male Chorus 1&2 or Treble Choir 1&2; admission by proficiency or audition. Advanced Women's Chorus is offered to students who have demonstrated advanced vocal, sight-singing, and music learning skills. This select group will represent Jenison High School in various district, state, and national festivals and conventions and will perform at all regularly scheduled concerts presented by the vocal music department. There may be additional performances for special community functions or other events. Individuals are highly encouraged to take private lessons and participate in solo and ensemble festivals.

Chamber Singers 1&2

Prerequisite: Male Chorus 1&2 or Treble Choir 1&2; admission by proficiency or audition. This highly select vocal ensemble studies and performs a wide variety of styles of music: classical, popular, and multi-cultural. Advanced musicianship skills are developed through rigorous training in sight singing, theory, and musical analysis. The Chamber Singers represent Jenison High School in various district, state, national, and invitational choral ensemble festivals and conventions, and they also perform on all major concerts presented by the vocal music department. Individual members are highly encouraged to take private voice lessons and participate in solo and ensemble festivals. Members may also be chosen to audition for All-State Honors Choir.

Required Texts and Materials

- ◆ A positive attitude and willingness to try new things
- ◆ Pencil
- ◆ Planner (either paper or electronic)
- ◆ Music
- ◆ Sight Singing Book
- ◆ Folder

Music, sight singing books, and a folder will be loaned to each student. The student is responsible for keeping and returning all of these items in good condition. Each piece of music costs between \$1-3. Folders are \$8. Proper care of music is required or the average cost of music will be charged to the student for repair. Any markings must be made in pencil only. Students will also be charged for lost folders or music.

These items are required at every rehearsal. Failure to bring these items will result in a loss of daily points.

Daily Requirements

Students are required to maintain a sense of etiquette in the classroom and while participating in choral activities. The following is a list of responsibilities to which students are expected to adhere:

Do's

- Be respectful of directors, accompanists, and other choir members.
- Put forth constant energy/effort.
- Bring pencil, music, and folder and is seated ready for roll when class begins (1 minute after bell)
- Bring any other assignment that may be due (1 minute after bell)
- Be in assigned position and says attendance number on time (1 minute after bell)
- Use assigned seat/place on risers.
- Bring assignment notebook or electronic version daily.
- Sing to the best of your ability.
- Use correct posture.
- Turn in assignments on time.
- Direct your attention to the director/adults in the room.
- Participate in rehearsal discussions to the best of your ability.
- Work toward building an understanding of music reading skills and theory.

Dont's:

- No put-downs allowed.
- No gum chewing, or candy (this is mostly for your safety!)
- Electronic devices may not be used during rehearsals. They may only be used for expressly stated purposes given by the director on such occasions such as calendar checks, google classroom usage, or quick research. Any misuse of a device will result in it's confiscation and delivery to the office for the remainder of the day.
- The pianos and audio/visual equipment are off limits for all students unless given specific permission.

Please Note: Regular attendance and active participation are important because they directly relate to your comprehension of material; ability to participate; performance on quizzes, exercises, and assignments; and ultimately, your grade. If you should miss a class, it is your responsibility to check with a trustworthy and reliable friend on anything you may have missed and contact me to discuss any missed assignments. If you know you are going to miss a class, it is your responsibility to complete the work before it is due.

Choral Program Policies and Responsibilities

In addition to daily requirements, students are expected to maintain a high standard of decorum while participating in choral activities. Here are some guidelines:

Policies

- Students are expected to check their email accounts that receive school and choir information regularly. Any information regarding classroom announcements, rehearsals, performance opportunities, and concert recordings will be sent electronically.
- Chewing gum is not permitted during any rehearsal or concert. Candy, food, or beverages are also not permitted.
- Students must arrive between 5-15 minutes earlier than a call time to be able to check-in.
- The director reserves the right to schedule additional rehearsals after school or in the evenings as needed. Students will be notified in advance; any absences must be cleared through the director **in writing** at least *two weeks in advance* prior to the rehearsal.
- Please remember that on concert day, we rehearse in the performance hall. It is imperative that students attend, so please try not to schedule doctor/dentist/job shadowing appointments on concert days. Jenison High School policy states that if students miss the rehearsal on a performance day, they will not be allowed to perform that evening. **A student will, however, be allowed to make up the missed performance within two weeks of the performance date.**
- Academic standing is of extreme importance, especially as students may be called from classes for extra performances. Students are expected to communicate with teachers when work is needed in advance or absences need to be approved.

Concert Behavior and Etiquette

- Concert attendance is mandatory for all choir members; if missed, students' grades will be reflected accordingly. Absences may be excused or unexcused. See below for more information on absences.
- When participating in any choral event, students represent our district, school, ensemble, their families and themselves. Mature behavior is required of all JPS Choir members.
- Students are expected to be positive supporters of JPS ensembles as well as other performers. Comments in a venue must be restricted to positive thoughts only. Any negative or critical opinions must be saved for a different location.
- Full uniform required
- Best focus and behavior on and off the risers
- Use assigned seating and standing position

- No cellphone/digital device use of any kind during any concert
- Concert Absences and Make-ups**
 - Babysitting, work, sports practices and games, retreats, rehearsals for other activities, and your birthday are all examples of **unexcused absences**.
 - Occasionally, there may be another school-related event or conflict that keeps you from attending a concert. Please let Mr. Carmichael know immediately when a situation develops. Early communication is necessary to determine whether the absence will be excused or unexcused. Serious illness or a death in the family are examples of **excused absences**. Please submit an emailed or written excuse from the parent to Mr. Carmichael when the student returns to school.
 - Since a performance is considered to be a major exam, students who have excused absences from performances have, under normal circumstances, two weeks to make up the missed work and submit the written excuse. **It is the student's responsibility to schedule a concert make-up session.** This make-up work may include, but is not limited to, singing the student's voice part along with the concert recording.

Inclusion Statement

The Jenison Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, sex, marital status, or disability. The choir program adheres to those guidelines. Alternative viewpoints are welcome in the classroom. However, statements that are deemed racist, sexist, homophobic, classist, or otherwise discriminatory toward others in the class will not be tolerated.

Disabilities

Any student who feels s/he may need an academic accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me to discuss your specific needs. Please also consult with your counselor(s) and/or parents to coordinate reasonable accommodations.

Concert Attire

Our choral department takes pride in our motto: "Building Life Skills Through Choral Excellence." How you present yourself in the working world can be the deciding factor between getting or not getting a job or promotion. It's amazing to see and hear the effect on students when they are in concert attire--they are more focused mentally, and they show it! Being in complete concert attire helps us to deliver the message that our Jenison community

is a class act. Please read the following information carefully, and be prepared for adherence. Our concert attire is a visual representation of the cohesiveness and uniformity of our ensembles. To be cohesive and uniform means we strive to look exactly alike. For example, one young lady without her necklace or someone with a hair color that is not a natural color stands out on stage and works against the uniform appearance of our group. Please be sure your uniform is clean, hung properly between performances, and not wrinkled when you come to a performance. Paying attention to these details truly matters to every student in the group. Students may use money from their choir account to pay for uniform costs. Please contact Mr. Carmichael if you need financial assistance.

In a few cases, concerts may be performed without formal uniform. In these cases the dress code will be written on the concert memo that students will receive in class. **Any concert not performed in formal uniforms will be announced prior to the concert. Students' attire must follow the school dress code.** The school's dress code can be found in the high school handbook.

All students: Hair color must be within the general spectrum of "natural" colors (no neon, purple, etc.). If in doubt, please check with Mr. Carmichael far ahead enough to adjust if necessary. Students will not be allowed to perform if their hair color or style defeats the purpose of the choir uniform. Hair must be secured out of the face so the audience can clearly see your eyes.

Gentlemen

- Shirt:** White, pressed, long-sleeved tuxedo shirt.
- Studs and cufflinks**
- Tux Pants, Jacket, Bowties, and Vests** (vests for only Chorale and Chambers Men) issued each fall (those in Band and Orchestra have the same tux style and will need to rent from the choir). *Any item that is lost or returned in damaged condition will be paid for by the student/parent.*
- Black tux shoes and black dress socks** (No sport socks!)
- No belt needed with adjustable tux pants. No suspenders, please.
- You may not wear jewelry such as necklaces, bracelets and watches, but may wear post earrings only. Please, no facial piercings.

Ladies

- Female Choir members in Treble Choir, Chorale, and Advanced Women's Chorus wear the specified **black floor length gown** and **shoes** which they purchased in their first year of High School Choir. Chamber Singers ladies rent a gown purchased by JPS and/or the Jenison Choir Boosters.
- One pair of **black knee-high nylons** (provided by the student) worn to the performance.
- Accessories:** You may not wear jewelry such as necklaces, bracelets and watches, but may wear post earrings only. Please, no facial piercings.

- Make-up:** Please don't wear bright eye-shadow, glitter, or shiny lip gloss on concert night. You may only wear clear nail polish on concert night, unless you are also wearing black or silver gloves.
- Chamber Singers:** You have been issued a dress that belongs to the choir program: Dresses that are lost or returned in damaged condition will be paid for by the student/parent.

Grading

Assignment	Grade %	Point Value	Due date if any
Participation in daily rehearsals	70%	100 per 2 weeks	everyday
Concert attendance	25%	300 points per concert	See schedule
Written Exams	5%	variable	Scheduled in class with one week notice
Final (Sem. 1)	5%	100	January
Year-End Performance	10%	300	Scheduled May-June

Grading Scale

A	100-94	B-	82-80	D+	69-67
A-	93-90	C+	79-77	D	66-63
B+	89-87	C	76-73	D-	62-60
B	86-83	C-	72-70	E	59 and below

Grade A requirements:

- Attention is focused on the director during rehearsal.
- Exhibits a high level of energy.
- Clearly strives for excellence.
- Work ethic is strong.
- Always brings materials to class.
- Sight-singing skills are evident and continuing to develop.
- Tone is produced to the best of the student's ability.
- Posture is tall.
- Test, quiz, and homework scores are high.
- Keeps track of and attends all performances/extra rehearsals each marking period.
- Uses assignment notebook (TC & MC).
- Turns in forms and completes homework on time.
- Exhibits appropriate, mature conduct at all times.
- Respects school and other people's property.
- Participates in class discussion.
- Does not socialize during rehearsal, nor distract others.
- Does not chew gum, or have food, candy, pop, etc. in class.

Note: Choir is a group effort and the majority of the work we do is in class. In most other classes, student behavior and achievement really only affects the individual grade of the student. In choir, everything a student does has an impact on the total product of ALL the students in the choir. On concert day, there is much at stake as we make our final preparations for the performance. Therefore, the rehearsal technique grade carries more weight on concert days.

Extra credit: Students have numerous opportunities to earn extra credit points (up to 150 per semester) and should talk to Mr. Carmichael for more details.

Further Training & Voice Lessons

Students are strongly encouraged to participate in both private and group voice lessons to develop and enhance personal vocal skills. We have two qualified teachers, Karen Ambs and Melissa Crosby, who teach during the school day in the voice lesson rooms near the choir room. Students may opt to take voice lessons from these teachers during their choir hour or a free period. Lessons are 25-30 minutes, once-per-week, and more information will be given during the first week of school. Students who take private lessons will also have the opportunity to compete in district and state solo and ensemble festival. Furthermore, students will be evaluated at the beginning and ending of each marking period to assess their growth and progress.

Choral Awards

Certain students in the choral program will give much time and aspire to great ability levels. To celebrate these achievements and students' contributions to choral excellence, the choir program will be featured at the high school awards ceremony in May. Awards will vary based on student input, director and accompanist discretion. An anonymous donor has also contributed a scholarship for two graduating seniors called the "Unsung Hero Scholarship." The recipient of this award is recognized for their diligence and contributions to their choirs even if they are not the leading vocal talent in their group. Additionally, seniors in the program are recognized for their leadership throughout the school year at the Spring Choral Concert.

Choral Boosters

The choral department is proud to have an established and supportive booster club. This organization is necessary to keep our program strong and to support our ensembles financially and logistically, so parents are urged to consider joining. At the very least, please consider coming to our upcoming meeting in September. Members who attend these meetings have direct input on their child's choral program. Topics at meetings include

volunteer needs, upcoming choral tours, fundraising, updates from the directors and much more. Meeting dates, times and places are listed on the schedule of choral dates for the year.

Choir Admin. and Student Accounts

The Jenison Choir Program is using Charms to help the directors administrate many of the day-to-day aspects of our program. This online product will make it possible for you to check student account balance, get information on upcoming events, volunteer to help with the different choir activities, make payments online and more! We will also be using other elements of Charms to communicate with all students and parents this year. If you have a Charms account with orchestra or band already, you and your student still needs to follow the process below to finalize their choir Charms account.



Please follow *each* step below:

1. Visit jenisonchoirs.org and you will see a link for Charms. Click this link and login with your student number to check your account and other payment information.
2. Log into the Charms website using your child's student number. (Found in PowerSchool. This is also the number that will be located on the inside cover of your student's assignment notebook and also their lunch account number)
3. You can choose to change your account password, or you can skip this step.
4. Click on the "PERSONAL INFORMATION" tab.
5. Enter in your *student's* name, *student's* cell phone number and carrier (if they have one), and *student's* email (school email). This allows the directors to email or text important reminders to your student. The other fields are optional.
6. ***Click on the blue button labeled "Add New Adult" if you do not see your name on a tab at the left of the screen. You should do this step for every adult that you would like to receive important choir information and updates. Please do not forget this step.*** Enter name, cell phone number and carrier, relation, and email. This allows the director to email concert and program information, and also text you in the rare case of weather cancellations. If parents' names are listed on the left tabs, then click on those tabs to ensure that the information listed is correct.
7. Click on the green button in the upper right-hand corner labeled "Update" and you're finished! Click on the red button in the upper left-hand corner to "EXIT CHARMS"

Schedule and forms

See next page for calendar and forms. Also, stay connected with our website's calendar!

CHOIR IMPORTANT DATES

MC=Male Chorus
TC=TREBLE CHOIR
CH=CHORALE

AWC=Advanced Women's Chorus
CS=CHAMBER SINGERS

Date	Time	Event	Groups Involved	Place
August 23-25, 2019	9:00am Friday to 3pm Sunday	Chamber Singers Retreat	CS	Grace Adventures
August 22, 2019	During choir hour	Uniform Fittings - See uniform section for more details	ALL	choir room
August 28, 2019	During choir hour	Medical Form and Choir Contract Due	ALL	choir room
September 2019		Entertainment Book Fundraiser	ALL	
September 9, 2019	7:00pm	Choir Boosters Meeting	Parents	choir room
September 14, 2019	9-8pm	AWC Retreat	AWC	Choir room
September 20, 2019	7:00pm	Homecoming Game. Choirs and alumni sing Nat. Anthem	CH, AWC, CS,	football field
October 3-4, 2019	During choir hour	Final Dress Fitting Date	TC	choir room
October 9, 2019	During choir hour	Choir Pictures in Uniform	MC <u>ONLY</u>	JCA
October 10, 2019	During choir hour	Choir Pictures in Uniform	TC, CH, AWC, CS,	JCA
October 17, 2019	8:00pm	Fall Concert	CH, AWC, CS,	JCA
October 18, 2019	7:00am	Combined Rehearsal	TC	JCA
October 29, 2019	2:45-7pm	TC Performance and Dinner	TC	Retirement home
November, 2019		Nut Sale Fundraiser	ALL	choir room
November 4, 2019	2:45-7pm	MC Performance and Dinner	MC	Retirement home
November 11, 2019	7:00pm	Choir Boosters Meeting	Parents	choir room
November 26, 2019	8:15am - 2:43pm	Elementary Tour	MC	Elementary
December 2, 2019	3:00-4:30pm	TC & MC Combined Rehearsal	TC, MC	choir room
December 3, 2019	2:00pm	Concert for Sandy Hill Elementary	CS	SH Gym
December 4, 2019	2:00pm	Concert for Bursley Elementary	CS	BU Gym
December 5, 2019	2:00pm	Concert for Rosewood Elementary	CS	RO Gym
December 6, 2018	3:00-4:30pm	Rehearsal with Band/ Orchestras	CH, AWC, CS,	choir room
December 6, 2019	TBA	Caroling for New Amsterdam Village Christmas Dinner	CS,	GUM Church

Date	Time	Event	Groups Involved	Place
December 9, 2019	7am	Choral Christmas Collage Reh.	TC	JCA
December 9, 2019	3:00 - 4:30pm	Choral Christmas Collage Reh.	MC, TC	JCA
December 10, 2019	1:00pm and 7:00pm	Choral Christmas Collage	MC, TC	JCA
December 13, 2019	7:30pm	Combined HS Christmas Concert	CH, AWC, CS,	JCA
February 2020	During choir	Cheese and Sausage Fundraiser	ALL	choir room
February 1, 2020	8am-5pm	10-12 Solo and Ensemble Festival	Any interested	GVSU
February 4, 2020	3:00 - 4:30pm	Vocal Blast Rehearsal	CS	JCA
February 4, 2020	TBA	Vocal Blast	CS	JCA
February 7, 2020	5:30pm	Pink Out Assembly and Game. Choir sings Nat. Anthem	CS	HS Gym
February 10, 2020	7:00pm	Choir Boosters Meeting	Parents	choir room
February 10, 2020	TBA	Choral Festival	AWC & CH	GrandvilleHS
February 11, 2020	TBA	Choral Festival	CS	CaledoniaHS
March 3, 2020	TBA	Choral Festival	TC	GrandvilleHS
March 9-13, 2020	TBA	Audition Week for 20-21 Choirs	ALL	choir room
April 13, 2020	7:00pm	Choir Boosters Meeting	Parents	choir room
April 23, 2019	3 - 4:00pm	Choir Clinic Day	MC	JCA
May 2, 2020	7:30am-4:30pm	7-9 Solo and Ensemble Festival	Any interested	CrestwoodMS
May 3, 2020	7:30pm	JH Spring Concert	MC	JCA
May 7, 2020	3:00-9:00pm	Club Night Rehearsal	CS	JCA Black Box
May 8, 2020	8:00pm	Club Night	CS	JCA Black Box
May 13, 2020	7:30pm	Spring Concert	ALL	JCA
May 17, 2020	TBA	Baccalaureate	CS	
May 28, 2020	Sound check 2:55-4pm Performance 6:30-7:30	Comencement	ALL	
May 29, 2020	2:43-5:00pm	Community Performance	MC	TBD

Policy reminder (located in the handbook)

Per music department policy “failure to inform the director of an absence two weeks or more before a concert will result in no credit for the concert.”

CHOIR CONTRACT

Student Name _____ Choir _____

Student Initials I have read the table of dates above and have reserved the days of the choir engagements on my calendar. I will report any concert conflicts to my director immediately.

Student Initials I have read and understand the contents of the Jenison HS Choir Handbook and agree to abide by the guidelines/policies.

Student Initials I understand the uniform policy and will make the necessary arrangements to be prepared for Picture Day on October 9th.

Student and/or Parent Initials I have logged into Charms and have updated my contact information.

Parent Initials I have read and will support my student in following the choral handbook and the high school handbook.

Student's Name

Student's Signature

Date: _____

Parent's Name

Parent's Signature

This form is due on Wednesday, August 28, 2019

Parental Consent for Participation/Medical Treatment

School Related Event: All Choir Related Events
Date of Event: 2018-18 School Year
Approximate Time of Departure: TBA
Approximate Time of Return: TBA
Method of Transportation: TBA

Student Name: _____ Birth Date: _____

Address: _____

Parent Phone: _____

Allergies/Medical Conditions: (All info shared on a need to know basis only):

I/we, being the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) do hereby grant permission for the activity as detailed above. I/we also grant permission for medical care, dental care, surgical care, or hospitalization to be provided if, in the opinion of a chaperone or medical personnel, it is deemed necessary.

It is also understood that the Jenison High School Discipline Policy, as detailed in the Jenison High School Handbook/Planner, is in force during every school sponsored activity. If you have any questions, or if you would like a copy of the Jenison High School Discipline Policy, please call the high school office, 457-3400.

Parent/Guardian Name: _____ Date: _____

Contact Numbers (home): _____ (work): _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Medical Insurance Coverage Information

Insurance Company: _____

Contract or I.D. Number _____

Family Physician: _____

Physician Telephone: _____

This form is due Wednesday, August 28.