
Charyl Stockwell Preparatory Academy

CHOIR HANDBOOK 2016-17

Mr. Jason Penner, Director of Choirs

Message from the Director

Welcome to the Charyl Stockwell Preparatory Academy Choir Program! You are embarking on a lifetime of musical enjoyment! It is my goal to excite my students about music and to provide them with meaningful music instruction in a positive and supportive learning environment. The more you invest of yourself, the more will be your reward.

This choir handbook will give you some sense of my goals and curriculum, my philosophy of grading for this course, and my expectations of each choir member. Parents and students are asked to read this entire handbook, discuss it, and keep it for reference for the entire school year. **Please take special notice of the sections dealing with concert attendance, grading, concert dress, and concert schedule.**

Please contact me, drop in, come to concerts, have conferences, and continue your interest in your child's growth--musical and otherwise! I look forward to meeting all of you and to help provide a positive and lasting experience in music.

Sincerely,

Jason Penner

CSPA Director of Bands & Choirs

jpenner@csaschool.org

(810)- 225- 9940 ext. 436

"Music has a way of finding the big, invisible moving pieces inside our hearts and souls and helps us figure out the position of things inside us" – Karl Paulnack

Classroom Expectations

The music classroom has three basic expectations: respect, accountability, and integrity.

- *Respect*—fellow students, Mr. Penner, the classroom, the belongings of others, school property, and yourself.
- *Accountability*—be responsible and take ownership of you own actions and choices, both good and bad—this also includes being on time and prepared for class, having music folder, turning in assignments on time, and ALWAYS bringing a pencil to every class period.
- *Integrity*—knowing the difference between right and wrong and acting accordingly.

In Addition:

- Arrive on time, be prepared
- Come in uniform, stay in uniform
- No food or gum in class
- Beverages: **water bottle only**
- Hall passes: students must have a pass the leave the classroom
 - See Pass Policy
- The uses of laptops/computers/tablets are at *MY* discretion. **NO CELL PHONES.**

*All CSPA policies apply.

Pass Policy

As a staff we realize that you may need to use the restroom at some points in time during the school day. We are sensitive to your needs. However, there are appropriate times for using the restroom. Appropriate times are passing time, during lunch, before school, and after school. Permission to use the restroom is only given during times of emergency. We expect you to come to class prepared and on time. Only one student is permitted to leave the classroom at a time and must take the class pass with them. Students must ask and receive a specific library pass to go to the CSPA library.

Attendance Policy

The unique nature of the choir class has, as part of the curriculum, performances outside of the schedule school day. The success of our organization and ensembles depends directly upon the full and complete participation of all of its members. Calendars are provided at the start of each school year and are updated and available in the classroom, Tuesday Times, Middle School Messenger, Courier, and district wide calendar. The performance expectations of the ensemble are outlined in the course description and choir handbook. It is reasonably expected that with this notice, as a member of the Charyl Stockwell Preparatory Academy Music Program, that you will attend every performance. Please do not schedule avoidable conflicts with performances. These include job commitments, baby-sitting, doctor and dentist appointments, senior pictures, etc. Choir is an academic class and is graded. Attendance will be taken at every rehearsal and performance. Although nothing can replace the absence of a performance, the student must see the choir director for an assignment that will replace the grade.

“To stop the flow of music would be like the stopping of time itself, incredible and inconceivable” – Aaron Copland

Materials

Please come to each class prepared with the following materials:

- Music Folder (provided)
- All passed out materials: music, theory packets, worksheets, etc.
- Pencil with eraser – please no pens!
- Water bottle (as needed)

Choral Music Program Overview

Middle School Concert Choir

This ensemble contains 1st through 3rd year middle school students. No previous experience is necessary to join this ensemble. We rehearse different genres of music, learn basic music theory, music history, and work diligently to incorporate and relate to the Middle School curriculum. Throughout the year this ensemble will give three evening concerts, perform at CSPA Volunteer Tea, special CSA performance, and other possible opportunities.

High School Chorale

This ensemble contains 9th – 12th grade students. Middle school choir experience is recommended but is not required. We rehearse different genres of music, add to our knowledge of music theory, aural skills, music history while working diligently to incorporate and relate to the High School curriculum. Other performance opportunity may include CSA board meetings, recruitment concerts, and special school sponsored events.

Grading Policy

We do not learn at the same rate, nor do we sing and read music with equal skills. However, your grade is within your control. You will be evaluated based on your class participation, sight-singing and music reading skill mastery, your ability to bring items to class, turning assignments in on time, and your attendance at performances. Your grade will be computed as follows:

Classroom Assessments - 10%

- Having music and pencil
- Group work
- Homework
- Personal Goal Setting & Reflective writing

Summative Assessments – 30%

- Practice Checks
- Musical knowledge assessments
- In-Class quizzes
- Other assessments as assigned

Written & Playing Summative Assessments – 40%

- In-class test
- Musical knowledge test
- Projects

Performance - 20%

- In a performing ensemble every person is important to contributing to our performance, therefore attendance at all CPSA Choir performances is expected of all choir students.

“Music Expresses that which cannot be said and on which is impossible to be silent” – Victor Hugo

Academic Integrity

In order to foster a healthy and appropriate atmosphere for learning, CSPA strives for its students to maintain certain standards of academic integrity. At CSPA, we strive for students to understand that they are in control of their own actions and behavior. In order to be effective students and life-long learners, it is imperative to hold high standards for success and academic honesty. Students should use their own abilities to complete assignments and projects, unless instructed to work collaboratively with classmates or outside individuals. Plagiarism, cheating, and dishonest behavior are not characteristic of a CSPA student. Steps toward this type of activity will result in academic consequences.

Academic Dishonesty

Copying another person's ideas, opinions, or theories is academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty is when a student uses another person's work and claims it as their own. The outcome of an offense will be the following:

1st offense – Redo the assignment (with proper citations if needed) or complete an alternate assignment for full credit. Parent/guardian, advisor, and administrator will be notified.

2nd offense – Zero credit, no opportunity to re-do and the parent/guardian, advisor, and administrator will be notified.

Academic dishonesty in any class will be considered the first offense. Any other offenses thereafter will result in a zero regardless of the class

Performance Attire Policy

All choir students will be required to wear their choir uniform to performances:

Girls

- White shirt or blouse (all white)
- Solid black dress pants or knee-length skirts
- Black dress flats (no heels or tennis shoes)
- Black socks (if needed)

Boys

- White long sleeve button down shirt (all white)
- Solid black dress pants
- Tie
- Black socks
- Black belt
- Black shoes (no tennis shoes)

Please understand I am not asking you to purchase new items, but to use the resources available to you so that our performing ensembles look professional and uniform. If you have any questions or concerns pertaining to the **Performance Attire Policy** please contact me via phone or email.

Curriculum Guide

Parents and students will find a list of learning goals for students in Charyl Stockwell Preparatory Academy Music Program. After completion of the CSPA Music Program students should be able to successfully:

Individual Goals

- Demonstrate the correct posture while singing.
- Form correct vowel formation.
- Produce characteristic & controlled sounds.
- Perform clean articulations to include; accents, staccato, legato and forte-piano.
- Perform solo works with minimal assistance from the director.
- Sing ostinatos, partner songs, and rounds.
- Sing from memory a varied repertoire of songs representing genres and styles from diverse cultures.

Ensemble (Group) Goals

- Explain and demonstrate, with the choir, the pyramid balance concept.
- Explain and demonstrate, with the choir, staggered breathing.
- Explain and demonstrate, with the choir, musical phrases.
- Perform the appropriate level of concert music with artistry and musical taste.
- Successfully sight-read an appropriate level of concert music.
- Perform music for the public with the choir.

Music Theory Goals

- Identify pitches in both treble and bass clef.
- Count, play, and identify by ear, common rhythmic figures including eighth-note/eighth-rest combinations, sixteenth-note/sixteenth-rest combinations, syncopated rhythms, rhythms involving ties, dotted rhythms, triplet figures, and cut-time figures.
- Define basic Italian, French, German and Latin terms and symbols found in music.
- Name the keys on the piano.
- Construct half-steps and whole-steps above or below any given pitch.
- Sing major & minor scales.
- Write and identify major key signatures.
- Identify any given pitch in any given key using numerals, solfege, or proper degree names.
- Identify (aurally and written) major, minor, and perfect intervals.

- Identify, analyze and understand music theory within a piece of music.
- Compose basic melodies with accompaniment.

Advanced Individual Goals

- Sing chromatic scale using solfege.
- Sing and understand basic swing rhythm.
- Sing harmonic and melodic minor scales using solfege
- Transpose and perform basic tunes up or down a whole step at sight.

Music Appreciation Goals

- Experience the performance of fine music by ensembles and soloists by attending live concerts and listening to recordings.

Citizenship Goals

- Exhibit personal pride, integrity, responsibility, commitment, dependability, a strong work ethic, and esprit de corps.
- Respect the abilities and efforts of others.

“If music be the food of love, play on” – William Shakespeare

Practice Practice Practice!

Tips for Practicing!

Daily practice time is essential for student success in choir. Daily practice time is homework for choir. The guidelines below will help to organize your practice time. Remember, practice time is to be spent practicing, not watching the clock 😊.

- Practice in the same place each day. Be sure there are no distractions.
- Begin with long tones. Concentrate on producing a pleasing sound. Think about your breathing. Produce a steady and controlled air stream. You should love your sound. It is yours and no one else's. No two musicians have the same tone. ***Always make sure that your tone is clear and beautiful.***
- Spend time on scales/solfege. Sing them slowly at first and then work for speed. Use class warm-ups and sight singing material. Work for accuracy and be sure to sing everything on the page.
- Practice in front of a mirror to check your posture, facial expressions, and posture.
- Practice your music. Work on the parts that you cannot sing. Practice them slowly at first and then increase the speed. Work one measure at a time for difficult parts. Once you are able to sing a measure five times without mistakes then you can increase the tempo. The same goes for the entire exercise.
- Pay careful attention to details such as: vowels, rhythms, key signatures and accidentals, signs and symbols, dynamics and articulations.
- End by singing something just for fun.

How Parents Can Help

Regardless of musical background, a parent's support and encouragement will have a tremendous impact on a child's progress in choir. To assist in the musical growth of your child, you can:

- Support the goals, policies, and procedures of the director and school.
- Encourage regular practice at home. Provide a daily time and place where your child can practice without distractions or interruptions.
- **Ask your child to sing for you and encourage performance!**
- Teach your child to be punctual by helping him or her to be on time to performances and rehearsals.
- Enthusiastically attend all choir functions to show your support. Get involved!
- Give strong consideration to providing private lessons for your child. This one on one attention with a voice specific instructor will add greatly to your child's musical education.

In addition, please fill out the **Music Parent Committee Volunteer Form** if you are interested in volunteering throughout the year!

Contact Information

Jason Penner

CSPA Director of Bands & Choirs

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(810)- 225- 9940 ext. 436

<http://cspams.weebly.com>

<http://cspahs.weebly.com>

“Music is the movement of sound to teach the soul for the education of its virtue” - Plato

Music Parent Committee Volunteer Form

This year we will be continuing a Music Parent Committee! The main focus of this committee will be to assist the needs of the CSPA music program and music teacher. This committee will function has a sub-committee within Parent Council.

The focus of the Music Parent Committee for the 2016-2017 school year:

- Assist the CSPA music teacher in organizing parent volunteers for events
- Organize and run concert bake sales
- Assist the CSPA music teacher regarding large equipment moves
- Organize and run any additional CSA approved fundraising events*
- Collaborating with Parent Council and communicated the music program needs for each year.

After we receive interest forms, we will generate a date and hold a general meeting with Mr. Penner and Mr. Beyer to set procedures, expectations, program needs and to generate ideas for the year!

Join the Music Parent Committee!

Student Name _____

Parent Name _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Questions? Email Mr. Penner at jpenner@csaschool.org

Handbook & Concert Schedule Agreement

We have read the CSPA Choir Handbook & Concert Schedule and agree to attend all required performances. We realize that performance is an important part of choir and that we all depend on everyone's participation to make our concerts a success.

We agree to be on time and dressed appropriately for each performance.

We understand that students may only be excused from concerts for serious, unavoidable conflicts and that we must notify Mr. Penner of a conflict in writing as soon as possible. These conflicts include medical emergencies, surgery, family member military deployment, etc. Routine doctor's appointments, sports practice, dance practice, and like things are not excusable activities – please plan around the concert schedule that is provided. For major sporting games, dance recitals, or other culminating events please contact Mr. Penner far in advance so that we can work a plan out for the student. Failure to attend a performance will result in 0 points for that performance and possible loss of credit for the class.

We understand that emergencies happen and that we will make every effort to notify Mr. Penner by phone or email in case of a serious emergency. If we cannot reach Mr. Penner, we will provide an explanation in writing the next school day (or when returning to school).

Student Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

Please return to Mr. Penner by September 28th, 2016