

Chorus Course Syllabus

Dr. Blackmon

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REMIND – MCMS Chorus @chorusmcms



What to Bring DAILY to Class:

- Student Agenda
- Chromebook and Earbuds/Headphones
- Pencil & Paper
- **Positive Attitude ☺ (the MOST important!)**

Chorus is a year-long class that meets every day and has several aspects...chorus is not just about singing together. We will also explore other areas of music such as music theory, music vocabulary, and music history. Additionally, we may at times branch out across the curriculum to incorporate cross-curricular skills to support our school-wide effort to enhance student achievement.

Blended instructional strategies will include the CANVAS on-line platform in addition to more traditional classroom and rehearsal methods. All students are expected to participate fully with a positive attitude in all aspects of the class...each activity has a purpose and will be figured into class participation and/or class assignment grades.

General Time-Line of Class Objectives:

Due to our concert schedule, the 1st and 4th quarters will have a greater emphasis on the development of music theory skills and music vocabulary. Students and parents should be prepared for more written assignments and class assignment grades during the 1st and 4th quarters. The 2nd and 3rd quarters will have a greater focus on daily rehearsal and performance repertoire preparation. Variations in the time-line may occur based upon teacher observation of ensemble and student needs, as well as assessments.

➤ 1st Quarter:

Welcome, Overview & Pre-Assessments
Ongoing Development of Music Vocabulary and Theory

- Defining The Voice Unit
- Rhythm Unit

Introduction to Scales and Sight Singing

- Solfege Syllables and Hand Signs

Music History Focus: The Renaissance Era (1450-1600)
Holiday Concert Repertoire Introduction/Preparation

➤ 2nd Quarter:

Primary Focus: Holiday Concert Preparation/Performance
Ongoing Development of Music Vocabulary/Theory

- Dynamics Unit

Scale and Sight Singing Development – Relating Skills to Repertoire
Music History Focus: The Baroque Era (1600-1750)

➤ 3rd Quarter:

Primary Focus: Spring Concert Repertoire Introduction/Preparation
Ongoing Development of Music Vocabulary & Theory

- Mid-Year Review & Mid-Year Assessments
- Tempo/Articulation Unit

Scale and Sight Singing Development – Relating Skills to Repertoire
Music History Focus: The Classical Era (1750-1825)

➤ 4th Quarter:

Spring Concert Preparation/Performance
Ongoing Development of Music Vocabulary/Theory

- Directional Indicators Unit
- Year End Review & Post-Assessments

Music History Focus: The Romantic Era (1825 – 1900)
Music Appreciation Enrichment

Chorus Grading Scale:

Class Participation: 50%

Class Assignments: 25%

Performance/Event Participation: 25%

** See Back of Syllabus for More Details Regarding Each Category **

Official current grades are calculated in Infinite Campus (not CANVAS). Honor Roll is determined by Q4 progress report grades.

➤ **CLASS PARTICIPATION...**

Students are expected to participate fully in singing rehearsals, class activities and performances. Students should NOT be working on other class work, reading, or engaged in other activities during rehearsals or instruction time. *If for some reason you are unable to participate fully due to illness or other circumstances, please discuss these privately with Dr. Blackmon before class instruction begins.* **Each day will be worth “20 Participation Points” totaling a maximum weekly participation grade of 100% for each student.**

➤ **CLASS ASSIGNMENTS...**

♪ **Daily grades** are assigned periodically during daily class instruction for ongoing evaluation of skill development – advance notice of daily grades will typically not be given, as this will be a part of general instruction. These will consist primarily of vocabulary development, theory assignments, and/or music history assignments. Generally, more daily grades are taken during the 1st and 4th quarters rather 2nd and 3rd when concert preparation is the primary focus.

♪ **Quizzes** will take place periodically for vocabulary, performance skill and theory development. Quizzes will always be announced at least a week in advance. *Quiz grades will equal the equivalent of two daily grades.*

♪ **Late Assignments:** Assignments not turned in within 5 days of the due date will still be eligible for a *maximum* grade of 70%. Extenuating circumstances/prolonged absences will be reviewed on an individual basis in order to determine fair expectations for completion and credit.

➤ **PERFORMANCE/EVENT PARTICIPATION GRADE POLICY...**Chorus is a performance class. Participating in performance events is an integral part of the Georgia Standards of Excellence for chorus classes. Performance/event participation counts for 25% of a student’s grade in chorus. If the student does not participate in a scheduled performance grade event, he/she will be provided an alternate assignment (in CANVAS and/or written) to complete for grade credit. Students will have the opportunity to work on alternate assignments during chorus class time if they choose to do so. **Alternate assignments are due 5 days from the date the assignment is given and will be graded for accuracy and completion.**

- If a student was absent from school on the day of the performance grade event due to an *excused* absence (ex. sickness, death in family, etc...), the student is eligible to earn full credit (100%) on the assignment.
- If a student was present in school the day of the performance grade event or if the student was absent from school that day for an *unexcused* reason, the student is only eligible to earn a *maximum* of 85% on the assignment.
- If a student does not turn in an alternate assignment within the 5-day period, the student is only eligible to earn a *maximum* of 70% on the assignment.

Extenuating circumstances/prolonged absences will be discussed and reviewed on an individual basis in order to determine fair expectations for completion and credit. Please be aware that student attendance records for the day of a performance grade event will be determined through official attendance records in Infinite Campus and all decisions will be based on and verified by official school records. *Please be sure to follow the school policies for excused absence documentation (refer to school agenda) so that there are no discrepancies.*

➤ **PERFORMANCE REPERTOIRE...**

During the course of the year, we will experience a wide variety of choral music styles. Throughout history, music has played a major role in almost every society. Choral music began as a form of worship and celebration and is still used in this manner today throughout much of our world. Often times, we will study music which may include songs of praise and celebration and/or from different cultures. We will not focus only on one specific genre or culture – it is the goal of the class to expose students to a variety of different choral music styles. Please know that in no way by studying these styles of music are we intending to “influence” personal beliefs...we are simply studying an important form of choral music because we are a chorus class. Should you ever have a concern relating to any of the music we are learning, please make an appointment to discuss these concerns individually with Dr. Blackmon.

➤ **ABOUT YOUR TEACHER...**

Franleata Sorrells-Blackmon has been the chorus teacher at Madison County Middle School since January of 2002. Dr. Blackmon attended Converse College in Spartanburg, SC, where she received the Bachelor of Arts degree in music (piano) in 1994, and the Master of Education degree in 1998. In 2004, she earned the Educational Specialist degree in music education with an emphasis in choral music from the University of Georgia. In 2005, Dr. Blackmon was honored as the MCMS Teacher of the Year. She was selected to participate in the Professional Association of Georgia Educators (PAGE) Teacher Academy, Elite Class cadre 2005-07 and in the 2012-13 PAGE Teacher Leader Institute. Dr. Blackmon successfully defended her dissertation in the spring of 2017, earning her Doctorate in Education from Liberty University. She is a member of The National Association for Music Education (NAfME), The Georgia Music Educators Association (GMEA), and The Professional Association of Georgia Educators (PAGE). Dr. Blackmon enjoys traveling, spending time with family, and serving as a church pianist. She resides in her hometown of Comer with her husband, Jody Blackmon, and son, Stephen.

CHORUS BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT PLAN

Mustangs take PRIDE in everything they do!

BE Prepared, Respectful, Independent, Determined, Excellent

You will be challenged to take PRIDE in all that you do at MCMS...in every aspect of student life, you will have expectations in each of these areas. The following are expectations specific to this class:

<p>P <i>Prepared</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrive to class on time and sit in your assigned seat • Bring your agenda, charged Chromebook with earbuds/headphones, pencil/paper, & positive attitude to class every day • Know and place a priority on performance/event requirements • Have correct concert attire PRIOR to performances and come dressed appropriately • Turn in paperwork and assignments on time
<p>R <i>Respectful</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treat everyone in chorus with courtesy and respect...earn respect by being respectful! • Keep hands, feet, objects, and disrespectful comments to yourself • Take care of the music, materials and equipment you use in the classroom • Respect “teacher designated” areas, materials, and equipment in the classroom • Respect individual differences, preferences, and needs • Engage only in appropriate conversations with others • Volunteer to help others • Lift others up...don’t tear them down!
<p>I <i>Independent</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be a good listener! • Follow directions • Know school rules and abide by them – if it’s a school rule, it applies in this classroom ~ ex: no personal electronics, no hats, no food/gum/drinks other than water (except on special designated days) • Use your quarterly passes wisely and appropriately • Always give your BEST effort
<p>D <i>Determined</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay focused on the activity/lesson...do not work on other assignments, read or socialize during rehearsals and instruction time • Work cooperatively with others
<p>E <i>Excellent</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strive for excellence in all that you do!! • Set high expectations for yourself! • Give 100% and always do the best that you can do!

Rewards and Consequences:

It is my expectation that all students will behave appropriately in class. Students will discover that appropriate behavior will result in various POSITIVE rewards and privileges at times, at the discretion of the teacher and/or team. Often times, discipline issues tend to arise when a student is unhappy in a class...you have each chosen to be in chorus, so I hope that you will fully engage yourself in our class activities and that misbehavior will be minimal!

However, if a student chooses not to follow these guidelines or if a student disrupts the class by not following directions that have been given, consequences will occur. Consequences will include, but may not be limited to: Verbal Warnings, loss of break time, written assignments, parent contact, and for serious and/or habitual offenses, office referrals. Typically, a warning will be extended for the first offense. Each situation is different, and therefore, it will be at the teacher’s discretion to determine the best course of action. Blatant disrespect, insubordination, foul language, and/or fighting will result in immediate office referrals.

Chorus is an elective class...students who cannot behave appropriately in chorus may lose the privilege of being a part of this elective class. Inappropriate behavior and negativity from just one student can hinder the learning experience for all!

If you have difficulties with another student or concerns regarding the class, please discuss these with me...I cannot help to resolve a problem if I do not know that one exists! I am very willing to meet with students after class for such issues. Please know that I always try to be as fair as possible when disciplining students, yet unfortunately, at times all deserving students are not “caught”. Just remember, you are not being fair to your peers or to me if you are acting inappropriately in class. My first priority is to teach and/or lead the rehearsal and yours should be to participate positively. If someone else is behaving inappropriately, that does not give you the right to do so. If you are punished, it is because your **own** behavior has earned it. Remember - **YOU** control your choices, attitude and behavior!

Leaving the Classroom:

All Houses/Academic Teams schedule restroom breaks prior to Connections, and students are encouraged to use the opportunity to take care of personal needs before our class period. Due to such a limited class time each day in Connections, students will be limited to **6 passes per quarter. Only 1 student will be allowed a pass out of class at a time.** Students must bring agendas to class, as these are a school requirement for leaving classrooms. A specific card for chorus passes will be attached to your agenda and you must have open passes in order to leave the chorus classroom. (Exceptions will be made for students called to an office, going to see the nurse, or rare emergency situations). Any unused passes may be “cashed in” for rewards at the end of each quarter or “rolled over” to the next quarter.

Please be considerate when you ask to leave the classroom...only ask during a transition or “down time” – not in the middle of a rehearsal or direct instruction. ***(Remember... all Houses/Academic Teams have planned restroom breaks for students throughout the school day...so, take advantage of these opportunities!)***

Tardies:

Tardies without a pass will be marked in Infinite Campus. Too many tardies could result in lunch detention, loss of break, or possible ISS.

Electronics:

Per school policy, personal electronics cannot be visible, on or in use during school instructional hours. If electronics are in use without special permission from the teacher, they can be taken up by the teacher, sub, or observing administrator and turned into the house office for appropriate disciplinary action. School issued Chromebooks should be used for instructional purposes only and with permission from the teacher.

Food/Drinks/Gum:

In compliance with school policy, no food or drinks (except water) are allowed in the classroom. Gum is not appropriate, and can even present a safety risk, especially in a chorus classroom. Please DO NOT consume food, drinks, or gum in the chorus classroom except during special days designated by the teacher.

CONCERT ETIQUETTE

A musical performance is unlike a sporting event or even a rock concert. There are certain behavior expectations that audience members and participants should honor. Part of your learning experience in chorus is to learn and practice appropriate concert etiquette!

- ♪ Refrain from talking or whispering during a performance
- ♪ Do not eat, drink or chew gum during a performance!
- ♪ Silence cell phones and other electronic devices (better yet, leave them at home or in the car!)
- ♪ Do not get up to go to the RR or leave early during a performance (unless you are sick)
- ♪ Do not wave or yell out at others at a performance
- ♪ If someone else is performing or speaking, focus all of your attention on them
- ♪ If you are performing, focus all of your attention on your director and the music

I strive daily to treat all students with the utmost respect and courtesy, in expectation of receiving the same in return. My first priority is to teach the class and lead rehearsal and the students' first priority should be to participate and learn...it is not my goal to be simply a “class policeman” and your goal should not be to disrupt class or simply to socialize. I expect students to always try to behave appropriately and, when mistakes happen, to accept the consequence with the understanding that this, too, is a learning experience. In the end, just remember – we are all human and, if you cooperate with me and have a positive and respectful attitude, I’m sure we can overcome any obstacles together!