Dear Parents, Guardians, and Choir Members,

Welcome back! I cannot begin to express how excited I am to begin singing again this year!

I am so proud of the work CHS Choir students did last year, and so impressed with their skills, dedication, and good-natured attitudes. We are all hard at work re-building the momentum that we lost during the pandemic, and I know we won’t squander this opportunity keep the ball rolling after a very successful 2022-2023 school year. There have been some very obvious changes to the CHS Choral Program this year. I am now dividing my time between the CRA band program and the Capital High Choirs, and my excellent colleague Mr. Zach Harris is going to be lending his expertise with the instruction of the Tenor-Bass Ensemble.

I am excited for the wonderful music we will engage and the amazing experiences we will share.

It is important to me to maintain a co-operative and communicative network with parents. This helps to ensure that students have great musical experiences and outstanding choirs. Please do not hesitate to email me or Mr. Harris with questions or concerns at school: [tbaty@helenaschools.org](mailto:tbaty@helenaschools.org); [zharris@helenaschools.org](mailto:zharris@helenaschools.org).

I am so excited to be making music with the Capital High School students again, and I cannot wait to hear what we will accomplish this year!

All the Best,

Thomas Baty

Director of Choirs, Capital High School

**Schedule of Events**

Capital High School Choirs participate in many events throughout the course of the year. The following is a list of the planned events and concerts that students are responsible for. A large portion of the grading policy relies on the students’ attendance and attire at these events. Students are expected to be at concerts for their entire duration. This schedule is being provided at the beginning of the year so that arrangements can be made to keep these dates open. It is not, however, a comprehensive list. Students will be notified of further obligations as they arise.

All **BOLD, CAPITALIZED** events are ***mandatory*** for ***all*** students.

**OCTOBER 9………..…………….…..……CHS FALL CONCERT @ 7:00 PM**

October 18-20…………………..……...….MMEA All-State Festival in Missoula

(Selected Students)

November 13-14.……………………………….....…AA Choral Festival in Helena

(Saturday’s Children, Jazz)

**DECEMBER 4…………………..……..CHS WINTER CONCERT @ 7:00 PM**

December 18……………………….……………………...Capitol Rotunda Concert

(Saturday’s Children)

January 24-27……...........……….ACDA All-NW Honor Choir (Selected Students)

February 26....................................................................Concert with CRA 8TH Grade

(Possibly at CHS?) (Saturday’s Children, Jazz)

**MARCH 11..……………………..……...CHS SPRING CONCERT @ 7:00 PM**

**APRIL 11-12.…………………………DISTRICT MUSIC FESTIVAL @ HMS**

April 13..…………...………………………………………..District Music Festival

(Solo and Ensemble) @ Bozeman

May 4...…….…………...……………………..…....State Music Festival @ Helena

May 16…………………Sats With CRA 7th Graders @ HMS (During School Day)

**MAY 18-19…………………..………….....DESSERT SHOW PREPARATION**

**MAY 20……………………..…CHS POP CONCERT AND DESSERT SHOW**

# Grading Policy

The grading policy for CHS Choirs will consist of three parts outlined below. The grade of each student will be assessed based on these criteria.

***Rehearsal Technique:***

Music begins in daily rehearsal. It is extremely important that each student do their part to be present, on time, and prepared for every rehearsal. This includes attendance as well as attitude. Music is a cooperative and creative process, and only by creating a ***trustworthy*** environment can we fully experience and express the music.

Each student earns 4 points for rehearsal technique each day, entered as a weekly grade of 20 points. If they are timely, prepared (have all their music, pencils, rehearsal markings…) and demonstrate appropriate rehearsal behaviors, participation and listening skills, students will have earned those points. Points are lost for tardiness, lack of preparation, lack of participation, disrespectful behavior, and inattention.

Absences will be handled in this manner:

* If a student is absent ***for any reason*** (including school activities) they will not have earned their 4 daily rehearsal points.
* Absent students will have the opportunity to make up their daily rehearsal points. If a student accrues 10 or more absences per quarter ***even if they are marked “Excused,”*** they may forfeit the option to sing in the concert.
* “Unexcused” absences cannot be made up and each one will subtract 4 points from the student’s weekly total.

\*\*\***Bathrooms**: Use of the bathroom during class is a privilege. If it is abused, it will be lost.\*\*\*

***Concert Attire and Attendance:***

Concerts are the musical equivalent of final exams. Performance absences will be handled on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the director. Possible conflicts must be brought to the director’s attention **AS SOON AS POSSIBLE**. If the director excuses a performance the student has the option to make up the lost points. This also applies to students who are not allowed to participate in the concert due to chronic absences. ***It is the student’s responsibility to request a concert make-up.*** If the director does not excuse the concert, the student does not have the option to make-up lost points.

**Unexcused** performance absences shall include, but are not limited to:

Participation in a different non-school performance

Participation in a rehearsal or practice

Last-minute vacations (less than 2 weeks notice)

Employment conflicts

Schoolwork

An absence resulting from disciplinary measures (either school or otherwise)

**Concert attire** (*found on pgs. 6-7*) will be discussed at the beginning of the year. Students are responsible for maintaining and wearing the proper concert attire throughout the year. A student’s presentation at a concert is a reflection of the choir program and a component of the educational process. Students who do not adhere to the attire guidelines display (whether purposeful or not) a lack of respect for the choir program and the audience. These students will lose points for their concert grade equivalent to the severity of their wardrobe infraction.

***Miscellaneous Assignments and Quizzes:***

There will be periodic singing tests and memorization quizzes to assess the progress of the students. These tests will assess tone, time, pitch clarity, expression, diction, posture and breathing. Training choirs will sing in small groups. Auditioned choirs should be prepared to sing in small groups, or individually. There will also be weekly written work including daily music theory exercises, rehearsal markings made in the music, and any homework that may be assigned.

*Grades are earned by students as follows:*

***A*** *– 90% - 100%*

***B*** *– 80% - 89%*

***C*** *– 70% - 79%*

***D*** *– 60% - 69%*

***F*** *– 59% and lower*

**Classroom Expectations**

Singing is an art form and a means of expression, and we can only express ourselves fully when we trust our classmates and feel respected by them. Negative attitudes and behaviors have no place in the musical rehearsal and will not be tolerated. These are a few basic questions to guide students in proper behavior.

1. ***Do your work***
   1. **Are you on time?**
   2. **Do you have all your materials?**
   3. **Are you focused?**
   4. **Are you actively trying to improve?**
2. ***Don’t be a jerk***
   1. **Are you taking your bad day out on the class?**
   2. **Are you respectful of your peers? The teacher?**
   3. **Can you turn your personal issues into a constructive musical focus?**

Students are expected to be ***ready to sing when the bell rings***. Students are further expected to drink only water during rehearsal. **FOOD AND OTHER DRINKS ARE PROHIBITED WHILE WE ARE REHEARSING.** Tardiness and absences in Treble Choir and Tenor-Bass Choir will be dealt with according to the school policy and in the manor outlined on page 3. Tardiness, excessive absences, and/or behavioral infractions in Jubilettes, Saturday’s Children, and Jazz Choir will not be tolerated. These are auditioned choirs and students who disrespect their peers will be dismissed.

***ELECTRONIC DISTRACTIONS ARE PROHIBITED DURING REHEARSALS. ANY STUDENT USING A PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICE DURING REHEARSAL TIME WILL RECEIVE AN ELECTRONIC REFERRAL AND BE SENT TO THE OFFICE.***

Music is a collaborative discipline, and it is impossible to have meaningful choral communication if members are not mentally and emotionally engaged.

A student who disrupts the rehearsal setting shall be removed from the classroom. Discussion with the student and disciplinary action will follow rehearsal. Consequences may include discipline referrals, conferences with parents, or dismissal from an auditioned choir.

I recognize that conflicts are a part of life. **REHEARSAL TIME IS NOT THE TIME TO AIR GRIEVENCES.** I am willing and available to discuss any difficulties with students or between students, but not during rehearsal.

**Care of Equipment**

***Music and Folders***

Students will be issued folders for the year and music for each concert cycle. This is the choral equivalent of a text book, and students are expected to care for these items and return them in the condition they received them. Students are responsible for any damages to school property.

***Performance Attire:***

*Tenor-Bass Choir:*

* Button-up White Shirt (You provide)
* Black Slacks (You provide)
* Black Socks (You provide)
* Black Shoes (You provide)

*Treble Choir*

* Tasteful\* white top and black slacks or skirt (You provide)
* ***Closed-toe*** ***BLACK*** shoes (something comfortable to sing in) (You provide)
* An accent color (to be discussed)

**\* Tasteful tops cover shoulders completely and do not show any cleavage or midriff. Tasteful dresses and skirts fall at or below the knees when standing.**

*Jubilettes*

* Black gown, Wrist corsage (Provided for you)

Or

* Black slacks (You provide)
* Black shirt (You provide)

And

* ***Closed-toe BLACK*** shoes (something comfortable to sing in) (You provide)

*Saturday’s Children*

* Tux pants, Neck tie (Provided for you)
* Black button-up Shirt (You buy, but ordered for you)
* Black socks, Black shoes (You provide)

Or

* Black gown, “Pearl” necklace (Provided for you)
* ***Closed-toe BLACK*** shoes (something comfortable to sing in) (You provide)

*Jazz Choir*

* Tux pants, Bow tie (Provided for you)
* Black button-up shirt (You buy, but ordered for you)
* Black socks, Black Shoes (You provide)

Or

* Black gown, “Pearl” necklace, White gloves (Provided for you)
* ***Closed-toe BLACK*** shoes (something comfortable to sing in) (You provide)

All uniforms should be treated as valuable and worthwhile and should always be worn with pride and dignity.

**Students will be responsible for paying any damages or necessary cleaning fees for school property.**

**Fundraising**

Students will be asked to assist in raising funds for concert attire and specialized musical events and equipment. Although many of our events are paid for with district funds, extra support is needed to help supplement activities such as choir tours, guest directors, musical commissions, and festivals. Every student shares the responsibility to fundraise for their personal involvement in special activities. Standard CHS Choir fundraisers include fruit and chocolate sales and the Dessert Show.

**Travel**

***School Sponsored Trips***

These are trips such as music festivals and choral invitationals. The school district provides the buses and funding for the cost of the event. Students are responsible for their own meals and possible lodging costs.

***Special Trips***

These are trips that the director and the school administration decide upon. Students are responsible for the majority of all travel expenses (lodging, transportation, meals, etc.). The cost of the trip is divided equally among the involved students and each is expected to supply the money necessary to participate. Funds may be raised through choir-sponsored fundraisers and/or out-of-pocket money from students/parents. Director, accompanist, and chaperone fees are figured into the amount each student is responsible for.

**Auditions**

Auditions for each curricular group will take place at the end of first semester as a part of the Semester One Final Exam. During the audition, students will be assessed on their tone, expression, pitch clarity, posture, time, diction and breathing—essentially all the things we have covered throughout semester one—as well as their cumulative attitude, behavior, and rehearsal technique. Following their audition students will be placed, for the following year, into the choir that best reflects their current skill levels and behavior. Students who are dissatisfied with their placement have all of second semester to improve their skills/behavior, and they may re-audition at the end of the year.

**All-Northwest Honor Choir.** This is an opportunity for students to sing in a group with the most talented student musicians in the Northwestern U.S. (Alaska, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Wyoming, and Montana). It is always a tremendous experience and highly recommended for serious and passionate singers. Students interested in auditioning for the All-Northwest Honor Choir must see me ASAP in the fall.

**All-State Honor Choir.** This is an opportunity to sing with Montana’s finest and work with skilled directors from around the country. The Montana All-State Honor Choir auditions take place in the spring after the final choir concert. Students will sign up for a time slot after classes in the last weeks of school and record their audition with the director.

**Choir Letter Awards**

**“Letters” and pins are awarded at the end of the year to students who engage in choral and singing activities outside of the class expectations.**

**These two criteria are mandatory to be considered for a Letter Award in Choir:**

1. **Student must be a member of a curricular choir with at least a “B” average for the year.**
2. **Student must have attended and performed (or been excused by the director) in all pre-scheduled concerts for their choir.**

The following points are awarded for lettering in choral music. Every student is eligible to letter. Students are responsible for keeping track of their own points. These points do not carry over from year to year.

District Music Festival Solo………………………………………...…Superior = 10 points

………….…...…………………………..Excellent=5 points

District Music Festival Ensemble ……………………………………..…Superior=5 points

State Music Festival Solo superior rating……………………….…………..….….10 points

State Music Festival Ensemble superior rating ………………...………………..….5 points

Accompanist at District or State Festival..……………………….……...………...10 points

Accompanist for Choir Concert……………………………........................……...10 points

Sing National Anthem @ game/assembly (can only count once)……………….…5 points

Complete All-NW or All-State audition……...……………...…………………....5 points

Member of CHS Choir program for four years…………………………….….….15 points

Enrolled in Private Lessons for a full year…………………………………….….10 points

Member of a Church/Youth Choir for a full year…………………………….....…10 points

Member of All-State, All-Northwest, or UM All-Star Choirs….……………….…10 points

Participated in rehearsals/performances of a musical

in town (CHS, Grandstreet, Carroll College, etc.)…………..……………10 points for each

Performed at 3 separate events outside of class (Not including National Anthem)...10 points

Member of another school choir………………..……………5 points for each “extra” choir

*Total points needed*

First year letter & pin……..30 points

Second year pin……..35 points

Third year pin…………40 points

Fourth year pin………45 points

Points do not carry over from year to year.

CHS Choirs 2023-2024

We have reviewed the CHS Choir handbook expectations. We understand that concert attendance and timeliness count for a large percentage of the grade.

We will have the required performance attire by the first concert, and we will be responsible for all materials checked out to the student. We further understand that we have a responsibility to compensate the school for any damages to school property.

We have reviewed the calendar and will contact the director to work out any conflicts for the required events.

We understand the expectations for individual students in rehearsals as well as the consequences for a failure to meet these expectations.

This page is a 10 point assignment and is to be turned in no later than ***Friday, September 15***.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_is a member of\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Choir

Student Name (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature Date

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Parent/Guardian Signature(s) Date