Dear Parents, Guardians, and Choir Members,

I am so very excited for the opportunity to welcome singers new and experienced back to choir class at Capital High School. It goes without saying that last Spring was an unfortunate debacle and none of us was able to close the year like we wanted or deserved. While I have high hopes that we will have many opportunities for in-person instruction this school year, there are, of course, still many known and unknown challenges ahead of us.

I would like to begin with a very important truth about this year: It will not feel like normal. It is likely that none of our classes will be rehearsing fully choral music, and we may not have a single “normal” performance. What I can promise, however, is that music-making will continue. When circumstances allow, in-person instruction will include elements of singing in solo and small ensemble settings.

In the opening weeks of school each student will determine one of two online “paths” that will allow them to earn credit for vocal music:

1. Vocal Performance: In an online format, students that choose this path will be responsible for submitting recordings of themselves. Students on this path will effectively be receiving free voice lessons.
2. Music Fundamentals: In an online format, this path will be largely composed of written and music listening assignments.

While I feel as many of you do that there can be no substitute for the experience of singing in a choral ensemble, health and safety needs demand that we seek out alternatives. I promise that I will do all I can to help each student continue to develop as a confident musician and vocalist. Life is what you make of it. I encourage you to seize every opportunity to continue to grow and learn.

All the Best,

Thomas Baty

Director of Choirs, Capital High School

**Schedule of Events**

***The following schedule is one that I put together for this year before the pandemic hit. There are three events that I have already actively cancelled. The others (especially during the Fall semester) are very likely to change. I will update all effected parties in as timely a fashion as I can manage.***

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 6~~****~~CHS FALL CONCERT @ 7:00 PM~~**

~~October 14-16 MMEA All-State Festival in Great Falls (Selected~~

~~Students)~~

~~November 9-10 AA Choral Festival in Helena (Saturday’s Children,~~

 ~~Jazz)~~

**DECEMBER 1 CHS WINTER CONCERT @ 7:00 PM**

December 15 Jazz Choir Tour to Elementary Schools

February ? Concert with CRA 8th Grade (Possibly at

CHS?) (Saturday’s Children, Jazz)

**MARCH 8 CHS SPRING CONCERT @ 7:00 PM**

**APRIL 8-9 DISTRICT MUSIC FESTIVAL @ HMS**

April 10 District Music Festival (solo and ensemble) @ HHS

May 7-8 State Music Festival in Missoula

**May 22-23 DESSERT SHOW PREPARATION**

**May 24 CHS POP CONCERT AND DESSERT SHOW**

**Grading Policy**

Students in choir will be graded on their work across each of the four phases and in two key areas. There will be no weighting of grades this year. All grades will be determined by the simple sum of points earned per assignment, then divided by all points possible.

**Vocal Performance –** This category includes all rehearsal related assignments, as well as performances (solos, small groups, and large ensembles)

1. ***Phase 0 (Closure) –*** In this phase *vocal performance* assignments will consist of recordings submitted by students. Students who have selected the Vocal Performance path will be responsible for weekly submissions of themselves singing solo and/or small ensemble works.
2. ***Phase 1(Alternate to Closure) –*** In this phase *vocal performance* assignments will be handled in class and/or by recording. Students will be working on solos and in small groups only.
3. ***Phase 2 (Modified) –*** In this phase *vocal performance* assignments will be handled in class and/or by recording. Students will be working on solos and in small groups only.
4. ***Phase 3 (Normal) –*** This will likely be the primary category for assignments in phase 3 and daily rehearsal of choral singing is probable. Students will be graded on rehearsal practices and techniques that we have learned in class.

**Music Fundamentals**

1. ***Phase 0 (Closure) –*** In this phase *music fundamentals* assignments will be the sole category for students who have selected the Music Fundamentals path. Students will be responsible for weekly listening and written assignments.
2. ***Phase 1(Alternate to Closure) –*** In this phase *music fundamentals* assignments will co-exist with *vocal performance* assignments. When students are online, they will be completing weekly written and listening assignments, and when they are in class, they will have the opportunity to work on their vocal performance assignments.
3. ***Phase 2 (Modified) –*** In this phase *music fundamentals* assignments will co-exist with *vocal performance* assignments. When students are online, they will be completing weekly written and listening assignments, and when they are in class, they will have the opportunity to work on their vocal performance assignments.
4. ***Phase 3 (Normal)*** This category will play a supplemental role in this phase. It includes any written work or graded music listening that is not specifically related to rehearsal.

Elements of both categories will be present throughout the year, regardless of phase. However, in phases where there is instructional time spent at home (phases 0, 1, maybe 2), there will likely be more assignments in the *music fundamentals* category. Likewise, in phases 2 and 3 when students spend all instructional time in class, there will be more assignments in the *music production* category.

*Grades are earned by students as follows:*

***A*** *– 90% - 100%*

***B*** *– 80% - 89%*

***C*** *– 70% - 79%*

***D*** *– 60% - 69%*

***F*** *– 59% and lower*

**Course Expectations**

It is important for everyone to realize the importance of flexibility this year. If you are registered for a choir class, you will be expected to complete the work, regardless of which phase we are in.

***For all work in all phases, students will have one week (5 school days) from the time the work is assigned to complete the assignment for full points. After the first week, students have a second week to submit assignments for half credit. After two weeks, students will not receive credit for any incomplete assignments.***

***For distance learning*** (Phase 0) students will choose one of two “paths” in which to earn credit.

1. Vocal Performance: assignments consist of learning music and submitting vocal recordings for coaching and feedback. There will also be a smaller number of supplemental assignments that address music theory, music listening, and music history curriculum.
2. Music Fundamentals: assignments consist of music theory, music listening, music history, etc. This option is for students who cannot or do not wish to submit vocal recordings of themselves for coaching and feedback.

***In all classes and all phases students will need to check their STUDENT EMAIL and Teams classes DAILY.*** Since there is no telling when we might shift into a different phase, the most reliable communication will be through email and Teams. *During phases 0 and 1 all students will be responsible for a brief daily check-in in addition to their weekly assignments.*

A typical weekly schedule in Phases 0 and 1 will look like this:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
| Record goals for the week | Respond to prompt | Mandatory virtual meeting during normal class time | Physical/emotional health survey | Reflect on weekly goals |

**Classroom Expectations**

Singing is an art form and a means of expression, and we can only express ourselves fully when we feel safe and comfortable in our surroundings. 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 leave your issues at the door and focus on the music?**

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 IN CLASS.** Tardiness and absences in Treble Choir and Tenor-Bass Choir will be dealt with according to the school policy. 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 classroom time. Any student using a personal electronic device during classroom time will receive an electronic referral and be sent to the office.***

Music is a collaborative art, 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.

**Additional Covid Expectations**

During this difficult time, there are additional guidelines that pertain to the choral classroom. Here are the safety expectations that apply to singing in each phase.

***Phase 0*** ***(Closure)*** – We will be fully remote in this phase, so there are no special precautions for the classroom.

***Phase 1 (Alternate to Closure)*** – In this phase, all students will wear a mask and maintain 6 feet of distance.

* While indoors
	+ there will be no full-voice singing;
	+ only 8 students will be allowed to sing at a time;
	+ only students at the front of the room will be allowed to actively sing;
	+ singing will only be allowed for one 30-minute window each period.
* While outdoors
	+ there will be no full voice singing;
	+ more than 8 students can sing at a time;
	+ singing time can exceed the 30-minute window.

***Phase 2 (Modified)*** – [Same as Phase 1]

***Phase 3 (Normal)*** – In this phase, choral rehearsal can resume close to normal. It is possible that masks will still be required.

**Care of Equipment**

***Sheet Music***

Students will be issued sheet music this year. This is the choral equivalent of a textbook, and students are expected to care for these items and return them in the condition they received them. Furthermore, students are expected to take music home and bring it to class with them each day. *Music cannot be stored in the choir room.* It is suggested that students keep sheet music protected in a personal folder.

***Performance Attire***

In the event that a choral performance is possible this year, we will be attired in a CHS Choir shirt and uniform bottoms. The design and expense of the shirt is yet to be determined.

**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 for school property.**

**Fundraising**

Students will be asked to assist in raising funds for concert attire and specialized musical events. 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 of fundraise for their personal involvement in special activities. Standard CHS Choir fundraisers include chocolate sales and the Dessert Show.

**Travel**

***As of the beginning of this year I do not anticipate that we will travel at all this year. I predict that there will be no options for travel unless we find ourselves in phase 3.***

***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-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.

**Lettering**

**To earn a letter in choir, students must go above and beyond the time and effort required to earn credit in a class. This year letters will be handled differently than past years. Since performance opportunities will be few and far between, there will be fewer ways to earn points for letters. There will still be ample opportunities, however for students to accomplish choral feats that surpass the in-class requirements.**

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.

Shared a recorded video for Karaoke Wednesday….……..………...……………...5 points

Recorded a “how to” video for members of their choir…………………………….5 points

Participated in an optional “live stream” performance…………………...………..10 points

Shared a recorded video of a classical vocal solo………………………………….10 points

Shared a recorded video of a classical vocal ensemble…………………………….5 points

Other opportunities to earn points may become available. If you have a question about something that is not on this list, please ask the teacher.

*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 2020-2021

We have reviewed the CHS Choir handbook expectations. We understand that in a remote learning environment, students have the opportunity to work toward either a *Vocal Performance* path or a *Music Fundamentals* path.

We understand that we have a responsibility to compensate the school for any damages to school property.

We understand the grading requirements and expectations for individual students in rehearsals and in a remote environment, 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 11***.

I, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, am a member of\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Choir

 and in a remote environment, I choose work on the ***(circle one)***

***Vocal Performance*** / ***Music Fundamentals*** *“*path”.

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

Student Signature Date

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Parent/Guardian Signature(s) Date