

8th Grade Choir Handbook

2021-2022



Please fill out the last 2 pages and return them (along with T-shirt money)
to Mrs. Conrad by September 3rd. Thanks!

8th Grade Choir Schedule 2021-2022

*This is the calendar as of August. TBA=To Be Announced
Any changes will be given to students and parents as soon as possible.
Honors Choir info will be separate as those plans become available.*

Theme for this year: “Make Plans, but Be Flexible!”

October 7 (Thurs.) – Tentative date for making Choir Videos in the Auditorium during Choir Classes. Wear choir T-shirts!

December 1 (Wed.) – * Auditorium Rehearsal for all choirs. Pick up time (at HS Auditorium) TBA.

December 2 (Thurs.) – Holiday Concert for MS and Elementary Choirs, LHS Auditorium, 7 pm concert, 6:15 pm student check in, wear uniforms!

February 18 (Fri.) – A Guest Clinician will work with choirs during classes.

March 1 (Tues.) – District Choral Festival, all choirs will perform, times TBA, at The Chapel, Washington Ave., St. Joseph

April 9 (Sat.) – OPTIONAL Solo & Ensemble, various times, location TBA.

May ?? – State Choral Festival for choirs who are invited, various times, Hope College, Holland, Michigan

May 16 (Mon.) – Extra practice for a small number of singers (solos, ensembles, speaking parts, etc...) for spring concert, after school, HS Auditorium, times TBA

May 23 (Mon.) – * Auditorium Rehearsal for all choirs. Pick up time (at HS Auditorium) TBA.

May 24 (Tues.) – MS Spring Choir Concert, 7 pm concert, 6:15 check in

* Auditorium Rehearsals: We will go by bus to the HS Auditorium just before the end of the school day. Ending times for the rehearsal and other concert details will be given about a week ahead of time: in class, on the LMS Choir website, and on a take-home note.

Find Your Voice!
Lakeshore Middle School Choirs

Welcome to 8th Grade Choir!

It looks like this will be another unique year with more questions than answers, regarding things related to planning. My theme as we begin is, *"Make Plans, but Be Flexible!"* As a teacher who has been directing choirs for more than 30 years, I learned a lot of new (digital) methods last year. I often struggle with technology, but students have been very helpful and together we can learn a lot! One thing I am sure of: I will never again take for granted, the joy of singing together! When we couldn't make music together it was frustrating. All the technology in the world can't replace the joy of a group of people, each giving something of themselves to create something that none of them could have done alone.

Our 8th Grade Choir is an important part of the Choir Program here at Lakeshore! We will build on the foundation from 6th and 7th Grade with: additional performance opportunities, music reading/writing instruction, sight reading training, teamwork building, and vocal training. There is much to learn in just a few short years to prepare you for even more musical experiences in our High School Choirs!

Please read this handbook carefully so that you know what you can expect, and what is expected of you! At the end of the handbook there are pages to return. Please turn them in by **September 3rd**.

Please keep informed about our choirs through: the Choir Website, PowerSchool Email, and Google Classroom. The website is a great resource for parents and students. You will find updates, parent notes, announcements, celebrations, pictures, schedules, and meeting dates. Please check it out at: lakeshoremschoirs.weebly.com. PowerSchool email allows me to quickly get updates and reminders to parents. This is an important part of staying flexible with our plans as I may need to notify parents quickly. If you have not registered your email address(es) in the PowerSchool system please contact the Middle School Office for help in getting that set up. We will use Google Classroom in choir quite a bit and I will walk students through it in class. Thank you for helping with communication in these ways!

If after reading the Handbook (or at any other time!), you have questions or comments, please contact me! I'm looking forward to working with you this year and having a great year in choir! The power in singing together is more than the musical harmony we create. It's about the harmony of people coming together. This year we will create harmony in new ways!

Mrs. Carole Conrad
cconrad@lpslancer.net
428-1408 ext. 3099

"I can not imagine my life if I didn't have a music program in my school." - Beyonce

Behavioral Expectations: It is expected that students will treat other class members, teachers, substitute teachers, and student leaders with respect. Student behavior that is detrimental to the group may result in the removal (temporarily or permanently) from the choir.

Singing Expectations: Some students are very comfortable with the sound of their voice and they don't mind others hearing them (some actually love to be heard!). Other students, especially at this age, are not comfortable singing alone, or in front of people. Whichever group you are in - relax! I will not ask you to sing alone (though I will give plenty of opportunities for you to do so!). The point of choir is not solo singing, it's coming together to create music in a way we can't do on our own.

Choir Parents: All parents of Lakeshore Choir students (grades 6-12) are members of the Lakeshore Choir Parents Organization. This group meets monthly and helps with fundraising, publicity, handling of choir money, scholarships, and more. Parents are invited, and encouraged, to attend these monthly meetings! Check the choir website for details.

Grades:

- 35% Participation - Students are expected to sing, listen, and join in class discussions at the appropriate times. They are also expected to have their materials ready when class begins. Additionally, there is a zero-tolerance policy for teasing. Singing is a vulnerable activity for most of us and we will always encourage the best from each other!
- 35% Concerts & Auditorium Rehearsals - Students are expected at these required events on time, in uniform (for concerts). Behavior and attitude also contribute to this total. Choral Festival is also considered a "concert" performance. Please note the "Concert and Auditorium Rehearsal Attendance" section from this handbook.
- 30% Classwork - There will be some digital work (on Chromebooks) and written work (paper/pencil) as we work on reading and writing music. There will also be group work done in class, as well as Learning Checks (Quizzes).

Supplies: Students need to have a pencil. A pocket folder and music will be provided by the school (music needs to be returned in good condition). We will also use the Chromebooks a lot, so they need to be charged and ready.

Uniforms: For performances, choir members wear a black choir T-shirt purchased through the school, (see back page of this Handbook for an order form), black pants, black shoes (closed toes, no high heels please). If purchasing these pieces presents a hardship, please contact Mrs. Conrad (early!). We have some donated items and our Choir Parents Organization will provide uniform pieces when needed. At our concerts, we try very hard to look "uniform" so that the audience's attention is drawn to the high-quality music we are making (not to the sparkly, red sequined headband, green hair, or unique jewelry). Individual expression is important, but not appropriate when "in uniform". Hair should not be in the singer's face. Hair accessories should match hair color. Jewelry: small earrings and rings are allowed, but no necklaces or bracelets, please.

*"What a tragedy it would be if we lived in a world where music was not taught to children."
- H. Norman Schwartzkopf*

Concert and Auditorium Rehearsal Attendance: We hope to be able to have concerts this year! If so, we will need to be able to rely on each other to put performances together. All choir students are expected and required to be at all concerts and auditorium rehearsals (auditorium rehearsals are the rehearsals in the auditorium the day before a concert). Festival performances are also considered "concerts" in this policy. Choir is a "team effort" and we rely on the responsibility of those around us. Students and families are asked to plan around concerts and auditorium rehearsals. The Lakeshore Performing Arts Policy for Middle and High School choirs and bands applies to this choir. According to this policy, there are two kinds of absences: excused and unexcused.

Excused absences: personal illness, death in the family, and those given at the discretion of the director when notified *in advance* by the parent/guardian. Students with schedule conflicts in sports and other school organizations need to make the director and coach of both events aware of the conflict *as soon as possible* so that an agreeable plan can be reached in advance. In the case of excused absences, students can "make up" the time missed through Musical Community Service. Musical Community Service can be arranged through the director and may include: sorting music in the music library, helping with an Elementary Choir rehearsal, updating choir folders, or assisting with music for a church or community group. A form will be provided by the director.

Unexcused Absences: An absence which is not excused will result in a zero for the event. Since performances are a large part of what choirs do, they are also a large part of the choir grade. Unexcused absences for performances or auditorium rehearsals may result in the student being dropped from the choir program.

Fundraising: Last year we were not able to have any fundraisers. Our choir program has extra expenses, and we hope to be able to have fundraisers to help defray those costs this year. The money goes toward: music, supplies, reward parties, travel expenses, scholarships, etc..., and some will go toward individual student accounts.

Individual Student Accounts: Every choir student has the opportunity to let their fundraising money work directly for them through student accounts. The money can be used for the Chicago Trip (we can't plan one yet), solo & ensemble fees, and festival medals. This money rolls over to following years and can be used for choir related expenses even in high school! Students who leave the choir program forfeit their account and the money goes into the general choir fund. Please note, each student does not have a savings account in his or her name, but rather through careful bookkeeping the Choir Parent Treasurer keeps track of that which is specifically designated for individual student accounts. The effort is made so that those who work the hardest at fundraising, have the most benefit.

"It occurred to me by intuition, and music was the driving force behind that intuition. My discovery was the result of musical perception." - Albert Einstein, when asked about his theory of relativity.

MUSIC WITH A SACRED TEXT

The Michigan School Vocal Music Association believes that the use of good music with sacred texts is vital to choral music education and to the choral art. MSVMA supports and has adopted the position statement of the American Choral Directors Association in regard to this issue. The following statement is printed with the permission of the ACDA:

Choral music educators recognize that choral music may fulfill diverse objectives. At one end of the spectrum are aesthetic education and artistic performance that can insure development of musicality and sensitivity. At the opposite end of the spectrum is pure entertainment. Between these two poles may be found opportunities to enhance knowledge and understanding through a growing awareness and perspective of history and art as reflected in great music. **To achieve any selected educational objective, the quality of repertoire is of paramount importance.**

An assessment of the quality of repertoire which can fulfill the highest objectives of aesthetic education necessitates careful examination of the relationship of text and musical setting. The wealth of choral literature which represents and reflects peoples, cultures, and traditions of all lands and compositional styles of all eras includes much music in which the composer has utilized a sacred text. The term "sacred" refers to all manner of religious belief and not only to the practices of the Judeo-Christian teachings. **It is important that almost all of the significant choral music composed before the 17th century was associated with a sacred text.**

To study and perform music in which the musical setting of a text is artistically accomplished is a highly commendable objective. While public school teaching objectives and criteria for repertoire selection should not include religious indoctrination, the selection of quality repertoire will invariably include within its broad scope music with a sacred text. **To exclude from a public school curriculum all choral music which has religious meaning associated with the text is to severely limit the possibilities of teaching for artistic understanding and responsiveness.** Such an exclusion has as its parallel the study of art without any paintings related to the various religions of the world, the study of literature without mention of the Bible, or the study of architecture without reference to the great temples and cathedrals of the world.

Since choral music with a sacred text comprises such a substantial portion of the artistic repertoire representative of the choral medium and the history of music, it should have an important place in music education. Its study and artistic performance have nothing to do with the First Amendment to the Constitution and the doctrine which advocates separation of Church and State.

*This statement has been endorsed by the
National Board of Directors
of the American Choral Directors Association*

"Education in music is most sovereign because more than anything else rhythm and harmony find their way to the innermost soul and take strongest hold upon it." - Plato

Choir Handbook Form

By signing, I am confirming that I have: read this Handbook, understand the expectations, and am ready to commit to them as a member of Lakeshore Choirs. I am also agreeing to the rehearsals & performances listed in this Handbook. Parents are giving permission for the events in the schedule. Additional information and reminders will be given.

Student Name Printed

Student Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Lakeshore Choirs Publicity Permission

The Lakeshore Choirs occasionally use pictures OR names of students in the Lakeshore Light, the Herald Palladium, and on web sites. We will use pictures OR names, not both. Do you give permission for this?

- Yes, you may use picture OR name for publicity.
- No, please do not use either picture or name for public

Unique to 2021-2022: No Medical Form!

Since we do not have travel plans right now, we do not need medical information at this time. Parents &/or Students, if there is anything else you'd like me to know as we begin this year together, please include that here. Thank You 😊!

Choir T-Shirt/Sweatshirt Order Form

All Lakeshore Middle School choir students need to own the official "Lakeshore Choirs" T-shirt (black with red and white print). These T-shirts are part of the uniform. The T-shirt cost is \$10 (Please contact Mrs. Conrad if you cannot make this purchase.). Hooded black sweatshirts are available for \$30 and are *optional*. The shirts are basic unisex sizes: Youth Medium, Youth Large, Adult Small, Adult Medium, Adult Large, Adult X-Large, 2XLG. Parents, you are welcome to order shirts for yourselves too! Please submit payment with the order (or contact Mrs. Conrad to make other arrangements).

Student name: _____ Grade: _____

Please check the appropriate box(s) and fill in the size desired:

- I am purchasing a T-shirt (\$10), Youth or Adult? _____ Size? _____
- I already have the current choir shirt; it fits and is in good condition.
- I am purchasing a hooded black sweatshirt (\$30), size _____

Choir Parent Volunteer Opportunities

It takes many volunteers for the Choir program to run smoothly. Areas where we may need help are listed below. Please mark any areas in which you might be able to assist us. This information will be given to the Choir Parents Organization. Thank you!

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| _____ Choir Parents Org. meetings | _____ Festival Chaperone (school day) |
| _____ Handing out concert programs | _____ Fundraiser Help during school |
| _____ Sitting with choirs at concerts | _____ Fundraiser Help after school |

Parent Volunteer Name(s) _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Student's Name _____

Please return this form with payment (for T-shirt/sweatshirt) to Mrs. Conrad by:

September 3rd

Please make checks payable to Lakeshore Choirs. Thank You!