

Lone Hill Middle School

Choral Music Department

Choir Handbook



Pursuing Musical Excellence

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www.sandimaschoir.com

Course Description

Rehearsal and performance of choral literature from a variety of musical periods and styles by composers from around the world.

LHMS ENSEMBLES

COURSE TITLE	CHAMBER SINGERS
GRADE LEVEL	7-8
PREREQUISITE	TEACHER APPROVAL/AUDITION
CLASS PERIOD	5 th PERIOD

This is an advanced, audition only mixed choral group for 7th and 8th graders. Students are placed based on spring audition results. This choir work with high caliber music in an enthusiastic, innovative and ambitious rehearsal format.

COURSE TITLE	CHORUS
GRADE LEVEL	7-8
PREREQUISITE	DESIRE TO SING/ABILITY TO SING A MELODY
CLASS PERIOD	6 th PERIOD

This choir is open to all 6th-8th graders; no audition is required. This ensemble focuses on proper vocal technique, choral performance practices, and music theory and history, and it will explore choral literature from all eras and styles. Specific attention is given to music written for changing voices and vocal development.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Music Literacy (Notes, symbols, performance markings, rhythms)
2. Sight-reading (the ability to read a piece at sight without hearing it prior to performance)
3. Voice Development (Changing voices, vocal physiology, vocal health issues)
4. Performance skills (Stage and audience protocol, performance anxiety management)

***In accordance with the California Performing Arts framework, this course incorporates all five component strands in the content standards:**

- Artistic Perception (Reading, writing, and describing Music)
- Creative Expression (Concert Performances)
- Historical and Cultural Context (Studying music from other cultures and historical periods)
- Aesthetic Valuing (Analysis of our performances and the performances of other ensembles)
- Connections, Relationships, Applications (applying what we learn to other subject areas)

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

Positive Attitude

- Cooperates and is willing to try new things
- Is cordial with peers and staff
- Works hard to improve
- Leads others in a positive direction

Commitment and Responsibility

- Regular attendance to class, performances, and extra scheduled rehearsals
- Shows responsibility for uniform upkeep, music, fund-raising items, etc.
- Communicates to solve problems in a timely manner
- Is responsible, respectful, and self-disciplined
- Maintains a high level of academic standards in all courses

CLASSROOM RULES

1. Have your class materials in hand and be on the risers by the tardy bell.
2. No gum, food/drink (besides water), or cell phones allowed during the class period.
3. No profanity, unnecessary talking, or roughhousing/fighting.
4. No public display of affection at any time.
5. Respect yourself, classroom property, and others.

CONSEQUENCES (DISCIPLINE POLICY)

1. Verbal warning
2. Conference after class
3. Parent contact
4. Referral to counselor; parent conference
5. Referral to assistant principal

CLASSROOM PROCEDURES

WHEN YOU ENTER THE ROOM:

1. Enter the room quickly and quietly
2. Read the board for daily announcements and calendar updates
3. Take out your music, folder, a **sharpened pencil with an eraser**, and any other materials you will need during rehearsal
4. Be in your assigned spot, with all materials, **BEFORE** the bell rings and begin your physical warm-up

WHEN REHEARSAL BEGINS:

1. Follow all rules and instructions from your director

AFTER REHEARSAL ENDS:

1. Wait for the instructor to dismiss you (not the bell!)
2. Return all materials to their original place and exit the room in an orderly fashion

USE THE RESTROOM DURING PASSING TIME

- Students may be released to use the restroom during class when it's an emergency.
- Students may be released to go to the restroom at the teachers discretion.
- Excessive restroom use, unless accompanied by a Doctors note, can result in lost participation points for that day.

GRADING POLICY

Music is an academic subject and carries academic credit. All students are expected to study their music, practice, contribute positively to the group, and attend rehearsals and concerts. **Missing a concert is the same as not taking a final exam.** *Failure to participate will result in zero points for the performance and will negatively affect your overall grade.* All grades are based on a total points scale (not weighted).

Students will be evaluated based on assessments, attitude, improvement, and attendance. Every student will be evaluated individually based on the following criteria. Parents are encouraged to consult the director at any time with regards to their student's progress.

SEMESTER GRADING RUBRIC

Attendance at any scheduled event, including performances and rehearsals: 50% of grade

Students are expected to participate in every scheduled event. Choir tours and/or enrichment trips are not mandatory, therefore, do not affect grading.

Preparation and Participation: 25% of grade

Being prepared is: (1) standing on the risers with music folder/ pencil in hand by the sound of the tardy bell, (2) arriving early/on time to all scheduled events and (3) being ready to work hard everyday. Participation is singing/working in class meetings, rehearsals, and performances. Points will be given every day in attendance.

Musicianship: 15% of grade

Students will be evaluated on basic music theory skills, sight-reading, and vocal growth.

Individual Study and Work Ethic: 10% of grade

Involves individual time spent in student/staff run sectionals, and independent music, sight-reading, and music theory study. It also involves attitude and general behaviors.

Grading Percentages:

- 90%-100% = A
- 80%-89% = B
- 70%-79% = C
- 60%-69% = D

DAILY GRADING RUBRIC

Choir is a performance based class and requires participation in daily activities as well as outside performances. The following is a list of the expected behavior required for students to earn daily participation points. (Failure to meet any of these expectations will result in a lowered grade and potential removal from the class.)

When in doubt, “Always come to class with an **Empty Mouth** and an **Open Mind!**”

Classroom Participation: (Includes but is not limited to):

1. Always have required materials before class begins: music, music folder, sight-reading materials, a **sharpened pencil with an eraser**, and extra paper for note taking
2. Always participate enthusiastically during warm-ups and rehearsal
3. Appropriately mark your music when instructed by the director
4. Volunteer to answer questions, sight-read in class, or help with other business
5. Try out for solos when applicable

Behavior (Includes but is not limited to):

1. Be in your assigned spot with all required materials **before** the bell rings.
2. Never have food, drink, or gum in class (except water)
3. Return music in original (or better) condition
4. Exhibit a pleasant, energetic, and disciplined attitude
5. Sit or stand properly, with correct posture for singing
6. Come to class ready to learn and sing
7. Follow all classroom “Rules and Procedures”
8. Show respect for the director, other students, and all materials
9. Leave the drama at the door

Attendance Policy

As a member of the LHMS Choral Department you have an obligation to your fellow choir members to be, at school, at all outside-of-school rehearsals, and at performances on time, prepared, and with all necessary materials. **Poor daily attendance or habitual tardiness will not be tolerated.**

1. All students are expected to have excellent daily attendance at school
2. Attendance at sectionals, rehearsals, and concerts scheduled outside of the regular school day is **required and graded**. Absence from sectionals or additional rehearsals can result in a reduction of grade and possible removal from performance opportunities.

3. Absence from outside-of-class rehearsals and concerts will be **EXCUSED** for the following reasons:
 - Medical emergency or personal injury
 - Death in family
 - Serious illness
 - School conflicts that were scheduled previous to a choir event (provided ample written notification is provided)**
4. Examples of **UNEXCUSED ABSENCES** include but are not limited to:
 - Work
 - Oversleeping
 - Transportation (Dead battery, flat tire, no gas, missed bus, no ride, etc)
 - Babysitting
 - Tutoring
 - Routine Dr. Appt.
 - Personal/Family Vacation
 - Disneyland
 - Any school activity conflict when proper notification is not provided**
5. You must contact Mr. Pugh in writing (email preferred) if you are going to miss an outside-of -school rehearsal or performance for any reason

CONSEQUENCES

Failure to follow the attendance policy as listed above will result in the following:

Grade reduction: Any student who has an **UNEXCUSED ABSENCE** from a dress rehearsal or major concert will automatically have their grade lowered one (1) letter grade. If a student misses both a dress rehearsal and a concert within the same grading period (quarter) they will be unable to receive any grade above a C- (70%) regardless of their grade previous to the absences. (Please review the list of **UNEXCUSED ABSENCES** above for clarification and use the calendar listed in this handbook to avoid any conflicts)

Students who miss any rehearsal or performance with an **EXCUSED ABSENCE** will still be required to make-up the points that they would have received should they have been at the rehearsal or concert. You will find detailed make-up work information listed below. If work is completed and turned in per the guidelines listed below no grade reduction will occur.

For information about tour participation and grades please see the “Tour” section.

Loss of performance status: Students who are frequently tardy or absent for any reason (excused or unexcused) may have their performance status revoked. Students who have any combination of five (5) or more unexcused absences or tardies within a quarter will meet with the director and be given an attendance contract. Any student who does not fulfill their attendance contract will have their performance status temporarily revoked. Students will be given “book” work to do in class in lieu of rehearsing and will complete research-based papers for every concert/performance that they are unprepared to perform in. Students will only be permitted to rejoin the ensemble when attendance has improved and they pass a part test on all choral material that the class is currently working on. If attendance does not improve students will not be permitted to perform with the ensemble for the rest of the academic term and will be dropped from the class at the semester.

MAKE UP WORK

Dress Rehearsal/Concert: If a student has an **EXCUSED ABSENCE** from a dress rehearsal or concert they may complete one of the following make-up assignments. If a student chooses not to

complete the make-up work their **EXCUSED ABSENCE** will become **UNEXCUSED**. Their grade will automatically be dropped two letter grades. Total points can only be earned if make-up work is turned in by the deadline provided and is complete and accurate. It is your responsibility to get your make-up work completed and turned in. I will not remind you.

- a) Choose two (2) contrasting concert pieces (from the missed program) and write a three (3) page essay comparing and contrasting them. The paper must include information about the composers, musical time periods, style, texture (homophony, polyphony, etc), text, and any other significant details that make the pieces similar and different. The paper must also include a bibliography and must list at least three different sources. Prepare a 3-5 minute presentation to be given in front of the class and bring in at least two (2) recordings of each song to demonstrate important similarities and differences between the songs.
- b) Select one famous composer from a list provided by Mr. Pugh. Read an approved biography on the composer's life and works. Then write a three (3) page essay describing the composer, his/her most well known works, greatest influences, and overall impact on music history. Provide concrete details from the biography to back up these assertions. Prepare a 3-5 minute presentation to be given in front of the class and bring in at least two musical examples of the composers most well known works to be played for the class. Also include at least two (2) musical examples of the composers who influenced him/her and who he/she influenced. Be ready to explain the musical elements that can be heard in all of the listening examples.
- c) Perform, for the class, all of the music on the concert program. In addition to the student evaluations that your peers will complete, complete an individual evaluation (guidelines will be provided for you). Write a three (3) page paper describing your preparation for the concert. Be sure to include information about your attendance, in class participation, memorization, sectional rehearsals, language issues, range and rhythm difficulties, if any, and a detailed description of how your voice part affects the overall pieces.

All papers must be: 12pt. Arial font, single-spaced, with one inch margins (no headers).

Unexcused absences cannot be made up, no exceptions

PERFORMANCE ELIGIBILITY

Choir is a performance-based ensemble that often requires time outside of class. Often festivals, workshops and other performing opportunities even occur during the school day requiring students to miss other academic classes. For this reason it is essential that students maintain a minimum GPA to ensure performance eligibility. The following describes the LHMS Choir Performance Eligibility Policy.

Academic: Students must maintain a passing grade in ALL academic classes and a minimum 2.0 GPA in order to be eligible for choral performances outside of the class period. If a student's grade in any class drops below passing it is up to that teacher and Mr. Pugh to determine whether or not they will be permitted to participate in any activity that may conflict with that particular class.

Behavior: As a member of the choral department at LHMS you are expected to set a positive example on campus. You are, at all times, representing yourself, this program, the director, and the school. If you are caught participating in any activity that is seen as unbecoming, your status in the choral department will be in jeopardy. A meeting with the director will be scheduled to discuss your future participation (if any) in the ensemble. **Any activity that is seen as threatening in any way will not be tolerated.**

Tour Eligibility: As with all Lone Hill activities, the student members of our ensembles represent San Dimas High School and the student body. As a school representative, all singers are to display good

academic performance and exemplary behavior inside and outside the rehearsal space. To be eligible for an extra-curricular trip, students must have a current GPA of 2.0 or higher on the most recent grade report and no F's.

If a student has a behavior violation on campus that requires Detention, Saturday School, Suspension of any kind, etc that overlaps with a choir activity, that student will not be permitted to participate.

PERFORMANCE PARTICIPATION

Full points can only be earned for performances if the student:

1. Is on time for the warm-up
2. Is in proper concert attire
3. Acts appropriately as a performer and audience member before, during, and after the concert

Remember: LHMS choir members are always expected to behave appropriately and represent the Choral Department, as well as the greater LHMS community. Failure to do so will result in a lowered grade in addition to potential removal from the LHMS Choral Program.

Fundraising

Participation: Students can, and will, be required to attend/participate in fundraising events throughout the school year but they cannot be required to raise funds nor can they be excluded from an educational activity if they do not.

Student Accounts: Choir cannot maintain individual accounts for students. All monies earned from fundraising activities will go into one "choir" account.

Donations: Donations are not only accepted they are encouraged!

Field Trip(s)/Tour: This includes Disneyland/Tour, etc. As always, any student who wishes to participate in an outside activity regardless of their ability to pay will be allowed to attend. Finances are NEVER a reason to miss out an activity.

Outfits: Students will still need performance attire for formal concerts and festivals. Detailed information about outfits for the school year can be found in the "Concert Dress" section. Students who wish to purchase their outfits may do so, otherwise you will be provided with an outfit that must be returned to the LHMS Choral Department at the end of the school year.

No permanent alterations can be made to loaned outfits.

TOUR POLICY

Tour: Tour can be an exciting and educational experience where students get the opportunity to travel to new places, learn more about choir and other fine arts, bond with classmates, meet and hear other choirs from around the country, and make music in a variety of venues. In the past, total participation from the entire group has been mandatory in order for an ensemble to go on tour. While I prefer that every student participate in the tour, unavoidable conflicts exist. **Because the main focus of any tour is educational and musical, a balanced ensemble is absolutely necessary.** In order for any group to go on tour at least 80% of each section must participate. This means that not only must 80% of the entire ensemble participate but; 80% of each section (soprano, alto, tenor, bass, etc) must participate. Without a balanced ensemble there is no reason to go on tour.

Tour Eligibility: As with all San Dimas activities, the student members of our ensembles represent San Dimas High School and the student body. As a school representative, all singers are to display good sportsmanship and exemplary behavior on and off the competitive field. To be eligible for an extra-curricular trip, students must have a current GPA of 2.0 or higher on the most recent grade report.

No student will be denied the opportunity to participate due to financial constraints. Please contact Mr. Pugh ASAP to discuss possible payment options (payment schedule, sponsorship, fundraising, reduced payments, etc).

*More specific information regarding tour will be sent home in the coming weeks.

Concert Dress

Students are not required to purchase their own outfit but it is **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED**. Students who wish to keep their concert attire or make any alterations to it must purchase the outfit. Sizing for outfits will take place in class in September. **No permanent alterations can be made to loaned outfits.**

Any student who is not dressed appropriately for any performance will not be allowed to participate in that performance. The student will be marked with an unexcused absence for that performance and grading will be effected accordingly. The decision to enforce this is at the discretion of Mr. Pugh.

Choir T-Shirts and Sweatshirts will be available for sale.

All Women: Black and white dress or skirts* and black closed toe-shoes*

All Men: Black dress slacks*, black dress shoes*, and white collared dress shirt

All * items singers will need to provide for themselves all underlined items will be ordered for each singer

Choralairs: Will need to purchase a Choir Shirt to be used in informal performances

Informal Performance Attire: There may be occasions where the choir wears an informal uniform (choir T-shirt and jeans). In such instances, each student is expected to wear the prescribed clothing and dress in a dignified manner.

All Women: Hair must be pulled out of face. Bobby pinned or clipped. No jewelry, except stud earrings or assigned jewelry for selected groups.

Parent Involvement

Lone Hill Middle School has a history of musical excellence that has always been supported by the surrounding community. Now, more than ever, we need your help. Parents and family members who are interested in helping the Lone Hill Middle School Choral Department can do so in a variety of ways. Whether you want to help order and distribute choir outfits, chaperone events, help set-up or tear down concerts, print programs, serve on a committee, or make a donation, please share your interest on the form provided at the end of this handbook.

Communication

As the choral department continues to grow and expand it is imperative that communication between the school, the parents, the students, and the director is as simple and up to date as possible. In order to ensure that everyone has access to this information I maintain a website exclusively for the parents and students of the San Dimas High School and Lone Hill Middle School choirs. The website (www.sandimaschoir.com) will include downloadable versions of choir forms including the choir handbook, calendar, tour and fundraiser information, permission slips, etc. The website will also include up to date information about concerts, fundraisers, choir bios, musical examples and rehearsal recordings as well as a google calendar that has all of the dates for both the SDHS and LHMS choirs for the school year. You can even subscribe to it if you use a google calendar at home. This website will be my main form of communication. I recommend that each family bookmark this web address

and “Follow” the website so that you can stay up to date on everything the San Dimas Choirs are doing. As always, I can also be reached at my district email address j.pugh@bonita.k12.ca.us.

REMIND (TEXT-MESSAGING SERVICE)

In an effort to make sure that all students/parents have the most up-to-date information possible I will again be using *Remind* to send text reminders to students. This service is free to you and will allow me to send updates and reminders to all the students. This along with the choir website **sandimaschoirs.com** will be the main avenue of communication I use. Please read the information below about how to sign up. It is super-fast and easy. You just need your cell phone. Text “81010” and in the message write:

Remind

LH Choralairs: @lhtreble

LH Treble: @lhchor

All codes are lower case and contain no spaces. If the code isn’t exact it won’t work. If you have used *Remind* before it will recognize your phone number and you are done, if not, it will prompt you to add your first and last name, this is what displays when you register so please use your full name and not a nickname.

A NOTE FROM MR. PUGH

As a member of the choir, you belong to one of the school’s most important and successful organizations. Not only are you respected in your own community, but throughout California (and beyond) as well. You will be called upon several times this year to represent San Dimas High School and Lone Hill Middle School by singing at public events. We are confident that, as a representative who is proud of his/her school and who wants the school to be proud of him/her, you will do your best to display the highest type of conduct and appearance. Any organization, in order to function well, requires teamwork. To operate as a team, each individual member must be loyal and willing to cooperate; he/she must think of the good of the choir and not just his/her own interests, and he/she must be willing to put forth his/her best effort at all times and work hard to achieve success for the team. We challenge each of you to be this kind of choir member.