



www.tigermusic.org/choir

Choral Music Handbook

2010-2011

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Vision Statement

The Marple Newtown High School (MNHS) Choral Department enjoys a rich tradition of musical excellence based on high musical standards. Our commitment for the 2010-2011 school year is to become a visible performing ensemble throughout the Greater Philadelphia Area involving more than 150 students from the Marple Newtown High School, whereby corporate and individual excellence is displayed at each performance venue.

Mission Statement

The MNHS Choral Department will provide opportunities for each student to develop artistic expression, individual responsibility, personal integrity, and sense of community through the teaching of lifetime musical skills. Equally important is the desire to create an atmosphere in which the student, as an individual, can develop worthwhile characteristics within their own personality. Students will have the opportunity to improve individual vocal technique, music theory and sight-reading skills. Students who participate in choir will learn life-long singing skills that can be helpful for future roles in musicals and other events sponsored by the MN School District. Students will also learn challenging choral literature in a variety of musical styles using genres from various cultures and historical music time periods.

This handbook is designed to introduce you to MNHS Choral tradition of excellence and to provide you with valuable information regarding grading policies, eligibility, uniforms, fees, fundraising, trips and calendar events. As the year advances, any additions or changes will be provided to you via our website at www.tigermusic.org. We are excited about the opportunity that awaits us in the 2010-2011 school year. Thank you for your support of music education at MNHS. It is our privilege to have you as a valued part of our choral family.

Marple Newtown Choir Association

The Marple Newtown Choir Association is open to any parent or community member in the school district who wishes to promote the choir's tradition of excellence. All families are encouraged to join the Association by paying the membership's annual dues of \$15 per family. All members are given the privilege of voting during all meetings, and help plan activities to promote the goals of the choirs. For more information on this group, please log onto their website at www.tigermusic.org/choir/ChoirAssociation.

Calendar of Events

other events to be scheduled and posted on the choir website

September 2010

7th – 10th Concert Choir Auditions
9th NO SCHOOL – RELIGIOUS HOLIDAY
14th Choir Association Executive Board 7 PM
16th First Select Choir Rehearsal 5-7 PM
17th Forms and Fees Due!

October 2010

11th NO SCHOOL – RELIGIOUS HOLIDAY
18th – 22nd PMEA preliminary auditions for District XII Choir
19th UNIFORM FITTING from 6-8 in the choir room
19th Choir Association General Board Meeting 7:30 PM (exec. 6:45)

November 2010

16th Choir Association Executive Board 7 PM
20th PMEA District XII Auditions – 8 AM
25th – 28th No School – Thanksgiving Holiday

December 2010

14th Choir Association Executive Board 7 PM
20th Winter Concert 7:30 PM Report 6:30
24th – Jan 2nd Winter Recess

January 2011

4th Choir Resumes
11th Choir Association Executive Board 6:30 and General Mtg. 7 PM
13th – 15th PMEA District XII Choral Festival

February 2011

8th Choir Association Executive Board 7 PM **MANDATORY TRIP MEETING**
16th – 21st Choir Trip to Memphis, TN - **Depart 8 PM**
24th - 26th PMEA Region VI Choral Festival

March 2011

2nd Spring Concert (report time 6:00 PM)
8th Choir Association Executive Board 7 PM

April 2011

16th-24th Spring Recess
23rd Choir Association Exec. Board 6:30 PM and Annual General Meeting 7:30 PM
30th Cabaret Dinner at Marple Presbyterian Church.- 6 -9 PM

May 2011

11th Spring Concert at Paxon Hollow Middle School 7:00 PM (report time 5:30)
15th Choir Association Executive Board 7 PM at Paxon Hollow with 8th Grade

June 2011

8th Choir Awards Banquet – Paxon Hollow Country Club 5-9PM
16th Commencement – Report Time 5PM

August 2011

9th – 11th Choir CAMP 8am-Noon Tues. through Thurs. **REQUIRED FOR ALL**

Eligibility

All students in the Marple Newtown High School are encouraged to further their aural, social, and performance skills by joining the MNHS Choir. The **CHORALE** shall be open to all students without audition and shall perform a Winter and Spring Concert. **CONCERT CHOIR** shall be open to all students by audition only. Student selected into this choir will be eligible for the annual Spring Trip and will perform at both the Winter and Spring concert as well as various other school and community events as scheduled. Admittance to the **SELECT CHOIR** is by annual audition only, and students must be part of either the **CHORALE** or the **CONCERT CHOIR**. Auditions for the Select Choir will be held during the last two weeks of school in June and on an as-needed basis during the current school year. The Pennsylvania Music Educators Association (PMEA) offers students of the MNHS Choral Department the privilege to audition for the District XII combined choir. Students who wish to audition must speak to Mr. Vogel about a preliminary audition time, have a passing grade in chorus, and be able to sing a variety of choral literature, including religious works. Preliminary auditions will be held at MNHS during the month of October. Both the Select Choir and the PMEA choir are open to students in grades 10-12. All outside performances are subject to a passing grade in each of his/her classes.

Select Choir

Select Choir is open to all students by audition each spring. Students must be part of the Chorale or Concert Choir to audition. Select Choir represents the School throughout the community by traveling to different locations each semester to perform. The Select Choir performs at the Winter and Spring concerts as well as on the annual Spring trip in addition to other community performances. This choir rehearses from 4-5:30 pm once per week on Thursday. Additional uniform purchase is required.

Aleatoric

The Marple Newtown High School offers an option for singers to perform original and arranged versions of popular songs in an a cappella style. Students are selected to perform through audition each spring. Students who are selected into Aleatoric must commit to outside practice time on a weekly basis. Many rehearsals take place outside of school and are student led. The group has oversight provided by the Director of Choral Music.

Attendance and Performance Requirements

Performance is a requirement for all MNHS Choir members and is a factor in grading policy [see below]. Make note of all scheduled performances and extra rehearsals. All concerts and rehearsals will be announced well in advance. Dates that are added to the calendar or changed will be sent out to you as soon as possible. Students are responsible for all announcements posted on the choir bulletin board and on the MNHS music department website (www.tigermusic.org). If a student misses a rehearsal and is not reported as being absent from the school office, their grade will be lowered by 5 points. Students who arrive late to a rehearsal will receive a reduction of 2 points. A student must be in attendance at school the day of an event in order to participate in the concert/event that same night. Students who are unable to attend the concert due to illness must have a doctor's note within 5 days and will be required to do a listening project and paper to make up the missed concert. A concert shall be defined as any performance outside the school day. Any conflicts should be submitted in writing a minimum of 10 days prior to the event. The Director of Choral Music, on an individual basis, will determine absence classification [excused/unexcused]. Lack of transportation is not an excuse for missing a rehearsal or concert. Help classes and detentions are not excused. More than two unexcused absences are grounds for dismissal from the Concert Choir. Consideration will be given for extenuating circumstances. All requests for excused absence must be submitted on the REQUEST FOR EXCUSED ABSENCE form. Forms may be found online and in the choir room.

Daily Attendance

Attendance for all events will be taken either through an automated scanning system or by paper and pencil. All students must have their barcode to scan in for each rehearsal and performance. Students may only scan their own barcode. Anyone who scans an alternate or additional barcode will be subject to immediate disciplinary action up to and including removal from all music department activities. Scanning a barcode that is not your own is considered cheating and will be dealt with accordingly. You are responsible for your own attendance, no one else's.

Daily attendance is worth a total of 5 points per rehearsal. 2 points will be deducted for late arrival and 5 points will be deducted for each skipped rehearsal. A skipped rehearsal is defined as a missed rehearsal whereas the student comes to school before 9 AM and does not have a doctor's note, does not come to choir, and has not filled out the proper rehearsal excusal form for help class.

Help class should be avoided on days when there is choir rehearsal. Help class times that do not conflict would include after school, during lunch and during days which the alternate choir meets. Going to help class is not an excused absence unless the form has been submitted a minimum of 2 days in advance. Lack of transportation is not an excuse for missing a rehearsal or concert. Help classes and detentions are not excused. More than two unexcused absences are grounds for dismissal from the Concert Choir. Consideration will be given for extenuating circumstances.

Grading

Your grade is determined by a combination of the following

1. **Performance Tests.** These may be over solfege, rhythm, or a song rehearsed in class. Most often these will be performed in small groups. These may or may not be announced in advance.
2. **Rehearsal/Concert Performance.**[see Performance requirements above]
3. **Class Participation.** This area of your grade comes from your daily demonstration of performance techniques learned in class.

Conflict Policy

When you are involved in an activity that is conflicting with a choir rehearsal or performance the following criteria should be used:

<i>Choir:</i>	<i>Other Activity:</i>	<i>What you should do:</i>
Rehearsal	Meeting/Practice	Split Overlap Time evenly
Rehearsal	Game/Match	Go to Game or Match
Concert	Meeting/Practice	Go to Concert
Concert	Game/Match	Go to Concert

Rehearsal Expectations

1. Obey all MNHS rules/regulations as expressed in the student handbook issued by the Marple Newtown School District.
2. Be in assigned seat with your folder and pencil ready to sing at 7:05 am!
3. Leave all belongings in designated areas. Return folder and pencil to folder slot.
4. Be attentive to the Director of Choral Music's instructions at all times.
5. Raise hand if you have a question.
6. Class will be dismissed by the teacher, not the bell.
7. Be respectful and courteous to others at all times. Respect the rights, feelings, and property of others. Keep your hands, feet, comments, and objects to yourself.
8. **DO NOT** Play the Piano.
9. No gum, candy, food, drinks or "foreign objects" permissible during class, rehearsals or concerts. This includes breakfast foods. Water bottles are permitted.
10. **STAND LIKE CHAMPIONS!!** Proper singing position is required when singing, standing or sitting.
11. The choir classroom is not for personal grooming.
12. There will be **NO BULLYING TOLERATED.** You are here to learn and not to make criticisms.

Consequences

Consequences for actions deemed in appropriate may include any of the following (in no particular order).

1. Warning and counseling with teacher.
2. Detention, parent contact, lowered grade.
3. Detention, parent contact, lowered grade and discipline referral.
4. GUM = AUTOMATIC DETENTION

If a student fails to report to detention, his/her time will be doubled unless he/she has an excused absence. Major offenses will be immediately referred to the office. Detentions will be held on Thursdays from 2:35-3:30. It is the responsibility of the student for his/her transportation after a detention.

Uniforms and Materials

All MNHS Choir students are required to pay an the \$10.00 annual uniform fee. This fee provides for the dry cleaning of uniform accessories and helps defray the cost of replacement purchases. Students are also required to have a pressed and laundered tuxedo shirt at each performance along with appropriate white undergarments, black tuxedo pants for gentlemen and black palazzo pants for ladies. All choir members should have black formal closed toe shoes without any printing or design and should be appropriately polished before performances. Choir members will need black socks/hose. All students will be assigned a performance attire accessory and are responsible for the replacement fee of \$45.00 for vests, \$25.00 for ladies black blouse and \$15.00 fee for each cummerbund/bowtie set that is not returned in an acceptable condition by the next school day immediately following our last performance.

Students will be assigned a school issued folder and music. Students will need 2 pencils for class. They will remain in their assigned folder slot. Students are encouraged to take their folder out of the choir room to practice at home providing the folder is always available for class/rehearsals. Students should never mark in their folder or music using ink or some type of marker. Lost or badly damaged music/folders will be assessed a fee of \$3.00 per damaged or unreturned song and a \$5.00 fee for damaged or unreturned choir folders.

Uniform Fees/Supplies are Due by September 17th.

Fundraising

Make Checks payable to **MNMPA-Choir**. Please place money in a clearly marked envelope including student's name and amount. All money should be turned in on a daily basis and placed in the choir deposit box next to Mr. Vogel's office. While the Marple Newtown School District provides financial support, the MNHS Choir Department sponsors various fundraisers to help offset the costs of a tradition of excellence.

- A. Profits from these activities provide for non-budget department needs as determined by the Director of Choral Music. A portion of profits may be applied to the student's trip account or help defray the cost of uniform purchases in the form of a sponsorship.
- B. Profits from the fundraiser are not refundable or transferable.
- C. A portion of the funds raised throughout the year shall include the dues for the Marple Newtown Choir Association.
- D. Parents and community members may at any time make a donation to the Marple Newtown Choir Association instead of participating in the fundraiser.

Financial Need

Students and Families with financial need may apply to the Marple Newtown Choir Association for assistance in paying fees associated with the choral program. Assistance is given confidentially between the treasurer and the family in consultation with the Director of Choral Music. Financial assistance may be requested for any expense. All monies must be paid back to the Marple Newtown Choir Association either through specific fundraising opportunities or by cash or check by the graduation of the student. Each application will be assessed on an individual basis and is not a guarantee for future assistance.

Forms

Please make every effort throughout the year to return requested signatures on all forms on or before their due date. There will be one general permission form for choir activities throughout the school year. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to inform the choir Director of Choral Music of any change in the medical condition of a student and to promptly fill out an updated Health History Form and to fill out a MNSD Self Administer/Self Carry Medication form for EACH medication necessary. MNHS Choir will adhere to the Marple Newtown School District "no alcohol/drug use" policy for all students.

Choir Camp

The Marple Newtown Choir holds an annual summer camp to kick off the school year. The camp is sponsored by the Marple Newtown Choir Association and involves performances by professional musicians, extended music learning time and welcome activities. The Camp takes place the second week of August (Tuesday through Thursday); On Tuesday and Thursday from 8AM to Noon and on Wednesday from 8-10AM with an optional Trip to NYC to see a Broadway performance. The choir arrives home around 8PM that night from the day trip. All students are highly encouraged to attend the camp as it provides a jump start to the year, allows new students to network before the entire student body assembles in September, and provides a foundation for the learning necessary for Concert Choir auditions each fall.

Trips and Payments

The Marple Newtown Choir Association sponsors an annual trip for the Choir. These trips take place during a combination of curricular and extra curricular hours. The trip is a privilege and not a right. To be eligible, students must:

- a. have a GPA of 80 or above
- b. not be failing any class
- c. no discipline referrals within 60 days of the trip
- d. all monetary obligations must be current
- e. music must be memorized for trip performances
- f. no teacher concerns about missed class time

Fundraising will be made available to all students to cover a majority of the trip cost in the form of sponsorships. Any money raised by that student must be used by that student or turned into the general operating budget of the Marple Newtown Choir Association. No cash will be given to any student for fundraising efforts. Payments will be broken up as follows: Deposit (refundable within one month); First Payment, Second Payment, Final Payment. No refunds will be given after the initial deposit period has ended. Trip costs are fixed based on group size. If you are unable to go and a replacement person cannot be found, you will be responsible for 100 percent of the actual cost to the Marple Newtown Choir Association.

Officer Positions

The Marple Newtown Choir has a core of student leaders that help organize and run daily and special activities in choir. Officers are chosen for the beginning of each school year through an audition process. Student leaders must not have a discipline record from the current school year from which they are applying, must not be unexcused absent or late during the second semester in which they are applying, and must show evidence of leadership and teamwork throughout the current school year. All students applying to be an officer candidate must fill out the necessary application that may be obtained through the Director of Choral Music. Students will be chosen based on student and teacher recommendation. All positions will be ultimately chosen by the Director of Choral Music in a manner in which is the best fit for the choir.

Roles of Offices

Each officer is chosen for a very specific duty. At times, officers may help each other out, but the specific duties listed below are the ultimate responsibility of the chosen officer.

- A. **President** – the primary job of the President is to oversee all of the officers, making sure that all jobs are completed accurately and on time. The President shall be in charge of calling all meetings of the officers and meeting frequently with the Director of Choral Music to help carry out the goals of the choir.
- B. **Vice President** – The Vice President shall be responsible for supporting the President and provide oversight for all Concerts throughout the year. The Vice President shall be responsible for doing uniform compliance checks and shall help with any needs of the choir upon request.
- C. **Student Conductor** – The student conductor shall assist with warming up the choir during all rehearsals and performances. The student conductor shall be given the opportunity to conduct at least one song during the spring concert.
- D. **Secretary** – Each official meeting of the officers shall have minutes documented by the secretary. The secretary shall be the person responsible for helping with daily attendance in homeroom. Any official correspondence from the officers shall be handled by the secretary and approved through the President and then the Director of Choral Music.
- E. **Soprano/Alto Section Leader** – The combined membership of the Soprano and Alto sections of the choir shall be led by this person. It is the responsibility of this person (in consultation with the Director of Choral Music) to suggest areas of needed improvement and schedule outside rehearsals (at least one per marking period) to add refinement to the choral sound.
- F. **Tenor/Bass Section Leader** – The combined membership of the Tenor and Bass sections of the choir shall be led by this person. It is the responsibility of this person (in consultation with the Director of Choral Music) to suggest areas of needed improvement and schedule outside rehearsals (at least one per marking period) to add refinement to the choral sound.