



www.tigermusic.org/choir
www.CharmsOffice.com

Choral Music Handbook

Mr. Christopher Vogel, Director of Choral Music
HSchoir@tigermusic.org (610) 359-4238

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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 each school year is to become a visible performing ensemble throughout the Greater Philadelphia Area involving more than 100 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 Charms website. We are excited about the opportunities that await us in this 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 the website at www.tigermusic.org

Charms

Charms is a software package purchased by the Marple Newtown Choir Parents Association to make communication easier. This website provides a level of parent and student communication that is organized, up-to-date, and easy to use. Every parent or student in our choir is able to access the calendar, print handouts, view the handbook, check on finances, pay for fees and, maintain practice logs, record auditions and tests, maintain your own name, address, phone, email address, etc. Parents can also see whether that permission slip, health form, or a handout acknowledgement actually made it back to the office. Here is how to get started:

- Log onto www.charmsoffice.com.
- In the Parent/Student Login type: **TigerMusicChoir**
- In the **Password** Field, for students it is your **student ID Number**. For Chaperones of trip it is your Home Phone Number.
- On the far right, click password. Make it something you can remember.
- Then Click Student Info, and please correct and update.

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the Charms Office Assistant interface. The page title is "Update Student Detail - Brittany Zembower". The form contains the following information:

Student ID	5998086749	Sex	F
First Name	Brittany	Locker	#32 2-4-30 Combination
Middle Name		Birthdate	5/29/1993
Last Name	Zembower	Primary Group	2010-2011 Husky Band
Address	127 Big Oak Band	Other Groups	Brass Jazz Ensemble 1 Leadership Council Wind Ensemble
City, St Zip	Chuluota FL 32766	Instrument/Part:	Marching: Baritone Concert: Baritone Jazz: Keyboard
Phone	407-365-9999 Cell 407-625-9999	Email 2	
Cell Carrier	Select Carrier		

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 choir shall be open to all students without audition and shall 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. Students may be selected for admittance in the Select Choir without being part of the choir class, however, preference will be given to students of equal ability that are already enrolled in the class. 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 before and after school on selected days. Additional uniform purchase is required. A \$125 participation fee will be assessed to all members of this performing ensemble to help defray the cost of music, choreographer and additional uniform purchases.

Aleatoric

The Marple Newtown High School Choir Parents offer an option for singers to perform original and arranged versions of popular songs in an acapella 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. A \$50 participation fee may be assessed to all members of this performing ensemble to help defray the cost of 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 Charms website. 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 recording 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 Select Choir and/or Aleatoric. 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 at the end of this handbook.

Daily Attendance

Attendance for all events will be taken either through an automated scanning system. 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.

Chaperones

Any parent or guardian wishing to chaperone or help with events pertaining to the choral program must first be deemed eligible by the Marple Newtown School District as set forth by PA State Law. Information for volunteers and chaperones can be found on the school district website (www.mnsd.org). The **original clearance paperwork** must be submitted to the Director of Choral music, who will then forward it on for approval by the Marple Newtown School District. At time of approval, a copy will be made and the original documents will be returned to the parent. For a full list of procedures, please read the policy on the school district website.

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. They may be live, in class, or as an assignment on Charms.
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 the bell!
3. Electronic Devices should be turned OFF. Students are not permitted to use any electronic device from the beginning bell through the end bell. Students' phones will be taken until the end of the day if they are in use during any part of the choir rehearsal.
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 the \$15.00 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 \$50.00 for vests, \$30.00 for ladies black blouse a \$20.00 fee for each cumberbund/bowtie set, and \$125.00 for any select choir dress or tuxedo 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. Students must bring the choir folders to class each day, and are encouraged to take them home to practice. 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 30th.

Fundraising and Fees

An Activity Fee is due for all members of the choral program. This fee is payable to the Marple Newtown School District and is established by the School Board. This Activity Fee does not include any Marple Newtown Choir Fees for uniforms, sprit wear, PMEA audition fees/music, rehearsal meals, field trips, etc..

It is the policy of the Marple Newtown Music Parents Association that no child be excluded due to financial concerns. If a student needs assistance, please communicate with the director to make appropriate arrangements. The MNCPA APPLICATION FOR FINANCIAL AID is available for assisting students in need.

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 located on the choir room wall. 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 using the Application for Financial Aid Form 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 as well as 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, allowing new students to network before the entire student body assembles in September. The cost of choir camp is \$30.00

Trips and Payments

The Marple Newtown Choir Association sponsors an annual trip for the Choir. This trip takes 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. **Historian** – Each official meeting of the officers shall have minutes documented by the Historian. The Historian shall be the person responsible for helping with daily attendance in class. Throughout the year, the Historian shall take photographs and videos of official choir events to leave documentation of the choir’s performances and activities. The Historian shall provide the end of the year video or slideshow for the annual banquet.
- E. **Librarian** – The librarian shall be in charge of passing out and collecting all music, scanning music in and out of charms and keeping the music library neat and orderly at all times.
- F. **Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass Section Leaders** – The combined membership each the Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass sections of the choir shall be led by a section leader respective to the voice part of that leader. It is the responsibility of each leader (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.

MNCPA APPLICATION FOR FINANCIAL AID

A limited amount of financial aid is available from the Marple Newtown Choir Parents Association (MNCPA) to assist students who might otherwise be unable to participate in the Choral Program due to financial constraints. Any current or incoming student may apply for financial aid by completing this form and agreeing to the requirements outlined below. All applications will be reviewed by a committee of the MNCPA Executive Board with names removed. All forms shall be held in a strict confidential nature by the Director of Choral Music. Financial Aid Applications may be submitted throughout the year, with no deadline. Applicants will be notified of the MNCPA's decision within 30 days of submittal. Financial Aid may be awarded in the form of a scholarship, extended payment opportunity or a combination of both.

REQUIREMENTS

Financial aid recipient students/families must:

- 1) Consistently be passing all classes on progress reports and report cards.
- 2) Be a member in good standing of the Choral Program with consistent attendance of all required choir events, rehearsals & performances throughout the year.
- 3) Participate in and raise funds for the MNCPA throughout the year.
- 4) Sign up and participate as a parent/guardian volunteer in at least one area of choir support.
- 5) Complete this application form including the one-page student essay and submit.

Student ID #
Parents/Guardians First Names
Home Address
Home Phone
Email Contact

Parent: Please explain on the back of this page (or attach a separate page) why you need financial assistance with choir fees. Also indicate the area in which you are most interested in volunteering (see back of this page.)

Student: Please attach a one-page essay describing your previous choir experience, your goals as a member of the Choir and reasons why you are deserving of the MNCPA's investment in you with financial aid. (Your essay must be neat and legible; typing/word processing is preferred.)

Financial Aid Agreement:

I understand that any financial aid awarded to me by the MNCPA is based on my fulfillment of the above requirements. If at any point during the school year I do not meet the expectations of this contract, my family will be held responsible for 100% of the financial aid to be repaid.

Student Signature/Date:
Parents/Guardians Signatures/Date:

Marple Newtown Choir

REHEARSAL REQUEST FOR EXCUSED ABSENCE

Because it is so important to the entire group that every student be at every rehearsal we use this form to record all absences BEFORE THE ABSENCE TAKES PLACE. All members are reminded that absences put an added burden on the entire group. Please remember that it is impossible to make up a practice or performance! As per that attendance policy, work and lack of transportation cannot be requested as an excused absence.

THIS FORM IS DUE IN THE DIRECTOR OF CHORAL MUSIC ONE WEEK PRIOR TO A REQUEST TO MISS A REHEARSAL.

FORM TURN IN DATE: _____

STUDENT NAME: _____ **STUDENT ID NUMBER:** _____

DATE(S) TO BE MISSED _____

This form is being turned in before the absence: YES NO

REASON FOR MISSING

APPROVED

NOT APPROVED

Director Signature

Director Signature

Work Assignment: _____

Due Date (not flexible) _____

Student Signature _____

Marple Newtown Choir

PERFORMANCE REQUEST FOR EXCUSED ABSENCE

Because it is so important to the entire group that every student be at every PERFORMANCE we use this form to record all absences BEFORE THE ABSENCE TAKES PLACE. All members are reminded that absences put an added burden on the entire group. Please remember that it is impossible to make up a practice or performance! As per that attendance policy, work and lack of transportation cannot be requested as an excused absence.

THIS FORM IS DUE IN THE DIRECTOR OF CHORAL MUSIC THREE WEEKS PRIOR TO A REQUEST TO MISS A PERFORMANCE.

FORM TURN IN DATE: _____

STUDENT NAME: _____ **STUDENT ID NUMBER:** _____

DATE(S) TO BE MISSED _____

This form is being turned in before the absence: YES NO

REASON FOR MISSING

APPROVED	NOT APPROVED
_____ Director Signature	_____ Director Signature
Work Assignment: _____ _____	
Due Date (not flexible) _____	
Student Signature _____	

Acknowledgement of Marple Newtown Choir Handbook Policies and Procedures

School Year _____

Student ID # _____

I acknowledge that I have read the Choir Handbook (rev. 6/2015) and understand the expectations, guidelines, financial commitments and requirements of the course. I have also studied the calendar and am aware of my responsibilities with mandatory events. I acknowledge it is my responsibility to check the calendar provided on Charms on a weekly basis, and to keep all personal information including email addresses and phone numbers current and accurate.

_____ Student's Printed Name

_____ Student's Signature

_____ Date

I have read the Choir Handbook and understand the requirements and financial commitments of the course. I acknowledge that my child's responsibilities for Choir are posted on the Charms calendar and that I will keep the information in my child's Charms account current and accurate.

_____ Parent/Guardian Printed Name

_____ Parent/Guardian Signature

_____ Date

**Additional discretionary expenses may be incurred for optional spirit wear, trips, and other optional items. Payment for these items must be made upon ordering/commitment.*

A signed form must be on file with the Director of Choral Music for student to be eligible for all trips, performances, fundraisers and events outside of the school day.