



Brookfield Central Choirs

Course Handbook, Syllabus & Guidelines

2023-2024



Mrs. Allison Hickmann
E-mail: hickmana@elmbrookschoools.org
Choir room- 1204

New AND returning members/parents please read through the syllabus and linked calendar and e-sign on your student's canvas assignment.

Brookfield Central Choirs Calendar of Events 2023-2024

Dear BC Choir students and families,

Welcome (or welcome back) to Brookfield Central Choir! I am so excited to start making music with all of you!

Each ensemble is new every year- we are excited to welcome new members to our choirs and equally excited to have "veterans" to lead the way. If you are new to our program, **welcome!** We promise to make you feel like you are a part of the family right away. If you are returning, **thank you** for choosing to be here, I know you will continue to spread the joy of singing! One thing I am most proud of as a teacher is the community that we have built in the BC Choirs program. Students are supportive of one another and it is a truly safe place for everyone to express and be themselves!

One of my main ideas every year is that YOU are in charge of your own choral experience. While I may lay the foundation for you, it is YOU who ultimately determines how hard you work, if you stay focused and present in class, if you will choose to be encouraging and kind to one another, and if you acknowledge your gratitude for the opportunities and experiences that singing provides you. I will use these pillars for myself as well as all of my students every day:

Be encouraging. Come prepared. Be present. Give your all, all the time. Be grateful.

My door is always open and I look forward to another year of getting to know each and every student of mine. My goal is that the choir room will be a place for you to work hard and challenge yourself, but also a place that will feed your soul and put a smile on your face. It is my hope that you will always feel like you are cared about as students, choir members, and people.

Let's make some great music together!

Mrs. Alli Hickmann

Brookfield Central Choirs Course Syllabus & Guidelines

1. Course Learning Objectives:

1. **Music Literacy:** Decode, analyze, compose and perform correctly using musical notation.
2. **Rhythm:** Analyze and perform rhythmic patterns accurately with steady pulse.
3. **Intonation:** Listen, evaluate, modify and analyze individual performance to execute part accurately in tune.
4. **Tone Quality:** Understand, differentiate, evaluate and produce appropriate tone quality and tonal styles.
5. **Diction:** Produce, phonate and perform articulation in the choral setting.
6. **Expression:** Communicate music expressively and effectively.
7. **Ensemble:** Demonstrate good ensemble through interpreting verbal and non-verbal cues, and through collaboration and teamwork.
8. **Demonstration of Mastery:** Develop and demonstrate an in-depth understanding of accountability and productivity in the rehearsal and performance setting.
9. **Integration:** Articulate and understand relationships between music, the other arts, cultures and disciplines in a global setting.

Choir teaches far more than the notes on the page. We learn how to work with others towards a common goal, how to accept and give constructive criticism, we develop work ethic and practice skills, we develop appreciation for diverse genres and origins of music and people through music, and we have fun together!

2. Ensemble Descriptions:

All choirs at Brookfield Central are primarily participation/performance-based classes that provide engaging, differentiated experiences for students on a daily basis. The courses are designed so that students learn about music and the voice through exploration and experimentation—the act of *doing*. Throughout this year-long experience that meets every other day, students will learn to apply basic techniques of healthy, age-appropriate singing, including correct breathing, efficient posture, and effective vowel placement. When practiced consistently, these components and others will aid in the development of quality tone production. The importance of voice care is also emphasized in each ensemble throughout the year.

Each choir experience will provide students the amazing opportunity to sing beautifully crafted, quality choral literature that will challenge, inspire the imagination, and encourage artistic growth. Through the “textbook study” of each piece, students will take away an increased knowledge of music theory, history, as well as an understanding of cross-curricular connections that may be applied to any arena of the music world. Whether it is rock-n-roll, jazz, country, hip-hop, Broadway or classical choral music, the foundational elements derive from the same roots of study. The long-term outcome for each student is to broaden the appreciation and deepen the understanding of all music; creating intelligent, lifelong music lovers in *each of you*.

Treble Choir: Treble Choir is composed of incoming treble voices.

Concert Choir: Concert Choir is composed of 9th-12th grade bass voices and 10th-12th grade treble voices.

Women’s Choir: Women’s Choir is composed of auditioned 10th-12th grade treble voices.

Chamber Choir: Chamber Choir is composed of auditioned 10th-12th grade mixed voices.

3. Classroom Expectations:

- Your attendance in class is imperative to your success along with the success of your ensemble. You will not be graded simply on attendance, but a portion of your grade comes from **daily performance, ensemble activities and musicianship (weekly ensemble grade)**. If you are not physically present in class, it is difficult to earn your points for that day. **Make up work could be necessary depending on what is missed during your absence. This could come in the form of lessons, sectionals or outside of class practice/writing.**
- Once the bell rings, students are expected to be in their seats with their music and a pencil. In order to maximize class time, bathroom usage and water bottle fill-ups should happen **BEFORE** the bell.
- Disrespectful behavior of any kind is not tolerated in the choir room. We will be accepting and encouraging of one another's strengths and weaknesses.
- Be respectful with **technology**. It is school policy that cell phones be placed in caddies before the period begins and can be used during passing periods and lunch only. Parents of students in violation of this policy will be notified and administration will follow up.
- Be on time and prepared with appropriate materials.
- **ONLY bottled water can be near a student's seat**- any other food or drinks should be left outside of the room or on the designated table near the classroom entrance. For your safety while singing, no gum is allowed. For 1st block classes, breakfast should be eaten before class begins. It is tough to sing while eating!

I will address any behavior or effort concerns directly with you- the student. If concerns persist, I will involve your parents. If a solution still has not been found, an administrator will be contacted. Should you have a concern about your own performance, course content, the classroom environment, or anything else, please contact me. I am happy to discuss anything with you in a professional and courteous manner!

4. Class Supplies:

Please bring the following supplies to class ASAP.

- 1 inch binder ***all students MUST have their own binder- no sharing of music***
- Pencil
- box of kleenex (please consider donating one to the choir room!)
- water bottle (optional)

5. Communication:

ALL students should sign up for the appropriate Remind list for text reminders:

Text 81010 to:

- Treble Choir: @bctreble24
- Concert Choir: @bcconcer24
- Women's Choir: @bcwomens24
- Chamber Choir: @bcchambe24

***Parents may sign up for remind lists, but I will send all information for parents through e-mail/Infinite Campus so it is not necessary.**

b. E-mail communication

I will connect with you via your school e-mail account often (usually via IC messenger this year)! Please be responsible and make sure you check daily. Please be aware that if you e-mail a teacher, it is a reflection on you as a student. Use correct spelling, grammar, punctuation, and an appropriate greeting. Sending an e-mail is a great way to contact me, but please do so professionally!

6. Cell Phone Policy

Cell phones will be kept in the phone caddies during class to maximize our engagement and limit our distraction. Same policy as the rest of the school!

7. Grading in the Performance-Based Classroom:

Category	Weight	Examples (<i>but not limited to...</i>)
Weekly Ensemble	10%	<i>rehearsal engagement, technique/instrument analysis, material preparedness, ensemble work (lg. group/sectionals)</i> **Students be assessed at the end of each rehearsal on the following goals: - <i>I was prepared for rehearsal (on time, had my music binder, a pencil, sight singing packet, etc.)</i> - <i>I was engaged in rehearsal (actively participating, taking notes, not using my phone, not talking to my friends, etc.)</i> - <i>I actively use good technique during rehearsal (proper alignment, good breathing, etc.)</i> - <i>I use sectional time wisely (follow section leader, being productive, taking notes in music, etc.)</i>
Written Work/Homework/ Assessments	40%	<i>in-class assignments, reflective writings, listening logs, theory work, aural transcriptions, take-home written work, online theory practice, concert critique papers, quizzes, exams, sight singing tests (live or recorded), performance assessments (sight reading factory)</i>
Performances	50%	<i>Concerts, festivals, clinics, solo/ensemble</i>

Semester Grade = Term 1/3 (50%) + Term 2/4 (50%)

****LATE WORK POLICY****

Written work, sight reading assignments, and other non-performance assessments will not be accepted after 2 weeks of the assigned due date. This includes concert make-ups. Assignments turned in after the given due date will be given a maximum of 90% of the credit offered.

8. Performance Policies and Procedures:

a. Attendance

Attendance for all performances is mandatory for all ensembles. A concert is considered to be a showcasing of the work and preparation done in class, similar to a final exam. In order for everyone to perform their best, everyone must be present. If you miss a concert, you are letting your team down. In addition, absence from a required concert will also negatively impact your grade, as performances serve as a major summative assessment for this performance-based class. For this reason, it is important that all choir students check schedules VERY CAREFULLY to make sure that there are no conflicts with work, sports, family commitments or other activities on the dates in question. Do not hesitate to speak with Mrs. Hickmann when a conflict is noticed.

Performance absences will only be excused due to illness or family emergency. Should you miss a concert, you will be required to make up the work by watching the concert recording and writing a 2-page evaluative critique paper. You will also need to make an appointment with Mrs. Hickmann to sing your prepared parts from all concert repertoire to demonstrate mastery of content. This concert make-up protocol must be completed within 2 weeks of the concert for credit (unless any extenuating circumstances need to be considered)

b. Sacred Music in Public Schools:

The official statement from The National Association for Music Educators: “It is the position of MENC (Music Educators National Conference): The study and performance of religious music within an educational context is a vital and appropriate part of a comprehensive music education. The omission of sacred music from the school curriculum would result in an incomplete educational experience.”

Sacred music has been a tradition within the music community for centuries. Sacred music from multiple religions shall be valued as pieces of art rooted in the foundation and continuity of musical history. **Sacred music is studied not for the meaning of the text, but rather to expand musical repertoire.** If you have concerns about your child singing a particular piece of music for any reason, please reach out to Mrs. Hickmann and a plan will be made to provide an alternative assignment.

9. Choir Attire

Purchased choir attire will be worn for all formal concerts as well as travel performances. We will keep the same attire throughout your high school career, so it will only need to be purchased once. (extras are purchased to “trade” through the years in case you grow!) Sizing will be done in class to ensure a proper fit. Dresses and vests are machine washable. *Dresses, vests and ties in good condition can be donated at the end of your choir career for future choir members in need.*

Option 1: Black Corelli Dress, Pearl Necklace

Expected to provide black closed toe flat/low-heel shoes of own

Option 2: Black Vest, Royal blue tie

Expected to provide black dress pants, **BLACK** button down collared shirt, and black dress shoes of own

Students will be charged through Infinite Campus for the following costs once the order is placed mid-September:

Option 1:

Corelli Dress & Pearl Necklace

Total cost: \$76.00

(incl. Shipping & IC Credit card fee)

Option 2:

Poplin Vest & Blue Tie

Total cost: \$38.00

(incl. Shipping & IC Credit card fee)

*****Sizing will be done during class time so we find the correct fit for everyone!*****

Since this was a new dress style in the last 4 years, I do not have many extras to provide for families in need. Free/Reduced eligible families or anyone with concerns may contact me if they are unable to purchase and would like to work out a “rental” situation. We will work together to make sure everyone has the attire they need!

10. Solo & Ensemble Festival

Each year Brookfield Central High School participates in the District and State Solo & Ensemble Festivals. Choir students are strongly encouraged to participate in a solo and/or ensemble event. **Every choir student will choose a solo or small group selection and either perform at the festival or in class for evaluation.** Solo & ensemble festival is Saturday, March 11th at BCHS this year. We will again be looking for lots of student and parent volunteers to help the day run smoothly!

11. Fundraisers

We will offer a few fundraisers this year for students to raise money for choir related activities/costs, including trips, spirit wear, festivals, field trips, clinics, etc. All profit goes directly to students' individual fundraising accounts and can only be spent on choir related things during your time at BC. Any money raised that is not spent by graduation or program exit will be donated to the general choir activity account for other choir expenses. Money can be saved up throughout your years in the program!

Fall: Milwaukee Pretzel Sale- Sept. 12-23

Winter: Poinsettia Sale (November)

Spring: Kringle & Coffee (April)