**Marriotts Ridge High School**

**2016-2017 Academic Year**

**Choral Program Syllabus**

Mr. Scott AuCoin, director

[scott\_aucoin@hcpss.org](mailto:scott_aucoin@hcpss.org)

**Choir Objectives**

The Student should be able to:

* Follow classroom rehearsal procedures
* Meet individual responsibilities for condition of school-owned music
* Follow concert performance procedures
* Meet performance obligations as indicated on the school’s comprehensive calendar. (Subject to change with ample notice)
* Demonstrate basic competencies of vocal performance in the areas of correct breathing and breath support, tone production including placement, resonance, and use of head voice, sight reading musical notation, choral diction, accurate intonation and tone blending within a section
* Read and perform appropriate NAfME (National Associate for Music Education) grade music for Choral Festivals of adjudication
* Sight read appropriate NAfME grade level music notation for Choral Festival of Adjudication

#### Grading Policy

Classes in the choral program are graded; the major exams are the performances and the students’ knowledge of the pieces for performance. Grades are based on daily assessments of participation, musical technique, self-discipline, and performance skill improvement exhibited within rehearsal. Attendance to all rehearsals is mandatory. There is an exception, of course, where the student has an excused absence from school. Verification of such excused absences is handled within the school through the main office.

Each student will be expected to meet the following criteria to the best of his/her ability and will be evaluated accordingly. **Grades for choral classes, as for all classes, reflect what the student earns and will be found among grades for other academic classes on a nine-week grade report. However, students of choir who fail to comply with the responsibilities of this ensemble will receive a failing grade.**

#### Grade Outline

Your grade in choir will be based on a combination of daily assessment, written reflections, and performance assessments.

The calculation will be based on the following ratio:

Daily Assessment grade: 50%

Written Assignments: 20%

Performance Assessments: 20%

Concert Attendance: 10%

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Total: 100%

**Daily Assessment Grade (50%)**

The Daily Assessment grade will be graded by the student’s daily participation by following the rehearsal procedures. This grade will be assessed each week totaling 50 its per week. This grade will also be made of attendance to the weekly Chorale rehearsals\*\* totaling 25 points for each chorale. Failure to follow rehearsal procedures or failure to attend chorale on a consistent basis will result in a low daily assessment grade.

**Written Assignments (20%)**

The Written Assignments grade is made up written work such as concert reflections and listening assignments. Each written assignment is worth 25 points. Written Assignments will be posted on Canvas. ***Students must submit all assignments through Canvas.***

**Performance Assessments (20%)**

The Performance Assessment grade will be made up of concert performances as well as individual assessments. Concert performances are worth 100 points. Concert and required rehearsals cannot be missed.\* In order to receive all the points, students must follow all Concert Procedures. Individual Assessments will be worth no more than 25 points. Individual Assignments will be graded in the following areas: Tone Quality, Pitch and Rhythmic Accuracy, Vocal Technique, and Musicianship.

**Concert Attendance (10%)**

Students will be required to attend at least one live music performance each quarter. Students will turn in a 500 word written assignment and the performance ticket to receive the full 50 points. More information can be found on Canvas.

*\*If an absence from a required rehearsal or performance is excused, the student may be given an alternate assignment allowing them to make up the points.*

*\*\*If a note from a parent excusing the absence is given to me no points will be taken.*

**Rehearsal Procedures**

The following information are exceptions for daily rehearsal etiquette.

* Promptness to class
* Preparedness for class (this includes having…1) essential materials i.e. music, pencil, etc.. 2) practiced at home (see below), and 3) NO gum, candy or food 4) NO CELL PHONES IN CLASS
* Attentiveness
* Consistent effort
* Positive attitude
* Ability to work well with others
* Remaining engaged in the rehearsal
* Responsibility for the condition of the music and folders assigned to him/her
* Willingness to ask questions when clarification or additional help from the teacher is warranted
* Extra Wednesday evening rehearsals (6-8pm) are each worth 25 points
  + If a Wednesday rehearsal is missed, an excuse must be sent in the following day
* Students may want to have a small choral journal to collect vocabulary, personal accounts on their choral experience, sight-reading examples and examples of the International Phonetic Alphabet.

**Daily Practice**

Obviously it is extremely important that a student working at this level, on developing his/her vocal technique, must dedicate time and energy to practice. Contrary to popular belief a strong educator is aware when a student is or isn’t prepared for class. If it becomes evident that a student has not prepared, the director may choose to give the student a pop quiz in which the student will be required to perform selections of their music for the director alone.

The student is encouraged to spend 20-30 minutes a day reviewing his/her music and developing their sense of musicianship through sight-reading and dictation. It is strongly suggested that at least 45 minutes of practice fall on the weekend. Improvement will be greater if the student continues practice and review over the weekend. A practice routine that conveniently suits the family schedule is always best. Students improve steadily when practice occurs on a regular basis at a set time of day. Also, students will benefit more from practicing for a reasonably comfortable length of time rather than cramming practice into two or three very long sessions

Students will have opportunities to practice individually during school hours or after school in the practice room. Please feel free to see me directly to help improve your vocal skills outside of class. If you are looking for a private voice teacher, I am happy to make recommendations.

Concert Procedures

The following information makes up the procedures to gain 100 points for Concert Performances.

* **Concert Attendance Policy:** The attendance and participation in each scheduled performance is **MANDATORY** as dictated by the policy written in the Howard County Public Schools **Program of Studies** (page one). This policy will be strictly upheld and enforced at MRHS**. Due to the nature of this ensemble, failure to comply with concert responsibilities may result in removal from choir.** If the student is ill or where extenuating circumstances apply\*, in accordance to Howard County Policy. **I would ask that you notify me directly no later than twenty-four hours before or after the absence**.If the student does have an excused absence, the points may be redeemed by individually performing the required music for me. It will be the responsibility of the student to schedule an appointment with me for this purpose. Should the student fail to attend the make- up session, the points for this performance will be forfeited. Students may also be assigned a written assignment to make up for a missed performance

\*Please note that family vacations, sports events (Arts-Athletic Agreement), lack of transportation, etc. are not considered legitimate reasons for missing performances. Arrangements can be made if a ride is not available. Please contact me as soon as possible so that I may assist you in finding a solution.

* **Concert Attire:** The Chorus attire will have a very specific uniform that each student will be responsible for obtaining from MRHS. The student is responsible for taking care of these items. In addition to the chorus uniform, the student will be required to have the appropriate shoes to accompany this uniform, gentlemen a dressy black shoe, ladies no more than a standard two inch hill on a black character shoe. I suggest you use **[www.discountdance.com](http://www.discountdance.com).** **If these guidelines cannot be met please contact me ASAP and we can make some arrangements.** Students who fail to wear the appropriate concert attire may not be permitted to perform in the concert.
* **Arrival Time:** Students are expected to arrive 45-60 minutes before the concert start time. Students that don’t arrive on time for performances may not be permitted to perform in the concert. “**Downbeat at \_\_\_\_” means our rehearsal starts at that time.**
* **Musicianship and Concert Etiquette:** Concerts are the culmination of the musical education process. Therefore, students are expected to display a sense of pride for the hard work they have put forth and respect the efforts of others. In addition, all “classroom procedures” should be followed. Students will also be assessed in the following technical areas:
  + Watches conductor
  + Uses good posture, diction, & breath support
  + Matches pitch as given from piano or conductor
  + Sight-reads rhythmic passages with at least 95% accuracy
  + Learns melodies assigned to his/her voice part
  + Memorizes concert material by practicing at school and home
  + Understands and identifies fundamental musical signs & symbols
  + Participates in all required rehearsals and performances
  + Demonstrates continued improvement in each of the following areas of musicianship throughout the school year. 1) tone quality, 2) dynamics, 3) phrasing, 4) intonation, 5) pitch, discrimination, 6) diction, 7) breath support & 8) blend with the ensemble, 9) uniformity of vowels

Essential Materials for Class

1) Music Folder (given)

Students will be given a new choir folder to use for the year. They must return the folder in condition they received it at the end of the year.

If they loose or destroy these new folders, they will owe MRHS $20.

2) Pencil

Students must bring a pencil to rehearsal to mark music. To not have a pencil is to be unprepared for rehearsal.

3) Music

The music are the materials for our class. If students do not have their music, they cannot participate fully. Each student will be held responsible for the condition of music issued to him or her when it is returned to me. Payment for or replacement of any lost or damaged music must be made.

In order to practice at home, students will be allowed to take their choir folder home. Students must bring their folder and music everyday to class. If a student does not bring his/her music to rehearsal, the student forfeits his/her preparedness points, for that day.

*Bring these materials everyday to class to be successful!*

Wednesday Night Chorale

There are *selected* Wednesday evenings that the entire choral department comes together to rehearse music as the Mustang Chorale. These Wednesday nights are listed on the schedule below. These Wednesday night rehearsals are worth 25 points. Please put these Wednesday evenings into your calendar! If you need to miss a chorale, a note from a parent or guardian must be brought in or emailed to me by the end of the school the following day. Everyone MUST attend Chorale for our program to be successful.

Field Trips and Outside Performances

Occasionally throughout the choir season, groups will need to travel to various performances. Some groups will travel more than others. Please see the attached schedule for dates of some of these performances. Field Trip permission forms and any other information about a trip will be given out with ample notice. Students in choir will also have the opportunity to travel with the entire MRHS Music Department for Spring Trip. More information regarding Spring Trip will be given out as it becomes available.