

## 2023-2024 Brighton Middle School Choir Handbook

**GRADING POLICY:** The purpose of this policy is to provide a means of grading that fairly reflects the variety of contributions and activities of a performance ensemble. It allows all students to experience success regardless of their individual degree of talent, and it requires all students to be active and positive participants in daily rehearsals, which is absolutely essential for an ensemble to achieve excellence. Below are the four factors set by the Tipton County Board of Education and how each factor is assessed within our choir classroom:

1. Nine Weeks Test - Public Performances – Range from 100-300 points depending on the type of performance: Public performances consist of concerts, solo and ensemble, festivals, and other school performances. Performances vary depending on which performing group your child is taking part in and what the director assigns. Performances are considered exams and are required events for participants. In rare circumstances, the director may approve an absence from a performance; absence due to a family vacation or lack of a ride are not deemed excused.

2. Test Average - Pass-offs – Range from 20-100 points depending on length and complexity: Pass-offs, also known as singing tests, will be done regularly throughout the quarters; material covered will range from material covered in class to small assignments that require the students to work on material at home. If a student would like to have a pass-off retest, they must do so before or after class. Mrs. Roland believes in rewarding students for work. If a student gets 100% correct on a retest, then the student will receive full credit in the grade book. Students must retest pass-offs within the same nine weeks as the original pass-off.

3. Weekly Average - Classroom Performance – 100 points: This grade Includes: Immediate set-up upon arrival, individual warm-up when applicable, participation in all classroom activities (warm-up, breathing exercises, rehearsal, etc.), preparedness for class (having all materials at your seat, practicing at home, etc.), performance of correct notes and rhythms, behavior, listening, posture/projection, and overall musical contribution. After school rehearsals also count under the weekly average grade. With classes being separated, attendance to after school rehearsals is mandatory. Each after school rehearsal counts as a weekly grade. Generally, the rule for after school rehearsals is that if it would excuse you from school, then it will excuse you from after school rehearsal. Please notify Mrs. Roland as soon as possible if you are going to miss a rehearsal.

4. Homework – Practicing – 10 points: Students will be assessed on practicing by their steady improvement day to day outside the classroom and whether or not the student takes his or her music home daily. If the instructor believes that a student or group of students are not practicing, the student will be assigned a practice log, which will need to be signed by the student and parent each week. More information about practicing is presented later in the handbook.

Please note: students are not allowed to write note names consistently on their music, as this inhibits their ability to read music. The students are trained to learn the music and must work to memorize note names. This is known as cheating. The act of actively writing in note names will result in a zero for any grade associated with their music; this can include public performance, test average, weekly average, and practicing. However, writing in other information, for example,

adding a crescendo or a dynamic mark we added during class is encouraged as this will aid in their home practice.

The primary responsibilities of each choir member are to participate positively in daily rehearsals while improving their musical skills through consistent practice time.

**RULES:** Students are expected to follow all county/school rules, to be respectful, and to be ready to learn. Choir is an extra-curricular subject and membership is a privilege. With such a large membership, there is a lot of trust held between members and directors/staff. Use of alcohol, tobacco, drugs, and/or any other illegal or age-inappropriate substances will result in immediate expulsion from the choir. Fighting may also result in immediate expulsion. Other disciplinary matters may result in office referral and possible expulsion from choir.

**MATERIALS:** Students are required to have a No.2 pencil (no pens), a choir folder or notebook with proper papers, their music, composition notebook, and their method book (if applicable) in class every day. Coming to class unprepared will result in a deduction in their class grade for the day.

**REMIND:** All students and parents need to sign up for Remind. This service allows me to send text messages to students and parents so that they receive info throughout the school year. I will never see the student/parent numbers, and you will never see my number. Remind is the primary method of communication between director and students and families. If you are not signed up for remind you will regularly be missing important information regarding field trips, concerts, special events, fee reminders, parent meetings, fundraisers, and numerous other communications. To sign up:  
ALL Grades – Text @card-choir to 81010

**PRACTICING:** Students will quickly learn that the middle school musician's motto is "Go Practice!" Students should take their music home on a regular basis. Singing is a physical activity, requiring time and repetition to develop proper muscles and coordination and breath control. Practicing on just weekends is virtually useless as proven through various studies. Despite busy schedules, students need to put in some time on their singing skills every day. I recommend students practice at least 20 minutes a day. If time is used wisely, a lot can be accomplished in a short time period. Private lessons are not required in the Brighton Choirs, but they are encouraged. If you are interested in finding a private lesson instructor, feel free to contact me.

**CONCERT ATTIRE:** All choir students are required to wear formal attire to concerts, unless otherwise stated by the choir director. For BOTH winter and spring concerts, young men need to wear a long-sleeved collared black dress shirt, black dress pants, black belt, black socks, black dress shoes, and a tie or bow tie of the appropriate assigned color for that concert. **Young women may wear a long (ankle length) solid black dress with dress shoes or may wear the same attire as men.** If the dress is not ankle length, black leggings or opaque tights must be worn underneath. Ankle length black skirts with a dressy black blouse are also permitted. Dresses shorter than knee length will not be permitted. Jeans, cargo pants, carpenter pants, or any non-dress shoes are also not permitted. The color of the tie for the Winter concert will be red. Colors for the spring concert, if applicable, will be announced at the beginning of the spring semester. Those who do not follow the concert attire dress code will not be allowed to perform and will receive a performance grade of zero. **\*\*Highlighted section edited for clarification 12/8/23:** Ladies wearing a dress or skirt should wear an ANKLE LENGTH dress/skirt. Dresses and skirts of any other length (knee length, calf length, thigh length, etc. do not fit the expected guideline. Dresses/skirts shorter than ankle length but longer than knee length will result in not being permitted to perform on

stage and a forfeiture of points, the same as I would not allow a student to wear black shorts or capris. Formal concert events are special occasions and students are expected to dress in a manner that reflects this. Seasonally, it can be tricky to find ankle length black dresses in stores, but they are plentiful online. Please contact Mrs. Roland if you would like help finding a dress. I recommend securing your concert attire at least 1 month prior to the first formal concert, so you have time to exchange it if there are any issues.

**BOOSTERS/CHAPERONES:** The Brighton Choir Booster program is the heart of our organization. The Brighton High School Choir Boosters and the Brighton Middle School Choir Boosters are the same, joint organization; if you are on Facebook, please look up the Brighton Choir Boosters page. These parents work very hard to make sure we have the needed materials and services whether it's music, travel arrangements, festival fees, sound equipment, instruments, or support. The boosters make so much happen for this choir program. Booster meetings occur approximately once per month, always on a Monday evening at 6:00pm in the Brighton High School Band/Choir Room.

**FEES:** This year's choir fee is \$40 for Brighton Middle School choir students. The fee covers the expense of your child's choir t-shirt (typically distributed in the Spring), classroom supplies, composition notebook and binder, and music expenses. If this fee is not paid, your child will not receive their choir shirt. This will exclude your child from participating in events requiring these items. Please make checks payable to the **Brighton Choir Boosters**. Fee waiver does not cover the choir fee. Choir fees need to be paid by September 31<sup>st</sup>. If there is a problem paying the choir fee before the deadline, please email Mrs. Roland at [sroland@tipton-county.com](mailto:sroland@tipton-county.com).

**PERFORMANCES:** One of the greatest experiences in choir is getting to perform. Here at Brighton, we have several opportunities to perform and it is important to know which concerts we will be involved in. Each performing group has a different set of performances throughout the year. Please check the choir website regularly throughout the year to find more information about these performances. Also, I will be sending home performance information on Remind throughout the year. The choir will perform a December Winter Concert, a Spring concert, with other possible concerts throughout the year. These as well as any additional performances will be announced well in advance.

**FUNDRAISING:** The choir program is funded entirely by the booster program. We receive no state or federal funding for choir. Fundraising is necessary within most school programs and, aside from choir fees, covers 100% of our operation costs. We do not receive money from the school board. This money goes to maintaining and replacing school instruments/equipment, subsidizing field trips, office supplies, sheet music, bringing in extra staff, and purchasing items for the overall need of the choir program.

**PRIVATE LESSONS** – Not required but strongly encouraged: Private lessons are paid instructional time for students with a private teacher. It is the fastest way for a student to attain individual improvement. In private lessons, students focus on fundamentals, skill development, sight-singing, literature, and other musical elements. While we strive to provide students with the best education possible, it is impossible to provide each individual with hours of individual feedback and instruction. Students who take private lessons tend to develop a command of their instrument (voice), have increased enjoyment of singing, increase their chance of making All-West and/or Treble Honor Choir, and have higher potential for scholarships to college. While lessons are not required, they are encouraged. Private lessons ordinarily range anywhere from \$30-60 an hour. The school, staff, and choir program is in no way shape or form associated with private lesson instruction and assumes no liability of any kind from lessons or profit from

lessons. Please feel free to contact Mrs. Roland if you are interested in private lessons for your child and would like help finding an appropriate teacher.

If you have any questions, please email me at: [sroland@tipton-county.com](mailto:sroland@tipton-county.com). I am looking forward to a great year!

Musically,  
Steffanie Roland  
Director, Brighton Middle School Choir

Brighton Middle School Choir Parents and Students:

Welcome to the BMS 2023-2024 school year! For our new members, welcome to the program. For our returning members, welcome back to school. We have an exciting year of music making coming for the Brighton Middle School Choir. We will spend the next few weeks testing voices to find the voice-part with which students will have the highest potential for success, and will be laying a foundation for fundamentals through basic skills such as reading music notation.

The choir handbook is available online at <https://brightoncardinalchoirs.com/>. Below is an information sheet that needs to be turned in to Mrs. Roland as soon as possible. The choir handbook is digital this year; the school only allows a limited number of paper copies per month, which I would rather use to provide students with music and educational resources. If you are in need of a paper copy, please have your child inform me of this need. Please read the choir handbook in its entirety and sign the form below. This year's choir fee is \$40.00, which will need to be paid by **September 31st**. If there are any problems paying by the due date, please inform Mrs. Roland at [sroland@tipton-county.com](mailto:sroland@tipton-county.com). If you are writing a check, please make checks payable to **Brighton Choir Boosters**.

My primary form of providing information to parents and students outside of the classroom is through Remind. These messages consist of text, pictures, and videos. Please sign up by texting **@card-choir to 81010**.

Please do not hesitate to email me at [sroland@tipton-county.com](mailto:sroland@tipton-county.com). Email is my primary form of communication, as I do not answer the phone while instructing classes. I am looking forward to a fantastic school year!

### Student Information 2022-2023

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Current grade level: \_\_\_\_\_

Guardian Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Voice Part (if known): \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Shirt size (Adult Sizes): \_\_\_\_\_

Does your child have any medical conditions of which we should be aware? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### Choir Agreement

I, the undersigned, have read the choir handbook in full and reviewed the materials therein with my child/ward. I fully understand and accept the policies set up for attendance, rules, fees, grading policies, additional COVID-19 Procedures, and performances.

Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_