



Melissa M. Heitzenrater-Beichner
Phone: 716-962-8581, ext. 121
Email: mbeichner@cvcougars.org
Website: www.cvvocalmusic.weebly.com

Welcome to the Cassadaga Valley Choral Program!

Welcome back, and get ready for a great year in the Choral Program at CV! Cassadaga Valley has a reputation for having a wonderful music department, and this year will be no exception. We will be performing a wide variety of choral music from many different genres and time periods, and will also be focusing on improving our music literacy skills. The expectations for this year are very high, and by working together, we can improve upon our foundation of excellent choirs and have a fantastic year.

Handbook

Please read the following handbook very carefully, as many things are outlined and many questions throughout the year can be answered by looking through this document. You can find information on the various choral opportunities available to middle and high school students, a calendar of important events, choral curriculum and goals, expectations, concert attendance and attire, and other new policies in this handbook. ****Please sign and return the last page by Friday, September 16th.**

Curriculum

In chorus, we interact with each other through a variety of learning experiences while we work on developing many mental and physical skills as mentioned in the class descriptions. Choral singing involves “whole-brain” learning, enhancing all areas of the school curriculum. It also teaches self-discipline, an important skill in anything you pursue in life.

The curriculum for all choir classes is based on the *National Standards for Music Education*, along with the New York State Arts Education Standards.

Curricular and Extra-Curricular Choral Opportunities

Sixth Grade Chorus

The Sixth Grade Chorus is open to any interested students who like to sing and are interested in learning about reading music and singing as part of a large group. We will be learning basic vocal techniques and focusing on posture, breathing, diction, and care of the voice, as well as beginning to learn to read music and sight-sing. Unison and two-part music from various genres and time periods will be studied. **Performance requirements:** Middle School Winter and Spring Concerts.

Junior High Chorus

Like Sixth Grade, Junior High Chorus is open to any interested student regardless of participation in previous years of chorus. Junior High Chorus will continue to build on what has been discussed in previous choruses, and will also include learning about the changing voice. Music selections will include three-part mixed and some four-part music. **Performance requirements:** Middle School Winter and Spring Concerts.

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Senior Chorus

This is a mixed group of students in grades 9-12. Any students are welcome to participate in the class, provided they are ready for the challenges that being members of the Senior Chorus presents. The expectations for this class are very high, and students are advised against taking the class because they think it will be an “easy A”. Music theory and sight-singing will be introduced/continued from middle school, and singers will be exposed to a wide variety of music in different genres, time periods and languages, frequently singing in four or more parts.

Performance requirements: High School Winter and Spring Concerts

Advanced Chorus

This is a music elective for students in grades 9-12 who have demonstrated dedication, maturity, and a desire to develop their choral singing skills in a small group setting. Students will learn challenging music in three- and four-parts and will deepen their music literacy skills.

Performance requirements: High School Winter and Spring Concerts, Baccalaureate, others TBD

Group Voice Class

Students enrolled in the Voice Class will study solo singing and vocal technique to learn to perform as soloists and as part of a small group for duets and trios. Students will learn about use and care of the voice, and will perform selections from both classical and musical theatre repertoire. There will be many opportunities to perform for peers and in masterclasses, and students will also learn about and practice auditioning and critiquing.

Performance requirements: NYSSMA Solo Festival Audition and Spring Voice Recital

Valley Minstrels

This is a select, advanced singing group that rehearses after school, and students are admitted to the group by audition only. Auditions will be held in September, and rehearsals will take place on Tuesdays and Thursdays in the chorus room. Attendance at all rehearsals is necessary for the development of the group, and students may be removed from the group at the discretion of the director if they have missed too many rehearsals. Students will learn more advanced music, and will be able to broaden their musical knowledge and musicianship skills during this time. The Valley Minstrels will perform at the High Winter Concert, as well as outside venues as scheduling permits.

Cassadaga Valley School Musical

The musical is another extra-curricular opportunity for students to sing, dance, and act in a stage production. Auditions will be held for the production, and depending upon the requirements of the show, may be open to both high school and middle school students. Any interested student may audition, they do not need to be members of the chorus. More information will follow when it becomes available.

“A Night on Broadway”

The second annual “A Night on Broadway” will be a two-night concert of some of the biggest hits to grace the musical theatre stage. Any interested students may select a solo (or duet/small group number) and audition for a spot on the concert. As this event is a fundraiser for the Senior Chorus, it is expected that all members of the class participate in some way, whether onstage, backstage, ushering, designing programs, etc. More information about auditions will be available during the second week of classes.

CCMTA All-County Chorus

All-County Chorus is an opportunity for students in grades 6-12 who would like to participate in a choral festival where they will sing with students from schools around Chautauqua County. Students are selected for participation following an audition. Audition information will be available later in the school year. The festival will take place on May 20th at SUNY Fredonia.

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Classroom Expectations

- All school rules apply to all students at all times, whether on campus or not.
- Students are asked to consider the following before speaking/acting: Is it safe? Is it respectful? Is it responsible? If the answer to any of those questions is no, then do not do or say it!
- Chorus is a performance-based class, and students are expected to participate positively **at all times** (including warmups, sight-singing, theory exercises, singing with their section, etc.).
- Come to class prepared to work and learn from bell to bell - do not pack up before you are dismissed.
- Come to class on time. If you are going to be late, bring a pass and sign in at the piano.
- Do not talk while the teacher is talking, or while other sections of the chorus are working on learning their notes.
- No food or drink is allowed in the chorus room, except bottled water (this is a school-wide rule).
- Cell phones are not to be out during class. Period. Our music will be on a classroom set of iPads, and if students are truly participating with 100% effort, there is no need for a cell phone. See the Electronic Device Policy below.
- Students should not be working on assignments for other classes during chorus. In order for the group to increase their musicianship skills, all members of the group need to be full and active participants.

Electronic Device Policy - Directly from the teacher and student handbooks:

Regarding Students Using Electronic Devices...

- *From the Teacher Handbook* - “**Any unauthorized use** of an electronic device will make that device **subject to confiscation. The parent will then be asked to come and pick up the device.**”
- *From the Student Handbook* - “Student use of personal technology during instructional periods is **limited and will be granted at the discretion of the classroom teacher...** Students will follow teacher directions... Students must comply with all teacher and administrator requests related to the use of the personal device. **If a student uses his/her personal device outside of the approved usage as designated by the teacher or staff during class time, the student will receive disciplinary consequences...**”

What this means when you enter Mrs. Beichner’s class (chorus room or auditorium):

- 1. If you are carrying a personal electronic device, it must be in your pocket, backpack, purse, or other similar location (**out of sight**).
 - 2. Personal electronic devices should be either **off** or in **silent/airplane mode** so it doesn’t interfere with class.
 - 3. If a personal electronic device is in “silent” mode, **it should not ring, light-up, or vibrate** with notifications. You can check them after class.
 - 4. Personal electronic devices may only be used when permission has been given **prior to the start of that particular class period. Permission granted one day does not mean permission is granted the next.**
- **Failure to comply with the above stated rules will result in disciplinary consequences as outlined:**
- **1st Violation** - Verbal reminder and the device must be put away immediately (ie. no “just let me finish this text.” If it is not put away immediately, this will be considered an immediate second violation).
 - **2nd Violation** - Device confiscated for the remainder of the class period.
 - **3rd Violation** - Device confiscated for the remainder of the day (to be picked up after the 8th period bell).
 - **4th Violation and any violations thereafter** - Device confiscated, given to the principal, and the parent/guardian must come to the school and pick up the device.
 - If a student refuses to surrender their device when asked, they will be sent to the office and a discipline referral will be submitted to the principal.

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Grading

Choral grades are a factor in a student's overall average, and the choral grading system is based on the following (subject to change at the discretion of the teacher):

- **Rehearsal** (approx. 40%): Weekly grades for ensemble skills, punctuality, preparedness, **full** participation, attentiveness, and using proper vocal technique.
- **Marking Music** (approx. 5%): Students will be asked to "write in" markings on their music during class. Random checks will occur throughout the marking period. Students share their iPad with another singer, so the marking music grade will be the same for both people who share the iPad.
- **Assessment** (approx. 10%): music theory, sight-singing, and listening skills will be assessed as students complete worksheets and other activities during class. Brief quizzes should be expected throughout the year. Students should also expect to demonstrate their mastery of concert music and sight singing skills either by singing in small groups, or individually by recording the assessment selection.
- **Repertoire Proficiency** (approx. 35%): concert attendance, etiquette, and proper performance attire (as described below) will guarantee full credit in this area. *In quarters with no concert requirement, weights will be adjusted.
- **Lesson Attendance** (HS only - 10%): All high school students must attend one small group voice lesson per quarter. Students will sign up for a lesson time with others from the same section. If a student misses their lesson time, it is their responsibility to make it up.
- **Extra Credit**: given for going above and beyond class requirements, including: volunteering to sing in a small group in class, attending outside performances, etc.

Music Policy

All chorus students will share an iPad with their music on it. Each student is responsible for the care of his/her iPad. All iPads are to be placed in their proper numbered slot and plugged in at the end of class. Students are responsible for marking their music as directed in class, and this is a factor in the grade of both students.

Attendance Policy

Attendance at all performances is **MANDATORY!** A concert is where a student demonstrates their proficiency and performance skills on the repertoire that was taught throughout the semester. If a student misses the concert, their "Repertoire Proficiency" grade will be a zero unless/until they have performed the concert selections for the teacher. If the absence from the concert was excused, students may receive up to full credit for the "Repertoire Proficiency" (depending on their proficiency). If the absence was unexcused, they may receive up to half credit for the "Repertoire Proficiency" (depending on their proficiency). It is the student's responsibility to make arrangements for the proficiency make-up.

You are receiving notice of concert dates and times well in advance, so please plan accordingly. I will be happy to assist students with finding rides to the concert, IF NOTIFIED IN ADVANCE - NOT THE DAY OF THE CONCERT. Should such a situation occur, please contact me by phone in advance at 716-962-8581. Again, students who miss the concert (regardless of the reason) will be required to make up the grade as outlined above.

Concert Attire (Clothing that is owned by the district will remain at the school. Students will arrive 15 minutes before their normal warmup time to change)

Senior High Men - Black dress pants and black dress shoes. Shirt/Vest/Bow Ties provided.

Senior High Women - Black dress shoes. Outfit provided.

Junior High (ALL) - TBD. You will be notified as soon as possible about attire requirements.

Valley Minstrels - See Senior High Chorus requirements. Note-outdoor concerts may require other attire.

Calendar of Important Events

***Please note that there were several errors on the district calendar you may have received in the mail. Please change the calendar dates to the ones listed below.**

Should any other changes occur, you will be notified as soon as possible.

Dates that are bold and underlined are errors/omissions

Mid-Late September - "A Night on Broadway" Auditions

Late September - Valley Minstrel Auditions

10/20/16 - "A Night on Broadway" @ 7:00 p.m., tickets \$5.00

10/21/16 - "A Night on Broadway" Dinner and a Show

Dinner @ 5:30 (\$5.00), Show @ 7:00 (\$5.00)

11/10/16 - Rock & Roll Hall of Fame and *Finding Neverland* (tentative, Senior High only)

Mid-Late December - Musical Auditions

12/14/16 - MS Winter Concert - 7:00p.m.

12/21/16 - HS Winter Concert - 7:00 p.m.

2/8/17-2/14/17 - Valley Minstrels Singing Telegram Sale

3/10, 3/11, 3/17, 3/18/17 - School Musical

Note that the musical will be performed TWO weekends instead of just one

4/28/17 & 4/29/17 - NYSSMA Solo Festival (Group Voice Class Students)

5/20/17 - CCMTA All-County Spring Festival @ SUNY Fredonia

5/24/17 - Tri-M Induction Ceremony & HS Instrumental and Voice Recital

5/31/17 - MS Spring Concert @ 6:00, HS Spring Concert @ 7:30

Mid-Late June - Baccalaureate (Advanced Chorus Students)

Contract

****Return by Friday, September 16th****

We, the parent/guardian and the student involved, have read and understand the policies set forth regarding requirements, expectations, electronic devices, grading, attendance, and attire in the

2016-2017 Cassadaga Valley School District Vocal Music Handbook.

Date: _____ Class: 6th Grade Junior High Senior High

Chorus Attendance Number: _____

Student Printed Name: _____

Student Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian Printed Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

* **Parents and Students** - please sign up for Remind using the following code(s). This is how you will be notified of important changes, reminders, etc. You may also sign up with an email address. Visit www.remind.com if you need further instruction.

* Senior High Chorus - text @cvhschorus to 81010, then follow the prompts

* Junior High Chorus - text @cvjrchorus to 81010, then follow the prompts

* 6th Grade Chorus - text @cv6chorus to 81010, then follow the prompts