

Somerset Berkley
Regional High School
Music Department



2018-2019
Choral Handbook
Concert Choir
Chorale
Show Choir

September 5, 2019

Hello to all Choral Students and Parents!

Welcome to another wonderful year of music at Somerset Berkley Regional High School! To those of you who are new to the program, we are in for a great time in the music department. For those returning students, I hope you are excited to come back for another great year of music-making. I am extremely anxious to start working with each and every one of you. Somerset is already known as “Musictown” and we are going to work and take this program to even new and more exciting heights!

The information in this handbook is designed to give each of you the tools and information to make this year as successful as possible. In order to maintain and improve upon the quality of our choral groups, there are expectations and goals that must be met by each individual and the groups as a whole. When this is done, it is much easier to work together as a team to perform to the best of our abilities. Please make sure you read each and every section carefully so that you fully understand what is expected of you in this program.

At this point, I would also like to point out that the parents, family members, and other community members are an integral part of our program. We have a very strong parent organization, the Somerset Friends of Music, who support the music program in every possible way. Without them, it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to maintain all the various aspects of our program. I strongly encourage all students to help with fundraising throughout the year. These fundraisers are designed to give us everything we need to have the best learning opportunities. I would also like to encourage all parents to help with our fundraising efforts if you could. It is important to the continued development and success of our program that everyone do their part.

If you are ever looking for more information regarding the music program, I strongly encourage you to turn to the music department website, www.SBRHSmusic.org. Also, please feel free to contact me at any point with questions you may have. I can be reached by e-mail at BiancoS@sbregional.org

I am looking forward to a great and music filled year!

Sincerely,

Mr. Samuel M. Bianco
Director of Choirs

Philosophy

Somerset Berkley Regional High School choral ensembles are performing and academic ensembles. There are many responsibilities associated with being a member of a performance group. The most important things to understand are:

1. The effort of *every* individual has a direct effect on the learning and musical experience of *every* other member.
2. Our success will come only through dedicated, frequent rehearsal, practice and performance.

When we make this thinking a part of ourselves, we take pride in and have a sense of ownership in what we do. The bonds that are created when we create music at this level together are a natural and encouraged part of this process. Your full engagement in this process will result in one of the great experiences of your life.

Expectations

- *Come to every rehearsal ready to go (always with your music and a pencil)
- *Leave the worries of the world at the door and be ready to focus on the task at hand
- *Explore different feelings and beliefs through the music we make
- *Grow musically as an individual and as an ensemble

RESPECT YOURSELF AND EVERYONE AROUND YOU
Without mutual respect, our ensembles cannot perform to their maximum potential. This is absolutely essential to the success of our year and any type of disrespect will not be tolerated

Concert Choir is an elected ensemble, open to all students in grades 9-12, meeting during the school day. Members will study choral and vocal technique, musical literacy, ear training, and critical listening skills. Members will study and perform a wide variety of literature, from different historical periods, cultures and languages. Members will be assessed semi-individually on a regular basis. The Concert Choir will perform several times throughout the school year, both in and out of the school day. Members are encouraged to study voice privately and to consider auditioning and/or participating in choral festivals.

Chorale is a select ensemble that meets during the school day. Chorale is open to all students in grades 9-12 through an audition process that takes place in the spring. The content will be similar to what takes place in Concert Choir, with the following changes - Students will be performing more often and will be expected to be more independent in learning their parts. While private study and outside choral festival participation are not required, they are strongly encouraged.

Show Choirs – “Electrify” , “Amplified”, and “Voltage” meet after school and are considered to be an extra-curricular activities. Show Choir is open to all students in grades 9-12 through an audition process that takes place in the spring. In Show Choir, performances are choreographed, costumed and shows often center on a main theme. The repertoire comes from the rock, pop, jazz and musical theater genres. During the season, many of the performances are part of music festivals, all of which are evaluative – several are competitive.

Attendance Policy

In order to make the most of the year, all students must attend all rehearsals, outside practices and performances. **Unexcused absences from class or outside rehearsal will result in the lowering of your term grade by 5 points.** Lateness will be dealt with on an individual basis at the discretion of the director.

Absence from *any portion* of a concert in which you perform is unacceptable. **Missing any portion of a required performance will result in your term grade being lowered by 15 points.** If the absence is excused (see next paragraph), you may make up the work by completing an outside assignment to be designed at the discretion of the director.

The only absences that will be excused are for extreme illness, family emergency, or a death in the family. *Written parental notification is required.* In cases where the choral ensemble and other school event activities conflict, a reasonable compromise will be worked out between the concerned directors / coaches. Your employment and family events are not emergencies. In the case of non-extreme illness, you are expected to attend the performance.

Officers

The choral program has a set of student officers who will be chosen by vote and by Mr. Bianco. These positions are extremely important to help all of the choral ensembles run smoothly throughout the year. The officer positions include president, vice-president, and librarian. All officers will meet with Mr. Bianco as needed. At the beginning of the school year, anyone interested in applying to be an officer can submit a short paragraph to Mr. Bianco explaining why you would like to be an officer and what qualifications you have.

Concert Attire

All high school performing groups have a uniform that they are expected to wear for all performances. Anyone who does not wear this to a performance will not be allowed to perform at that event.

Men:

Black Dress Pants
Uniform Tuxedo Shirt and Tie
(to be ordered from the Music Dept)
Black Dress Shoes (No Sneakers!)
Black socks

Women:

Long Black Dress
(to be ordered through the Music Dept)
Black Dress Shoes (no open toes)

Grading Requirements

Grading is scored as follows:

Concert Choir members will be graded on musical progress, cooperation, attitude and attendance. Grading is scored quarterly as follows:

- **70% Attendance and Participation:**

All students must be present at all rehearsals and performances for the full duration. As well, all students are responsible for having their music with them for every rehearsal. You must also put your best effort in everything you do. Anything less is not acceptable. You must practice and have our parts prepared for rehearsal. PRACTICE AT HOME - REHEARSE AT SCHOOL! Audio files of specific vocal lines for each part are available to all students on the Somerset High School Music Department website, www.somersetmusic.org. Also be prepared for rehearsals, set-up in a timely fashion, be quiet and attentive during rehearsals, and support and respect your fellow classmates.

- **30% Assignments**

There will be a small number of written assignments each term that will count towards your final grade. Make sure to complete each one because each will be worth a lot of points since they are few and far between.

Please sign and return the form below to Mr. Bianco by September 14th, 2018

2018-2019 Choral Program Student Handbook Agreement

I have read the 2018-2019 Somerset High School Choral Program Handbook with my parents. I agree to abide by all of its contents as a member of the Somerset Berkley Regional High School Music Department.

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Parent Signature _____ Date _____