

*Old Town Middle School*

*Choral  
Department  
Handbook*

*2020-2021*

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The purpose of this handbook is to inform you of the procedures and policies that will be followed by the choral department at Old Town Middle School. Parents and students should be familiar with this handbook. Please store this handbook where you will be able to refer to it as necessary during the school year. Many commonly asked questions are answered in this handbook. Please check the handbook first when you have questions.

## **OTMS Singers Fees**

ALL fees MUST be paid in full by **Thursday, October 15, 2020**. Please pay your fee through **MySchoolBucks**. If you need extra time to pay this fee, please talk to Miss Moore **ASAP**. There is ALWAYS a way to work things out, but you must communicate your need for help!

### **6<sup>th</sup> Grade Singers: \$40**

Covers two t-shirts, Sight Reading Factory, and Breezin' Thru Theory

### **ALL 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Singers: \$45**

Covers two t-shirts, Sight Reading Factory, Breezin' Thru Theory, and competition fees

## **Fundraising Requirements**

ALL 2020-2021 OTMS Singers will be encouraged to participate in ONE fundraiser this year. A successful choral program does not run for free. Your fee pays for the items listed above. In addition to these things, we have accompanist fees, music to purchase, classroom supplies, paper for concert programs, travel, and other miscellaneous expenses encountered during the school year. The fundraising requirement helps us function to the best of our ability. Before each fundraiser, you will be given a required amount of sales for that specific fundraiser (for example: sell 3 bags of Poppin' Popcorn). The required amount will be an easily attainable goal.

## Performance Attire Purchase

**ALL GIRLS, Grades 6-8:** Your performance attire for this year will be your choice of **SOLID** black  $\frac{3}{4}$ -sleeve or long-sleeve blouse (**NO SLEEVELESS**) and **SOLID, FULL LENGTH** black pants. You may purchase these items wherever you please. Please be modest in the fit of your top and pants. Refrain from showing too much skin or from having your outfit fit too tightly. We want to look like classy young ladies. Girls will be asked to wear closed-toe black flats with the outfit. Please ask if you have any questions! **PLEASE DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE TO PURCHASE YOUR PERFORMANCE ATTIRE!**

**\*If you were a Chamber Girl or Treble Select singer last year and have a Choir dress, you will wear your dress.\***

**6<sup>th</sup> Grade Boys:** Your performance attire will be a **SOLID WHITE** long-sleeve button-up dress shirt and **SOLID BLACK** dress pants. You may purchase these items wherever you please. You will also need to wear black socks and black dress shoes. You will be given a tie to wear the night of each performance. **PLEASE DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE TO PURCHASE YOUR PERFORMANCE ATTIRE!**

**Chamber Boys:** Your performance attire will be a **SOLID BLACK** long-sleeve button-up dress shirt and **SOLID BLACK** dress pants. You may purchase these items wherever you please. You will also need to wear black socks and black dress shoes. You will be given a tie to wear the day/night of each performance. **PLEASE DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE TO PURCHASE YOUR PERFORMANCE ATTIRE!**

## Performance Appearance and Attire

### **Boys and Girls:**

1. Jewelry: NO watches, bracelets, rings, earrings or necklaces.
2. Hair: Must be normal, naturally colored and regular shaped. Hair must be pulled back away from the face for performances. An open and expressive face is important. Items used to secure hair (bobbie pins, barrettes, etc.) must not be brightly colored (should be brown, blonde, black, etc.).
3. Hems: Pants and dress hems must touch the top of the foot in front and not drag the ground anywhere (not bunched at the bottom). Hems should be even and ironed.
  - a. Alterations are the responsibility of the parent/guardian. If you need to raise or lower the hem of your dress or pants, please DO NOT CUT the

dress or pants! You could possibly grow taller this year! Just turn the hem under to the necessary length.

**Girls:**

1. Outfit: Black choir dress OR black top and pants
2. Shoes: Solid black with a closed heel, toe, and sides. No decorations (shiny buckles, sequins, etc.) that would distract the eye. Shoes must be comfortable for the singer to wear when walking or standing during a performance. NO TENNIS SHOES!
3. Leg Coverings (for girls wearing Choir dresses ONLY): Must wear black pantyhose with choir dresses.

**Boys:**

1. Outfit: Black dress pants and black dress shirt (Chamber Boys) OR black dress pants and white shirt (6<sup>th</sup> Grade Boys) with tie
2. Shoes: Solid colored black dress shoes with black tall socks. NO TENNIS SHOES!

## **Performance and Grade Requirements**

**MHSAA:**

The Mississippi High School Activities Association sets certain requirements for middle/junior high school and high school students who participate in groups that come in contact with other schools (interschool events). Even though Choir and Band are part of the regular classroom curriculum, their members participate in festivals and All-State events and therefore function under the auspices of MHSAA.

1. Grade Requirements: Students must have a 2.0 ("C" overall average) for any four courses.
2. Age Limits:
  - a. 6<sup>th</sup> Graders: No restrictions at this time.
  - b. 7<sup>th</sup> Graders: Must not have reached 14 years of age by August 1<sup>st</sup>.
  - c. 8<sup>th</sup> Graders: Must not have reached 15 years of age by August 1<sup>st</sup>.

**ABSENCES ON THE DAY OF A CHOIR EVENT:**

As stated in the MCSD Student Handbook, in order to participate in a school activity that occurs on a regular school day (concert, festival, auditions, or ANY Choir event), a student must be present for 63% of the day. If the student is absent for more than 63% of the day, they will not be allowed to participate in the concert or event.

## **GRADE REQUIREMENTS:**

1. MHSAA requires that 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> graders have a 2.0 average for any four courses. MCSD requires that those four courses be the CORE courses (Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies).
2. The OTMS Choral Department will uphold even higher standards. If a regular education student has even one "F" on his/her progress report or report card at the time of a performance, that student may not perform in concert or festivals until proof is provided that all grades are passing.
  - a. If there is a major choir performance for which a singer is not eligible due to grades, the parents will be notified by written note or e-mail. The singer is STILL required to ATTEND the performance. The singer will be required to write a critique of the performance to earn his/her test grade.

## **GRADES**

**TESTS:** (66 percent of a student's grade, as per MCSD policy)

1. Written quizzes and tests
2. Sight-singing and music tests
3. Afterschool rehearsals
4. Performance test grades

**DAILY:** (34 percent of a student's grade, as per MCSD policy)

1. Breezin' Thru Theory and Sight Reading Factory checks (will be graded for either completion OR accuracy, depending on the lesson)
2. Notes/forms sent home that must be returned with a signature by a certain date. Late notes will lose 10 points for each day late.
3. Material checks (binder, Chromebook, pencil, paper - 100 or 0)

## **ABSENCES**

All performances and rehearsals of the OTMS Choral Department are **MANDATORY**.

Only a death in the immediate family or an extreme illness of the student will be considered excused. In the case of an extreme illness, a doctor's excuse must be provided. Should an emergency arise which prevents a student from attending a performance or rehearsal, please contact Miss Moore **IMMEDIATELY** by e-mail, via Remind, or by calling the school office. If the student misses a performance (excused only) where a test grade is given, the student will be given a written assignment to complete. An unexcused absence will result in a 0 test grade.

## **BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE**

The basis of any superior organization is firm discipline. All singers are expected to realize his/her responsibility to the group and engage in self-discipline. The rules in the OTMS and MCSD handbooks will be strictly adhered to in all classes, afterschool rehearsals, performances, and off-campus activities. If a student chooses to be uncooperative, disrespectful, or disruptive, the student will face the following consequences: student/teacher conference, parent contact, office referral, or other consequence assigned by school administrators.

Students who are eligible to participate in off-campus activities with the OTMS Singers are expected to keep a flawless behavior record. Students with unacceptable behavior in any class will not be allowed to travel off campus with OTMS Singers. This includes overnight trips. Trip fees are non-refundable if a student is prohibited from traveling with the choir due to behavior problems. Miss Moore, Mrs. Chase, Mr. Stokes, and Mrs. Hurst will make final decisions on whether or not a student is eligible to travel with OTMS Singers.

## **ALL-STATE HONOR CHOIRS**

Members of Mississippi All-State Honor Choirs are chosen through statewide auditions. According to state guidelines, only a certain percentage of our students are eligible to audition for these honor choirs at the state level.

### **Elementary All-State Honor Choir:**

All 6<sup>th</sup> grade students are eligible to audition. To audition, students will learn and sing the first verse of "Path to the Moon" for the judging panel. They will also be required to sing "Happy Birthday" in the key of D as well as match pitch and repeat short melodic patterns.

Students interested in being considered for this honor choir will audition with Miss Moore first. The Mississippi Music Educators Association only allows us to take **FIVE** 6<sup>th</sup> grade students to audition at the state level. The **FIVE** 6<sup>th</sup> graders chosen by Miss Moore must be able to audition at St. Anthony's Catholic School in Madison (date and time TBD). If chosen to participate in the All-State choir, the student must also commit to attend rehearsals and performance March 25-27, 2021, at the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg, MS.

### **Junior High All-State Honor Choir:**

All 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students are eligible to audition. Students will receive links to online tracks to assist them in learning portions of each honor choir song that will be sung for the audition. Students will have a preliminary audition with Miss Moore to determine which students will move on to the statewide audition. Students will record and submit their auditions online (with Miss Moore's help) through OpusEvents from October 12-16, 2020. If chosen to participate in the All-State choir, the students must also commit to attend rehearsals and performance March 25-27, 2021, at the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg, MS.

## **CONCERTS AND FESTIVALS**

Participation in all concerts and festivals is required of ALL OTMS Singers. A test grade will be given to all students for participation. Other festivals and performances may be added at the teacher's discretion. Dates and times will be announced well in advance of rehearsals, concerts, and festivals. Be prepared to be flexible!

### *2020-2021 Concert Festivals and Performances*

#### *Festival of Carols Concert*

*Date: TBD*

*Time: TBD*

*Location: TBD*

*(ALL OTMS Singers)*

#### *Titan Idol*

*Dates: TBD*

*Times: TBD*

*Location: TBD*

*(ANY 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade student can audition)*

2021 District Festival

February 25- February 26, 2021  
Ridgeland High School Auditorium

Times: TBD

(ALL 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade singers)

2021 State Choral Festival

Dates: TBD

Times: TBD

Location: TBD

(For 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade ensembles that earn Superior ratings in  
Performance at District Festival)

2021 Spring Choral Concert

Early May - Time and date TBD

Location: TBD

(ALL OTMS Singers)