

*O'Fallon Township High School Music Department*

**2018 - 2019**

# *Choral Program*

**Student *and* Parent  
Handbook**

***Web Site and Calendar:***

**[WWW.OTHSCHOIR.COM](http://WWW.OTHSCHOIR.COM)**

**\*VERY IMPORTANT INFORMATION– PLEASE READ IN FULL\***

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**This handbook has been prepared to provide both choir students and their parents/guardians with a quick reference for the rules and regulations governing the choral program. In addition to the information provided in this handbook, all students are expected to abide by the regulations set forth in the OTHS Student Handbook and Code of Conduct.**

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## **Welcome O'Fallon Township High School Choral Students and Parents!**

Welcome to the O'Fallon Township High School Choral program! You are about to embark on an exciting journey and we're glad you've chosen to come along. Music is one of the most rewarding and exciting educational opportunities offered by our schools. Consider getting as involved as your schedule will allow. Your investment in the OTHS choral program will pay tremendous dividends for many years to come. In addition to obtaining the life long skills needed to become a music performer or consumer, you will learn skills that can be used in every facet of life. Teamwork, dedication, self-discipline and responsibility prepare you for a successful future in any profession you may choose. We look forward to the opportunity to serve you as you become a member of the choral music team at OTHS.

### **Music Department Faculty and Staff:**

**Mr. Erick Price**

Director of Choirs - [pricee@oths.us](mailto:pricee@oths.us)

Chamber Ensemble, Concert Choir, Treble Chorus, Freshmen Choir, and Show Choir

**Mrs. Lauren Whitaker**

Administrative Assistant - [whitakerl@oths.us](mailto:whitakerl@oths.us)

**Dr. Melissa Gustafson-Hinds**

Head Band Director - [gustafsonhindsm@oths.us](mailto:gustafsonhindsm@oths.us)

# *OTHS Choral Department Curricular Courses*

## **Honors Chamber Ensemble (1<sup>st</sup> semester) Chamber Ensemble (2<sup>nd</sup> semester)**

Full Year

½ credit per semester (honors credit 1<sup>st</sup> semester only)

*Open to sophomores, juniors, and seniors*

*Prerequisite: Audition*

Honors Chamber Ensemble is the premier choral group at OTHS and is a one semester course focusing on the highest levels of vocal musicianship. Students will be introduced to advanced music theory, a large variety of vocal styles (including acapella), and several different foreign languages. Voicing ranges from SATB to 16 parts. The Madrigals and Jazz Choir are compassed within this group. Students will also have additional written projects to complete as a requirement of the honors course. This group is the largest time commitment of all the choirs, and students are required to attend all performances and complete all assignments.

### **Cleaning Fee:**

All students enrolled in Honors Chamber Ensemble will be required to pay a \$15 cleaning fee to the OTHS Choir Department to cover the cost of Madrigal Costume Cleaning. Cleaning fees are due by Friday, September 14<sup>th</sup>.

### **Private Lessons:**

***Private lessons are required to participate in Honors Chamber Ensemble (1<sup>st</sup> semester only)***

Individual instruction is one of the best methods a student can utilize to become an outstanding musician. Lessons are strongly encouraged for all students. Many private lesson instructors are available locally. These invaluable lessons reinforce musical skills taught in class and aid in the development of good singing habits. They correspond with all choral activities (Solo Contest, IMEA, sight-singing, college audition preparation, etc.) and supplement our musical curriculum. These “one on one” lessons may vary in price depending on teacher and frequency of lessons. Some opportunities may be available for these lessons to be taught during the school day while other opportunities are available for after school lessons.

**Written Projects:** *Detailed rubrics will be provided for each assignment.*

### **Paper # 1: Due Oct. 2018**

Attend a recital, concert, or musical theater performance at the collegiate level or higher. A voice recital with a private instructor is also acceptable. Write a 250-word review of the performance. Focus on the performance level of the musician or ensemble.

### **Written paper 2:**

### **Paper # 2: Due Dec. 2018**

Research a music career and a professional related the recording industry (a list will be provided in class).

Write a 500-word essay reflecting on their recording experience, and relating it to the career and professional they chose.

**During the school year, students will be participating in the following performances and contests:**

Feeder School Concert  
Madrigal Dinners  
Community Outreach Performances  
IMEA Auditions and Festivals  
*(mandatory for chamber choir members)*

IHSA Organizational Contest  
IHSA Solo and Ensemble Contest and Concert *(Mandatory for ALL chamber choir members)*  
Spring Pops Concert

# CONCERT CHOIR

Full Year  
1/2 credit per semester

*Open to sophomores, juniors and seniors*  
*Prerequisite: Audition*

A full-year course focusing on perfecting fundamentals, intermediate theory, and good musicianship through the performance of a wide variety of musical styles. Moderate amount of singing in foreign languages. Begins with SATB voicing.

**During the school year, students will be participating in the following performances and contests:**

Feeder School Concert  
Winter Choral Concert  
IMEA Auditions and Festivals  
IHSA Organizational Contest  
IHSA Solo and Ensemble Contest and Concert  
Spring Pops Concert

# TREBLE CHORUS

Full Year  
1/2 credit per semester

*Open to sophomores, juniors and seniors*  
*Prerequisite: None*

A full-year course focusing on vocal fundamentals, basic theory, and good musicianship through the performance of a wide variety of musical styles. Begins with SSA voicing. In addition to performance expectations, students will also study introductory music theory, sight-singing techniques, and music history. Attendance at performances is mandatory and considered as part of the basic course requirements.

**During the school year, students will be participating in the following performances and contests:**

Feeder School Concert  
Winter Choral Concert  
IMEA Auditions and Festivals  
IHSA Organizational Contest  
IHSA Solo and Ensemble Contest and Concert  
Spring Pops Concert

# FRESHMEN CHOIR

Full Year  
1/2 credit per semester

*Open to all freshmen*  
*Prerequisite: None*

A full-year academic course focusing on good musicianship through the performance of a wide variety of musical styles. Begins with SAB voicing. In addition to performance expectations, students will also study introductory music theory, sight-singing techniques, and music history. Attendance at performances is mandatory and considered as part of the basic course requirements.

**During the school year, students will be participating in the following performances and contests:**

Feeder School Concert  
Winter Choral Concert  
IMEA Auditions and Festivals  
IHSA Organizational Contest  
IHSA Solo and Ensemble Contest and Concert  
Spring Pops Concert

## **Extra-Curricular Opportunities:**

### **ENCORE AND BLUE NOTE JAZZ CHOIRS – DIRECTED BY MR. PRICE**

Encore is the premiere vocal jazz ensemble comprised of members from the curricular course Chamber Choir. This ensemble focuses on the art of vocal jazz, vocal pop and modern vocal styles. Encore meets throughout the school year and participates in numerous festivals and community events. Members are selected through audition only. Auditions for Chamber Choir are held in the fall for participation in the following academic year.

### **GREAT EXPECTATIONS SHOW CHOIR - DIRECTED BY MR. PRICE**

Great Expectations is the premiere performance choir at OTHS that uses advanced vocal skills and choreography to create a yearly show for exhibition, entertainment, and competition. After school and summer commitment is required for these extra-curricular activities. These performing ensembles are open to all students in grades 9-12 and are selected by audition only. Auditions are held in April for participation in the following academic year.

Prerequisite: To participate in show choir the student MUST be enrolled in a choir class.

### **IHSA SOLO AND ENSEMBLE CONTEST**

IHSA hosts a state solo and ensemble contest each spring at Alton High School. Participation is voluntary (for all but Chamber), and participants are strongly encouraged to engage in private music lessons if they wish to compete in IHSA Solo and Ensemble Contest. Specific information regarding the contest will be announced in the winter months.

## **IMEA JAZZ AND CONCERT FESTIVALS**

The Illinois Music Educators Association hosts district and state level music festivals in both the jazz and concert genres. Chamber choir members are required to audition for at least one IMEA organization; otherwise, participation is voluntary. Auditions take place in October, and district festivals take place in November. Those students selected for participation at the All-State level will travel to the state music festival, held in January at the Civic Center in Peoria, IL.

## **MADRIGAL DINNERS – DIRECTED BY MR. PRICE**

OTHS hosts a Madrigal Dinner in December each year. The performers include members of the Chamber Choir as well as additional select members from Concert Choir, Freshmen Choir, and Women’s Chorus. All choral students are invited to apply for participation in the Madrigal Dinners: both on-stage and backstage roles are available. Specific information regarding opportunities for involvement in the Madrigal Dinners will be provided at the start of the school year.

## **SPRING MUSICAL – DIRECTED BY MR. PRICE**

Each year, OTHS students perform a Broadway musical during the spring semester. All OTHS students are invited to audition for the spring musical: both on-stage and backstage roles are available. Auditions will be held in January of 2019.

## **FEBRUARY FROLICS – DIRECTED BY DR. SHACKELFORD**

Each year, OTHS students perform a variety show during the month of February. All OTHS students are invited to audition for February Frolics: both on-stage and backstage roles are available. OTHS seniors are also eligible to apply for a February Frolics emcee position. Auditions are held in early January each year.

## **NATIONAL FESTIVAL TOURS**

Enrollment in the choir program offers a variety of performances and travel opportunities. All enrolled choral students are eligible to participate in national festival tours. Details regarding destination, dates, fundraising efforts, and performance opportunities will be announced as information becomes available.

Our past festival resume includes:

2018 – New York, New York

2016 – Los Angeles, California

2014 – New York, New York

2011 – Orlando, Florida

2009 – New York City, New York

2005 – Honolulu, Hawaii

2003 – Branson, Missouri

2001 – Orlando, Florida

1998 – Chicago, Illinois

1997 – Nashville, Tennessee

## **CHORAL PROGRAM OBJECTIVES:**

1. To develop proper vocal technique and the musicianship skills necessary to make a positive contribution to the vocal music program.
2. To enjoy making music through achieving performance and ensemble goals.
3. To promote school spirit through serving as ambassadors for OTHS, the O'Fallon Community, and the state of Illinois.
4. To recognize the importance of participation in music and being a lifelong learner.
5. To set a positive example for others and serve as contributing members of a winning team.

## **General Expectations:**

Self-discipline is an important element of choir rehearsal and performance. Students must realize that they are a member of an ensemble team with an excellent reputation. Their behavior during class and at public performances reflects on both OTHS and the Music Department. Please remember the following basic rules:

- Students are expected to be respectful and cooperative team players at all times.
- 100% positive participation will prevent disruptive behavior. Criticizing another student's voice or effort will not be tolerated.
- Students are expected to come to class on time, with folder and pencil in hand, ready to begin when the bell rings.
- Students are to stand, perform vocalizing exercises, actively participate, and be on task during class.
- Students will leave all food, gum, and drinks outside of the room.
- Students will take care of the music facility by leaving the facility in the same or better condition than they found it and taking all of their belongings with them each day when they leave the choir room.
- Students will be issued their own choir music and it should not be lost or damaged. The student will pay for music if it is lost or damaged in any way. All music will be collected at the end of the semester.
- Students will exhibit proper concert etiquette at all performances.

## **ANY STUDENT WHO DOES NOT FOLLOW THE EXPECTATIONS WILL EXPERIENCE THE FOLLOWING CONSEQUENCES (IN ORDER):**

1. Grade lowered – verbal warning first
2. Director / student conference
3. Parent phone call
4. Office referral
5. After 3 offices referrals, the student will be removed from the class.



## *What Will You Be Graded On?*

1. **PARTICIPATION AND PREPARATION:** Grades will be determined by the student's preparation for class (see class materials) and class behavior (see class behavior). Class materials will also be checked on a regular basis for a grade.
2. **MUSIC THEORY AND MUSIC APPRECIATION:** Students are expected to participate in music theory, history, and appreciation lessons throughout the semester (this includes homework, quizzes, and tests). Students should expect at least one theory assignment per week (usually on Thursday and due on Friday).
3. **PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT:** Occasional vocal tests will be given to assess performance ability and/or memorization of repertoire. Students will be informed of the dates for performance tests in advance.
4. **REQUIRED CONCERTS AND PERFORMANCES:** Attendance at all required concerts is MANDATORY as outlined in the music department calendar. No exceptions. In the rare case that an excused absence is approved, the student must complete an alternative assignment to make up the grade. (For additional information regarding attendance requirements, see the calendar located in the back of this handbook and the "Attendance Requirements" section of this handbook.)

### *Grading Scale:*

A+ 100-98	A 97.99-93	A- 92.99-90
B+ 89.99-88	B 87.99-83	B- 82.99-80
C+ 79.99-78	C 77.99-73	C- 72.99-70
D+ 69.99-68	D 67.99-63	D- 62.99-60
	F 59.99-0	

### *Required Class Materials:*

**Black Binder** – Each student is responsible for keeping their music in a 1-inch black 3-ring binder. This is requested to ensure the safety of the music, to organize class materials, and to provide a professional, uniform concert folder.

**Choral Music**- Students will be provided music belonging to O'Fallon Township High School. They are responsible for this music, just as they are responsible for textbooks in other classes. Lost or damaged music must be paid for by the student. Students are encouraged to take music home for practicing purposes.

**Pencil** - Students should have a sharpened pencil at the beginning of each class. Choral music is used for many years; markings in the music must be non-permanent. Pens are NOT acceptable.

## *Attendance Expectations:*

*\*Please read this section in its entirety as it is extremely important and will greatly impact your grade if not followed correctly.*

As a member of the OTHS Choir Department, you have an obligation to your fellow choir members to be at school, at all outside-of-school rehearsals, and at performances on time, prepared, and with all necessary equipment. We are not tolerant of poor daily attendance. Read carefully.

Attendance at sectionals, rehearsals, and concerts scheduled outside of the regular school day is **required and graded** for all curricular choir members. Be aware that each ensemble has different rehearsal/performance requirements. Absence from sectionals or outside-of-school rehearsals will result in a reduction of grade and possible removal from performance opportunities. **WORK IS NOT AN EXCUSED ABSENCE!** It is the student's responsibility to schedule work around all school related choir activities. The calendar is given out on the first day of school, with plenty of time to avoid any and all conflicts.

1. Absence from outside-of-class rehearsals and concerts may be excused for the following reasons:
  - Medical emergencies or personal injury
  - Death in family
  - Other family or school activities determined on a case by case basis (must be communicated at least 10 days in advance)
2. ALL ABSENCES REQUIRE WRITTEN NOTICE FROM A PARENT/GUARDIAN IN ORDER TO BE CONSIDERED EXCUSED.
3. Once the absence is excused by the director, the student must complete a make-up assignment. The assignment is due by the date of the missed event unless the absence was an emergency. In that case, the assignment is due by the end of the semester, and will remain a 0 in the gradebook until completed.

*An online absence form and make up assignment instructions can be found at:*  
**[www.othschoir.com/student-information](http://www.othschoir.com/student-information)**

## *Performance Attire:*

**Concert Attire** – All students will wear all black dress attire for all performances. Performance attire is a crucial part of the choral experience. The goal is to look as professional and uniform as possible, creating nothing visually distracting; our music will speak for itself.

- **Concert Attire for Women** – Women will wear modest solid black dresses or dress slack outfits. Hemlines must fall below the knee. Leggings or yoga style pants are not appropriate. Shoes must be solid black dress shoes and should not be above a two-inch heel (this is for your comfort as well as to keep noise on stages and risers to a minimum). Nude colored nylons are strongly recommended and encouraged. Flip-flops, crocs, sandals, and mules are not permitted. Hair and make-up are to be conservative in nature. Hair accessories are to be black or neutral in color. Hair should be pulled back or up away from the face.
- **Concert Attire for Men** – Men will wear long sleeve black dress shirts and black dress slacks. Men must wear a black belt, black dress socks and black dress shoes (tennis shoes and/or white socks are not acceptable). Men will be supplied with a blue tie that must be returned to the OTHS Choir Department at the end of the school year. Hair should be pulled back or up away from the face.

**Costumes (Madrigals, Musical, Show Choir)** – Those students involved in the Madrigal Dinners, the Spring Musical, or Great Expectations Show Choir will be issued a costume during the school year. Students are responsible to keep their costumes in a safe place at home. Unless directed, costumes are never to be left in the choir room, storage rooms, etc. Costumes are to be hung up neatly at all times and returned in the same condition they were received in. Failure to return complete costumes in acceptable shape by the required due date will result in student cost for cleaning and/or repairs.

## *Concert Etiquette:*

Audience members are encouraged to follow some well-established standards for formal concert behavior.

- Refrain from talking during the performance.
- Remain seated for the entire concert. If it is absolutely necessary to move, move only between selections and exit at the nearest door.
- Wait to re-enter the auditorium until the current performing group is finished.
- Applause is the only appropriate form of expressing appreciation. A good rule of thumb is to wait until the conductor lowers his or her hands to indicate the completion of the selection or work.
- Please eliminate disruptions by turning off pagers, cell phones, and removing small children who are crying or speaking loudly.
- Students are not permitted to leave until the end of the concert and are expected to observe all performing groups. This is part of the educational process.

## *Private Lessons:*

Individual instruction is one of the best methods a student can utilize to become an outstanding musician. Lessons are strongly encouraged for all students. Many private lesson instructors are available locally. These invaluable lessons reinforce musical skills taught in class and aid in the development of good singing habits. They correspond with all choral activities (Solo Contest, IMEA, sight-singing, college audition preparation, etc.) and supplement our musical curriculum. These “one on one” lessons may vary in price depending on teacher and frequency of lessons. Some opportunities may be available for these lessons to be taught during the school day while other opportunities are available for after school lessons.

## *Fundraising:*

Participation in fundraising events is crucial to the success of our organization; they are optional though strongly encouraged. Expenses continue to rise (music, musicians, instructors, costumes, entry fees, etc.), so we need to have a very successful and prosperous fundraiser program to help pay for these costs. On trip years, most individual student fundraisers will directly benefit each individual student’s trip account. Our choral booster organization (OCRA) plays a vital part in our fundraising efforts. All parents are expected to attend and participate in booster activities as often as their schedule allows. **These fundraisers will not be possible without the help of both the students and their parents, and participation in them is expected.** We ask that you volunteer some of your time, so that we may secure the future of the choir program, and the experiences in which the students participate.

## *HOW DO I KNOW WHAT’S HAPPENING IN THE CHORAL DEPARTMENT?*

OCRA Choral Booster Meetings are held in the OTHS Milburn Choir Room. Meetings are generally on the second Thursday of every month at 7:00pm. All parents are encouraged and expected to attend. A great deal of information is provided regarding volunteer needs, fundraisers, schedules, upcoming events, trips, and much more. The best way for you to stay informed as a parent is to attend the booster meetings. In addition to supporting the choral program at OTHS, participation in the boosters provides you with an opportunity to get to know other OTHS Choir parents.

For information regarding the choir department and all of its curricular and extracurricular activities, please visit our website.

[WWW.OTHSCHOIR.COM](http://WWW.OTHSCHOIR.COM)

If you have a facebook account, be sure to join the facebook group “OTHS Choir” for news, pictures, video, and other updates. You can also follow us on Twitter @OTHSCHOIR.

# *The O'Fallon Choral Risers Association* *O.C.R.A.*

The O'Fallon Choral Risers Association (OCRA) was founded nine years ago in an effort to provide financial, social and physical support to the O'Fallon Township High School Choral Department. Whether your child is enrolled in a choral class or participates in one of the extra-curricular choirs, it is important to recognize that the entire program is in danger due to severe budget cuts. OCRA has been established in an effort to provide what can no longer be provided by governmental entities. Because of the magnitude of the situation, we are calling on all parents of choral students to join us in helping the program that gives so much to our children.

**This is the time for all of us to work together, giving and doing whatever possible to ensure the success of our students and the program.** Like other well-known booster organizations at OTHS, it is our goal to become a force to be reckoned with in the years to come—a group that raises money, provides volunteer hours, and serves as a strong and vocal advocate for the choral program at OTHS.

Please join us for an informational meeting immediately following both the Milburn and Smiley open houses, in the respective choir rooms. They are the same meeting, so you only need to attend one. We cannot stress enough how important and expected your participation is. We have several open board positions available if you would like to get more involved. These crucial positions will be discussed at our first meeting(s).

## *Schedule:*

Detailed information, such as specific times and locations, will be distributed in class AND can always be found on the Google Calendar located on the choral program website.

Dates and times are subject to change.

# O'Fallon Township High School Choral Program COMMITMENT FORM

Due by Friday, August 17<sup>th</sup>.

IT MUST BE SIGNED BY BOTH THE STUDENT AND THE PARENT/GUARDIAN.

This completed form is required for all choir students, and WILL count for a grade.

*PLEASE COMPLETE IN FULL AND PRINT IN ALL CAPITAL LETTERS.*

Student Name (print) \_\_\_\_\_

Year in School \_\_\_\_\_ Choir Class \_\_\_\_\_

Student Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Student Cell \_\_\_\_\_

1. Parent/Guardian Name(s) (print) \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Email Address \_\_\_\_\_  
(VERY IMPORTANT IN ORDER TO RECEIVE EMAIL UPDATES)

Phone # : \_\_\_\_\_

2. Parent/Guardian 2 Name(s) (print) \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Email Address \_\_\_\_\_  
(VERY IMPORTANT IN ORDER TO RECEIVE EMAIL UPDATES)

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

IN BECOMING A MEMBER OF THE OTHS CHORAL PROGRAM, I AGREE TO DO MY PERSONAL BEST TO CARRY ON THE TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE AND SUCCESS BOTH MUSICALLY AND PERSONALLY. I REALIZE THAT CONSCIENTIOUS ATTENDANCE AND PREPARATION FOR REHEARSALS AND PERFORMANCES ARE ESSENTIAL FOR THE PERFORMANCES FOR THE CHOIR PROGRAM TO OPERATE SUCCESSFULLY. I HAVE REVIEWED THE REQUIRED ATTENDANCE DATES AND WILL ATTEND ALL DATES IN WHICH IT IS MANDATORY FOR ME TO ATTEND. FURTHERMORE, I UNDERSTAND THAT I AM EXPECTED TO ASSIST AT CHOIR DEPARTMENT FUNDRAISERS. I WILL NOTIFY THE CHOIR DIRECTOR IN ADVANCE IN THE CASE OF AN ABSENCE. I HAVE PERMISSION TO ATTEND ALL EXTRACURRICULAR PERFORMANCES FOR ALL ENSEMBLES IN WHICH I AM A MEMBER.

I HAVE READ THE EXPECTATIONS AND GUIDELINES OUTLINED IN THE CHORAL HANDBOOK. I AGREE TO FOLLOW THESE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES IN ORDER TO BECOME A SUCCESSFUL MEMBER OF THE O'FALLON TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL CHORAL PROGRAM.

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_