****

**CHOIR**

**HANDBOOK**

**2021 – 2022**

**Mrs. Julie Newcomb - Choir Director**

**Pflugerville ISD Mission Statement**

Our mission of Pflugerville Independent School District is to provide a quality education with a commitment to excellence by facilitating learning in a safe and nurturing environment.

**CMS Choir Mission Statement**

The mission of the Cele Middle School Choir Program is to serve as an important musical link between the elementary and high school years by providing a unique educational experience in which students gain not only musical skills and a lifelong appreciation of music, but have the opportunity to develop individual skills that will help them to be successful throughout their lives.

**CMS Choir Ten Ethical Principles**

The following ten major ethical values form a philosophical basis for ethical judgment and define the moral duties and virtues implicit in ethical behavior. Cele Middle School Choir is committed to these principles and expects all choir members to continue to strive toward these standards of behavior.

**Honesty**

♦ Always tell the truth.

♦ If you know of a situation or problem that the choir director should know about, it is your duty to discuss with him or her the situation or problem.

**Integrity**

♦ Always do what you know to be right even when no one is watching you.

♦ Do not compromise your values.

**Promise-keeping**

♦ By signing the choir contract you are making a promise to follow all policies and guidelines in the CMS Choir Handbook.

**Loyalty**

♦ Support all members of the CMS Choir Program through thought, word, and deed.

**Concern for Others**

♦ Be tolerant and forgiving of each other.

♦ Help create and maintain a positive atmosphere and a safe environment by speaking positively to and about each other.

**Law Abidance/Civic Duty**

♦ Exhibit behavior that is representative of good citizenship in all classes and school-wide activities.

♦ Follow all school and choir rules and behavior expectations.

♦ Assist in concert setup and takedown, as well as any other jobs that need to be done.

♦ Take care of choir facilities and equipment.

**Respect for Others**

♦ Behave in a respectful manner to the directors and all choir students, parents, chaperones, and guests.

♦ Respect the rehearsal time by using every minute wisely.

♦ Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself.

♦ Follow directions/instructions the first time they are given.

♦ Decide BEFORE you speak or act whether what you are about to say or do will be considered appropriate.

**Fairness**

♦ Celebrate with others when they succeed.

♦ Do not criticize other students who earn recognition.

**Pursuit of Excellence**

♦ Make an effort to improve daily.

♦ Do your best at all times and you will succeed.

♦ Help others to improve by leading by example and being supportive of others.

♦ Maintain the highest level of rehearsal behavior.

**Accountability**

♦ Take responsibility for your actions. Admit to what you do wrong and take pride in what you do right.

♦ Pass all of your classes every grading period to maintain eligibility.

♦ Be on time to and attend all rehearsals and performances.

♦ Wear the appropriate uniform required for all concerts.

♦ Follow through on your commitment to other choir students and the directors.

**NEEDED SUPPLIES**

**Students should have the following materials no later than Friday, September 3, 2021.**

1- One inch, poly 3-ring binder with dividers (This will be provided by CMS Choir)

**To be placed in this binder**:

**➢ 15 sheets of blank notebook paper**

**➢ 4 sharpened pencils**

**➢ pencil pouch**

**➢ 1 highlighter/3 different colored pencils**

**➢ Choir handbook**

Students are expected to maintain the above supplies in a neat, clean and orderly manner or they will be asked to replace the unkempt materials.

**UNIFORMS**

**All CMS Choir students are required to have a formal and an informal choir uniform. Students with inappropriate concert attire will not be allowed to participate in the performance, and thus, their grade will be affected.**

➢ **FORMAL UNIFORM:**

❖ **Varsity and Junior Varsity Choirs:** These choirs will be wearing a floor-length, sleeveless, cowl neck dress in black, with sheer black tights and low-heeled closed-toe black shoes. A dress will be issued to each student by the CMS choir program. There will be a replacement fee for lost dresses. It is the student’s responsibility to obtain all of the other pieces of the required uniform. Undergarments **cannot** be visible even if it's the same color as the dress. **No unnatural hair color of any kind**. Hair will be in a low bun and all hair accessories have to be the same as hair color. No jewelry of any kind. This includes earrings, necklaces, rings, and bracelets.

❖  **Men’s Choir:** The boys wear black dress pants with black dress shoes and black socks, a black dress shirt, vest, and tie. A vest and tie will be issued to each student by the CMS choir program. There will be a replacement fee for lost vests and ties. **No unnatural hair color of any kind**. No jewelry of any kind. This includes earrings, necklaces, rings, and bracelets.

It is the student’s responsibility to obtain all pieces of the required uniform.

❖ **Freshman (Beginner) Choir:**

The Freshman girls will wear a knee, to below-the knee-length, dress or skirt and nice blouse: white on top and black on bottom. In addition, sheer black/ black tights and low-heeled closed-toe black shoes must be worn (think flats or a ballet slipper). **No unnatural hair color of any kind.** Hair will be out of face and hair accessories have to be the same as hair color. Only small earring studs may be worn. No necklaces, rings, or bracelets of any kind.

The Freshman boys will wear black dress pants with black dress shoes and black socks, a black dress shirt, vest, and tie. A vest and tie will be issued to each student by the CMS choir program. There will be a replacement fee for lost vests and ties. No jewelry of any kind. This includes earrings, necklaces, rings, and bracelets. It is the student’s responsibility to obtain all pieces of the required uniform.

➢ **INFORMAL UNIFORM:**

❖ **T-Shirts:** You are required to purchase a CMS Choir T-shirt to be worn for less formal performances/ social gatherings. Students will not be allowed to perform at these concerts without a CMS Choir T-shirt. In addition, you will have the opportunity of purchasing an additional item of clothing for those wintry days. More information will be coming soon about how to purchase these.

❖ **Jeans:** Students are required to wear **blue** jeans (not black, not khaki, not Capri pants and not shorts).

These jeans should be neat and not have holes or excessive fraying. Jeans must comply with the school dress code. Any closed-toe shoes may be worn. NO HEELS!

**REHEARSAL/CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR**

**EXPECTATIONS AND CONSEQUENCES**

**Behavior Expectations:**

❖ Be in your assigned seat, quiet, with your choir folder and sharpened pencil, ready to begin rehearsal **BEFORE** the tardy bell rings.

❖ Talking is not allowed in class. During rehearsal, if your section is not singing, you are expected to be following along and silently studying your part.

❖ Raise your hand to be addressed. Be courteous to others and listen while they are speaking.

❖ Be kind and respectful to peers, teachers, and guests.

❖ Eating and gum chewing are not allowed in the choir room. There will be no grooming in class. You are highly encouraged to bring a water bottle…. with water only.

❖ Take care of the choir room and all equipment and materials. The piano, computer, sound system, practice rooms, and director’s office are off limits without permission from the choir director.

❖ Remain in your assigned seat throughout class. All personal needs should be taken care of before the bell rings. This includes the restroom, Kleenex, materials, and water. Remain in your seat until the choir director (not the bell) dismisses class.

❖ A behavior contract is attached to this handbook. The contract must be signed by parents and choir students and returned by **Friday, September 3, 2021.**

**Behavior Consequences:**

❖ Student / Class warning

❖ Rehearsal grade deduction

❖ Parent phone call

❖ Parent, teacher, and student conference

❖ Office referral

**Note**: Severe offenses will automatically result in an office referral.

**GRADING POLICY**

Each nine weeks’ grades are averaged according to the percentages listed below:

1. **40% Rehearsal Grade/ Skill/ Theory Quizzes**
2. **60% Performance Grade/Skill/ Written Assessment**

If there are no performances in a grading period, grades will be averaged in this manner:

1. **40% Rehearsal Grade/ Skill/ Theory Quizzes**
2. **60% Skill/Written Assessment**

➢ **Rehearsal Grade**

Rehearsal Grades are determined by:

❖ being prepared and having all materials

❖ following all student expectations (above)

❖ focused, active participation in daily activities including sight reading, warm-ups, all

 singing activities, and score preparation.

**Extra Rehearsals**

All choirs will be required to attend after school rehearsals in the week before a concert/ festival. These rehearsals will be scheduled no earlier than two weeks in advance. **Every choir rehearsal** **is mandatory and counted as a part of the rehearsal grade.** An unexcused absence can negatively impact the overall choir grade. Points will be deducted for tardiness.

➢ **Skill/Written Assessment Grade**

Skill/Written Assessment grades include:

❖ Any written work

❖ Periodic sight-singing tests

❖ Periodic singing tests to demonstrate an understanding of proper vocal technique

❖ Student self-assessment of performance/ rehearsal skills

❖ Teacher observation and assessment of rehearsal skills

❖ Any other assessments given

➢ **Performance Grade**

All performances of the CMS choirs are **mandatory** because they are part of the school curriculum. Students may receive a maximum total grade of 100% for each concert in which they participate.

❖ 50% of the concert grade will be an assessment of the student’s contribution to the performance goals.

❖ 50% of the concert grade will be the performance itself.

**Note:** Concert grades will be lowered for inappropriate concert behavior such as talking, causing any kind of distraction during a performance, tardiness, improper uniform, etc.

**Students who miss a concert must have their parents call the choir office, email the director, or bring a written excuse to the director the day the student returns to school after the concert. Failure to do so will result in a grade of "0" for the performance section of the concert grade.** Concerts will only be excused in instances of severe illness (fever,vomiting, etc.) or family emergency. If the absence is excused, the student will be graded only on thestudent’s contribution to the performance goal and the absence will not affect the overall grade.Forgetting about the concert, not having a ride, not having a uniform, etc. will not be considered excused concert absences and will result in a grade of “0” for the performance portion of the grade. Students in I.S.S. at the time of an evening concert are not allowed to perform in or attend the concert as per school policy. Important: alternate assignments will not be given to any student who misses a performance. Concert grades cannot be made up.

**CONCERT BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS**

Choir students will exhibit proper concert behavior during all performances, in either their own choir or as an audience member. Students will be graded on their behavior. Concert etiquette is an integral part of choral music education. Appropriate conduct in formal and informal concert settings is included in the T.E.K.S. set by the Texas Education Agency. The following rules will be followed at all times:

➢ Talking is not permitted on stage or in the audience. It is disrespectful to the performers on stage and audience members.

➢ Do not distract the performing choir in any way.

➢ Do not leave your seat for any reason during a performance. You will be given ample time to use the restroom and drinking fountain before the concert. If you must leave, do so as quietly and inconspicuously as possible. Leave between songs only.

➢ No food or drink is allowed on stage, backstage, or in the seating area. This includes water bottles and gum.

➢ **Cell phones are not permitted on stage or in the audience at any time**.

➢ Move between the seating area and stage in quiet, single-file lines. Sit in your assigned seat/row. Do not talk as you enter or exit.

➢ Support your fellow choir members with appropriate applause. Yelling, whistling, shouting names, etc. is not acceptable.

➢ Set a good example for the audience and other students. Other people may not know how to behave in a concert setting.

➢ We hope all parents and guests will stay for the concert when bringing a student to a concert. If a student needs to be picked up, please do so in a timely manner.

➢ Stay for the entire concert.

**ELIGIBILITY**

**U.I.L. AND COMPETITIONS**

Participation in the U.I.L Concert and Sight Reading Contest in April is **mandatory** for our Varsity and Junior Varsity choir students. Students participating in Solo and Ensemble, All-Region Choir Auditions, U.I.L. Concert and Sight Reading Contest, any music festival/contest, must follow all of the eligibility requirements set by the Texas Education Agency, University Interscholastic League and PFISD eligibility rules. For the most updated eligibility requirements, please consult the UIL website (<http://www.uiltexas.org/music>) Click on the resources and forms tab, then click on the gray box to the right of the page label Constitution and Contest Rules).

The student:

❖ Must **not** have been sent to I.S.S. for any reason during the nine weeks of the event.

❖ Cannot receive 3 office referrals from any teacher or administrator during the semester in which the event occurs.

❖ Cannot receive a referral from a choir director during the nine weeks of the event.

**GENERAL TRAVEL GUIDELINES**

❖ Students must exhibit good behavior in **ALL** of their classes to participate in daytime performances or field trips that require students to miss school.

❖ The student is responsible for promptly making up for all missed work. If the student fails to make up any missed work, he/she will not be allowed to miss class for the next daytime performance or field trip.

❖ Students are required to comply with District, CMS and Choir rules and regulations regarding discipline and behavior while on a trip. Bus conduct will include that of the schools and the bus driver’s additional requests. Students are expected to model the CMS Choir Ten Ethical Principles while at school-sponsored events. Students who misbehave will lose the privilege to participate in future choir trips.

❖ Parents/guardians are welcome to join the choirs on any of their outings. District policy states that parents/guardians must have a Pflugerville ISD Volunteer Form on file with the school district to be allowed to chaperone. The online application can be found at pfisd.net (click on the parent tab, and then locate the community tab).

❖ Departure and arrival times will be given in detail and in advance. These times are strictly enforced.

❖ Parents must promptly pick up their children from field trips that occur outside of the school day. To help ensure student safety, all students should be picked up at the bus lanes (On the east side of the school).

❖ All students must be picked up from all choir activities in a timely manner.

❖ As per district policy, students are expected to ride the bus to and from any field trips. Please contact the director by phone if special arrangements need to be made. Special arrangements will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

**FUNDRAISING**

All fundraising is optional but students are encouraged to participate. The money raised is to help keep the cost down of all spring festivals/ trips.

❖ All money raised belongs to the CMS choir and cannot be refunded for any reason. It is deposited into the Choir Activity Fund and cannot be moved to any other budget account.

❖ Each fundraiser is earmarked for a specific purpose. A fundraiser for student accounts will be held in the spring.

**PAYMENT INFORMATION**

There will be times during the school year when payments will need to be sent to choir for trips, uniforms, etc. Most of our monies will be handled online through a system called *Revtrak*. If you’d rather pay using a check or cash, this is also acceptable.

To help with bookkeeping, we ask that the following guidelines be followed each time money is sent to school for choir purposes.

❖ Please make all checks payable to **CMS CHOIR** and include your driver’s license number near the name and address portion of the check.

❖ Please include the choir student’s name on each check in the “memo” area

❖ Please send all money (cash or checks) to school in an envelope marked with

**student’s name, class period, and “CMS CHOIR”** written on the front. It is not a good idea to label any envelope sent to school as “money”.

**Statement of Financial Policy**

No student will be denied participation in the CMS Choir due to financial hardship. Please speak to the choir director so that arrangements can be made for those in need of consideration.

**COMMUNICATION**

Communication between parents, students and the choir director is important to the success of the program and to help each student reach his/her potential. We encourage parents to be actively involved in the CMS Choir Program.

➢ **Email through Charms software or Skyward:** It is important that **ALL** parents provide email addresses to be used specifically and ONLY for CMS Choir as the choir director will use email to communicate announcements, reminders, and special information to parents.

* **Remind:** We also communicate this way. Remind is a safe way for teachers to text message students and keep in touch with parents. More information to follow.
* **Choir Website/ social media:** Our choir website is <https://celecoltchoirs.weebly.com/>. This is updated regularly. Look for us on Facebook/ Instagram/ Twitter!

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