

Gateway Middle School – Mr. Herron – Syllabus

Welcome

Welcome to the Gateway Middle School choral program! It is an honor and a privilege to become a member of our performing groups. We have a fine reputation and we intend to keep it.

Objectives

1. To emphasize the development of singing and music reading skills necessary to make an enjoyable contribution to a quality choral organization.
2. To enjoy making music. Music is fun, but there is no fun in mediocrity. To ensure the success of the group, each student, parent, and director must realize his/her responsibilities. Each must be willing to sacrifice individual desires for the betterment of the choir.
3. To have a good attitude about choir. The amount of satisfaction and fun you receive from your choir will be no greater than the amount of hard work and enthusiasm you are willing to consistently contribute. Your attitude will have a direct impact on your achievements.
4. To understand the importance of proper conduct, consideration of others, and courtesy as a vital part of the choir.

Classroom Routines and Expectations

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

- Be on time to class
- Be prepared for class
- Raise your hand
- Be respectful to the teacher and students
- Discipline problems will be dealt with immediately

Consequences

Any student who does not follow the rules listed will receive the following consequences:

- Director / Student conference, Choir Service
- Discussion with grade level team
- Parent contact
- Office referral
- Removal from performance based setting and alternative assignments given

Grading

The diligent, hard-working members of the Gateway Choir Department know that being in choir doesn't necessarily mean an "easy A." Grades are an important part of choral music education, and it is important for each member to be acquainted with the expectations of the GMS Choir Department grading system.

A minimum of ten grades will be given during each grading period. Grades will include but are not limited to the following:

Weekly Participation

Weekly rehearsal grades will be determined by attitude, respect, cooperation, effort, sectionals, sight-reading, attendance, and improvement. Students will receive an automatic "0" for the following: skipping class (defined as being in the building but not in class without the teachers' permission for a minimum of 10 minutes) or walking out of class for any reason.

Skills

The choir member will be expected to improve individual musical skills. An evaluation of this improvement may include **taped music tests, individual sight-reading tests, and written quizzes**. The choir member will be evaluated on improvement of his/her ensemble skills during daily rehearsals.

Performances

All performances are mandatory. **Failure to attend a choral performance may result in failure of the course for that grading period, if the absence is unexcused.** A performance is considered an examination of the material that has been covered in the singer's class.

Attendance Policy

As a member of the Gateway 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.

1. All students are expected to have excellent daily attendance at school.
2. Absence from concerts will be excused for the following reasons:
 - Medical emergencies or personal injury
 - Death in family
3. Examples of unexcused absences include but are not limited to:
 - Oversleeping
 - Transportation
4. You must call if you are going to miss a performance. (314-241-2295)
5. Chronic absenteeism from school, unexcused absences from rehearsals or performances, and tardiness may result in:
 - Grade reduction
 - Loss of performance status
 - Removal from current choir or removal of performance opportunities

Concert Dress

For our school concerts, students are expected to wear white shirts and black pants or skirts. Students should also wear dark colored (preferably black) shoes.

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 at all possible. If it is absolutely necessary to do so, move only between selections and exit at the nearest door.
- Wait to re-enter the auditorium until the 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.