

Little Rhody High School West



Choral Handbook

2014-2015

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WELCOME!

A Message from the Director

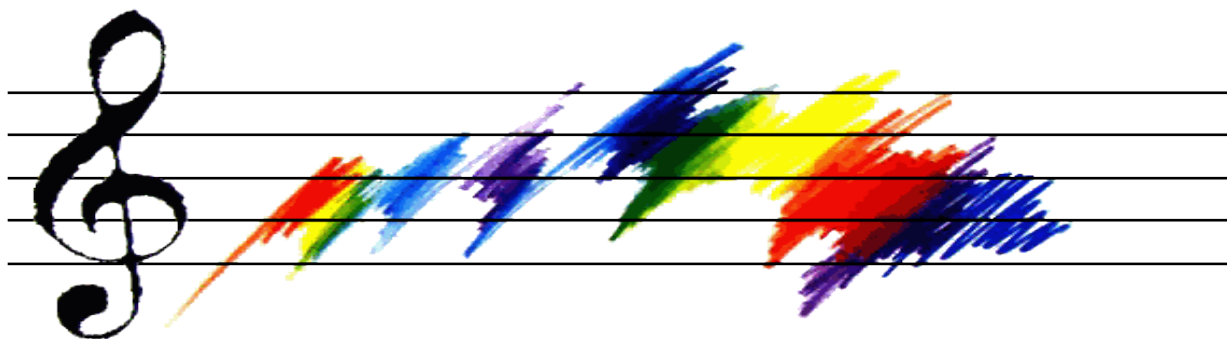
Dear Students and Parents/Guardians,

Thank you for your interest in the Little Rhody West Choral Program! I am proud to serve the school as the Choral Director and lead such talented young voices in an exciting year of music. It is my goal to uphold the school's high standard of musical excellence and professionalism by sharing my knowledge, experience, and passion for music in a positive learning environment. It is a big commitment: we work hard, practice intensely, and learn a lot about music and ourselves. But with hard work comes great rewards. I encourage you to review the information in this handbook about the choral program to see if you are up for the challenge. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns. My door is always open.

Yours in music,

John Giacchi

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Mission Statement

“Why Music?”

Why music? It is a question society is asking our schools. Music is more than reading notes from a page or playing a tune on an instrument. A strong music education enriches the individual, the school, and the community. By joining chorus or band, students develop real-world skills, such as:

- showing commitment and follow-through
- appreciating the arts
- realizing the beauty of cultural diversity
- stimulating creative thinking and problem-solving
- promoting hard work individually and in groups
- building social connections
- harnessing music’s therapeutic effects
- developing stress management and coping skills
- improving time management
- seeing a correlation to improved scores in other core subjects

As such, it is the goal of the Choral and Music Departments at LRW to endow the students with the power of music and teach these valuable life-skills through a comprehensive and positive music education.



WHERE DO YOU FIT IN?

Program Offerings

General Chorus: This is a non-audition group open to all who want to sing. The goal of General Chorus is to develop the fundamentals of choral singing, such as vocal technique, solfege, ear-training, sight singing, music theory, and music history. The General Chorus will perform a variety of repertoire at all major school concerts.

Concert Choir: More accomplished singers may audition for the Concert Choir. This is a select group generally comprised of juniors and seniors that have proven ready for more challenging pieces and in-depth study of music. The Concert Choir will perform a variety of repertoire at all major school concerts, school events, and community performances.

Show Choir: Students who are part of the General Chorus and/or the Concert Choir may audition for the Show Choir. This is an extracurricular program dedicated to more jazz, Broadway, rock, and pop styles. This group collaborates with the theater department to perform the school musical in addition to performing on its own at school and community events. Students interested in this ensemble should have a strong desire to perform with theatrics, costumes, and staging/props.

Voice Class: Voice Class is offered as a fine-arts elective that focuses on the mechanics of singing, the anatomy of the voice, and developing proper technique. Voice Class emphasizes group and solo singing, vocal exercises, and understanding the voice as an instrument.

Private Lessons: Voice lessons are available by appointment with the choir director. These lessons may take place during student-led sectionals or other times arranged by teacher and student. These private lessons will serve to enhance individual musical development, solo singing, performance preparation, and additional assessment opportunities.



Other Opportunities

“What else is going on?”

All-State: Students are encouraged to audition for All-State Choir in November. Selected students will have the opportunity to collaborate and make music with the best high school singers and music directors in the state in a festival concert in March.

Tri-M Music Honor Society: A program of NAFME (National Association for Music Education), Tri-M Music Honor Society is an international honor society that acknowledges music students for their musical and academic achievements. Members will enrich the community with song and be an inspiration for music excellence.

Student Officers

“Wait, wait, there’s more....”

President: Supervises officers, acts as student representative for choral department, oversees fundraising, and helps coordinate special projects with the Choral Director.

Vice President: Assists President and acts on his/her behalf in case of absence.

Secretary: Takes meeting minutes and is responsible for all official communication, including thank you notes, website and school bulletin updates, and assisting Choral Director with student announcements.

Music Librarian: Manages the music resources, including distributing and collecting scores, photocopies, inventory, and repairing music as needed.

Stage Manager: Coordinates performance needs, including stage set up and break down, sound and lights, audio recording, logistics, and performers’ requirements.

Publicist: Works closely with Secretary and Choir Director to promote the choral program to the school and community. Duties involve maintaining website, Facebook, and Twitter in addition to using photography, video/YouTube, flyers, and other means of promotion.

Section Leaders: Students who show exceptional musicianship and leadership may be appointed as Section Leaders, and will have the opportunity to lead special group and sectional rehearsals.

LRW CHORAL STANDARDS

5 Rules to Live By

- 1. Respect:** Yourself, others, teachers, the school, the community, materials, the music, the process...be respectful, professional, and LISTEN. You represent the school, the choral program, and me! With music and the arts in schools being so unstable, it is of the upmost importance that we represent LRW in the best way we can: with MUSIC!
- 2. Show Up:** In life, in music, in the choral program, the first and sometimes biggest step is simply showing up. When you commit to the choral program, we rely on you to be there physically, mentally, and musically so that the group can be at its best. Being punctual, attending all rehearsals and performances, and actively participating is the way we will advance individually and as a group. Please see the following Attendance and Grading Policies for more details about this important topic.
- 3. Be Prepared:** It will never feel like we have enough time. So, in order to get the most out of the choral experience and to become the best singers we can be, it is on you to come to class prepared and be ready to SING!

This means:

- having your music and materials ready
- being in your section on time
- knowing your parts
- no talking out of turn (LISTEN!)
- no chewing gum
- no food or drink (except water)
- no unauthorized use of electronic devices

- 4. The School Rules:** All school rules and policies apply in the chorus room. Refer to the official student handbook for all school rules and regulations.
- 5. Have Fun:** We will work hard, practice intensely, and study a lot to be at our best musically and professionally. The attitude you bring will make the difference between having fun and feeling overwhelmed. Stay positive; we are sharing the joy of music! Hard work deserves great reward, the greatest of which is making music. However, the fun does not stop there; other incentives are frequently offered as rewards.

Discipline

“Don’t make me turn this car around...”

I expect that because all students in the choral program have made the decision to commit to the group and therefore *want* to be there and *want* to learn, discipline will not be an issue.

Success in the program is easy: just follow the 5 Rules to Live By.

If, however, disciplinary action is required, the following protocol will be enacted:

1. Verbal Warning / Student Meeting with Teacher
2. Written Warning / Note Sent Home
3. Detention / Phone Call Home
4. Principal Referral / Detention / Parent-Teacher Conference
5. Dismissal from Choral Program / Failing Grade Issued

Furthermore:

Any gross violation of school rules, severe disruptions, and/or violent behavior will not be tolerated and will result in immediate referral to the principal and possible termination from the program.



Concert Dress

“What should I wear?”

In order to perform in a choral concert, student **MUST** be in concert dress. Any student not in concert attire will not be allowed to take the stage and will not receive credit for the performance. Each ensemble has its own identifying uniform, as described below:

General Chorus

Men

- Black pants
- White, button-down, collared, long-sleeve shirt
- Tie
- Black dress shoes
- Black socks

Women

- Black dress or black skirt (knee length or longer) with long-sleeved black top
- Black dress shoes
- Black nylons

Concert Choir

Same dress clothes as General Chorus, with the addition of choir robes and/or stoles provided by the school. Choir robes will be kept at the school and issued at performance time.

Show Choir

Dress will be determined based on performance details.

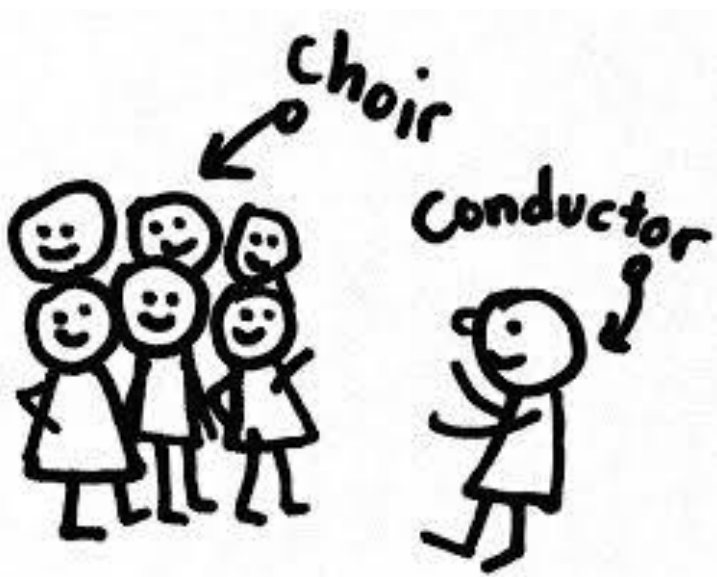
Additionally

All choral members must purchase a LRW music department shirt to be worn at informal performances. The shirts are \$20. An order form will be sent home during the first weeks of classes, and is due back Oct 1st in order to have them in time for the first concert. Failure to purchase the shirt in time for the concert will prevent the student from performing.

Materials

“Here’s what else you’ll need...”

- Assigned Music, to be returned in the same condition it was issued.
 - NOTE: Students are responsible for the cost of lost or damaged music!
- 3-Ring, 1” Binder to hold your music and assignments.
- Notebook or loose-leaf paper to fit in choral binder.
- 2 Pencils. NO PENS.
- Concert Dress and LRW Music Dept. Shirt, as mentioned above.
- This handbook!



Attendance

Students are expected to attend all concerts and rehearsals. Period. That is the commitment.

If an extenuating circumstance prevents a student from attending a concert, prior notice should be given and documentation **MUST** be provided.

If a class is missed due to illness, the student should contact the choir director to determine if make-up work is possible.

In the event of excessive absenteeism, solos and/or parts may be reassigned.

GRADING

Criteria

“How to get an A in chorus...”

Class Attendance, Participation, & Preparation 25%

Students are expected to be at all rehearsals, on time, prepared to sing and/or complete the day's tasks.

Concert Attendance & Participation **25%**

Students are expected to be at all concerts, on time, and prepared to sing. If an extenuating circumstance prevents a student from attending a concert, prior notice should be given and documentation must be provided.

Tests, Quizzes, and Assignments	25%
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There will be 4 exams on material covered in class, including music theory, history, sight-singing, ear-training, prepared pieces, and vocal technique. Short quizzes will be given throughout the year on specific lessons. Regular homework assignments, including 1 research paper, will be assigned

Portfolio Project	25%
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Students will keep a portfolio of their progress and assessments to be used in a capstone project.

Grading Scale

94-100 = A
90-93 = A-
87-89 = B+
83-86 = B
80-82 = B-
77-79 = C+
73-76 = C
70-72 = C-
67-69 = D+
63-66 = D
60-62 = D-
0-60 = F

EXTRAS

Class Trips

“Work hard. Play hard.”

Some concerts will require travel to the performance venue. These performances are part of the curriculum and are mandatory. Field Trip Permission Forms will be sent home for these events. Forms must be signed and returned in order for the student to attend and receive concert credit. Bus transportation and/or carpooling will be provided.

The music department and choral program also coordinate enrichment field trips. These outings could be day trips or last longer and require overnight accommodations. Possible events include city trips (New York, Cleveland, Montreal, Orlando, etc.), attending a local concert, visiting a museum, or going to an amusement park. These trips are optional, but highly recommended for the experience. Costs will be determined and offset by fundraising, but there may be an out-of-pocket expense per student.

Fundraising

“Show me the Money!”

The Choral Program needs YOUR help! To keep the music alive and well at LRW, we must do some of our own fundraising. We will have programs, videos, and CDs for sale at events. Also, the student leadership team will coordinate other fundraising activities throughout the year under the supervision of the Choir Director. Funds will be used for class trips, transportation to performances, music upkeep, uniform cleaning, and other incidental costs that will benefit the students that the budget will not otherwise allow. All parents and students are called to help keep the music playing!

Other Ways to Help

“All hands on deck!”

The choral and music programs thrive from student and parent involvement. We will be recruiting help throughout the year, but please feel free to contact the Choral Director anytime if you would like to volunteer your time and talent. We will need help with:

Chaperones, Bake Sale, Spaghetti Dinner, Pancake Breakfast, Concessions, Cashiers, Set Design

Or any other way you would like to contribute, let us know!

CALENDAR

Tentative Schedule of Events

“Be there or be square!”

When	Time	What	Who	Where
Oct 3	6pm	Meet the Music Dept. Welcome Concert	All Groups	LRW
Oct 31	6pm	Spooky Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser	All Groups	LRW
Nov 9	2pm	Veteran’s Day Concert	Concert Choir	Town Square
Nov 15	9am	All State Auditions	All State	Convention
Nov 21	6pm	Fall Concert	All Groups	LRW
Nov 30	8pm	Town Lighting	Concert Choir	City Hall
Dec 19	6pm	Holiday Concert	All Groups	LRW
Dec 21	5pm	Caroling	Open/Tri-M	TBD
Feb 13	6pm	Winter Valentine Concert	All Groups	LRW
Mar 14	2pm	All State Festival	All State	Town Square
Mar 26-30	6pm	School Musical	Show Choir	LRW
Apr 10	6pm	Spring Concert	All Groups	LRW
Apr 25	9am	Pancake Breakfast	All Groups	LRW
May 5	6pm	Cinco De Mayo Concert	All Groups	LRW
May 17	2pm	Paw Sox Game	Concert Choir	McCoy
May 22	6pm	Spring Follies	Show Choir	LRW
Jun 5	6pm	Music Awards Night	All Groups	LRW
Jun 12	6pm	Final Concert	All Groups	LRW
Jun 16	4pm	Commencement Ceremony	Concert Choir	LRW

Notes:

All dates are subject to change. Additional performance opportunities may arise, concert dates and/or venues may be change due to weather or other event, additional after-school dress rehearsals may be required, and optional dates for field trips may be scheduled. Notice of any date change will be sent home. Please refer to the LRW Choir Webpage for an up-to-date schedule of events: www.LRWChoir.com.

Attendance is required of all students. Consult the Attendance and Grading Policies contained in this handbook for details.

Acknowledgement

Please sign and return by Sept 8th, 2014.

Student

I, _____, have read and understand all the information disclosed in this handbook and hereby pledge my commitment to the LRW Choral Program. By doing so, I promise to:

- attend and fully participate in all rehearsals and performances,
- adhere to the rules and regulations set forth by the Choir Director,
- accept the consequences if expectations are not met,
- advance the group and myself musically and professionally,
- contribute to a positive learning experience.

Signature _____

Date _____

Parents/Guardians

I/We have discussed the terms of this commitment with our child, support his/her decision to join the choir, and will assist him/her in achieving the above goals.

Signature _____

Date _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Database Information

Please complete and return by Sept 8th, 2014.

Student Information

Name _____

Grade _____

Voice Part _____ (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass, Unknown)

Email address _____

Home Phone Number _____

Street Address _____

Have you participated in any music ensembles at LRW? _____

If so, please list which ones and for how many years:

Please list any other instruments you play proficiently:

Parent/Guardian's Full Name(s) _____

Parent/Guardian's Phone Number _____ (daytime)
_____ (cell number)

Parent's Email address _____

Do you give permission for your child to be videoed/photographed for educational and/or music department promotional use? _____