

# 2019-2020 NORTH POSEY CHOIR HANDBOOK

## Victoria Schaefer, Director of Vocal Music & Theatre

Welcome! My name is Ms. Schaefer, and I am Director of Vocal Music & Theatre at North Posey Jr. High and High Schools. This is my second year at North Posey directing all the school Choirs, Theatre programs, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade General Music classes. I am also assisting Mr. Walden when needed.. I'm excited to continue exploring music with you this school year!

I believe that Choir is welcome to all and I encourage students to freely express themselves and learn about music. Music is universal, and can help connect people from all around the world, no matter what background one may have. Our curriculum is designed for all learners, regardless of previous musical experience. This being said, Choir is an elective performance class, so I expect ALL students to attend rehearsals/performances, assist with our financial goals, and contribute to a positive learning environment. I would like our program to continue developing its reputation of hard work and success.

This handbook is my class syllabus, an agreement between the teacher, student, and parents about what to expect throughout the school year. Please read carefully! All students and parents are asked to read this handbook and **bring the signed agreement back to school by Friday, August 14, 2019.**

My door is always open for any comments, requests, and suggestions you may have. From time to time, it may be necessary to revise this handbook or make reasonable exceptions based on extenuating circumstances. Please feel free to reach out to me at any time. Thank you!

Sincerely,



Victoria Schaefer  
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Assistant Director of Bands  
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*I am happy to speak with parents over the phone, but I do not distribute my cell phone number to students. Students can join our Choir group on the "Remind" app, email, or use Canvas messaging.*

## **MEMBERSHIP POLICIES**

### **Program Goals**

The Music Department at North Posey Jr. High and High Schools seek to develop students who perform a wide variety of musical repertoire at a proficient or advanced level. The framework of our program consists of fundamental goals that are beneficial to students of all backgrounds and career interests:

- **MUSICIANSHIP** to study and perform excellent music from a wide variety of periods and styles
- **CULTURAL AWARENESS** to prepare for a global economy and respectful social connections
- **AESTHETIC APPRECIATION** to explore others' beliefs & feelings as well as our own
- **SELF-CONFIDENCE** to encourage individual performance and professional growth
- **RESPONSIBILITY** to guide our own beliefs and actions positively
- **CITIZENSHIP** so we appreciate our role in society and obligation to others
- **CAREER EXPLORATION** to prepare for a wide variety of occupational interests

In order to achieve these goals, each student must be taught and developed within the scope of their own abilities. "Talent" is not a prerequisite. Each student must acknowledge their current abilities, set goals for improvement, and measure personal growth.

### **Leadership Attitude**

1. **BEST EFFORT** – We complete all tasks using our best efforts. Even if we don't think we are capable of completing a task, we try our hardest. We value every minute of rehearsal time because we know quality practice leads to quality performance.
2. **COOPERATIVE** – We are open to new ideas, and we make sacrifices to further our goals. We work with the Director and fellow choir members to make each rehearsal and performance efficient, educational, and fun. We encourage our friends and teachers to do their very best.
3. **DEPENDABLE** – Our friends and teachers can rely on us to be at the right place at the right time with all our materials and a positive attitude. Even when we are not feeling our best, we "push through it" as best we can without making excessive excuses. We can be trusted to respect music and equipment. We do our best, even when we are not congratulated or recognized. We follow the rules without being constantly reminded to do so.
4. **HONEST** – We always tell the truth in a professional manner. Instead of hiding information to make ourselves look better, we confess our own faults and mistakes. We

remain silent or rephrase our thoughts if we think our words may hurt someone else. When we don't know something, we ask our friends and teachers for guidance.

5. **HUMBLE** – We respect the fact that we make mistakes, but we rarely make the same mistake twice. Since we realize our human imperfections, we support our friends and teachers when they make mistakes. We encourage our friends and teachers to make good choices. We know that our personal feelings and desires are not the most important factor in every decision.
6. **SELF-RELIANT** – We “take care of our own business” and complete our tasks before worrying about others. We bring our own materials to class and have our music learned when asked to practice. We do more than the minimum amount of work required and often help others complete their tasks if needed. We often take initiative; when we know something needs to be done, we do it without being told. We reach out to friends and teachers for help when we know we can't do something alone. Our friends and teachers can rely on us for help.
7. **SPORTSMANSHIP** – We work together to achieve our goals. We encourage our friends and teachers at North Posey and at other schools, too. When we travel to festivals, we respect other choirs and talk about them positively. If someone says something negative about us, we forgive them and lead by being a positive example.
8. **COURTESY** – We always look out for the needs and interests of others before ourselves. If we see someone who needs assistance, we take initiative by helping them before we are asked. When someone asks us to do a little extra work or make an accommodation, we do our best, even when it's not convenient or they don't ask as nicely as we would like.

### **Class Registration**

All Choir students must be enrolled for both the fall and spring semesters (Jr. High - 4th period; High School - 5th period). Choir is a FULL YEAR responsibility because we prepare year-round for our festivals and performances. If you have any class conflicts or concerns, please talk with Ms. Schaefer.

### **Concert Attire**

Students must rent approved performance clothing from the school. The cost is included in the annual fundraising package. Ladies wear black choir dresses and black flats with their hair pulled away from the face and minimal jewelry. Gentlemen wear an approved tuxedo (no jackets.) If the dress code changes for a particular special event (e.g. Veteran's Day, football, etc.) I will make that clear to all students and parents in writing and online. - **Attire may look different this year (2020-2021).**

## **Performances**

In addition to daily classroom rehearsals, Choir students are expected to attend a number of performances required in the calendar. These events may be outside normal school hours. By registering for Choir, students agree to abide by the attendance policies in this handbook.

**Choir participation is a privilege. Students who fail to abide by our membership policies may have their grade lowered or be administratively removed from the class per school handbook policy.**

## **CLASS PROCEDURES**

### **Required Daily Materials**

All students are responsible for purchasing their own materials and bringing them to class each day.

- Chromebook
- One 1" plain black binder
- One pack loose leaf paper OR notebook
- Pencils/Erasers
- **Face mask**
- **Water Bottle**

### **Warmups**

I always start class with some kind of warm-up to mentally and physically engage students in our learning. Students will train faster if they practice healthy singing and habits at home. I also encourage students to do breathing exercises at least three times a day to build breath capacity and flexibility.

### **Music Selection**

We sing a variety of music for many different purposes. I will often refer to our music as *repertoire*. Students may be asked to help select repertoire throughout the year. Music will be approved by the Director based on ISSMA classification, part requirements, solo opportunities, educational value, and historical/cultural relevance. Due to the nature of choral music history, we will sing a mix of religious and secular texts from Western and non-Western traditions. We appreciate all music as art. The MSD of North Posey County does not promote or adhere to any particular religion or belief system.

### **Part Assignments**

Each student will be assigned to a part at the beginning of the year. No part assignment is better than another. My top concern is *healthy* singing. As each student's voice changes, I want to be sure they are singing in a range where they will be most successful. I will notify students of any part divisions in the music so they know which notes to sing. I may change part assignments during the year, but I will always provide accommodations during part checks. Students and parents are encouraged to speak with the director about any part assignment concerns or voice changes.

### **Solos in Repertoire**

If our repertoire requires one or more soloists, I will set an audition deadline by which time I must hear interested students sing the selected part(s). Auditions may be set up by appointment or in-class. Not everyone who *wants* a solo will *receive* a solo.

### **Emergencies**

Students must follow the instructions of the Director or any other teacher/staff member during an emergency. Whether it is a drill or a real emergency, everyone must remain calm, focused, and professional. Students should remain silent so they can hear instructions.

- **Fire/Evacuate** – follow the route to exit the building in an orderly fashion
- **Tornado** – proceed quickly to the designated tornado shelter and take cover; stay away from glass and windows; protect the head and neck
- **Earthquake** – duck and cover under a desk, table, or doorway; protect head and neck
- **LockOUT** - secure classroom doors and operate as usual; follow staff instructions explicitly.
- **LockDOWN** – prepare to defend or evade; turn room lights OFF and lock doors; students may be locked and barricaded inside music storage rooms; follow staff instructions explicitly.

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

### **Tardiness**

Students are expected to be in their seats with all necessary materials when the bell rings. Students should travel responsibly between classes to use their lockers and the restroom during passing periods. Chronic tardiness may result in a disciplinary referral and lowering of the student's grade. Passes are granted on an as-needed basis.

### **Class/Daily Absences**

Classroom absences during the school day are arranged through the Office. Makeup work is available upon request and due when the student returns. Practice assignments are usually posted online through Canvas/Harmony. The NPHS student handbook lists various kinds of absences and explains how some absences may affect students' final exam exemption status.

## **Performance Absences**

Choir is a *CURRICULAR* class because students receive a credit for their achievements in our curriculum-based class. Neither the Choir nor our performances are classified as “extracurricular activities.” Skipping a required performance will result in an **automatic failing grade** for the grading period unless one of the following criteria are met:

1. Student’s extreme medical illness documented by a health professional
2. Funeral or visitation for death in the immediate family documented by a funeral home
3. Graded or Overnight educational field trip (*must be pre-arranged with the Director*)
4. College visitation (*must be pre-arranged with the Director*)
5. Service as a Page in Indiana General Assembly (*must be pre-arranged with the Director*)
6. Precinct election worker (*must be pre-arranged with the Director*)
7. Religious Holiday (*must be pre-arranged with the Director*)
8. Jury Duty or Court Order (*must be pre-arranged with the Director*)
9. Excused by School Principal

**Missing school does not automatically excuse a student from a performance – documentation of one of the above is required or the student will receive a failing grade.** Documentation must be received by the Director within five school days of the absence. Students will not be excused for work, vacations, social activities, sports practices, etc. Excused performance absences will result in an alternative assignment being provided for the student to make-up the missing credit.

## **Clubs/Sports/Extracurricular Conflicts**

HS students in an afternoon club should report to their club on appropriate PM club days. Students without a club will come directly to Choir for a mini-rehearsal or study hall. If a Choir performance conflicts with another class, club, sport, or extracurricular activity, students should speak with the Director. Students cannot be excused from Choir by any other teacher or coach. Please contact me if you ever have any concerns. We usually work-out an agreement to share time in some way or work around our schedules.

# GRADING POLICY

## Grading Scale

The following numerical equivalents are assigned to letter grades as stated by the Board of Education:

- 93+ = A
- 90-92 = A-
- 88-89 = B+
- 83-87 = B
- 80-82 = B-
- 78-79 = C+
- 73-77 = C
- 70-72 = C-
- 68-69 = D+
- 63-67 = D
- 60-62 = D-
- 59 and below = F

## Extra Credit

Extra credit projects are available upon request (e.g. repertoire assignment, professional performance attendance & reflection, student teaching, historical review, research paper, etc.) All extra credit must be submitted at least one week prior to the last full school day of the semester (not including exams).

## Grading Weight

Each grading period, a student's final grade will consist of the following:

Jr. High		High School	
Daily Materials & Participation	10%	Daily Materials & Participation	10%
Music Literacy	20%	IPA Singer's Diction	10%
Part Checks	20%	Music Literacy	10%
Performances & Concerts	50%	Part Checks	10%
		Solo & Ens./Musical/Project	15%
		Performances & Concerts	45%

## Music Literacy

Students will be assessed for their ability to read and write music. We will practice many of these exercises in-class, and I provide several links to training apps/websites online. We frequently practice literacy skills so students have more efficient rehearsals and prepare for festivals properly.

## Part Checks

Students will be assessed for their knowledge of current repertoire (i.e. Can you sing your part?) Students may be assessed individually or in small groups. Part Checks are not intended to frighten students; I genuinely use them to check for student knowledge. Please motivate yourself to practice!

### **Solo & Ensemble (HS – required; JR - optional)**

At the High School-level, participation in the ISSMA Solo & Ensemble Contest is ***required*** (optional in Jr. High.) Students may prepare a solo or small ensemble, with Director approval. The District Vocal Solo & Ensemble will be February 1<sup>ST</sup> at AIS Evansville. State will be February 22<sup>Nd</sup> at Perry Meridian High School in Indianapolis. While *District* is required, State is optional if you advance.

- **Soloists** must attend voice lessons twice a month for 30 minutes (usually after school or lunch, but other times are available.) Students must sign up for lessons in the Choir room. Lessons, music, accompanist, and registration costs at the district level are included in the NPPA Choir Fundraising Package. Advancement to state requires a Gold rating in Group I (advanced).

**Solo & Ensemble participants must attend regular rehearsals/lessons, pass a jury hearing in January, and attend the District Contest date in order to receive full credit.**

**\*\*Solo & Ensemble may look different this year. Please be flexible.\*\***

### **MONEY**

#### **Class Materials**

Students are responsible for acquiring the following materials and bringing them to class each day:

Chromebook, 1-inch plain black binder, loose leaf paper or notebook, pencil with eraser.

#### **School Activity Fee**

Each school charges a small activity fee for Choir in lieu of the fact that we have no textbook. This fee is paid directly to the school at the beginning of the year with the rest of your textbook and activity fees (JR - \$3/semester; HS - \$5/semester). The school activity fee is used to purchase music and supplies.



**NPPA Choir Fundraising Package**

The Boosters of the North Posey Performing Arts are a 501(c)3 organization of parents who help fund performance opportunities in band, choir, and theatre. Choir is open to all students regardless of family income, but we need everyone to fundraise or contribute. The NPPA asks that each student participate in the annual NPPA Choir Fundraising Package.

Students can participate in any or all of the fundraisers throughout the year to raise the ***total profit*** amount listed (*we only make so much profit off each fundraiser.*) Each student’s fundraising will be tracked individually so you can see your financial progress on our website. **If you do not wish to fundraise or don’t make your fundraising goal, we kindly ask that you pay the difference.** Fundraising does not affect any student’s grade, but may lead to a reduction in performances, field trips, and other educational opportunities. Excess fundraising amounts can be used toward other optional fees or future years in Choir. If you have any questions, please reach out to Ms. Schaefer.

<b>Jr. High - \$50 total profit/year</b>	<b>Sr. High - \$100 total profit/year</b>
Dress/Tux Rental, Alteration, & Cleaning	Dress/Tux Rental, Alteration, & Cleaning
Performance Transportation	Performance Transportation
ISSMA/IMEA Registration	ISSMA/IMEA Registration
CSWS Registration/All-State Audition	District Solo & Ensemble (reg.+accomp.)
Music and Copyright Agreements	Southern IN Honor Choir Registration
Concert Accompanists	Music and Copyright Agreements
Choir T-shirt	Concert Accompanists
	Choir T-shirt

**Does NOT include optional fees:**

- District Solo & Ensemble (\$35 or \$10)
- All-State Registration (\$200 if you advance)
- Jr. High Quad State (\$40)
- Musical Costume Rental (TBA by part audition)
- Extracurricular field trips (TBA part)

**Does NOT include optional fees:**

- HS Quad State (\$60 by audition)
- State Solo & Ensemble (\$35 or \$10)
- All-State Audition (\$15)
- All-State Registration (\$200 by audition)
- Musical Costume Rental (TBA by part)
- Extracurricular field trips (TBA)

**\*\*We will work with students if you have a financial need. We want each child to have high-quality opportunities in our performing arts programs.\*\***

## **TRAVEL & OFF-CAMPUS ACTIVITIES (May vary due to COVID-19)**

### **Transportation**

If the Choir participates in an off-campus activity, all travelers must follow the school transportation policies. In some cases, the school may not be able to provide transportation. Please talk with the Director if you ever have transportation needs. Permission slips are sent home before each event.

Parents may transport their child in a personal vehicle if documentation is provided to the Director. Students may not ride with unapproved drivers without documentation from a parent/guardian.

If allowed by the Director and the school, high school students with a valid Indiana state drivers license may be able to transport themselves to an off-campus location in some circumstances. Students may not carpool with other students unless pre-approval is granted from the Director and the parent/guardian has given permission in writing.

If we decide to meet at the school to load transportation, students may be responsible for getting to the school building. Please contact Ms. Schaefer if this is ever a concern.

### **Overnight Stays**

Some optional off-campus activities will require an overnight stay in a hotel for participating students. The director will organize lodging for all students and verified chaperones unless a parent or legal guardian has notified the director (in writing) of an intent to secure lodging for their student(s). Extra fees may be necessary to cover the cost of lodging, but these will be announced in advance. All students are expected to follow school policies, hotel regulations, and Director/chaperone instructions. Students are NEVER allowed in a hotel room of the opposite gender.

Each night of an overnight trip, the Director/chaperone will announce:

- CURFEW – all students are to be in their own rooms, ready for room check
- LIGHTS OUT – lights in the room are to be turned OFF and students are to be in bed
- LOAD – all students are to be ready to load transportation
- CHECK-OUT – same as load, with rooms cleared and bags/suitcases ready to leave

### **Family & Chaperones**

Parents and families are always invited to attend choir events. If we need chaperones, the Director will send a note home to parents and post information online. Official chaperones must be approved by the Director and the school corporation or NPPA via a free, limited background check.

## STAYING INFORMED

### Remind App

I frequently use an app called “Remind” to send messages to students without giving them my personal cell phone number. It is available in the Apple App Store, Google Play Store, and Windows Store. I usually send messages only when needed. This app is not required, but it is useful!

- **Jr. High Choir** – text **@npjhchoir1** to **81010** or email [npjhchoir@mail.remind.com](mailto:npjhchoir@mail.remind.com)
- **Sr. High Choir** – text **@nphschoir2** to **81010** or email [nphschoir@mail.remind.com](mailto:nphschoir@mail.remind.com)

### Website

Important Choir updates are posted online at [northposeyperformingarts.com](http://northposeyperformingarts.com) for your convenience. You can find music, updated calendars, announcements, and more. Each school website has a link to our site under “Academics.” Choir assignments are also posted on Harmony/Canvas at both schools.

### Social Media

Follow us on any of our social media platforms available at [northposeyperformingarts.com](http://northposeyperformingarts.com)! We are on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, and Youtube! Pictures and videos may be posted with parent permission according to school policy – please contact Ms. Schaefer if you ever have any concerns. Some social media is blocked as part of our “Vikings Go Virtual” initiative, but Mrs. Schaefer still uses these platforms to communicate with parents and share with students. Please remember to follow the school handbook policies and corporation AUP regarding technology and online communication. Safety is our #1 priority!

### Contact information

Parents and students are encouraged to contact me at any time. Parents are welcome to call or text me, and I usually respond quickly. You can contact the NPPA on our website or by emailing [n.p.performingarts@gmail.com](mailto:n.p.performingarts@gmail.com). Students are not allowed to use my personal cell phone number except in cases of emergency during field trips. The “Remind” app allows students to message me and will always record those SMS conversations.

**Thank you for reading! I hope you’re as excited as I am about the year ahead!!!**

### Ms. Victoria Schaefer

[vschaefer@northposey.k12.in.us](mailto:vschaefer@northposey.k12.in.us)

[www.northposeyperformingarts.com](http://www.northposeyperformingarts.com)

**\*\*Please have a parent or guardian fill out this Google Form by Friday, August 14th, 2019\*\***

**[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc8qNTMRWswekUhhcsD0NeJlw2plAE\\_t3AduljylLznnlU8ug/viewform?usp=sf\\_link](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc8qNTMRWswekUhhcsD0NeJlw2plAE_t3AduljylLznnlU8ug/viewform?usp=sf_link)**