

Hempfield School District )  
Landisville, PA )

# Guidelines For ) The Hempfield Middle School ) Choral Program )

Revised and Published For )  
Students and Parents )  
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*Music, of all the arts, stands in a special region, unlit by any star but its own, and utterly without meaning, except its own.—Leonard Bernstein*

*Music is the shorthand of emotion. Emotions, which let themselves be described in words with such difficulty, are directly conveyed to us in music, and in that is its power and significance.—Leo Tolstoy*

*Music is a moral law. It gives a soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination, a charm to sadness, and life to everything. Fine music is the essence of order and leads to all that is just and good . . . dazzling, passionate, and eternal . . .—Plato*

*The Mission of the Hempfield School District Music Department is to provide meaningful learning experiences for all students that inspire and nurture the love of music throughout the community. The Vision of the Music Department is an enriched community through musical expression.*

**Hempfield School District**  
**Music Department**  
**Landisville PA**

Welcome to Middle School Chorus! We are very pleased that you have elected to sing during your middle school experience.

For you and for your parents, singing in your middle school chorus should be an educational, rewarding, and joyous experience. Dedicated participation in your chorus will provide you with opportunities to master new musical challenges, to develop more refined musical and vocal skills, and to associate with new friends in a larger ensemble.

Your middle school chorus will rehearse once each cycle during the flex period of the school day. Occasionally, your director may hold extra rehearsals before or after school as needed, especially right before a performance. You will be required to participate in the annual Holiday Concert in December and the annual Spring Choral Concert as scheduled on the School District Calendar. Your director will keep you and your parents informed of specific information regarding dates, times, dress code, etc. well in advance so you will have the opportunity to plan your personal schedule accordingly.

Parents/guardians: please note that attendance and participation in both concerts is a course requirement for your student. Please be sure to discuss this commitment with your child to avoid any potential personal conflicts with scheduled concerts. Please understand that your child is not automatically excused from a performance or rehearsal during the week immediately preceding a performance, except for personal illness or personal emergency.

Hempfield's Choral Program—from its rudimentary beginnings at the Elementary level, through the unique and exciting challenges of the Middle School years, to its highly respected reputation on the High School level—provides students and parents with the potential to experience the joy and pride of self-fulfillment. To achieve that potential, students must engage in many long hours of patient practice and hard work. We respectfully ask parents/guardians to demonstrate your commitment to our young choral musicians by supporting our choral program and by being a steady advocate for the value of music education in our school district. This handbook contains important information and departmental policies that guide the Choral Program: please read this handbook carefully together with your student.

Through your understanding, patience, cooperation, advocacy, and support, we are confident that you and your student will enjoy an exemplary choral music experience at the middle school level.

Sincerely,



Erin Stewart  
Choral Director

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## MIDDLE SCHOOL CHORAL PROGRAM )

Hempfield's Music Department offers distinctive choral music experiences at the Elementary, Middle School, and High School levels. After Sixth Grade Chorus, the Hempfield School District offers admirable choral music experiences at the Middle School and High School levels. Hempfield's Middle School Choral, Band, and Orchestra programs offer an age-appropriate level of performance that bridges the gap between Elementary and High School experiences.

According to a recent study, "Choral singing continues to be the most popular form of participation in the performing arts." Parents report that their child's academic performance improved after joining chorus. Other findings conclude that adults who sing in choruses are remarkably good citizens because they are team-oriented, reliable, involved in civic organizations, and able to socialize well in other areas of their lives. Singing in a chorus has also been shown to improve our sense of happiness and wellbeing. Research conducted at Oxford University has found that "people feel more positive after actively singing than they do after passively listening to music or after chatting about positive life events." The choral program at Hempfield strives to provide each student with valuable musical instruction that will contribute to a well-rounded education.

### MIDDLE SCHOOL COURSE DESCRIPTION GUIDE—GRADES 7 & 8

Chorus rehearses once each six-day cycle during the flex period of the regular academic school day. All students in each middle school chorus are graded at the end of each semester on a Pass/Fail basis. The semester grade is based on the following five criteria: attends rehearsals regularly, comes prepared to sing, actively participates in rehearsals, demonstrates musical growth, and actively participates in concerts and other scheduled events. Students who fail to meet at least three of these criteria will receive a failing grade.

Students involved in middle school chorus will develop skills in reading music, singing with proper tone, using correct diction, and most importantly, learning the human art of expression through singing. Membership in the Middle School chorus also affords students the opportunity to audition for the annual middle school musical and a select choral group called "Chamber Singers." Students may also audition to serve as piano accompanists and/or perform as soloists.

### MUSIC DEPARTMENT POLICY CONCERNING ALL CHORAL MUSIC STUDENTS

All students are required to sing with their choral group at all scheduled performances.

The director will establish a uniform dress code for students in each performance.

The director will send parents/guardians written notification concerning students' schedules, uniform requirements, and other related policies.

All students must review, understand, and follow regulations contained in this handbook. Failure to comply with Music Department policies, rules, and/or regulations can result in disciplinary action and/or the student's removal from the choral music program. Disciplinary action is subject to administrative review.