

2021-2022

Bexley Middle School

Choral Department Handbook



Welcome!

The choral program in Bexley has exceptionally talented and hard-working students who create beautiful music together. In order for our program to be successful, students need to devote their time, dedication, and self-discipline to the study of singing. I urge students to try their best every day and put forth their best quality of work. We should not settle for less, and our achievement depends on each and every choir member. Choir can be the place where you meet life-long friends, make lasting memories, and fall in love with making music together.

This handbook is designed to introduce you to the many facets of the Bexley Middle School Choral Department and to answer as many questions as possible. There are several items that you and your student will need to read. You will also find information about the Bexley Music Parents. In order to offer the many activities within the department, we require parental support and encouragement, both physically and financially. Please retain the calendar at the end of this packet as it contains important information regarding the schedule for the school year. I hope that you will take a moment to look over this information carefully.

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“Choral singing calms the heart and boosts endorphin levels. It improves lung function. It increases pain thresholds and reduces the need for pain medication,” Daniel H. Pink claims in his new book, [“When: The Scientific Secrets of Perfect Timing.”](#) It also seems to improve your outlook, boosting mood and self-esteem while alleviating feelings of stress and depression.

These aren’t simply effects of singing. “People who sing in a group report far higher well-being than those who sing solo,” he notes. It’s about synchronizing with others. What can explain this? According to Pink, it’s due to the sense of belonging that synchronizing with others brings.

Belonging shapes your outlook, writes Pink: “Its absence leads to ill effects, its presence to health and satisfaction.” Singing with others provides that. It involves being in perfect time with your voice and apparently your heart, too.

When Pink asks David Simmons, the artistic director of the Congressional Chorus in Washington D.C., why he believes people sing in groups, Simmons responds, “It makes people feel like they’re not alone in the world.”

Though this year may still be a bit different than others we have had before, we will experience the joy of singing together! The community that is created through our music making is something that is absolutely essential.

Mrs. Diane Goodney
Blosser
6th Grade & Bella Voce Director
Director
Bexley Middle School
diane.goodney@bexley.us

Mrs. Amy Johnston
Concert Choir
Bexley Middle School
amy.blosser@bexley.us

**“The only thing better than singing is more singing.”
Choral Department donation**

- Ella Fitzgerald

The Bexley Music Parents organization supports all music programs. The Choral Department has received financial support over the years specifically from choir families who have donated money to help defray the cost of any additional needs including the cost for printing programs, robe maintenance and choral specialist visits. **A suggested donation of \$25 per student would be much appreciated as we rely on these donations in the Choral Department.**

If you would like to donate, please contact Mrs. Blosser (Cash/checks, payable to Bexley Music Parents).

REHEARSAL EXPECTATIONS

The success of a choir depends on how it rehearses. How it rehearses depends on the conduct and cooperation of the student. Rehearsals are the place to correct mistakes. Be patient, attentive, careful, and cooperative in observing these rehearsal expectations. Good behavior, attitude and self-discipline are essential to producing a great experience for all.

1. Please be on time to all rehearsals and performances. You are to be in your place with your music and all visiting stopped by the time class/rehearsal begins.
2. Always have your music, folder and pencil for rehearsals.
3. Be conscious of GOOD POSTURE at all times.
4. Listen to Mrs. Goodney/Mrs. Blosser at all times. Talking while the conductor is rehearsing or giving instructions is **NEVER** appropriate.
5. **The use of cell phones is not allowed at rehearsals or performances.**
6. Rehearsals are not over until the director dismisses the choir. Please don’t begin to put your music away until instructed to do so.
7. Stay involved in the rehearsal from start to finish.
8. Keep the space orderly and clean. Please do not bring food or drinks (except water) to rehearsal.

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Additional Rehearsal Procedures

Every member will learn and memorize each composition accurately and thoroughly, and as quickly as possible. Memorization includes words and notes, dynamics, attacks, releases, etc. After we have been working on a composition for a length of time, Mrs. Goodney/Mrs. Blosser may ask various choir members to sing through either a section or even the entire composition in quartets or octets. Individual voice checks may be required and graded at any time.

Music and Folders

Copies of music will be provided along with a folder and additional music might need to be scanned (available on Canvas). Students should keep all materials organized in their folder. Keep a pencil in your folder at all times as we will be marking things in your music.

*** Any virtual rehearsals will function similarly, with the addition of some guidelines specific to Zoom. ***

Performances

Attendance

Since choir is a performing ensemble, members are expected to be present for every performance. **Each performance is 50% of your nine weeks' grade.** Performances are comparable to scheduled examinations, HOWEVER, unlike regularly scheduled examinations that can be made up, concerts (by their very nature of being one-time events) cannot. For missed performances, students will have the opportunity to perform their concert assessment for Mrs. Goodney/Mrs. Blosser and or the class. *Work is never considered an excuse.* **A calendar for the year is included in this handbook.**

Please be prompt for each call time as there are multiple groups that perform at concerts. Members are also expected to conduct themselves appropriately when another choir is performing, either at Bexley High School or another performance site. *Any choir member not behaving appropriately may be sent home from the performance, impacting the performance grade.*

Grading Policy

Choir is a **performance-based class**. Students earn grades primarily by performing in rehearsals as well as concerts. Students will earn grades in the following areas.

50% Quarterly Performance Assessments (Attendance & Participation)
50% Daily Participation / Assigned Projects

1. Performances in class by solo and small ensembles
2. Sight-reading/Music Theory/ Ear-Training- solo & small ensembles
3. Contribution & Focus

Dress Code for Performances

All members must wear the required BMS Music shirt and black pants/skirts (must be below the knee).

Students may purchase a shirt or borrow from a past member, but each singer must have their own shirts. Black dress shoes must be worn (no athletic shoes or sandals).

No distracting jewelry is allowed at performances. Hair shall not cover any student's eyes. Anything that draws attention to an individual is detrimental to our total team effort and is not acceptable for performances.

**** All members must wear the proper attire at all performances.
If you are not dressed appropriately you may not perform. ****

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE:

Bexley City Schools values co-curricular activities as an essential component of every child's educational experience. We encourage and welcome all students to engage in activities and believe financial need should not be a barrier to full participation. For any family in need of support, please contact Mrs. Blosser or Mrs. Goodney.

2021-2022 BMS Choral Department Calendar of Events

<u>Date</u> <u>cation</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Lo</u>
Sunday, October 3rd	MS Fall Choral Concert	2:00pm	HS Theater
Saturday, December 4th Arts TBD	MS Choirs @ Festival of the Montrose		
February 3 rd – 5 th	MS Musical	7:00pm (4 th)/7:30pm (5 th – 6 th) & 2:00pm (6 th)	HS Theater
Sunday, February 27th	MS Choral Concert	2:00pm	HS Theater
Tuesday, March 1st Theater	MS/Elementary Choral Festival	7:00pm	HS
Saturday, May 14 th Island	MS "Music in the Parks"	All Day	Kings
Sunday, May 15th	MS Choral Outdoor Concert	2:00pm	HS Piazza

Dates in BOLD are required for all Choir members

6th Grade & Bella Voce Director: **Goodney**

Mrs. Diane

Diane Goodney holds a Bachelor of Music Education from the University of Georgia and a Master of Education in Educational Leadership from Ohio Dominican University. She has directed choirs or taught general music in Atlanta, Georgia, San Diego, California and Oxford, Ohio. In addition to teaching music, she has been a Language Arts and History teacher, and a director for several musical productions, including *Into the Woods*, *The Music Man*, and *Pirates of Penzance*. From 2013-2018, she taught General Music at Cassingham Elementary where she directed the popular 4-6 grade choir. Mrs. Goodney is excited to start her fourth year at Bexley Middle School!

Concert Choir Director: **Blosser**

Mrs. Amy Johnston

Amy Johnston Blosser has been a presenter, adjudicator and guest conductor throughout the United States. She was named Educator of the Year for Bexley Schools in 2011 and was selected to serve as a Conducting Fellow for the 2015 International Conductors Exchange Program to Sweden. As one of the 14 fellows, Blosser represented the United States by traveling to Sweden in October 2015 and hosting Swedish conductors in February 2015. She won second place in the Youth & High School Conducting category for the American Prize, a nationally recognized honor.

In her nineteenth year as Choral Director at Bexley High School in Columbus, Ohio, Amy Blosser conducts six choirs grades 7-12, serves as music director for annual musical productions, and is the Fine Arts Department Chair. Under Blosser's direction, the Bexley High School Vocal Ensemble has performed at state conferences of ACDA in 2007, 2009, 2011, 2014, 2017 and 2019 and NAFME in 2009, 2011, 2013, 2016, 2018 and February 2022. In March 2012, they performed at the ACDA Central Region Conference in Fort Wayne, and in February 2016 in Chicago, Illinois. In March 2020, as the only choir from Ohio selected, they performed as one of 17 choirs in Milwaukee. Her choirs have toured throughout the United States and Europe, performing in notable locations such as Lincoln Center, Carnegie Hall and St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City, St. Mark's in Venice, St. Nicolas in Prague, St. Stephen's Basilica in Budapest, St. Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna, Canterbury Cathedral in England, Notre Dame in Paris and St. Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin, Ireland. They have shared performances with ensembles from The Ohio State University, Capital University, Ohio University and Baldwin Wallace. Blosser served as the National Chair for Repertoire and Resources for the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA) for nine years. Prior to this position she served as the National Repertoire & Resources Chair for Senior High School choirs and for the Central Region. As R&R Chair, Blosser has been active in

Wallace. Blosser served as the National Chair for Repertoire and Resources for the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA) for nine years. Prior to this position she served as the National Repertoire & Resources Chair for Senior High School choirs and for the Central Region. As R&R Chair, Blosser has been active in planning Regional and National Conferences in Los Angeles, Chicago, Miami, Oklahoma City, Dallas, Salt Lake City, Minneapolis and Kansas City. Blosser is a contributing editor for the *Teaching Music Through Performance in Choir, Volume V* (2019).

Blosser holds a Master of Music in Choral Conducting and Bachelor of Music Education from The Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio where she studied with Hilary Apfelstadt and James Gallagher. In addition to her work as a high school choral educator, Amy Blosser is the Artistic Director of the Bexley Choral Society and the Associate Director of Music at First Community Church.

**Accompanist:
Baker**

Mr. Chad

Chad D. Baker currently serves as the Director of Worship & Music at Christ Lutheran Church in Bexley, Ohio. As a faculty member of the Capital University Conservatory of Music and Trinity Lutheran Seminary his assignments have included teaching organ, piano and class keyboard as well as serving as an accompanist for the vocal area and assisting with weekly Chapel services as University Organist. Baker also serves as an accompanist for the Columbus Children’s Choir where he accompanies the New World Singers. Publications include articles in *The American Music Teacher* and *Keyboard Companion*. He was also a contributing arranger to three volumes of *Evangelical Lutheran Worship: Alternate Introductions and Accompaniments for Organ* published by Augsburg Fortress in 2008. Baker is a 2004 cum laude graduate of Capital University with a bachelor of music degree in keyboard pedagogy with an emphasis in church music. During his tenure as a student at Capital Baker studied organ with Janet Linker and piano and piano pedagogy with Dr. Rebecca Johnson. Additional study has been with James Hildreth, Michael Murray, Mary Craig Powell, Joan Seaton, Phyllis Warner and Todd Wilson.

Bexley Middle School Choral Department

Please indicate below any tasks with which you would be willing to help. We need parents who are willing to head up these events, with the understanding students will be doing most of the work. Please indicate if you are willing to coordinate one of these tasks.

Concert Assistance:

Chaperones (October, December, February, May, Kings Island) _____

Decorations (December) _____

Bexley Music Parents:

Representative @ meetings _____

Student/Parent Contract Form

For students:

I have read the 2021-2022 Bexley Middle School Choral Department Handbook. I understand the contents and will give my best effort in following the guidelines. I also have read over the attached calendar and agree to be in attendance at all the required performances listed. I have shown the handbook to my parent(s)/guardian(s) so they had the opportunity to read the expectations for this year in choir.

Student name: _____ **Student email:** _____

Student Signature: _____

For parent(s)/guardian(s):

My singer has shown the 2021-2022 Bexley Middle School Choral Department Handbook to me and I understand the above information. I also agree to assist the Choral Department by making sure my singer is in attendance at all of the required performances listed on the calendar. Any and all conflicts are listed below.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) name: _____

attendance at all of the required performances listed on the calendar. Any and all conflicts are listed below.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) name: _____

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) email: _____

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) signature: _____

Please list any existing conflicts with the Calendar of Events below. After the deadline listed, no absences will be excused (with the exception of family emergencies and personal illness, which may require a doctor's excuse.)

***** Please return to Mrs. Goodney/Mrs. Blosser by Friday, August 27th *****