

# Welcome to McGraw Chorus!

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Welcome to the 2021 – 2022 school year! My name is Mrs. Madison Elia, and I am thrilled to be your student's vocal music teacher this year! Below you will find details regarding vocal ensembles, voice lessons, rehearsal etiquette, concert dates, concert attire and grading. Please read through the syllabus and mark down the important dates in your calendars!

## Junior High Chorus

Junior High Chorus consists of students in grade 7! The National Music Standards (creating, performing, responding and connecting) are incorporated into daily instruction in this chorus. We will also be focusing on sight-reading, solfege and exploring diverse musics through listening and singing examples during the school year. This is a crucial age for vocal development, and we will work together to address individual as well as sectional needs to make sure we are comfortable and learning as much as we can about our ever-changing voices.

## Senior High Chorus

Senior High Chorus consists of students in grades 8-12! In this chorus, we will explore layering harmonies through recognizable songs from this day and age, and will heavily focus on how to produce and incorporate proper vocal technique into our singing. We will also dive into vocal anatomy and how the whole body is utilized to create a healthy vocal sound. The National Music Standards (creating, performing, responding and connecting), honor choir and NYSSMA preparation, and listening examples will be daily skills and goals focused on, taught, and learned this school year.

## Jazz Choir

I am so excited to share that I will be starting an after-school Jazz Choir this year! This choir is open to students in grades 7-12. It will rehearse after school from 2:50pm-3:30pm every Tuesday, and I will work with sports teams and coaches to ensure that any student who is interested in Jazz Choir will be able to take part. We will learn and perform music largely from vocal jazz, a cappella, and pop genres. Extracurricular choirs are a great way to stay engaged in music making after the school day ends as well as form meaningful relationships with one another while expanding vocal knowledge and skill. There will be more to come on this very soon! Please keep your eye out for a separate email and handout about Jazz Choir, and talk to your students about the possibility of joining.

## Small Group Voice Lesson Expectations

Students should be on time to every voice lesson and are responsible for knowing when their voice lesson time is. Students should report to their scheduled class and inform their classroom teacher **before** coming to lessons. Students should report to the chorus room (room 38) when it is time for their scheduled lesson. Small group lessons will begin on Monday, September 20, 2021 and will continue throughout the school year. Students should be sure to check the lesson schedule carefully, as their lesson day and time will change from week to week. *The lesson schedule will be posted on the auditorium door, outside of the chorus classroom, and will be shown to the students in chorus rehearsals. It will also be distributed to classroom teachers on a weekly basis.*

In the event your child misses a lesson due to an absence from school, they should see me the following day to see what was missed during the lesson and set up a time to make it up. In the event your child has a test during their scheduled lesson and is unable to come, they should see me **before** the missed lesson to schedule another time to make it up. Students will be expected to attend a **minimum** of 6 scheduled lessons each ten-week marking period, but keep in mind that students will grow from these weekly lessons and are encouraged to attend **all** of them!

Voice lessons are worth 40% of your student's overall grade, and each lesson will be graded out of 50 points. Students will be graded on preparedness, vocal technique, text accuracy (if in a foreign language), rhythmic accuracy and pitch accuracy. In order for voice lessons to be as successful and meaningful as possible for students, it is recommended that they spend at least 15 minutes a day practicing at home whenever possible. Please note that I want your students to succeed and that they are my number one priority. I will always provide them with productive feedback that will help them grow as singers, musicians and human beings.

## **Chorus Rehearsals & Chorus Rehearsal Etiquette**

**Required Materials:** Students are expected to have their music, folders, and a pencil for each rehearsal. Water is also strongly encouraged!

**Musical Preparation:** Students are expected to practice their chorus music at home and prepare any selections in their music assigned in the previous rehearsal. Our success as a group depends on each student's ability to perform their music to a high level, and preparation is key.

**Rehearsal Etiquette:** It is imperative that we maximize our rehearsal time by being on task from the moment our warm-up starts to the moment students are dismissed. Points will be deducted for inattentiveness, disruption, or misbehavior. Students are expected to remove any gum and leave **all** electronics in their backpacks. Students will receive two points for rehearsal etiquette each rehearsal if these rules are followed.

## **Mandatory Concert and Performance Dates**

\* Sweets and Songs Music Fundraiser – Wednesday, October 27th, 2021 ~ 6:30PM (6:00PM warm-up time)

\* Winter Concert – Wednesday, December 15th, 2021 at 6:30PM (5:30PM warm-up time)

(Winter Concert Snow Date – Thursday, December 16th, 2021 at 6:30PM)

\* Spring Concert – Thursday, May 19th, 2021 ~ 6:30PM (5:30PM warm-up time)

**All choir students are expected to be at these three performances, as they are graded!**

*Please Note: Our goal is to make this year as normal as possible for the students, however, there is still uncertainty with what the future may look like and therefore, flexibility will be key. More information will be provided and you will be given ample notice if concerts need to be adjusted or changed at all given the state of the world.*

## **Recommended Concert Attire**

The goal of our concert attire is to present a formal and professional ensemble appearance. No individual in the ensemble should stick out. Please choose dress clothes that reflect this goal.

**Option 1:** Blouse with sleeves, black pants or full-length skirt, black stockings or socks, black dress shoes.

**Option 2:** Full-length dress, black stockings or socks, black dress shoes.

**Option 3:** Dress shirt, black pants, tie, black socks, black dress shoes.

## Assignments and Grading Policy

### Grading Categories:

Rehearsal Etiquette and Participation	30%
Written/Listening Assignments	10%
Performances/Concerts	20%
Voice Lessons	40%

Please fill out and return the bottom portion of this page by Friday, September 24th, 2021, as it will act as a choir contract. If you have any questions, please feel free to email me at: [melia@mcgrawschools.org](mailto:melia@mcgrawschools.org)

I am SO looking forward to getting to know and working with each of you this school year! We have many exciting musical experiences and events planned, and I cannot wait to grow and collaborate with you all.

Sincerely,

Madison C. Elia

Secondary Vocal Teacher

McGraw Central School District

---

***Please return the bottom portion of this page to Mrs. Elia by Friday, September 24th, 2021***

---

I have read and understand the above information about ensembles, small group lessons, rehearsals and rehearsal etiquette, concert dates, concert attire and grading outlined above for the 2021-2022 school year.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Email Address (for reminders/newsletters): \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Phone Number(s): \_\_\_\_\_