

## The Bromfield School-Music Department

### 6th Grade Chorus- Course Syllabus

Teacher: Ms. Mercadante

#### **COURSE DESCRIPTION-**

6th Grade Chorus carries one full academic credit and students are encouraged to continue into Grade 7/8 Chorus the following year. Participation in 6th Grade Chorus is open to the entire class and even though previous singing is helpful, it is not required. Ms. Mercadante is a strong advocate for 6th graders because they are the future! The earlier students begin choral singing, the stronger their foundation will be for when they continue on in high school. Outstanding high school musicians start out as bright, young 6th graders! Becoming an outstanding choral singer introduces self discipline into students' lives at an early age and pays off in the student's educational experience later on.

In 6th Grade Chorus, students will learn several musical concepts related to choral singing. The singer will learn to perform his or her part confidently in a choral setting, establish the ability to blend within a section, show dynamic control, articulation, and sing with good tone, focus and pitch. 6th Grade Chorus music should have at least two part harmony; Part I and Part II. Part I singers are those who can comfortably sing both high and low with easy transition between high and low registers. Part II singers are those who can sing more comfortably in the lower register and tend to sing notes that harmonize with the melody in a song. It is recommended that a 6th grade chorus member switch their voice part at least once during the year because this will strengthen their voice. Depending on the level of motivation and capability of a 6th grade chorus, three part harmony has been introduced. Please see Ms. Mercadante with any questions about which voice part you should be singing.

Desired Outcomes for each student include the following:

- Development of knowledge and appreciation of the performing arts.
- Development of aesthetic judgments and the ability to apply them to artistic works.
- Ability to use cultural resources of performing arts groups.
- Ability to produce and perform musical works.
- Acquire knowledge of the materials, media and history of music.
- Understand the diversity of cultural heritage.
- Help all participants to develop a positive feel of self-worth.
- Students involved in the Music Program are expected to:
  - a. Respect others, property, the learning environment and him/herself in language, action and dress.
  - b. Exhibit honesty, integrity, self-control, responsibility, trust, concern for the well being of others and oneself, and a striving toward excellence.
  - c. Demonstrate consistency and purpose in his/her focus upon personal growth through the privilege of public education.

#### **REHEARSAL REGULATIONS-**

1. Students are expected to be on the risers, standing with good posture upon the first minute of class. Tardiness is unacceptable and shows a lack of commitment to the entire group.
2. Provided materials such as a concert folder and copies of music should be kept in good working condition. Any abuse, damage or loss of the materials will be the financial responsibility of the student and/or parent to replace.
3. Absolutely no gum, food or beverages other than water will be allowed in the music room at any time.

#### **STUDENT EXPECTATIONS-**

It is expected that students in the Concert Choir will:

1. Be present and on time for all rehearsals.
2. Come to all rehearsals prepared with a pencil, concert folder and choral music.
3. Respect one another and the facilities.
4. Learn their individual music and be a contributing member of the ensemble.
5. Attend all required performances.

#### **DISCIPLINE**

If any discipline issues arise in class, they will be handled in order according to the list below:

1. Student warning
2. After class discussion
3. Formal teacher-student conference
4. Parent Phone contact
5. Administrative Referral
6. Parent Student Teacher Administrative Conference

**REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING**

As each year progresses, teachers try to evaluate ways to improve the level of their instruction so that students will learn more and consequently be more successful. It is the intent of this section to establish a system of student evaluation that is both fair and specific. Each student's grade will be calculated each quarter based upon the following areas:

1. **INDIVIDUAL PRACTICE AND PREPARATION**; Recommended minimum of 30 minutes per day at home (5 days a week). Evaluated constantly at rehearsals, sectional etc.

**40% of TOTAL**

2. **ATTITUDE, PARTICIPATION AND COOPERATIVE SPIRIT**; rehearsal skills, enthusiasm, dedication, pride, positive leadership, effort and intensity, promptness, organizational skills.

**35% of TOTAL**

3. **CONCERT ATTENDANCE**; All School Rehearsals, Concerts and other performances, Sectional rehearsals, etc. Ensemble playing is dependent on team rehearsals with all players present. Students wishing extra help in addition to sectionals may meet with staff or section leaders as needed. The rehearsal is where we learn to make music (ART) TOGETHER!!! Performances at major concerts will be treated as final test grades for the appropriate marking periods. Students who miss performances due to unforeseen circumstances will be required to meet with the director individually to make arrangements for the missed concert, along with a parental note explaining the nature of the absence.

**25% of TOTAL**

4. **EXTRA HELP, EFFORT, OR SERVICES**; Students who seek extra help for self improvement, or who voluntarily perform extra jobs necessary for successful music ensemble operation may be given extra credit at the discretion of the music staff. In addition, students who perform in small chamber groups, combos, solo recitals, or compose original music or arrangements may receive additional credit toward their grade in band.

**20% possible extra credit**

The music staff will evaluate all students in these areas daily, and the final grade will be an average of all of these evaluations.

**CONCERT ATTIRE-**

Pride in appearance as a cohesive group is demonstrated when all are conscientious about their concert dress. Over the years, some students have deviated from this dress when preparing for performances, and it was very obvious to the audience. Concert dress is your "team" uniform when you perform at concerts. It is important to keep your concert dress neat and in order at all times.

For LADIES this would include the following:

White, long sleeve blouse Black, mid to floor length skirt or dress pants      Black shoes with a 1-2 inch heel

For GENTLEMEN this would include the following:

White, long sleeve shirt      Black dress pants      Black socks      Black shoes      Black tie

**MUSIC EDUCATION: FROM PAST TO PRESENT**

One of the most notable figures involved with the beginnings of music education is a man named Lowell Mason. His philosophy was that if children could learn to read, they could learn to sing. He worked relentlessly as a humble musician before earning his title as the first public school music teacher. Employed as the director of the Handel and Haydn society while also a solid leader in the 'singing school' movement, Mason went on to form the Boston Academy of Music in 1832. In 1834, he published a theory of music instruction manual and in 1838 he became the first public school music teacher in America. This title secured him as the "father of music education". Below is an inspiring quote of Mason's, taken from his list, "Nine Reasons for Music in the Schools".

"Vocal Music...tends to improve the heart...There is something in the nature of musical tones...that is truly heavenly and delightful, and if music of such a character could become universal throughout the nation, it would be a sure and excellent means of national improvement...It (music) tends to produce love to teachers, love to mates, love to parents, and love to a higher being...Let me have the making of the ballads of a nation and you may make their laws."

**CONCERT SCHEDULE**

August - October 2009 - PREPARATION FOR AUTUMN CONCERT	Oct. 22, 2009	April-May 2010 PREPARATION-MEMORIAL EXERCISES	May 28, 2010
October-December 2009 PREPARATION FOR WINTER CONCERT	Dec. 14, 2009	May-June 2010 PREPARATION FOR RECITALS	June 10, 2010
January-April 2010 PREPARATION FOR SPRING CONCERT	Apr. 7, 2010		