

# Ross Local Schools Choral Program Handbook



**2019-2020**

**Ms. Michelle Tamburo**

Director of Choral Activities, Ross Local Schools

RHS: 513-863-1252 Ext. 1418

Email: [michelle.tamburo@rossrams.com](mailto:michelle.tamburo@rossrams.com)

**Mrs. Brenda Hartman**

Collaborative Pianist, Ross Local Schools

*"I don't know if music can change the world overnight but I know that music can help someone make it through a difficult night." -Michael Franti*

## **Foreward**

It is the goal of this handbook to thoroughly and efficiently educate students, parents, school administrators, and the community about the expectations and purpose of the Ross High School Choral Department. This handbook should serve as a learning tool in the beginning of the school year and become a reference as the year progresses. It must be read in its entirety to guarantee a common knowledge for everyone associated with the choral program.

## **2019-2020 Course Offerings**

Pure Harmony (9th-12th Grade Women)

Symphonic Chorale (9th-12th Grade Men and Women)

Legacy Show Choir (9th-12th Grade Men and Women-Auditioned Ensemble)

## **Learning Outcomes**

To the student, most of the progress and success that you will achieve comes through your willingness to express yourself, your desire to be an involved member, and your attention to details in the music and remarks given by the director. To achieve a high degree of success, you must be willing to work individually as well as within our performance groups, continually strive to improve yourself as a member of the RHS choirs, and be proud of your accomplishments. The RHS Choirs will maintain a reputation of performance excellence through the outstanding work of our students.

**“Hard work beats talent when talent doesn’t work hard.”**

**-Tim Notke**

# **Classroom Expectations**

## **Required Materials**

Each student will be assigned a specifically numbered music folder for the entire school year. A pencil will be needed for EVERY rehearsal. All music will be furnished as you will be responsible for this assigned music in your assigned folder. These must remain in excellent condition or you will be billed for the replacement, a fee of \$20.

## **Personal Growth**

Improve each day, don't ever settle for mediocrity. Enjoy the process. Many of our goals will take time. Do your best, but be patient. We are working together for a common goal: the enjoyment of singing. Accept responsibility in attendance at daily rehearsals special concert rehearsals, concerts, and festivals. Continue your development of leadership within the choral program and your willingness to continually develop your singing voice. Respect your fellow students, choirs, and directors to set standards of excellence for the future. Strive to improve yourself and the RHS choirs to be the best you can be.

## **Habits to build – Choices to make**

Go directly to your spot with music and pencil – this reflects the kind of dedication and attention to detail that we need in a rehearsal. Do not talk when the director or classmates are speaking. Lead by example...yelling for people to be quiet does not work. Display focused silence when other parts are rehearsing by following your part when other sections are rehearsing. Take part in all activities - we all participate fully and as a ensemble. Be supportive of one another - help make choir a safe place

## **Classroom Policies**

No gum – use the wastebasket at the door. No candy, food, beverages, including coffee, in the choir room. However, WATER is encouraged. No headphones, iPods, or other electronic items (e.g. pianos). There is ZERO tolerance for foul language and inappropriate behavior in this classroom. Absolutely NO cell phones allowed! They are to be put into your folder slot. Do not write on the white boards or mirrors.

If you choose to not meet these expectations, the following consequences will be applied:

1. Verbal Warning
2. Call/letter to parents
3. Discipline Referral
4. Removal from choir

It is my expectation that students who choose to be in choir are here because they want to be, therefore we do not anticipate behavior problems being an issue.

Please keep in mind that I do not give out grades, you earn them. Choir is a performance-based class and effort and attitude are part of your grade, so please show up everyday with a positive attitude and ready to participate.

## **Absences**

The Ross High School Choirs are performing groups; therefore attendance at all additional rehearsals and performances is mandatory. However, sometimes an emergency situation cannot be avoided. Acceptable reasons for missing a performance or rehearsal are:

1. Personal Illness-doctor's note is required
2. Scheduled conflict with a student's participation in a Ross High School athletic competition. The student must be a member of the athletic team, not a spectator. It is the student's responsibility to notify Ms. Tamburo of the conflict at least 2 weeks prior to the scheduled conflict. (Coaches are willing to help accommodate both schedules and work around concert dates.) Remember, choir is a graded class - not an extracurricular activity.

Other personal conflicts or reasons for missing a performance or rehearsal will be dealt with on an individual basis with Ms. Tamburo, and the administration if necessary.

Work, family outings, babysitting, or lack of transportation will not be accepted as legitimate reasons for missing a concert. The dates for concerts and other important events are listed on the calendar included in this handbook (very last page) and on our website, [www.rosschoirs.org](http://www.rosschoirs.org), so please plan ahead and schedule around them, arranging for proper transportation, if necessary.

If a student is absent from school on the day of a concert, a note from the parent/legal guardian is still needed stating the reasons for the absence. In order for a student to receive full credit for the missed performance, along with an excused absence, a make-up assignment must be completed. (See the make up assignment section)

Students are expected to stay for the entire concert unless arrangements have been made with Ms. Tamburo prior to the start of the performance.

An unexcused absence from a performance will automatically result in a '0/100' for the performance grade.

## **Evaluation/Assessment**

Participation will be the majority of the student's evaluation and grade. Other factors which are considered in determining grades are behavior, attitude, cooperation, interest, musicianship, attendance, advancement, vocal checks, and any written test or quiz. Participation expectations include:

1. Being in your seat when the bell rings- Not walking around the room looking for your music, or socializing with friends
2. Having your own music AND a pencil - not sharing with your friend
3. Actively participating in warm-ups, sight-singing, music theory, and rehearsal
4. Demonstrating good singing posture while singing
5. Listening and being actively engaged while not talking during rehearsal
6. Following along in your music and being ready to sing
7. Always asking for help on a part you are not sure of

As an educator, part of helping our students be successful is the implementation of continuous assessment. Therefore throughout the year, students will be given vocal checks to measure their growth and knowledge. These are not based on the students talent, but are based on an evaluation of how well the student learned the music that was rehearsed, as well as how much growth as a musician the student made between one vocal check to the next. Students will be evaluated in groups and as individuals in front of the class and/or privately with Ms. Tamburo. If necessary, an alternative assessment will be provided to accommodate those who need it. Please keep in mind that this is a performance based class and that performances, whether in a concert setting, or in class on an individual basis, are part of the student's grade. Furthermore, there will be written exams and quizzes.

Parents, if you have any questions about your student's grade, please do not hesitate to contact me and I will be more than willing to give some recommendations for future checks and how your child can improve, if needed.

The following are basic guidelines for daily participation grading:

1. Students who are participating to the fullest of their ability and who are striving to achieve all of the factors mentioned above, will receive an "A"
2. The student who is sincere, but failing to participate fully in the above mentioned areas, will receive a "B"

3. Unlike other areas of study, the grade of a "C" in music performance is NOT considered average. Any performing student receiving a grade of a "C" or lower is lacking in some area of his/her participation or attendance. In such case where a student receives a "C", the student should request a conference with Ms. Tamburo to discuss what can be done to improve

One important aspect of my class is that we are able to form relationships built on trust and respect. If you ever feel the need to talk to me about your grade, voice, the person sitting next to you, etc..., please do not hesitate to see me. Communication is not only important, it is necessary.

## **Concert Point-Recovery Assignments**

Concert point-recovery assignments will only be permitted to students who's excused absence has been approved.

Since a "live" performance cannot be "made up", students who miss a required performance with an excused absence must complete an alternative assignment to earn their grade. This is not intended as a punishment, but simply a project to substitute for the missed performance. To complete a make-up assignment, please go to [www.rosschoirs.org](http://www.rosschoirs.org) and click the "Performance Details" tab located under the "About" tab. From there, follow the steps below:

1. Fill out and turn in an "Excused Absence Form"
2. If the absence is approved by Ms. Tamburo, students will need to complete one of the "Point Recovery Assignments" listed under the "Performance Details" tab.

The make-up assignment is the student's responsibility and is due 1-week after the missed performance. **Ms. Tamburo will not remind the students about their make-up assignment.** If a student with an excused absence chooses not to do the make-up assignment, the student will be assigned a 0/100 for their grade.

## **Concert Attire**

Musicians are expected to look their best for any performance, as this provides the "first impression" for the audience. Also, studies have shown that students perform better when they take pride in their appearance. In large groups, a uniform is a necessary component to looking professional, and there will be no exceptions. If cost is

a problem, please contact me to discuss financial needs and how we can help accommodate your needs. Additionally, fundraisers are offered to help cover the cost. No student will be permitted to perform without the proper uniform, and this will be considered an unexcused absence, therefore resulting in a '0' grade for the performance.

Uniform information for each choir will be sent home separately. You will receive that information along with the first fundraiser, which will begin very soon. The first fundraiser will automatically be credited to covering uniform expenses and/or the bi-annual trip.

## **Fundraisers**

This year, we will be having many fundraisers throughout the year. Student participation in each fundraiser is essential. Some fundraisers will benefit the student's individual accounts, covering costs such as uniforms, trip expenses, etc... Other fundraisers will go towards the general account to cover expenses such as music, equipment, piano tuning and repair, etc... We are always looking for new and creative ways to fundraise. If you have any ideas, please let us know!

**“Your life is your message to the world. Make sure it’s  
inspiring.” -Unknown**

## Choir Officers

Choir Officers will be selected during the third week of school. These officers will have the opportunity to assist and advise Ms. Tamburo in various matters pertaining to the entire organization. The specific duties of each position are:

**PRESIDENT:** The President is perhaps the most visible of all the Officers. Therefore, this person must be a positive role model for all students in the choir, and in the program as a whole. Specific duties include, but are not limited to:

1. Person must be a third or fourth year member of the choir.
2. Daily announcements.
3. Welcome/Introduction at each concert.
4. Represent the concerns and needs of your fellow choir members by being an open and responsive leader.
5. Be a visible and positive assistant to any substitute throughout the year.

**VICE-PRESIDENT:** The Vice-President is first in line to assist the President. Similarly, this person must be a hard worker with a positive attitude. Specific duties include, but are not limited to:

1. Person must be a second year, or more, member of the choir.
2. Help coordinate the monthly newsletter for the choral department – collect and submit articles of interest.
3. Be a visible and positive assistant to any substitute teacher throughout the year.
4. Maintain cleanliness around the room – especially in the folder storage areas.

**SECRETARY:** The Secretary must be very organized and detail-oriented, and possess excellent writing skills. Specific duties include, but are not limited to:

1. Person must be a second year, or more, member of the choir.
2. Assist the Director or substitute in taking daily attendance – especially noticing any tardies. Also must take attendance at each concert.
3. Send e-mails/texts to the choir when necessary (connect with President and Ms. Tamburo for announcements.)



4. Assist Ms. Tamburo and the Vice-President in putting together the Monthly Newsletter sent out to all parents and students involved in the Ross Choral Program.
5. Write thank-you notes, when appropriate, in a timely manner.

**HISTORIAN:** The Historian will continually take pictures and notes which can be used for the end of the year slideshow, as well as the Newsletters. Specific duties include, but are not limited to:

1. Person may be a first year, or more, member of the choir.
2. Have a camera at all choir-related events!
3. Communicate with Yearbook staff regarding photos.
4. Create a slideshow for the Awards Banquet, with Ms. Tamburo's final approval.
5. Work in conjunction with the Secretary, when newsworthy events occur in the choir department (All-State, Large Group Contest, Concerts, etc.).
6. Provide pictures to the Vice-President for the monthly newsletter.

**SECTION LEADERS:** The section leader is a student selected by the director who will take the leadership role as a positive role model. This is a dependable student who has demonstrated significant pride in our organization and can be counted on to plan and lead sectional rehearsals at the Director's instruction. Section leaders will have an "ear out" for those students who they hear are having problems with the music, and will seek to assist those students to improve their daily work.

The student section leaders will assist their section in making the appropriate markings on their scores. They will also help Miss Tamburo with folder checks of required materials, correct music markings, and any other important information. Above all else, the section leader must hold him/herself to the highest standard, exemplifying the department's ideals and standards. Officers must maintain an A average in concert choir. Remember, you are an officer – Not a GOD!

**Consequences:** A student officer who fails to maintain these standards and expectations will forfeit their office. The director will appoint a suitable replacement.

**\*\*\*Student's interested in an officer position must see Miss Tamburo for an application by August 23rd.**

# **Ross Local Schools Choral Association**

## **Why join the RLS Vocal Boosters?**

Every membership is important to the mission of the Ross Local Schools Choral Association. Your membership provides Ross Choral students with enhanced opportunities for growth and leadership in an award-winning choral program. Booster Club members and volunteers help to bridge the gap between what declining public education funding can provide and what our kids deserve.

The Arts are a vital part of the high quality Ross Local School District educational experience. From show choir to marching band, concert choir to jazz band, and visual arts to theater stage crew, the arts are activities available to capture the imagination and passion of all participating students. As a vocal booster club member you can help ensure that the students of the Ross Local Schools Choral Program benefit from a wide range of experiences that support and encourage lifetime learning and achievement.

Whether your children attend Ross Local Schools today or graduated years ago, we all have a stake in offering rich experiences that compliment academics and develop the whole person. Thank you for your continued support! We cannot do this without you!

For more information, visit the 'Choral Boosters' page at [www.rosschoirs.org](http://www.rosschoirs.org).

## **First RLS Choral Association Meeting: Monday, August 26, 2019**

**7:00 p.m.- Choir Room, RHS**

### **RLS Choral Association Officers 2018-2019**

President: Renee Stayton - [reneestayton@gmail.com](mailto:reneestayton@gmail.com)

Vice President: Shannon Schweitzer - [smschwei@gmail.com](mailto:smschwei@gmail.com)

Secretary: Brandee Staud - [bstaud@hcsdoh.org](mailto:bstaud@hcsdoh.org)

Treasurer: Susan Wurzelbacher - [angels2627@hotmail.com](mailto:angels2627@hotmail.com)

Legacy Member at Large: Gary Caudill - [gcaudill00704@roadrunner.com](mailto:gcaudill00704@roadrunner.com)

Next Generation Member at Large: Beth Ziepfel - [givemeaz303@gmail.com](mailto:givemeaz303@gmail.com)

Concert Choirs Member at Large: Heather Schulkers - [heather.schulkers@rossrams.com](mailto:heather.schulkers@rossrams.com)

## **2019-2020 Ross Choral Program Calendar of Events**

Mon, August 26 - Vocal Booster Meeting, 7pm

Mon, September 30 - Vocal Booster Meeting, 7pm

Tues, October 15 - RMS Fall Choir Concert, 7pm

Wed, October 16 - RHS Fall Choir Concert, 7pm

Mon, October 28 - Vocal Booster Meeting, 7pm

Mon, November 15 - Vocal Booster Meeting, 7pm

Fri, December 13 - RHS/RMS 'Tis the Season Concert @ RMS, 7pm

NO VOCAL BOOSTER MEETING IN DECEMBER

Fri, January 10 - Legacy/Next Generation Debut Performances, 7pm

Mon, January 27 - Vocal Booster Meeting, 7pm

Mon, February 24 - Vocal Booster Meeting, 7pm

Fri-Sat, February 28-29 - Ross Legacy Championship

Tues, March 3 - RMS Winter 5/6 Choir Concert, 7pm

Tues, March 10 - RMS Winter 7/8 Choir Concert, 7pm

Wed, March 11 - RHS Winter Choir Concert, 7pm

Fri-Sat, March 13-14 - OMEA Large Group Contest

Mon, March 23 - Vocal Booster Meeting, 7pm

Mon-Fri, March 30-April 2 - Ross Choral Department Trip, Destination TBA

Mon, April 27 - Vocal Booster Meeting, 7pm

Thurs, May 7 - RMS Spring 5/6 Choir Concert, 7pm

Mon, May 11 - RMS Spring 7/8 Choir Concert, 7pm

Wed, May 13 - Conzart

Mon, May 18 - Vocal Booster Meeting, 7pm

Fri, May 22 - RHS Choir Banquet, 6:30pm

***\*All dates are subject to change***

### **You're not done yet....**

\*Go to [www.rosschoirs.org](http://www.rosschoirs.org) and click the 'About' tab. From there, click the 'HS Handbook Form' tab and fill out the form completely. This will be your first **30-point** assignment, and is **due Friday, August 17, 2018**.