

KLO Middle School Choir 8 & 9 Handbook

WELCOME TO KLO CHOIR!

I hope that you all had a wonderful summer! For those returning to Choir, I am excited to be taking on this new challenge, and for those who have never participated in choral music here at KLO – WELCOME!

Your first assignment is to review this handbook with your family, copy concert dates to your home calendar, and sign and return the participation agreement located on the last page of this handbook on or before [Monday, September 13th/Tuesday 14th](#). You do not need to return the slip to me but I must see that the form has been signed by your parents and that they are aware of the information inside.

It's wonderful that you have decided to continue making music a part of your education! It is truly a valuable asset that you will have for the rest of your life. Be sure to take full advantage of the opportunities offered during your time at KLO! Music can be a truly rewarding and memorable school experience, and I look forward to helping you continue this journey with a great year of learning and making music together.

OUR GOALS

Our goal is to create beautiful music together in a harmonious environment. We are in the business of building an exquisite tapestry of sound that transcends itself through us. I want to teach you this art as you continue to play your instrument, read music, and work together in a friendly and respectful atmosphere so we may perform music to the best of our ability. There will be plenty of opportunities for you to develop cooperative and collaborative skills, and self-discipline through rehearsals and home practice.

Not all choral singers become great musicians, but certainly all become more mature, cooperative, self-disciplined, hardworking members of society with an appreciation of the arts. The life-lessons picked up in band are significant and can translate to success in other areas of your life!

MUSIC ROOM GUIDELINES

We will go over routines more in-depth during class. These are some to keep in mind:

- Be attentive and respectful.
- Do not play any instrument other than your own (this year for more reasons than ever!)
- Be ready to play on time with all materials (*pencil, method book, music and instrument in good working order*).
- Keep your, "Evidence of Learning Folder" up to date and in your assigned class file.

WHAT WE EXPECT FROM YOU

We want you to be courteous and willing to work toward our common goals. You need to accept guidance and constructive criticism in a positive way. Your classmates and I need you to be prepared for all rehearsals and performances. This means paying attention to detail and practicing at home as well at school, to improve and develop consistency in your playing. We also expect you to perform whatever "duties" are assigned to you or to your *section* (E.g., **taking care of the rehearsal room, equipment, storage areas, and sheet music**). Each member of the choir is vital. We all come to depend on one other. You are important to us!

CONCERTS

Concerts and music festivals are invaluable parts of a music education that can both teach and inspire through experience. Unfortunately, we will likely not be able to make them part of this year's program due to the need for physical distancing. We will endeavor to create a "virtual" performance opportunity which will be created during school time and be available for family to watch. We will provide information on this as the school year progresses.

COMMUNICATION

I am available to answer your questions about band and/or your child's learning progress. In addition, we are growing our own KLO music website to serve as a helpful resource and it may answer many of your questions. You can contact me with questions, or feedback on the website through the contact tab; <https://klocougarmusic.weebly.com/> . Messages of an urgent nature should be relayed by phone through the main office.

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Rationale – Why Take Choir?

Music education...

- Enables all learners to explore, create, perceive, and communicate thoughts, images, and feelings through music.
- Plays a significant role in students' lifelong development,
- Contributes to the development of a healthier society and a culturally literate citizenry that respects and reflects the diversity of human relationships.
- Enables students to interact with sound — simultaneously engaging mind, body, and spirit — through creating, performing, listening to, and responding to music.
- Offers one of the most effective ways of connecting thinking and feeling
- Provides a way of learning that effectively integrates the cognitive, psychomotor, and affective domains.

OUR LEARNING DESTINATION (GOALS)

Students will

- develop competency in problem solving, critical thinking, and decision making through experiences with music
- develop literacy in music, especially familiarity with the conventions of written music
- connect knowledge gained through experiences in music with other aspects of life
- demonstrate understanding and appreciation of artistic and aesthetic expression
- develop independence, self-motivation, and positive self-image
- practice co-operation in social interactions involving the creation, exploration, and expression of music
- explore, create, and interpret self-awareness and global understanding through the study of music and the music traditions of various cultures
- develop discipline & confidence through experiences that require focussed & sustained practice
- appreciate the role of music in society
- explore opportunities for lifelong pursuits in music (as recreation or career, as performer or audience).

OUR LEARNING TARGETS – THE BIG IDEAS!

- ♪ Through music making, one's sense of identity and community continually evolves.
- ♪ Experiencing music challenges our point of view and expands our understanding of others.
- ♪ Music, as with dance, drama and visual arts, is a unique language for creating and communicating.
- ♪ Engaging in music develops people's ability to understand and express complex ideas.

For some students the option to rent from the school may be available; however, we prefer you rent your instrument from the stores because they are experts for adjustments or repairs. Please see me if you have to rent from the school.

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SUPPLIES

Students require the following items at their seat each day:

- **Sharpened pencil with eraser on tip.** No pens. Not even erasable pen. Make a habit of keeping a few sharp pencils in your instrument case or folder, and always set one on your music stand at the beginning of class.
- **A one-inch black binder, labeled with student name** - You have to be able to remove or store pages quickly without losing them.
- **A water bottle.** - Our time is precious and it is important to have everyone together as much as possible. You will get thirsty so have water with you and you will be able to make it through class

SHEET MUSIC

Sheet music is expensive. Please keep them neat. It's okay to write on your parts. Good musicians are expected to write on their music, however, marks you make must be erased before the music is collected. Write lightly and always use a pencil. Music is to be returned in the similar condition it was handed out. Even photocopies should be cared for, as making or finding copies for students who have lost theirs is time consuming for teachers AND means that notes that students have put into their music have to be re entered (BY THE STUDENT).

➤ **TIME SCHEDULE**

- 60 minutes is the minimum amount of practice time required for the student per week. Practicing at the same time every day is good, but some flexibility should be built into this schedule. I encourage you to use Smart Music.

➤ **ENVIRONMENT**

- Practicing should be done in an area that is free of distractions away from the TV, radio, stereo, and family traffic. Good lighting, a straight-backed chair, mirror, and a music stand are definite assets. Reed players should have several reeds available during the practice session.

WEEKLY CHECK-INS

These are designed to have students document their understanding of their own progress. This will be kept in their file folders.



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PRACTICE TIPS FOR STUDENTS - IT'S HOW YOU PRACTICE THAT COUNTS!

Incorrect habits are sometimes more easily developed than correct habits, and a habit is hard to change so THINK when you practice. Avoid simply going through the motions! Remember, good singing comes through development of coordination, just like any athlete. Patience is a virtue for the ambitious singer. **Individual practice is the homework that must be done to meet the responsibilities that go with being a part of a team.** The idea is to have a fun, engaging musical experience. We can only do that if we have good skills, and skills and understanding come only with **daily** practice. At times you will be called upon to play your parts alone, and should be prepared to do so. Don't worry. I will make it fun and your classmates will support you!

1. **Warm up correctly.** Be gentle with yourself (don't push your voice beyond what is comfortable) but be regular with your warm-ups and practices.
2. **Set a goal for the practice session.** Don't try to do too much at one sitting. Think about what you are trying to improve on and set a simple clear goal. (see: "be gentle with yourself.")
3. **Isolate a problem or a section in a piece of music.** It may be a rhythm, a measure, or a line of music. Repeat it without straining (even thinking it is very useful).
4. **Try to end each practice session with something that is fun to sing and that has already been mastered!**
Practice involves learning and reinforcing areas that are difficult, therefore it is not always fun so set a little time aside for some pleasurable work.
Structure your practice session to get the most benefit out of your time!

ASSESSMENT

Assessments will be conducted both formally and informally. Formal assessments are recorded, after which students receive written and verbal feedback. Informal assessments are taken from brief solo performances, or through teacher observation as the ensemble plays. Students and I will review rubrics to assess skills and attitudes to help students better understand their targets, progress and to set goals. As this a performance-based, ensemble class, attendance is key to student success. For information on **KLO's Evaluation Criteria for Learning Standards, Work habits and Core Competencies**, please refer to pages 10 and 20 of the **KLO Family Handbook and Calendar**. (This can be found both on the KLO site and our Band website.)

PERFORMANCES

One of the great joys in learning music is having the opportunity to share the experience with audiences; unfortunately, due to COVID we will be limiting any presentations to virtual experiences. Should health guidelines open up to allow for in-person events, students and families will be informed.

ATTENDANCE

Particularly important in Non-Covid years

IMPORTANT: It is absolutely essential that all members of our band be present at all performances and sectional rehearsals. We work together as a team. When even one person is absent, the entire ensemble is effected and virtually incomplete.

A phone call or email to Mr. deBourcier before a performance or sectional rehearsal is required for an absence to be excused. While excused absences should be a serious illness or family emergency, we recognize individual

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circumstances. Absences are to be made up through special arrangements with Mr. deBourcier. One example is a playing test.

CONCERT PERFORMANCE ATTIRE (also for recording opportunities)

BLACK top, BLACK bottom, BLACK socks, BLACK shoes

DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP AND MUIC

Students skills as digital citizens will be fostered through the use of Google Classroom our KLO Cougar Music website and use of personal or school devices.

Technology will be used on a needs basis and will align with the KLO/District 23 digital citizenship **policies (see page 19 of the KLO Family Handbook and Calendar).**

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What kind of music do you perform?

A: Everyone has their own preferences, so we try to include a large variety – pop, jazz, swing, classical, musical theatre, folk etc.

Q: Do you do music trips?

A: Usually, yes; however, this year. due to the uncertainly surrounding COVID, we will not be planning a tour. We MAY work toward a grade 9 retreat/celebration. Plans for that will be announced in the fall.

Q: Do we have to practice?

A: Of course! The course requirement is a minimum of 60 minutes per week, above and beyond our school rehearsals.

Q: Do students need to take private lessons?

A: No, **except if you are a percussionist, bass, guitarist or pianist.** However, the opportunity to study privately with a professional musician can be an important factor in an individual's success if a student is struggling or wishes to progress more quickly.

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CONFIRMATION

Please complete and return this section indicating you reviewed the KLO Choir Handbook with your child on or before *Monday September 13th/Tuesday, September 14th*. This counts toward your *WORK HABIT* mark.

This form lets me know you received information that will help get the band year off to a good start. I appreciate your patience with the amount of information coming from school this week!

Thank you and I look forward to working with your child this year.

Parent/Guardian Name (please print)

Parent signature

Student Name (please print)

Student signature

Your Child's Band Block: _____

Other:

MYEDBC

Please watch for new information about our new information system.

INDIVIDUAL NEEDS?

Are there any Medical / Learning Needs for which I should be aware of (i.e., diabetes, asthma, allergies, eyesight, hearing, epilepsy, lesson adaptations/modifications, **behavior, self-esteem, peer relationship concerns, etc.**)? **If needed, please attach separate note in sealed envelope.**