



CHORUS

2016 – 2017 HANDBOOK

J. Champion, Director
Kacy Bishop, Assistant Director
Candace Wilkes, Principal

700 Old Mountain Road
Kennesaw, GA 30352
678-594-8224, ext. 254, Fax: 678-594-8226
lostmountainchorus@yahoo.com
www.lmmschorus.com

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I. Introduction and Welcome from the Directors

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to the Lost Mountain Middle School Choral Department. For those of you who are new, my name is Jay Champion, Choral Director and General Music Teacher at LMMS. I am very excited about teaching such a great group of students and look forward to meeting all our new students and parents.

I'm sure you would like to know a little bit about me, so I'll fill you in. I was born and raised among very strong choral traditions in Edinburg, Texas and studied at Louisiana State University where I received a Bachelor of Music Education degree as a voice major and a Bachelor of Music degree in composition. I earned my Master of Music Education degree and an Education Specialist degree from the University of Georgia. I taught middle school chorus and general music in East Baton Rouge Parish for one year before deciding to move to Cobb County in 1998. I served as choral director at the West Cobb School and decided to stay at the middle school level as the director at Lost Mountain Middle School in 2000. I am a member of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra Chorus and Chamber Chorus, and Coro Vocati.

I am glad to say that while teaching in Cobb County, I have encountered an incredible amount of success and have made a very positive difference in my student's lives. Helping my students feel good about themselves by learning about and appreciating music, and singing from their hearts is my number one goal. In order for this to happen, I am demanding as a teacher and director, always have the student's best interests in mind, challenge my students regularly, always try to accommodate to the special needs of my

students, and above all, love and care for my students very much. It is important for students to be willing to learn and have an open mind toward different kinds of music. They must not only give of themselves, but also encourage and support each other to do the same. They must see themselves as winners both individually and as a whole ensemble. Parents should actively encourage these successful habits and feelings by attending all concerts, becoming involved in chorus activities, and encourage students to stay enthusiastic and dedicated. This involvement shows the students our support, and that chorus is important and a source of pride. Parents are needed to help organize and execute various choral activities throughout the school year. If you are a parent that is interested in helping out in any way, please contact me by email or by phone.

The students will learn and grow as musicians and young adults. Responsibility, dedication, accountability, and teamwork will be reinforced daily through their efforts and allow them to learn how music plays an important role in the enrichment of the human spirit. I look very forward to helping this new group of students learn and grow!

Sincerely,

J. Champion

Dear Parents and Musicians,

Hello and welcome (back)! I am honored to be a new part of the choral department here at Lost Mountain. I am excited to be working with Mr. Champion and with the 6th and 8th grade chorus and Music Tech classes. A little about me... I grew up an Army brat and spent most of my childhood in Germany and Texas. In middle school, my family moved to Conyers, GA, where I ended up teaching my first year! I received my undergraduate degree in Music Education from Shorter College and my Masters in Music Ed from UGA. I taught for 10 years before taking some time off to spend with my two little ones, Ian (age 4) and Ivy (age 3). I teach private lessons, sing with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra Chorus, and am the Choral Manager of the Greater Atlanta Girls' Choir (along with parenting and wife-ing and teaching...there is no sleep in my house).

I love teaching middle schoolers for several reasons—the students are still deciding who they are as people, and they're generally some of the funniest people I know. I laugh every day that I teach. I also want my room to be a place where EVERY student feels welcome and can't wait to get back to!

Musically Yours,

Kacy Bishop

II. SYLLABUS

LOST MOUNTAIN MIDDLE SCHOOL CHORUS SYLLABUS

The student achievement goals of this class are placed on learning and demonstrating the fundamentals of music, correct vocal production, the rudiments of choral singing consistent with the National Standards and Core Curriculum for Choral Music as determined by Cobb County Public Schools, and the preparation of music for upcoming concerts. The fundamentals will be as follows:

1. **Sings alone and with others**

- a. **Vocal Production** - The learner will be able to identify basic vocal anatomy, and demonstrate proper body alignment, and breathing techniques in order to produce an appropriate choral tone.

- b. **Scales and Tonal Memory** - The learner will be able to sing major, natural minor, and chromatic scales and internalize and sing a series of intervals including 2nds, 3rds, 4ths, 5ths, and octaves using solfeggio.
 - c. **Diction** - The learner will be able to create and distinguish between pure vowel sounds and multiple vowels sounds and articulate voiced and unvoiced consonants.
 - d. **Aural Skills** - The learner will be able to apply listening skills to adjust individual intonation within the ensemble.
 - e. **Blend and Balance** - The learner will be able to demonstrate the ability to blend with other singers and sing with attention to balance between voice parts.
 - f. **Expression** - The learner will be able to consistently demonstrate and apply dynamics, tempo, phrasing, and textual meaning.
 - g. **Repertoire** - The learner will be able perform secular and non-secular music, written for two or more voice parts, with and without accompaniment, in more than one language, equivalent to level M literature found on the GMEA (Georgia Music Educators Association) repertoire list.
 - h. **Conducting** - The learner will be able to demonstrate and respond to basic conducting patterns and gestures incorporating stylistic interpretation in simple and compound meter.
 - i. **Concert Etiquette as a Performer** - The learner will be able to demonstrate proper concert etiquette as a performer.
2. **Plays instruments alone and with others**
- a. **Instrumental Performance** - The learner will be able to incorporate classroom instruments with appropriate technique to enhance learning.
3. **Reading and notating music**
- a. **Reading** - The learner will be able to accurately read and sing music equivalent to level D or C literature found on the GMEA (Georgia Music Educators Association) repertoire list, in an ensemble.
 - b. **Notation** - The learner will be able to read and write pitches and rhythms from aural and visual examples in standard music notation.
 - c. **Notation: Software** - The learner will be able to use available music instruction and notation software.
4. **Compose, arrange, and improvise music**
- a. **Improvisation** - The learner will be able improvise rhythmic and melodic phrases.
 - b. **Composition** - The learner will be able to create and notate rhythms and melodies through composition.
 - c. **Music Technology** - The learner will be able to create and notate rhythms and melodies using available multimedia applications and technology.
5. **Analyze, describe, and evaluate music**
- a. **Elements of a Choral Score** - The learner will be able to listen, describe, and analyze melody, harmony, rhythm, meter, dynamics, texture, voicing, form, style, instrumental accompaniment, and tonality.
 - b. **Performance Evaluation** - The learner will be able to describe and evaluate individual and group performances by offering suggestions for improvement.
6. **Music in relation to culture/history**
- a. **Characteristics of Repertoire** - The learner will be able to identify distinguishing characteristics of secular and non-secular repertoire representing a variety of periods, composers, cultures, styles, and/or genres.
 - b. **Concert Etiquette as a Listener** - The learner will be able to demonstrate proper etiquette as an active listener.
7. **Music in relation to other disciplines**
- a. **Interdisciplinary Connections** - The learner will be able to find and describe correlations between vocal/choral music and other disciplines.
 - b. **Relating Text to Music** - The learner will be able to describe and analyze the relationship between music and text in choral literature.

ASSESSMENT WEIGHTS

Participation in rehearsal techniques including warm-up exercises, music reading, rehearsals, posture, effective use of time, and class discussions. – 40%

- Grades are issued every two weeks. Students are expected to sing at acceptable level of effort and accuracy, with acceptable singing posture. Since we function as a group, they should keep up with tasks, and perform tasks to specific instructions. To save time, students are asked to quickly get seated, and be ready to work. Students should sharpen pencils and retrieve music before sitting down, and not waste time mingling.
- See the [LMMS Participation and Prepared Rubrics](#) for detailed information.

Self-Evaluation Survey – 10%

- Students will be asked to complete a self-evaluation rubric in the form of a survey. This survey is taken at least once a semester. Student responses are entered into a formula so students cannot calculate their own grade. Students are asked to identify their strengths and weaknesses and compare from one period to the next for measures of improvement. When students can improve on their individual weaknesses, we become better as a choir.

Prepared for class (Agenda notebooks, folder, pencil, paper) – 10%

- Grades are issued every two weeks. Students earn one point a day. Students are expected to have their folder with all music and handouts, workbook, sharpened No. 2 pencil (not color) with eraser, and student agenda. They must have them all!!!

Written Work – 10%

- Students will demonstrate knowledge through verbal communication, and written worksheets. They will also write solfege and/or counting in our music, and complete workbook exercises and worksheets.

Quizzes – 10%

- Quizzes are given frequently to practice written skills,
- Use your workbook and worksheets as a study guide
- Will cover knowledge of music theory terms and symbols and reading skills like labeling counting and solfege.
- Quizzes will prepare you for written tests.

Tests – 20%

- Will cover knowledge of music theory terms and symbols and reading skills like labeling counting and solfege.
- Singing tests

Notification Grade – 0%

- Occasionally, we will post a “grade” that does not count toward the class grade, but rather serves as an instant notification for parents concerning a given matter. For example, if students must turn in a field trip form by September 20, we will post that as a grade with a maximum of 1 point, but it will count 0% towards the report card grade. If a student has a “1”, it has been received; otherwise it will remain a zero.

For a more detailed explanation of our grading procedures, go to www.lmmschorus.com/grade.

CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS:

1. Be prepared and on time.
2. During rehearsal and when instructed, questions/ comments should be directed toward the teacher only. Please raise your hand and wait to be recognized before speaking. Socializing among other students is not permitted.
3. Show respect for peers, teachers, and property.
4. Obey school rules as stated in the Lost Mountain Middle School Student Handbook.
5. Have a positive attitude.

CONDUCT GRADES:

Conduct grades will be discussed with the student and parents if the student is at risk of receiving an “N” or “U”. This syllabus is a guide and is subject to change in order to accommodate class and individual needs. Students will be notified of change.

IV. UNIFORM AND SUPPLIES INFORMATION

Students will perform in their chorus polo shirt, khaki colored pants, dark formal shoes, and dark belt unless otherwise specified. The chorus polo shirt is a navy blue polo-style short-sleeve shirt with an LMMS Chorus symbol. If you don't have a chorus polo shirt, please fill out the [Chorus Polo Shirt Order Form](#) and return it to Mr. Champion. Pants must be plain khaki pants. No jeans, cargo pants, Capri pants, or corduroy pants are allowed. Shoes must be formal, black or brown, may NOT be athletic shoes, sandals (i.e., Birkenstock), boat shoes (i.e., Sperry), and cannot have white on them. Shoes may not be open-toed. The belt should be the same color as the shoes and may not have any shiny pieces on it (metal loops, large buckles, or rhinestones). Pictures can be found at <http://www.lmmschorus.com/uniforms.gif>.

If financial assistance is necessary in purchasing a chorus polo shirt, please submit a written request from the parent. This may be given to me in a discreet manner, via email, or paper letter.

V. EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Boys Choir will rehearse on Mondays and Tuesdays. Girls Choir will rehearse on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Chamber Chorus will rehearse on Thursday. Please check the list of clubs on the school website for details about these choirs. PLEASE CHECK THE CHORUS CALENDAR FOR UPATED INFORMATION ABOUT REHEARSALS. All students have the opportunity to audition for Middle School Honor Chorus. 7th and 8th graders can audition for All-State Chorus.

VI. CONCERT ATTENDANCE AND CALENDAR



Our chorus calendar is published on Google Calendar. You do not need a Google account to see the calendar. If you have a Google account, you can add our calendar to your own and view and copy appointments to your calendar. You can view our calendar in agenda form on the homepage of our website www.lmmschorus.com; from there, you will also have the option to see the calendar in monthly view.

Concert performances are the culmination of our work and the purpose of the ensemble. Attendance and participation in concerts is required to be in chorus. Participation by the entire ensemble is crucial to the success of the concert. The success of our concerts is crucial to the success of the class. Lack of participation in concerts is damaging to the morale of our ensembles. If concerts are a failure, students will perceive the class as a failure and not want to be in chorus. Concerts are our only chance to share our hard work and great music with our family and our fellow choirs. Watching performances by other choirs is a critical part of a students' music education and concerts are our only chance to enjoy and learn from this experience. Seventh graders must attend and participate in all concerts in order to be eligible to attend the Lock-In at Stars-and-Strikes at the end of the year. Eighth graders must attend and participate in all concerts in order to be eligible to attend the Disney Trip at the end of the year. Boys/Girls/Chamber Chorus members must attend and participate in all concerts in order to be eligible to attend the Lock-In at Stars-and-Strikes and sing at the Braves game at the end of the year. If a student has a conflict, they may be given permission to show up late or leave early if notification is given well in advance. In rare instances, students may be excused from the concert altogether if an explanation is submitted in writing by the parent at the beginning of the year. If a student is absent from school on the day of a concert, and that absence is excused, then the student is automatically excused from the concert. If a student must miss a concert due to a family emergency, a student may be excused if an explanation is submitted in writing by the parent the next day. Students **will not** be excused due to conflicts with rehearsals, practices, or games by other organizations that meet on a regular basis.

VII. FORMS TO RETURN TO THE DIRECTOR

Please fill out and return the Consent and Commitment Form, and the Chorus Polo Shirt Order Form (if necessary). These forms must be turned in as soon as possible upon receiving this handbook. You will receive a letter before each field trip to inform you of all the details concerning the trip. You will also receive a separate permission slip to sign and return for each field trip.

All parents and students are required to fill out the [Student and Family Information Form](#). This is an online form that can be found on our website (www.lmmschorus.com). This information will help us communicate with parents, get to know more about our students and their families, coordinate parent volunteers, and coordinate carpooling for students that participate in before-school activities.

Please subscribe to receive text messages from us with important announcements and possible last-minute changes. Instructions for subscribing are on the Homepage of our chorus website: www.lmmschorus.com.

VIII. DISCIPLINARY POLICY

All disciplinary matters will be addressed according to the Lost Mountain Middle School Behavior Policies and the appropriate use of the Student Eagle Card. In the event a student is asked for their Eagle Card and they do not have their Eagle Card, a silent lunch will be added to the original infraction.

IX. PARENT INVOLVEMENT

The Choral Department is in need of much help from parents this year. If you can help, please email lostmountainchorus@yahoo.com, or call (678) 594-8224, ext. 254. Your name will be added to an

email distribution list. When help is needed, everyone on the list will be notified. If you can help, simply respond. Areas of need include:

ADMINISTRATIVE DUTIES

Major help is needed in this area! Parents are needed for various tasks such as the collection of music, the organization of our library, payment records, and planning and organization of field trips. Parents will be needed to come to the school and help with these tasks. I need a small core of parents that can come one day a week, not necessarily on the same day.

CONCERT MANAGEMENT

Physically able-bodied parents are needed to set up risers at Burnt Hickory Baptist Church. This might be done the day before a concert or the morning of a concert. At least three are needed to put everything back after the concert. This will take about 15 minutes. I need three parents from three different grade levels to monitor, record, and correct student behavior during the concert.

PUBLICITY

One or two parents are needed to inform local publications about concerts and engagements. These parents will also scout performing opportunities for the choral department to gain exposure. The goal of this exposure is to create a need for our choral department in the community.

RECRUITING

In the spring, some of our students will visit our feeder elementary schools and recruit. At least one parent is needed to transport the students to and from school. The exact dates will be made available toward the end of the school year.

FUNDRAISING

At least five parents at a time (or as many as possible) are needed to help distribute items on the fundraising delivery date. Parents are needed from approximately 4 p.m. until the end of distribution at approximately 8 p.m.

We will have a poinsettia sale in December. This sale is for eighth grade Disney participants only. There is no kickoff meeting, but there will be a Saturday morning distribution event. At least four parents will be needed for the Saturday distribution event. The date will be provided if and when the fundraiser begins.

Finally, a few parents are needed to solicit donations from the community for sponsorship of our concerts and/or equipment. A local business can sponsor one song by purchasing the music of that piece for the class. This will cost between \$80 and \$100 for most songs, but may be as much as \$200 for the more popular and lengthy pieces. The business will receive recognition and thanks in our concert programs and will receive a certificate of thanks from the choral program for display.

FIELD TRIPS

Parents of a student auditioning for the all-state chorus are responsible for supervision of their own child. If a student participates in the 6th Grade Honor Chorus or All-State Choruses in Savannah, parents will be responsible for the supervision of their own children the entire time.

One parent is needed to help supervise the Honor chorus rehearsals on November 11 and 12. Parents are needed to transport honor chorus participants to and from dinner that evening. This should be a parent of a student participating.

At least two parents are needed to supervise students on the trip to GMEA Middle School Choral Festival.

Finally, parents are needed to chaperone field trips at a one to fifteen student ratio. Various trips will be planned and organized throughout the year. If you would like to chaperone any of these events, please contact Mr. Champion and specify which event.

BEFORE/AFTER SCHOOL SUPERVISION OF GROUPS

Occasionally, in addition to concerts, parents will be needed to supervise students in different rooms. This will most likely be the case with the show chorus. Parents may or may not be show chorus parents, but should be available on one or two day notice.

X. CONCERT ETTIQUETTE

Please follow the guidelines below for concert behavior. At all performances, when parents and students are seated in the audience, parents should watch their children to observe this behavior, and teach by example.

- Speak in a whisper while in the theater.
- It is appropriate to applaud when the first person walks on the stage, even if that person is the announcer. Your applause lets the performers know you are looking forward to the show.
- While a performance is in progress, do not utter a sound. Whispering to a neighbor is distracting not only to the people around you, but also to the performers on stage. Whistling and “Cat Calls” are never appropriate at our concerts.
- Refrain from open coughs or loud sneezes during a song. Although it is sometimes necessary, it can often be delayed until the next applause.
- Any devices that make sound should be turned off. Also be careful of any other potential noisemaking materials such as Velcro, jingling jewelry, or clothing that makes noise with movement.
- If the show is funny, feel free to laugh aloud. Pay close attention because your laughter must stop as soon as the words resume. You don’t want to miss the next funny line.
- Movement is very distracting to the audience as well as the performers. For that reason, no one should get up during a performance.
- It is appropriate to applaud at the end of every piece. Listen carefully to make sure it is really the end. It is embarrassing to start clapping before the song is over. Sometimes it seems like the end, and then the music starts again. The conductor usually puts his hands down by his sides when the piece is over.
- It is appropriate to remove crying or misbehaving children from a concert.
- While sitting in your chair, your feet must remain on the floor. Desks must remain lowered.
- If the show is very good, you may want to give a standing ovation at the end. This is appropriate as long as you stay at your seats.
- Set the example! Show others the correct way to act.
- While singing, stand still and watch your director. Nothing is more distracting to an audience than a choir member that is moving or scanning the room with their eyes instead of concentrating on what they are doing.

2016-2017
LOST MOUNTAIN MIDDLE SCHOOL
CHORAL DEPARTMENT
STUDENT / PARENT CONSENT FORM

Last Name _____

First Name _____

Grade _____

All students and parents are required to read, sign, and return this completed form in order for the student to participate in chorus.

I have read the Lost Mountain Middle School Student-Parent Handbook for chorus and acknowledge the rules and procedures therein. I understand that infraction of these rules and procedures could lead to disciplinary action.

Student Signature _____ Date _____

I understand that participation in chorus involves after-school performances on the following dates:

Thursday, October 6, 2016

Fall Concert

Tuesday, December 13, 2016

Chorus Winter Concert

Tuesday, February 28, 2017

Performance at Kennesaw State Univ. (7th and 8th grade only)

Monday or Tuesday, March 6 or 7, 2017

LGPE performances (during school; 7th and 8th grade only)

Tuesday, May 9, 2017

Chorus Spring Concert

7th Grade Parents: I understand that my child must participate in all of these performances in order to participate in the Lock-In at the end of the year.

8th Grade Parents: I understand that my child must participate in all of these performances in order to participate in the Disney Trip at the end of the year.

I also verify that I have completed the [Student and Family Information Form](#) online at the chorus website (www.lmmschorus.com).

I verify that I have subscribed to receive text messages from the LMMS Choral Department. To subscribe during the 2015-16 school year, send the following messages to (678) 269-7620: to subscribe to 8th grade Chorus, text @lmmsch2017; 7th grade Chorus - @lmmsch2018; 6th grade Chorus - @lmmsch2019; Boys choir - @lmmsboys; Girls Choir - @lmmsgirls; Chamber Chorus - @lmmscc; EMC - @lmmsemc

Parent Name (printed) _____ Date _____

Parent Signature _____ Date _____