

# WELCOME TO THE SLAUSON CHOIRS

We are looking forward to an exciting year with our 7th and 8th Grade Choirs. The real learning is a day to day process with noticeable progress seen over the whole year, and you are welcome to drop in anytime to see what we do.

**PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS:** Singing is a skill. Skills need to be practiced to improve. Singing, like most skills, becomes more fun as one's abilities increase. Singers at Slauson are also musicians.

1. We will build the skills necessary to sing and read music.
2. We will prepare a wide variety of concert music for performance.
3. We will have fun!

## **EXPECTATIONS:**

- Students need to be in class every day, on time.
- Students will bring to class daily and take care of: a pencil, their planner, and music.
- Students will master skills, make progress on Sight Reading Factory, and learn concert music at the requested times, or seek additional help to attain these goals.
- Students and families will keep track of performance dates and come to all concerts at the appropriate time in the appropriate attire.
- Students will learn about people and/or life in addition to music!

## **GRADING/POWERSCHOOL:**

- *Participation (40%)* - Students earn full credit based on their attendance, work ethic, and behavior. Each class period missed requires 15 minutes of practice at home.
- *Skills (20%)* - Students earn full credit based on their mastery of basic musicianship skills (7th graders pass 3 per quarter, 8th graders pass 4 per quarter). Students can pass skills in class, by appointment (before or after school or during first advisory/lunch), or by submitting video recordings through the Google Classroom.
- *Assessments (30%)* - Students earn full credit based on their progress in Sight Reading Factory and concert repertoire. Each assessment uses an Assessment Literacy grading rubric, clearly explained in each assignment on PowerSchool.
- *Performance (10%)* - Students earn full credit based on their attendance, participation, and behavior in concerts and events.

## **HOW FAMILIES CAN HELP AT HOME:**

- Ask your child to show you what he/she is working on, especially their skills, Sight Reading Factory, and concert repertoire. Be supportive of any practicing!
- Help your child get to concerts and enjoy listening to them.
- Help student check assignments and grades on PowerSchool, and ask to see the results.
- Encourage your child to come to me with questions or for assistance.

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**CHOIR AS A YEAR-LONG ELECTIVE:** Choosing a year-long music option at the secondary level requires an enhanced commitment from student musicians and families. Throughout the year, music selections, performances, and rehearsals are contingent on the consistency and continuity of a full ensemble. We are a team and losing musicians mid-year challenges our ability to grow a strong program and support the individual growth of all students. While there may be unforeseen circumstances that require a student to consider whether fulfilling the year-long commitment is possible (i.e. student injury, balancing academic & practice expectations, etc.), we are here to support all musicians here at Slauson. If your child is becoming frustrated or disengaged, there are numerous things we can do to help them on their musical journey. In collaboration with the Counseling Department, we will work with students and families using the following process when challenges of any nature arise:

1. Student/family contact the music teacher to schedule a conference (in person, phone, or email)
2. Identify a support plan (e.g. music advisory support, referrals for private lessons, etc.)
3. If the student/family would still like to explore other elective options, they will then be referred to the Counseling Office.

**SPECIAL EVENTS:** MSVMA Honors Choirs, Small Ensembles, Solos/Small Groups at the Winter Concert, Solo & Ensemble Festival, Choral Festival, Elementary Tour (8th grade), and (potentially) a Cedar Point trip are extra opportunities which may be available, depending on the progress and demands of the individual singers and of each choir (also affected by other school events).

**TEACHER'S COMMENTS:** Working with music and students is always a pleasure. I'm excited by what I have already heard this year. In both the small and large choirs, I continue to have high expectations for each singer, and will strive to make quality music a part of our lives. Please contact me, drop in, come to concerts, have conferences, and continue your interest in your child's musical growth.

Andrew Steck  
[stecka@aaps.k12.mi.us](mailto:stecka@aaps.k12.mi.us)