

Higgins Chorus Handbook

higginschorus.weebly.com

Dear Parents and Students:

Welcome to the 2014-2015 school year! My name is Mrs. Aridgides and I am the 7th and 8th grade Choral Director at HMS. I am very excited to work with students and help them grow as vocalists, musicians, and performers. Besides having the opportunity to sing a variety of musical styles, students will learn proper techniques to create a good vocal sound and warm-up routines that help prepare the body and voice for singing. In addition, students will develop their music reading skills, sight singing skills, and the terminology needed to analyze music and their singing.

Chorus is a full-year commitment. **Please read all sections carefully before signing the chorus contract. A signed contract implies that both the student and his/her parents understand class expectations, procedures, and the consequences that could result from failure to follow them.**

In this handbook, you will find information about rehearsals/performances, grading, expectations, consequences, and a letter about our Performing Arts Parents Group that offers you the opportunity to become involved if you are not already a member. Parents, please give this some consideration as this group helps further the success of our music program! We can always use extra help at our events!

Please go to higginschorus.weebly.com for web versions of our calendar of events, class documents, assignments, select ensembles, and the latest information regarding chorus class and concerts! You can also find updates and news on our Twitter account @HigginsChorus.

I look forward to another successful year, working together with Mr. Stone, Mr. Giannopolo, students, and parents to further develop the Higgins Middle School Music Department. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions. Have a great year!

Sincerely,

Mrs. Shannon Aridgides
7th and 8th grade Choral Director
aridgidess@peabody.k12.ma.us
(978) 536-4836

Higgins Chorus Performance Calendar 2014-2015

Performances are an integral part of our chorus class. The performance experience is essential for students to showcase their work to an audience after several months of rehearsals. Students are required to attend all concerts of the choral group in which they are participating **and** to follow the concert dress code. Students may only miss concerts in emergency situations or if they provide a written excuse prior to the concert that is deemed acceptable by myself. Being absent from a concert due to other family events, even with a written excuse, is usually not accepted. Please mark these dates on your calendar well ahead of the concerts!!! **Please note that an unexcused absence from a concert will result in a semester grade of Needs Improvement / Unsatisfactory and will keep a student off of the honor roll.**

September 16th	Select Chorus Auditions, Room 8
September 17 th	Select Chorus Auditions, Room 8
September 18 th	Select Chorus Auditions, Room 8
September 19 th	Higgins Chorus Contract Due to Mrs. Aridgides
October 2nd	First Select Chorus rehearsal, HMS auditorium
October 3 rd	First Great East Festival payment due
December 17th	Winter Coffee House, HMS band room
December TBA	Select Chorus Caroling, location TBA
January 12 th	6 th Grade Winter Concert, HMS auditorium
January 13 th	7 th Grade Winter Concert, HMS auditorium
January 14 th	8 th Grade Winter Concert, HMS auditorium
January 15 th	Winter Concerts Snow Date
March TBA	8 th Grade Vocal Collaborative Day / Concert, Peabody High
March 27 th	Final Great East Festival payment due
May 15th	Great East Festival, Six Flags New England
June 3rd	Spring Coffee House, HMS band room
June 8 th	Select Ensembles Spring Concert, HMS auditorium
June 9 th	6 th Grade Spring Concert, HMS auditorium
June 10 th	7 th Grade Spring Concert, HMS auditorium
June 11 th	8 th Grade Spring Concert, HMS auditorium
TBA	Select Chorus performs at Moving On Ceremony, HMS gym

Concert Dress Code (unless stated otherwise by Mrs. Aridgides)

Ladies are expected to wear:

- solid white, long/short sleeve dress shirt (no t-shirts, **tank tops**, or patterned shirts)
- black or navy dress pants or black skirt (must be knee length or longer)
- dark dress shoes, preferably black

Gentlemen are expected to wear:

- solid white, long/short sleeve dress shirt and tie
- black or navy dress pants and dark dress shoes, preferably black

Extra Ensemble Options:

Select Chorus is a small audition-only performing group comprising 6th, 7th, and 8th grade chorus students. In this ensemble, students perform challenging repertoire at a fast pace. Mr. Stone and I seek musically inclined students who are serious about developing their singing skills beyond chorus rehearsals in an after school setting. These students should be prepared for a full-year commitment of weekly rehearsals and a few concerts throughout the year. Find audition information on our website!

Coffee House performances occur twice per year. Students who are interested in performing a song/piece by themselves or in a small group should participate in auditions. Musical repertoire/style options will be discussed in the fall. Find more information on our website!

A Cappella is a vocal ensemble open to 7th / 8th grade chorus students who are interested in performing multi part pop music. The ensemble meets weekly during Coffee House season and performs at each Coffee House.

Drum Circle is a percussion ensemble open to all Higgins students who are interested in performing traditional drumming music from various countries. The ensemble meets (to be announced) and performs at our winter and spring concerts. Find more information on our website!

Grading Policy

Students will receive one of the following grades for chorus:

H=90%-100%
Honors

S=80%-89%
Satisfactory

N=65%-79%
Needs Improvement

U=0%-64%
Unsatisfactory

- **Rehearsal Contribution (attendance, group awareness, attitude, effort, preparation) – 40% of grade**
- **Concert Attendance/Attire – 30% of grade**
- **Musicianship Evaluations (singing alone and written quizzes) – 25% of grade**
- **Returned Chorus Contract – 5% of grade**

Class Expectations

A successful choral singer in Mrs. A's class will always:

Listen

Follow Directions

Come Prepared (pocket folder with loose-leaf paper, pencil)

Show Group Awareness

Be Respectful and Caring

Participate Completely: model appropriate posture, singing style, well-supported tone, eye contact, follow along in music, mark music when appropriate

Class Consequences

Three Check Policy for a student not following any or all Class Expectations:

√ = warning

√√ = lose class contribution points/lowers grade

√√√ = detention/lowers grade

*Students who do not show improvement after serving detention may lose their spot in chorus class.

Higgins Performing Arts Parents Group Information



The Higgins Performing Arts Parents Group was established during the 2010 – 2011 school year. With the assistance of fellow parents, we raise funds, purchase equipment, coordinate volunteers, create programs, and keep everyone informed about the fabulous shows and concerts our children participate in at the Higgins.

In a time when financial resources are limited, we are lucky to have a thriving Arts Program thanks to the School Administration, the School Committee, and the City of Peabody. We are especially thankful for our outstanding Performing Arts teachers. Their skill and dedication make these programs possible, and their genuine enthusiasm makes them fun!

We know that Performing Arts programs are critical to the success of many children and, for some children, are as important as academics. The positive lessons learned by students in the Arts are carried with them throughout their lives. These programs may even help develop the interest and talent of a budding star in our midst...

Please consider volunteering on our committee or even just donating an hour of your time whenever you can. We're accessible via meetings, email (listed below) or by sending a note to Mrs. Aridgides. We will also send information to those indicating interest on the chorus form. Details for our next monthly meeting will be included in the school's September newsletter and monthly calendar that will be distributed during the first week of school.

We humbly request a membership fee to assist in establishing the 2014 treasury. This is optional, and all funds go directly to the program in the form of supplies, equipment, and miscellaneous expenses.

Please watch for advertising and well-wishing opportunities as concerts, plays, and other activities arise. Information will be available on the Higgins website HPAPG page or via written communication.

We look forward to another wonderfully artistic year here at the Higgins!

Sincerely,

The Higgins Performing Arts Parents Group (HPAPG)

Website & Email:

- www.peabody.k12.ma.us/domain/376
- HigginsPAPG@gmail.com

Higgins Middle School
Chorus Contract for 2014-2015

Please KEEP your chorus handbook and return ONLY this signed contract to Mrs. Aridgides by Friday, September 19th.

Student name: _____

Student grade/cluster: _____

Student homeroom #/teacher _____

Parent name: _____

Parent phone: _____

Parent email: _____

I have read and understand all of the information about chorus class, including the required performances, class expectations, consequences, and grading.

Student signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent signature: _____

Date: _____

I am interested in the Performing Arts Parents Group

(Yes)

(No)

please circle one

Only those who provide a "yes" response will be contacted.