**MILL CREEK
MIDDLE SCHOOL**

**Choir Handbook**

**2013-2014**

**Welcome Letter**

Welcome to Choir! This year will bring a few more changes to the choir program at Comstock Park. It is my goal as your teacher to provide you with a fun and positive year in choir. I strive for excellence in my teaching, just as I hope you all will as students.

As your choir director, I have very high expectations of you as a musician and student. Your participation in choir is very important to reach those expectations. I hope that you are willing to be totally committed, prepared, and ready to step
forward with your best effort.

The purpose of this handbook is to give you a glimpse into what our year will look like in choir and what my goals are for the near future.

**This year…**

\*\*\*NEW PERFORMING FACILITY!\*\*\*

\*Studying choral etiquette, vocal technique, 2 part+ harmony, sight singing, music theory,…etc…
\*Challenging music…fun music!
\*Community performances (White Caps and more)
\*Special Guest Singers
\*National Anthem at sporting events
\*Singing at Elementary Schools
\*Christmas Caroling
\*Dinner Theater
\*Variety Show
\*Winter and Spring Concerts
\*Fundraiser for future choir trips and uniforms!
\*Awards Ceremony Performance

**Near future goals…**
\*Splitting 7th and 8th Grade Choir
\*Separating ***ALL*** MS and HS performances
\*Choral festivals and competitions
\*Continue growing the program
\*Short Choir Trips every other year
\*Auditioned Ensemble

**Not Just singing…**

We will be doing much more than just learning choir music this year. For us to be an excellent choir, we need to focus on much more than just singing! While we will be doing other music related things throughout the year, our main focus will be on becoming an outstanding choir that produces excellent sound. I want to let people outside the school know who you are, so get ready to perform! Be prepared to focus, work and study hard,
and have fun!

**Concerts and Performances**

As an important part to the choir, you are required to be at every concert and performance. These are worth a large part of your grade and are important for maintaining a good
 grade in choir.

Acceptable Reasons for Absense (must have written letter from parents)
1. Death in family
2. Serious Illness
3. Family Vacation out of town (2 weeks advance written notice from parents)

If one of these reasons applies, students will be able to take a singing test to make up for the points missed. Excuses beyond the three listed above will be excused only as the director deems necessary. Failure to attend concerts will result in a lowered grade.

\*\*IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND BECAUSE OF WORK, ANOTHER SCHOOL EVENT, OR LAST MINUTE REASON OTHER THAN THAT LISTED ABOVE YOU WILL NOT BE ABLE TO TAKE A SINGING TEST TO MAKE UP FOR THE POINTS. CONCERT DATES ARE ANNOUNCED VERY EARLY IN THE YEAR, AND REMAIN WRITTEN ON THE REMINDER BOARD THORUGHOUT THE YEAR. THERE ARE NO EXCUSES. YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR OWN CALENDAR.\*\*

*Concerts are a very important part of the class. You will be working very hard on music throughout the year, and this is your time to perform for the community and show them what you have been working on.*

**Sometimes an extra rehearsal before a performance is necessary. Please know attendance at these is mandatory and part of your assessment grade.**

 ***Dinner Theater Fundraiser: October 28 @ 6pm
Winter Choral Concert: December 12 @ 7pm
Variety Show: TBD
Spring Choral Concert: May 8 @ 7pm
All other performance dates and times: TBD
Spring Musical: TBD***

**Concert Attire**

**Winter, Spring, and Awards Ceremony Attire**

-Guys: Black Shoes, Socks, Pants. Long sleeved white button up shirt, dark tie
-Girls: Black shoes, Black skirt w/tan nylons or black dress slacks, Black blouse

**Dinner Theater and Variety Show, White Caps and other informal performances**

Students who are performing may dress to fit their act.
They must follow school dress code and be approved by Mrs. Vos.

Choir members with no individual act, servers and stagehands should wear choir
shirts with nice jeans.\*\*see choir materials section\*\*

**General Expectations**

Be on time to all rehearsals and public performances. Be prepared to give your best.

Be a responsible member - **bring** your music to rehearsal with pencil, get your folders as soon as you enter class, **keep** your music in order, **know** your music.
Demonstrate maturity in your actions and words.

Maintain respect for the Choir Room, the instruments and the equipment. This includes your music and folder. Keep the room clean and orderly. The piano, recording equipment and sound system are not toys. Do not use any of the equipment unless you have received permission from the directors.

Take pride in being in choir… your actions and attitude reflect on you,
your choir, and your school.

No gum, phones, food, drink (water is ok) or anything else that hinders learning/singing

**Choir Materials**

The only materials the student is monetarily responsible for is their own choir shirt and sticky notes! These shirts will be worn throughout the year at several performances and school events. Please bring cash or a check for $**12.00** *made out to Comstock Park Public Schools*, to Mrs. Vos. Information will be sent home with choir students the second week of school. Please bring payment ASAP.

**Music and Folders**

-Everyone will get their own music folder, pencil, and music
-Random checks will happen throughout the year to make sure you
have your materials in your folders, and they are still in good shape
-Music is expensive, please treat it with respect
-Music is to be kept in folders at all times, unless signed out on the bulletin board
-If music is lost or damaged, the student will pay for the replacement of the music
-Music left out of the folder or found in the choir room will result in a lowered
 participation grade
-Folder contract will be handed out to students to sign in the first week of school
-The choir program will be reimbursed for any lost music or folders BY the student
who lost them

**Choir Trips**.

This year we will be performing in and outside of the community. One trip I am hoping for is singing The National Anthem at the White Caps… More info to come later.

Every year we will be heading to a University or College in Michigan to visit their music program and get helpful hints from one of the choral instructors.

**Sickness**

If the student is sick and unable to rehearse during class, please send in a signed note. Students will be required to participate fully in class every day unless this note says otherwise. Being tired or having a bad day is not an excuse. Only if the student is ill (please keep them home), had dentist work done, or had some kind surgery or illness that prevents them from standing or rehearsing properly…should they be excused.

**Note to Parents**

Dear Parents,
Last year there were many positive changes in the choir program. This year brings more of those! I am so excited to be back for a second year at the school, and more excited for the growth in the choir program. There are wonderful things already happening this year!

\*Several choir students will be the first to perform on the new stage!
\*We have been asked to represent our school at the open house
\*The Griffins have asked us to return to their stadium!
\*Clinicians from area colleges will be visiting our choir program to help your students grow in their singing abilities!
\*We have a Dinner Theater Fundraiser that we are SO excited about!
The Comstock Park Choral Program offers a unique experience whereby a student may gain not only musical skills and a lifelong appreciation of music, but discipline, self-confidence, and a sense of accomplishment by working with others toward the common goal of ***EXCELLENCE***.The purpose of this handbook is to inform you of the expectations, requirements, and activities of the choral program. The Choral Program is not only a performance-based program, but a program where students will learn the importance of choral music throughout history and today. They will gain knowledge in all areas of music, as well learning to use their voices correctly. Students are expected to follow the rules and routines of this class, including the rules for concerts in order to keep
their grade high.I hope you will become involved by attending rehearsals and concerts. Feel free to pop in to a class this year! (A heads up is appreciated!) Come see the preparation as well as the results of these rehearsals at our concerts this year!Please feel free to contact me at any time you have a question or problem concerning
 your student or the program.

**Contact information**

Always feel free to contact me any time. If I am not teaching a class, my door is always open. You can contact me through email or by phone and I will try to answer all questions within 24 hours.

I would love to see and get to know both students and parents. I know I cannot succeed as a music teacher without the help and support of the parents in my program. I would ask that you show me the courtesy of approaching me directly if you have any concerns. I welcome feedback, although I have the ultimate responsibility for pedagogy in the classroom.

Email: mvos@cppschools.com
**Choir Website: www.comstockparkchoirs.weebly.com**
Phone: 616-254-5300
Cell Phone: 616-301-5109
Prep. Hours: M-F 8:00 am-9:30 am

**Text Reminders
Remind** *101*

This page needs to be
signed and turned in by
 Monday Sep. 9, 2013

PLEASE TURN THIS FORM IN
ALONG WITH THE CHORAL CONTRACT ON THE NEXT
PAGE BY MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 9!

Life can get hectic when we start school and we have to remember all of life’s details and schedules! This free program definitely helps lighten the burden! Last year there were many situations where small details were forgotten about concerts or assignments.

I have been using a reminder application that will allow me to text reminders and important announcements to the students and to their parents. This will help take the burden off of you to remember all of those little details of the choir program!

I promise you will never receive junk texts or advertisements and your phone number will remain private! You may also choose to opt out at anytime by texting “stop” to the number below.

It is my hope that many of you will choose to participate in this!

It is so simple!

7th and 8th Grade Choir students: Just TEXT @236a2 to 616-520-4142

6th Grade Choir students: Just TEXT @89e4 to 616-520-4142

The application will respond to your text, and ask you to type in your first and last name so I know who you are. This is all I see on my end. I will not see your phone number, only your name.

I will be participating in the FREE, no hassles, REMIND 101 app

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

I HAVE already texted this app and responded with my name YES NO

I HAVE NOT texted this app, but I will do so ASAP YES NO

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

I WILL NOT be participating in the FREE, no hassles, REMIND 101 app

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Reason: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\*this form needs to be turned in to Mrs. Vos whether or not you decide to participate in the app\*\*

**Mill Creek Choir Contract**

This page needs to be
signed and turned in by
 Monday Sep. 9, 2013

*Both students and parents should sign this
contract and return to Mrs. Vos by****Monday, September 9.*** *Failure to turn
 this in on time will result in a lowered participation grade*.

\*\*PLEASE KEEP THE REST FOR YOUR RECORDS AND ONLY TURN IN THIS PAGE OF THE HANDBOOK\*\*

Students

I \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ have read through and understand the choir handbook. I understand the grading system and the importance of attendance in class, extra rehearsals and performances.

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Student Email \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent or Guardian

I \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, have read through and understand the choir handbook. I understand the grading system and the importance of attendance in class, extra rehearsals and performances.

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/ Guardian Email \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Choir parent checklist**

Please have the following turned in by

 *Monday September 9, 2013*

* Choir Contract
* Remind 101 Text Reminder Form
* Parent Volunteer Form
* Check or Cash for Choir T-Shirt