

Iroquois High School
Vocal Music Department
Director: Mr. Timothy Gastle

Student
Handbook

2024-2025



Quality is never an accident.

It is always the result

Of intelligent effort!

Congratulations on becoming a member of an Iroquois High School Vocal Ensemble. Our choruses and student vocalists have truly become known for ever-improving performances and quality in the arts. Each and every student who participates in the Vocal Program at Iroquois High School is part of this exciting process. I expect that all of our members will strive to maintain and continue to build upon this great choral tradition at Iroquois.

Please read thoroughly all of the guidelines in this booklet, note our **calendar of events**, detachable so you can hang it in a convenient spot, and sign the following **signature form**, thereby acknowledging that you understand and shall comply with these policies. If you have any questions regarding these or other policies, do not hesitate to contact me at 652-3000, ext. 7141, or at: TGastle@IroquoisCSD.org. My best wishes for a productive school year, and thank you for supporting the arts in our schools.

ENSEMBLES



Chorale: Open to any singers from grades 9-12. No audition is required. Introduction and training in fundamentals of singing technique and styles. *1 Credit*

Concert Choir: Consists of singers from grades 10-12. Entrance by audition and director approval only. Select festival and touring ensemble, advanced literature study and performance experience. *1 Credit*

Swing Choir: Consists of singers from grades 10-12. Entrance by audition and director approval only. Select vocal jazz ensemble, rigorous performance and touring schedule. Additional outside-school time will be required. *1/2 Credit*

TriTones: Optional male ensemble open to men already enrolled in one of the previously listed ensembles, and meeting basic criteria of entrance audition. Rehearsals are each Wednesday and Friday before school (6:50AM). *Extra Credit on Chorus Grade*

TebleTones: Optional select female ensemble, based on audition, for girls enrolled in one of the previously listed ensembles. Rehearsals are each Wednesday and Friday before school (6:50AM). *Extra Credit on Chorus Grade*

CHORUS CURRICULUM

The goal of the Iroquois High School Vocal Music Program is to provide students the opportunity to develop music appreciation of various styles of music, perform compositions from several periods and styles of music, become a competent producer of music rather than a consumer of music, apply aesthetic and technical judgments to music and its performance by the group, develop abilities in vocal technique, sight-reading, concert etiquette, and deciphering musical “language” and terms.

ICHS CHORUS- OUR PHILOSOPHIES:



1. We are here for the **MUSIC** first. As a group, we're only as good as our last performance. Nothing less than excellence will do.
2. Rehearsal time is **SACRED**. Treat it thus.
3. Please leave your **ATTITUDE** at the door, and your **DRAMA** on the stage!
4. **CONCENTRATE** for 35 whole minutes.
5. We **LEARN** first, and entertain second.
6. Music is the vehicle through which we learn the **CURRICULUM**.
7. Respect each other's abilities & limitations to create a **SAFE** environment.
8. Experience **ENJOYMENT** in chorus, as opposed to "fun".
9. You are a **MUSICIAN**, not simply a "kid who happens to sing"! Take pride in the fact that you are a producer, rather than only a consumer, of music.
10. The arts require **DISCIPLINE**-Nothing worthwhile is ever easy. You are **RESPONSIBLE** for yourself, your schedule & your materials.
11. Respect the **DIRECTOR** (you don't have to LIKE me):
 - I had to become a musician **FIRST**.
 - I am here for your **EDUCATION**, not your amusement.
 - I will help you with anything, given proper **NOTICE**.
 - Chorus is not a **DEMOCRACY**, but I will not ask anything of you that I haven't done.
12. Become a **SUPPORTER** of ALL the arts throughout your life!

Iroquois HS Chorus Rules

(Short List)

RESPECT each other, yourself, the music, rehearsal time, process, the director.

COOPERATE-Focus on the music, don't disrupt rehearsals or distract anyone.

BE ON TIME and responsible for yourself, schedule, and music.

FOLLOW ALL DIRECTIONS in and out of rehearsals.

MARK YOUR MUSIC (without me telling you to).

REHEARSAL PROCEDURE

1. All students are expected to report to all rehearsals **on time**. Tardiness, unexcused absences as well as excessive absences from rehearsals will not be tolerated.
2. Students in select ensembles will only be permitted up to **5 total absences** per quarter from scheduled rehearsals for any and all reasons. These include doctor/dentist appointments. Absences in excess of 5 will result in a lowered rehearsal participation grade and review of membership status in the ensemble.
3. All students are expected to be on their best behavior at all rehearsals. When the conductor takes the floor, all other activity and talking **ceases**. Continual behavioral disruptions will result in a lowered rehearsal participation grade and review of your membership status in the ensemble. No other activities, backpacks, books, food or **PHONES** etc. are allowed on or near the risers. Apple Watches must be removed. Students must have their music/folders with them at every rehearsal.
5. Students are expected to **care** for and maintain music, folders, and other room equipment. Destroying or damaging any of these properties will result in the student's financial obligation to replace and all damaged or lost items.
6. It is expected that each singer show **respect** for the talents and abilities of your peers, as well as your conductor and yourselves.

CONCERT ATTENDANCE / BEHAVIOR

1. Attendance at all performance events is **ABSOLUTELY MANDATORY**. Chorus is a performance-based class and concerts are considered the only exams, as nothing replaces the performing experience. It is useless to participate in a team activity and then miss the culmination and outcome of the teamwork itself. Work, vacations, or other commitments scheduled over concerts are not acceptable excuses. Please note the performance calendar that follows. Students are responsible to clear any and all conflicts.
2. Students are expected to remain for the entire concert, in order to support and learn from their peers in other performing groups. This is curricular, and part of your assignment and grade.
3. All students are expected to be on their **best behavior** at any performance, field trip, or concert representing the Iroquois Music Department and the district, and all Music Department rules and regulations are in effect at all times.
4. When a student is an audience member or is observing the performance of a fellow student, he/she is expected to show exemplary concert etiquette: cease talking, pay attention, and applaud appropriately after performance, thus respecting the abilities of their peers.
6. If a student does end up missing a performance for any reason whatsoever, they must complete a compensatory assignment that serves as that portion of their grade. This is as follows:
 1. A 3-page written report with bib on a topic individually chosen by Director.
 2. Student must voice test and sing all concert literature for the Director for a grade, in addition to the normal voice test that takes place in the rehearsal setting.

As a member of this choral department, each student is expected to make a commitment to the music and the schedule, just as I do in kind.

CONCERT ATTIRE

The goal of concert dress is to present the members of a group as an attractive and unified team: no one more noticeable than another, but instead acting as one single entity. It is expected that all students take the best care possible of these apparel items. Condition of all items will be checked when turned in at the end of the year. Students resume financial responsibility for items damaged, lost, or stolen while under their care. Students in inappropriate concert dress will not be allowed to perform, thus affecting their performance grade. Final decisions will be made by the director.

Chorale:

MEN: Black dress pants (no jeans), a white button-down dress shirt, **black socks** and **black dress shoes** (NO sneakers). Red bow tie will be lent to you for performances.

WOMEN: **Ankle length** black skirt (your own), white **blouse** (issued from the Music Department.) Flesh-colored nylons and flat black dress shoes. No distracting jewelry or hairstyles please.

Concert Choir:

MEN: Tuxedo, red bow tie/cumber bun/pocket square set issued from the Music Department. Your own white wing-collar tuxedo shirt (purchased new or used). Also **black dress shoes** and **black socks**.

WOMEN: Designated long black dress that you must purchase, pearl necklace issued from the Music Department. Your own black shoes and flesh-colored nylons. Modest hairstyles and makeup please. No additional neckwear or wrist-wear may be worn.

***** A \$10.00 RENTAL FEE WILL BE COLLECTED FOR ALL ISSUED TUXEDOS AND BLOUSES AT THE END OF THE YEAR FOR CLEANING & MAINTENENCE.**

Swing Choir:

Swing Choir members are responsible for the purchase of separate concert dress for this ensemble (Swing Blues), either new or from a student previously enrolled in the group.

TriTones:

Membership in this ensemble requires men to purchase their own Red or White TriTones sweater, either new or from a previous member. See me for more details.

GRADING POLICY

All students' grades will be computed using the following formula. A sample of my grading sheet follows at the end of this handbook. Students may view their individual grading profile at any time.

- 1. PERFORMANCE ATTENDANCE: 40%** Attendance at every performance is **mandatory**. Students must stay for the ENTIRE concert, no exceptions!
- 2. REHEARSAL PARTICIPATION: 30%** Observations of participation and **conduct** while in the rehearsal setting. Elements rated include attitude, effort, employment of learned skills, enthusiasm, and teamwork. Rehearsing without a pencil, excessive talking, gum chewing and

inappropriate concert dress at performances will negatively affect your grade. Simply showing up for class does not constitute a perfect participation grade.

3. **VOICE TESTING: 10%** Live performance of well-rehearsed music for the class in quartets, trios, or small groups to assess if student knows his/her music and learned choral skills.
4. **CHORAL EVALUATION FORMS: 10%:** Written assignments relating to the dynamics of group efforts and outcomes in performance.
5. **WRITTEN MUSIC TEST: 10%:** Brief written tests or quizzes centered around knowledge-based musical concepts, terms, or other musical material taught in rehearsal.

EXTRA CREDIT is given to students who prepare solos for festival, participate in All-County Choruses, Area All-State Choruses, All-State Conference Choruses, extracurricular performance ensembles, fund-raisers, or any other extra vocal endeavors sanctioned by the Music Department.

** Failure to take a quarterly voice test will result in a failing grade for that quarter.*

*** Membership in Concert Choir requires all written work to be handed in regularly and on time. Failure to do so may result in a failing grade and removal from the ensemble.*

OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

Students have several optional performance opportunities. It is not required of students to participate in these events. However, if they choose to participate, they must be dedicated in assuming some of the preparatory responsibilities involved. These include the following:

Solo Festivals: Held in spring (NYSSMA) Dates TBA. Students prepare a vocal solo with my assistance, and receive a score from an adjudicator along with written comments and feedback. Level 6, may serve as an audition to Conference All State Choir.

All County Choruses: Through an audition process, students may be selected to participate in Erie county select choral ensembles.

Conference All State Festival: Through NYSSMA solo auditions, students may be selected to participate in the highest honors choir in the state. This entails going out of town for a period of 3-4 days for rehearsals and concerts.

Voice Labs & Lessons: Students may sign up with me for some time each week during school when he/she can receive extra help, vocal instruction and coaching.

Concert Choir Auditions: At the end of each school year **ALL** students must re-audition for Concert Choir. **No** student is guaranteed re-admittance for **ANY** reason. Acceptance is based on numerical ratings and past chorus record. I reserve the right to make any and all such decisions that I think necessary to preserve group integrity.

Library/Organizational Work: I always welcome help from students! Extra credit may be given to those students who go above and beyond the call of duty in helping the conductor with organizational projects, set-up or tear-down of rehearsal sets and stage equipment.

A Major Varsity Letter in the Arts is bestowed upon each student completing his or her third year in choral activities at the high school, or as the director deems appropriate.

2024/25 Iroquois HS Vocal Music Calendar

<u>Date</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Groups Involved</u>
9/20	Fri	2:35 PM	Handbook Parent Form Due	ALL
9/30	Mon		Cider & Doughnut Sale	All
10/30	Wed	12-4:00 PM	Cider & Doughnut Pick Up	All
11/20	WED	7:30 PM	HS CHORUS CONCERT	ALL-HS Aud
12/5-8	Thurs-Sun		Conference All State, Rochester	TBA
12/10	Tues	7:00 PM	MS Chorus Concert (Guests)	Concert Choir
12/13	Fri	11:00 AM	OLV Basilica Concert	ALL but Chorale
12/19	Thurs	TBA	District Concert Make Up	TBD
1/11	Sat	TBA	Jr High All County Auds, Depew	Optional, Grade 9
1/25	Sat	TBA	Sr High All County Auds, BAVPA	Concert Choir
2/1	Sat	TBA	All-County "Reserve" Audition Date	
2/7	Fri	2:35pm	Deadline: NYSSMA Solo Reg	Optional, 9-12
3/4	TUES	7:30 pm	HS CHORUS CONCERT	ALL but Chorale
3/7-8	Fri-Sat	TBA	Jr High All Co. Fest-East Aurora	Optional- Freshmen
3/21-22	Fri-Sat	TBA	Sr High All County Festival, UB	Optional, Grades 10-12
4/5	Sat	TBA	NYSSMA Solos: Lew-Port	Optional, Grades 10-12
4/24-27	Thurs-Sun		High School Music Trip to NYC	Optional, Grades 10-12
5/21	WED	7:30 pm	HS CHORUS CONCERT	ALL-HS Aud
6/3	Tuesday	6:00pm	Music Banquet, Ilio DiPaolo's	9-12 Optional
6/27	Fri	7:00pm	Graduation	Seniors

****Select choral groups will have additional performance dates.*

Iroquois Music Department Calendar 2024 – 2025

Oct.	30	Tues	7:30 PM, High School Orchestra Concert, HS Aud
Nov.	1-2	Fri-Sat	Junior High Area All State Music Festival, Akron HS
	14	Thurs	7:30 PM, High School Band Concert, HS Aud
	20	Wed	7:30 PM, High School Chorus Concert, HS Aud
	22-23	Fri-Sat	Senior High Area All State Music Festival, SUNY Fredonia
Dec.	3	Tues	7:00 PM, Middle School Band Concert, MS Aud
	5-8	Thurs -Sun	Conference All State, Rochester, NY
	10	Tues	7:00 PM, Middle School Chorus Concert, MS Aud
	12	Thurs	7:00 PM, 5 th Grade Band and Chorus Concert, HS Aud
	17	Tues	7:00 PM, 5 th - 12 th Grade Orchestra Concert, MS Aud
	19	Thurs	District-wide Winter Concert Weather Cancellation Make-up Date
Jan.	11	Sat	All-County Elementary, J.H. Choral, and Instrumental Jazz Auditions, Depew
	18	Sat	All-County J.H. Instrumental Auditions, Orchard Park
	25	Sat	All-County S.H. Instrumental and Choral Auditions, Cleveland-Hill
Feb.	1	Sat	All-County “Reserve” Audition Date in case of Cancellation of a January Audition
	6	Thurs	7:00 PM, 5 th - 12 th Grade Band Concert, HS Aud
Mar	1	Sat	All-County Elementary Rehearsals, Franklin MS- Ken-Ton
	4	Tues	7:30 PM, High School Chorus Concert, HS Aud
	7-8	Fri-Sat	All-County J.H. South Festival, East Aurora HS
	12	Wed	All-County Elementary Rehearsals, Franklin MS- Ken-Ton
	14-15	Fri-Sat	All-County Elementary Dress Rehearsals / Concerts, Kleinhans Music Hall
	14-15	Fri-Sat	All-County Jazz Festival, Cheektowaga HS
	21-22	Fri-Sat	All-County S.H. Festival, University at Buffalo
April	3	Thurs	7:30 PM, High School Band Concert, HS Aud
	24-27	Thurs-Sun	High School Music Trip to NYC
	29	Tues	7:00 PM, Middle School Chorus Concert, MS Aud
May	1	Thurs	7:30 PM, High School Orchestra Concert, HS Aud
	6	Tues	7:00 PM, Middle School Band Concert, MS Aud
	8	Thurs	7:00 PM, 5 th Grade Band, Chorus and Orchestra Concert, HS Aud
	13	Tues	7:00 PM, Middle School Orchestra Concert, MS Aud
	20	Tues	7:00 PM, 4 th Grade Band, Chorus and Orchestra Concert, MS Aud
	21	Wed	7:30 PM, High School Chorus Concert, HS Aud
	28	Wed	7:30 PM, String Recital, HS Aud
	29	Thurs	7:00 PM, High School Band Outdoor Pops Concert, HS Side Lawn
June	3	Tues	6:00 PM, High School Music Department Banquet, Ilio DiPaolo’s

Iroquois Central School Music Boosters

The Music Boosters are an organization whose purpose is to help promote and support the various activities within the K-12 Iroquois Central School Music Department. Membership is open to anyone interested in the progress and development of the Iroquois Music Department. If you are interested in becoming a member of the Music Boosters, please print and fill out the contact form below and return it to any Music teacher. Attendance at meetings is highly encouraged. By providing your contact information you will be placed on the Music Boosters List-serve. Additional information can be found on the Music Boosters page on the school website.

-----please detach and return to your child's music teacher-----

Iroquois Central School Music Boosters

Member Contact Information

Name:

Address:

Phone #(s):

Email:

Student's Name	Grade	Ensemble(s)- <i>band, chorus, orchestra</i>

How would you prefer to be contacted? (*circle all that apply*)

Home Phone

Cell Phone

Email