



# Choir Handbook

## 2015-2016

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Choir Teacher

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*“Music gives a soul to the universe,  
wings to the mind,  
flight to the imagination,  
and life to everything.”*

~ Plato

[einsteinchoirs.wikispaces.com](http://einsteinchoirs.wikispaces.com)

# Welcome to the Einstein Choirs!

If you are a returning singer, welcome back to another great year! If you're new to our program, welcome to the Einstein Choir team! This year is going to be full of exciting opportunities to make and share music together.

Please feel free to connect via email, phone, or in person with any questions. Utilize our choir website - [einsteinchoirs.wikispaces.com](http://einsteinchoirs.wikispaces.com) - to stay updated on homework assignments, upcoming concerts (both for our choirs and other local performances), and general information throughout the year.

We have a wonderful year of singing ahead of us!

~ Jaclyn Kottman, Einstein Choir Teacher

## Concerts

### Einstein Music Ensembles Concert policy:

While concerts are not the end goal of the work we do in ensembles on a daily basis, they are an important part of our learning and performance process as we proudly share our music with our community. They are also the primary formal assessment (test) for this class. Participation in each of the major performances is a course requirement for all Einstein music ensembles.

If you anticipate an issue with any of the dates below, please contact Ms. Kottman as soon as possible so we can work together to plan ahead!

## 2015-2016 Einstein Choirs Performances

Date	Event	Who	Where & Wear	When
Wednesday, Nov 11*	Veterans Day Assembly	8 <sup>th</sup> grade Band, Choir, & Orchestra	Einstein Gymnasium - <i>music polo, pants (no leggings) or skirt</i>	10:00am
Tuesday, Dec 8*	Einstein Music Showcase	Einstein Music Department (7 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup> grade Bands, Choirs, & Orchestras)	Appleton West HS Auditorium - <i>black on black</i>	7:30pm
Saturday, Feb 20	<i>Einstein Solo &amp; Small Group Workshops</i>	<b>Optional</b> (please speak with Ms. Kottman if interested)	<i>Einstein</i> - <i>dress nicely</i>	TBA (daytime)
Tuesday, Mar 22*	Classic Hits Concert	8 <sup>th</sup> grade Choirs	Einstein Auditorium - <i>colorful top, pants (no leggings) or skirt</i>	7:30pm
Thursday, Mar 24*	Westside Choral Festival	7 <sup>th</sup> grade Choirs	Appleton West HS Auditorium - <i>black on black</i>	7:30pm
Thursday, May 12*	Spring Choir Concert	7 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup> grade Choirs	North HS Auditorium - <i>black on black</i>	7:30pm

**"black on black":** Einstein Music polo shirt, black pants (no jeans, leggings, or yoga pants) or black skirt (with solid black leggings or tights), black socks, black dress shoes. Further details regarding concert attire can be found on page 4

**Attendance at performances with an asterisk (\*) is a requirement for this course.**

# Expectations

**Respect** – for all people in and outside of our room, for our shared space, for our shared time, and for the music we make together.

## **Our choir is a team.**

In order to make music together, we must act, speak, and sing with respect. Treat others how you would want to be treated.

## ♪ **Be prepared:**

### Mentally

- Bring your best self into class from the moment you walk through the door. Enter the room with a can-do attitude and a readiness to learn and sing!
- Be real, be honest. When you're having a rough day, let Ms. Kottman know before class begins, and "check it at the door" if you can!

### Physically

- Be in your seat and ready to go with your materials (folder, pencil) when the bell rings.
- No food, gum, or drinks other than water. This is primarily for your own safety.
- Go to the bathroom during passing time. Come into the Choir Room prepared to stay for a full period of music-making.

### Vocally

- Recognize that others in the class are also here to learn and sing. Be aware of how you're using your voice during class (from the moment you enter the room) and adjust your volume appropriately to be respectful of others.
- Be aware of your vocal health. Every singer is essential to this team! If you're sick or losing your voice, drink lots of water, do some low humming, and try to rest your voice by not talking as much as possible. Whispering is worse for you than speaking!

## ♪ **Contribute in positive ways.**

- Share your ideas and your voice! Make our music meaningful; make it your own.
- Support your teammates. Singing can be really scary! We will not be successful unless we support one another at all times. This includes appropriate participation and positive attitude in classes and attending all concerts in the correct attire, ready to sing.
- Take risks in your music-making and make mistakes! Learn from them. Do not discourage another person in ANY WAY when he/she makes a mistake.
- Celebrate success – your own and the successes of our team!

# Concert Attire

When we perform in professional concert attire, we show respect for each other, our music, and the work we have done to prepare for our performance. In dressing professionally, we are telling the community how proud we are to be singing together and to be representing Einstein Middle School.

Polo shirts are \$15 new (cash or check made out to Einstein Middle School) and \$0 to exchange. If you did not order a shirt at Registration, please have your student see Ms. Kottman.

## **Ladies: black on black**

- Einstein music polo shirt
- Black bottoms: nice black pants (no jeans, leggings, or yoga pants) or black skirt with solid black leggings or tights.  
Skirt length must meet school dress code expectations.
- Black closed-toe shoes: be able to stand comfortably and move quickly and easily!
- Hair should be out of face/eyes

## **Men: black on black**

- Einstein music polo shirt
- Nice black pants (no jeans)
- Black socks, black shoes
- Hair should be out of face/eyes

If you anticipate an issue with the concert attire, please contact Ms. Kottman as soon as possible so we can work together to plan ahead!

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# Concert Etiquette

We will encourage an atmosphere of professionalism and respect at concerts. Please share the following with your concert guests as they attend our performances to support the Einstein Choirs.

We will ask our audience members to please:

- be on time to our concerts.
- stay for the entire performance.
- keep cell phones and other electronic devices off during the concert.
- refrain from using flash photography.
- respect all performers through attentive listening and appropriate applause after each piece.
- help teach young children appropriate concert etiquette by reminding them to listen quietly and escorting them out of the auditorium between selections, if needed.
- enjoy the music we are proud to share!

# Local Concert Attendance and Reflection

We are so fortunate to live in a community full of opportunities to soak up fantastic music! Attending concerts can teach us about our world, inspire us as developing musicians, sustain the arts in our community, and encourage us to think about the very important role that music plays in our lives. This assignment asks you – Einstein student musicians – to be critical thinkers and coherent writers in your performance analysis and reflection.

Part of your Concert Attendance and Participation grade will include completing the following assignment:

♪ **Attend one vocal concert/event this year.**

- Local choral concerts (at area High Schools/colleges, the PAC, etc.), musicals, and operas would all count for this assignment. Solo vocal artists (classical, pop, or anywhere in between!) would be cool to see, but would not count for this assignment. If you have a question about what would count, please talk with Ms. Kottman about it beforehand!
- A schedule of upcoming local concerts can be found on Einstein Choir website.
- The performance must feature singers in at least 9<sup>th</sup> grade or older.
- Concerts attended during previous school years or over the past summer do not count.

♪ **Write a one page reflection paper on your experience**

- Paper prompts with further details are in the Choir Room and on the Choir website.

♪ **Bring in a copy of the concert program** and turn in to Ms. Kottman with your paper.

- If you forget to grab a program at the concert, please have your parent write a note as your “proof” that you attended the performance.
- Papers can be printed or shared on Google Drive.
- You may attend the concerts and turn in your paper at any time over the course of the year, as long as you have turned in your paper by Friday, May 27.

**This assignment is worth 100 points at the end of the year.**

**50 points** per concert attendance (as verified by the concert program or a parent note)

**50 points** per concert reflection paper (turned in to Ms. Kottman by Friday, May 27)

**A schedule of local upcoming events (Appleton high schools, Lawrence Conservatory of Music, PAC, UW Fox Valley, UW Oshkosh, etc) can be found on the Einstein Choir website. If you know about an upcoming concert that should be listed, please tell Ms. Kottman about it!**

**[einsteinchoirs.wikispaces.com](http://einsteinchoirs.wikispaces.com)**

# Grading

60%

## Class Work

- Attending all classes and Resource Rehearsals for your ensemble.
- Actively upholding and supporting class expectations
- Actively and appropriately participating in class with your full attention and full voice
- Actively contributing to the class by sharing your ideas and perspectives, and asking great questions
- Actively staying aware of how your actions and attitude are affecting the class or others around you, and making appropriate adjustments to your behavior when asked or encouraged to do so.

30%

## Concert Attendance and Participation\*

- Attending and participating appropriately in Dress Rehearsals
- Arriving on time to every concert in the correct attire and with a positive attitude
- Doing your part to maintain a focused, excited, and calm atmosphere before the concert begins
- Singing and acting appropriately during the performance in a way that best represents yourself, your family, and our school.
- Completing one *Local Concert Attendance and Reflection* by Friday, May 27

***\*Attendance at and active participation in all concerts listed with an asterisk in this handbook is a course requirement. If you anticipate an issue with any of the concert dates, please contact Ms. Kottman as soon as possible so we can work together to plan ahead.***

10%

## Assignments

- Independently and responsibly completing in-class work, as assigned.
- On-time completion of any assignments outside of class, as assigned.
- Returning permission forms or parent correspondence by the due date
- Asking questions or asking for help when needed
  
- Extensions can be granted with advance notice on a case-by-case basis.
- Students absent on the day an assignment is due are expected to turn in the assignment through email or by the next class period.
  
- Occasionally, homework assignments may include permission forms for field trips. Students who have not turned in a signed and completed permission form by the date of the trip will not be allowed to go.



## Choir Handbook Contract

**Please return this signed page by Monday, September 21**

**Student:** I have read through the Einstein Choral handbook with my parent(s). In signing this form, I acknowledge that I understand the expectations as a member of the Einstein Choir Team, and that I will be held accountable for what is agreed upon in this handbook.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Student Name (Please PRINT)*

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

**Parent:** I have read through the Einstein Choral handbook with my singer and have marked the concert dates on our calendar. In signing this form, I acknowledge that I understand the expectations to which my student will be held as a member of the Einstein Choir, and that he/she will be held accountable for what is agreed upon in this handbook.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Parent Name (Please PRINT)*

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

*An additional copy of this handbook can be found on our Einstein Choirs website.*

If you have any questions about the material in this handbook or the Einstein Choirs,

**please contact Ms. Kottman!**

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