



Olentangy Orange Choirs: Covid-19 Impact

I have been closely monitoring the science as it pertains to singing, most importantly with this landmark study, the “International Coalition of Performing Arts Aerosol Study Round 2” being conducted in part by the National Federation of State High School Association. [CLICK HERE](#) and [HERE](#) and [HERE](#) to see pertinent information from this study. I have also been monitoring guidance put out by the professional music organizations, which include the:

- American Choral Directors Association (ACDA): [CLICK HERE!](#)
- Michigan School Vocal Music Association (MSVMA): [CLICK HERE!](#)
- National Association For Music Education (NafME): [CLICK HERE!](#)
- Collaboration and discussion with OLSD Administrators
- Collaboration with the performing arts across OLSD
- Collaboration with the OLSD Choral Directors

Will we be singing in our choir classes this fall?

Yes! Here is what we are currently planning specifically, in regard to singing as we begin in a hybrid schedule. These guidelines are in alignment with the “Olentangy: Back Together” document as well as the “NFHS Study” recommendations for the performing arts.

- OOHS has been divided into two separate groups via the alphabet for the hybrid schedule. Some students have also opted for CDL. Therefore each choir is at least half its normal size which helps minimize exposure and allows for additional space between singers.
- Procedures for rehearsing outside and inside are identical. Rehearsing outside is preferable when possible.
- Rehearsal procedures are as follows: All choir students will be required to wear a “Singer’s Mask” during all choir rehearsals. All choir students will be socially distanced at 6 ft (or more when possible) and will have assigned positions in straight lines facing the same direction. We will be singing for a maximum of 30 minutes per session. The remainder of the choir class period will be spent in a secondary space doing other music enrichment activities, including a short “mask break” so students can switch from their singing mask to a daily mask.
- We will be singing for a maximum of 30 minutes per session. When rehearsing inside we will alternate rehearsal spaces to provide for at least one full air exchange between each 30 minute session.
- At this time, there will be no after school rehearsals because of all of the mitigating factors discussed. I will continue to monitor the situation.
- All OLSD choral programs have purchased the aforementioned “Singers Masks” together at a reduced rate, and will send individual information home about when this payment is due. To see what this mask will look like, [CLICK HERE!](#) Our masks will be blue with our individual school logos. Here is the science behind this mask choice: [CLICK HERE!](#)

Choir Concerts

- Choir concerts will not be held in the traditional manner. We will have performances, but they will look different this year.

What will be expected of us on the days we are not in school?

- Depending upon what we are preparing for, there will likely be practice tracks/listening assignments and expectations of continued singing/learning on the days you are not in choir. You may also have assignments relative to your choir's music theory/sight-singing learning.

What other safety precautions and mitigations will be taken in choir classes?

- Hand sanitizer will be provided and its use encouraged.
- Singing in formations such as circles or arcs will be avoided.
- Every student will have their own copy of the music and will be kept in your own backpacks. You must have a folder for choir music only.
- You must keep your singer's mask clean. Instructions will be provided.
- Each student will be responsible for sanitizing his/her singing area each day (chair), using district provided materials.
- Recommended MERV 13 filters have been installed in district air handlers.

Will there be any of our "normal" in person concerts, events, competitions this year?

- ⊘ Events will definitely feel different, but we plan on making exciting, engaging choral presentations across the district. For the first quarter, these will be all virtual. We will continue to assess the situation and let everyone know how we are moving forward through the year.
- ⊘ OMEA District and State Choir events are still on the calendar for the spring. OMEA is continually monitoring the situation, and providing regular updates that will be shared via REMIND for Choraliers and Varsity Singers, our groups that go to District and State events. There will be special, virtual OMEA Solo and Ensemble experience this fall, however. We will share more information as it is available.
- ⊘ Participation in show choir and pop acappella festivals and competitions in their traditional size and scope are not feasible at this time. These types of events are considered high risk due to unavoidable factors such as long distance travel, high population density in an enclosed space, and shared spaces/equipment between groups. At this time, Orange Choirs is only pursuing performance events that eliminate or minimize these risks such as virtual competitions and festivals etc.
- ⊘ *The normal show choir fees for competition, choreography, and uniforms WILL NOT be collected this year because of the lack of competitions. There may be a small fee for costuming for performances in the spring. Mrs. Brooks will communicate that well in advance.*

Can I do CDL and still take choir?

- YES! You will participate with your choir's learning through Schoology, and submit required work and recordings there. You MUST contact both Mrs. Brooks and your guidance counselor to set this up. This would be called "credit flex."

CDL students: If I decide at the start of 2nd semester to come back to school, will I be in the same choir whether or not I do the credit flex?

- Yes, and we will welcome you back with open arms!

In conclusion, it's obvious that things will not be "normal" this fall when we return to school. But we must focus on what we can do, not what we cannot. You will learn some new things about music theory, ear training, great choral works, and music technology. Since classes sizes are half their normal size, you can expect more personal attention and perhaps a bit more of a close family vibe. In whatever way we can, we will strive to give you a positive music experience...that's a promise! See you all soon!

If you have any further questions, do not hesitate to contact your individual directors!

Sincerely,

Mrs. Cherie Brooks

Mrs. Cherie Brooks, Orange HS

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