

August 21st, 2019

Dear Students and Parents/Guardians,

Welcome back! I am so excited to get started on my 9th year in Hillsboro!

First, **we will be having our beginning of the year meeting on Tuesday, September 10th at 6pm in the choir room. This applies to members of both ensembles.** This meeting is very important, especially for freshmen/new members and their parents. This is a great chance for parents to ask any questions. I would love to meet all of the new faces! In addition to going over the handbook, we will be talking about fundraising, parent committees, and **I will announce this year's musical!** There will also be free samples of our fundraiser cheesecake available (trust me – it's delicious!). If students bring a parent to the meeting and they sign in, the student will receive one notable point. Parents may still come to the meeting without their student (and the student will still receive their point). *Please* read through the handbook. So many students will come up to me and say, "I didn't know that!" when so many of these things are clearly stated in the handbook. You are responsible for all of the information in the handbook. Changes from last year's handbook are highlighted.

Choir officer elections for both ensembles are coming up quickly! These people are very important as they help the choir run smoothly and assist me with important tasks and decisions. The concert choir positions are president (senior only and 4 year choir member), vice president, secretary, treasurer, librarian, 2 historians, and 2 robe masters. Chamber Singers will have a president only, who will be responsible for multiple duties including attendance, filing music, collecting money, etc. Each person running for a position will need to create a short campaign video. The videos may be done in groups. We will watch the videos in class and vote on Monday, August 26th. This will give you the weekend to make your videos. Please keep the videos school appropriate, but make them creative!

Fundraising! Both ensembles will do the same fundraising. As we did last year, we will be selling cheesecake in mid-September with the delivery October 3rd. Exact dates are in your choral calendar. We are also planning on our 9th Annual Chili Supper in January/February! I encourage parents to get involved with these! Students will earn Notable Points and possible prizes for participating in the fundraisers.

Last year, Chamber was accepted to sing as one of the featured choirs at the Illinois Music Educators All-State Conference! We will be traveling to Peoria as a choir to sing on an assigned time and date during the conference in January. Everyone is welcomed and encouraged to attend! This is so exciting for us and a HUGE honor!

We are in preparation for our choir trip to New York City in November of 2020. Meetings and fundraising will begin soon, so please watch for announcements concerning the trip.

One big change for the year: We will no longer attend the IHSA Solo and Ensemble contest. After many years of unorganized schedules and inconsistent judging, I have decided it would be more beneficial to host our own contest for Hillsboro students only. This will take place on Saturday, November 9th at the high school. A guest judge will be brought in and all requirements pertaining to repertoire and skills will remain the same as IHSA standards .

Any students who are interested in auditioning for ILMEA District/All-State Choir needs to sign up on the bulletin board and see me for the music. I will be working with students during Flex time, on Fridays after school until 4:15, AND Friday mornings during the Chamber Singers hour from 7:15-8:00am. Concert Choir students are welcome to join Chamber Singers as they learn the required repertoire for ILMEA auditions on Friday mornings. Students will be required to attend a minimum of 3 rehearsals with me before they will be allowed to audition in October. Auditions will be on Columbus Day (Monday, October 14th) in Effingham.

The handbook contract is due by **Tuesday, August 27th**. Please read through the handbook thoroughly, as both the student and parents/guardians are responsible for the information in there!

Please do not hesitate to email me with any questions! Since I am back and forth between the junior high and high school all day, it can be difficult to reach me by phone.

Let's have a fantastic year!

Sincerely,

Mrs. Amy Lemons

alemons@hillsboroschools.net