

**Welcome to Cartersville Middle School 8th Grade MUSICAL THEATRE ARTS!**

Erin Karstensen, Choral Director & Kaitlyn Thornton, Theatre Director – Team Teachers

ekarstensen@cartersvilleschools.org kthornton@cartersvilleschools.org

WHAT IS MUSICAL THEATRE ARTS?

This course is designed as a year-long experience for students who are committed to strengthening their knowledge, understanding and practice of musical theatre and all aspects thereof. We will audition, rehearse, design, and perform a full-scale production in the fall semester and conduct a series of workshops and clinics throughout the spring for the purposes of preparing for continued studies in the area. Students will have the opportunity to work onstage or backstage or both.

COURSE STANDARDS

**Organize, design, and refine theatrical work.**

Analyze various theories of dramatic structure in a musical and explain how text, music, and movement can be used to advance the plot of a musical.

Engage in and apply meaningful cultural, literary, and historical research to support formal or informal theatrical performance

**Act and direct by communicating and sustaining roles within a variety of situations and environments.**

Examine and implement the skills and tasks associated with acting, singing, and dancing, incorporating vocal and movement technique, observation, and imagination to create characters for formal and informal performances.

Identify and examine the responsibilities and tasks of an actor in relation to directors, designers, choreographers, technical crew, and production staff.

Use the skills and tools of a director to develop a presentation of formal and informal musical theatre performances.

Conduct rehearsals to present a musical theatre performance for a live audience

**Execute artistic and technical elements of theatre.**

Engage as a creative team in script analysis to plan and create technical elements of a theatre production, including sets, props, costumes, makeup, lighting, and sound.

**Engage actively and appropriately as an audience member**.

Examine the relationship between actor and live audience in history and contemporary performance.

**Critique various aspects of theatre and other media using appropriate supporting evidence.**

Utilize constructive criticism, appropriate musical theatre terminology, and study of existing performance styles to modify and improve performance choices.

**Explore how theatre connects to life experience, careers, and other content.**

Explore the business of musical theatre.

Explore careers through participation in various production roles and activities found in commercial, professional, amateur, and/or educational musical theatre.

**Examine the role of theatre in a societal, cultural, and historical context**

Compare and contrast presentational and representational styles in musical theatre.

Examine the role and influence of musical theatre in various historical and contemporary cultures.

\* *Standards are pulled from the Georgia Standards of Excellence in Theatre Art for High School as Middle School standards for Musical Theatre do not exist.*

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

All students are required to participate in the fall production. After school rehearsals will be kept to a minimum and we will hold live evening performances on November 15th & 16th (detailed rehearsal calendar to follow). Parents will be asked to join us for an informational meeting on Tuesday, August 20th at approximately 7:00 pm (after Back to School Night has concluded) in the Chorus Room to discuss the calendar and the need for parental involvement in the process. The most important requirement for success in this course is enthusiasm and willingness to work with a team to create an environment that is rooted in encouragement and positivity.

Students should provide one black ½ inch three ring binder, a small supply of notebook paper, writing utensils which must include pencils with erasers, and should be in the habit of bringing a water bottle to school. Students will also bring their single binder that is used for all classes to class each day.

SCHEDULING

Students are able to take Musical Theatre Arts AND Canes Chorus all year, OR they may take Musical Theatre Arts all year AND one semester of Theatre Arts along with another elective or exploratory course.

COMMUNICATION

We will often use email to communicate with families through the school’s teacher messaging program. Please make sure your contact information is up to date with the school as our communication system pulls its information from the main database. You can add additional information such as an accurate email address or handle any updates or changes with the front office.

All assignments and information will be available for students on our class Schoology page. Please used Power School to review your student’s grades and progress.

Please don’t hesitate to email either one of us at the above addresses with any questions or concerns.

FIELD TRIPS

Exposure to live theatre is an effective way to grow aspiring performers by enriching their perspective and fostering the students’ bourgeoning interest in the art-form. Our standards include proper audience etiquette and learning to critically discuss examples of performances.

Good behavior and grades are required for students who would like to participate in field trips. Any students who has received an office referral or is failing any class may not be allowed to take part in these experiences. Please see the CMS Student Handbook for the school-wide policy governing field trip participation.

GRADING

Grading will break down into the following categories:

* **Rehearsal Skills – *Formative Assessment* – 40%**
	+ Singing Technique
	+ Acting Technique
	+ Dance Technique
	+ Technical Theatre Skills
	+ Audience Etiquette
	+ Students who are making an effort to learn and grow in the rehearsal process will not have a problem earning high grades in Musical Theatre class. Grading will never be based on a student’s ability – rather his or her continued effort towards improvement of theatrical knowledge and skills.
* **Performance Skills & Other Projects and Assessments – *Summative Assessment* – 60%**
	+ Includes performance and required rehearsal attendance, actual performance and professionalism [please refer to the Performance Policies section below for more information regarding expectations for performances], etc.
	+ Also includes any other assessments or projects that are designed to evaluate a student’s current level of mastery of the standards, and the final exam/ post-test.

All assignments are expected on the published due date. There will be a 10% penalty per day late.

PERFORMANCE POLICIES

* Musical Theatre students are constantly working toward getting ready for performance. The performance experience is invaluable to the learning process and each participant to the show’s overall success. **It is therefore *required* for students to attend each scheduled performance and required rehearsal.**
* Points will be deducted if a student is tardy, or if the student is not dressed in proper attire, or if the student’s behavior is in any way unacceptable for the performance experience.
* Inappropriate behavior at a performance will not be tolerated. Performers are not permitted to have cell phones and other electronic devices on or backstage. Students should NEVER have a device on or out during the performance itself as they will interfere with our sound system.
* Excused absences from performances will be dealt with on an individual basis by the directors. **A written note or email from a parent or guardian will be required for ANY absence.** Excused absences may include, but are not limited to, personal illness, death in the family, or religious reasons. Excused absences from performances will be the same as excused absences from school. Not having a ride, babysitting, homework, or other non-school-related activities will not be considered valid excuses.
	+ Students should communicate with community activity coaches or leaders early and often regarding required dates and times and make sure that these leaders know that our performances are a graded part of a class at school.
	+ For school activities, students must alert either Mrs. Karstensen or Ms. Thornton to any schedule conflict as soon as possible when dates are available, and they will work with coaches etc. to come up with a plan that will work for all involved.
	+ Students who are too sick to come to school on the day of a performance should not attend the performance. Students must be at school for half of the school day in order to be eligible to participate in after school activities.
	+ For any unexcused absence from a performance, a written assignment will be required to allow for the grade to be made up. Any issues with performance attendance should be discussed with the directors and dealt with as early as possible. ***Students will not be given the make-up assignment without written communication from a parent as to why the student missed the performance or rehearsal.*** A student who misses a performance and does not provide written communication from a parent within one week of the rehearsal or show date detailing the reason for the absence will receive a zero grade for the rehearsal or performance.

INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES

“Spongebob The Musical: The Youth Edition” Script & Score

Microsoft Office (Word & PowerPoint)

Students will read from a variety of shows, scholarly articles, and biographical texts.

\* Students enrolled in Musical Theatre class are invited to participate in all Chorus fundraising efforts and join us on Chorus field trips. All fundraiser profits raised by an individual will be saved in an account for that individual to use toward class expenses that would be paid through the school such as field trips, spirit wear, etc. Student Account funds may not be used for tickets to productions. All monies earned by a student in a CMS Chorus fundraiser can only ever be used for CMS Chorus expenses and therefore any monies left in a student’s account at the end of 8th grade will be returned to the general Musical Theatre fund. Profits can never be returned to a student as cash.