

CHAMBER SINGERS HANDBOOK 2016-2017

GENERAL INFORMATION — TEACHER: NICK PATTON

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EXPECTATIONS

1. Strive to maintain a positive and focused environment where everyone can learn!
2. Respect your peers, respect your learning space, respect your teacher!
3. Be on time and apply a hard work ethic to our rehearsals.
4. Attendance at all concerts and extra rehearsals is mandatory.
5. Bring a Pencil, 1.5" Binder, and Water Bottle to class every day!

COMMUNICATION

Communication is essential for maintaining a well working, supportive class! I encourage both students and parents alike to let me know of any concerns, comments, or questions they may have at any time. I can only solve problems or address issues if I know they exist, so please do not hesitate to ask whenever something arises. The class is very demanding, and although I will never book a concert with less than two weeks notice unless I ask all students first, it is absolutely essential that students check the Calendar on the Choral Website on a regular basis. E-mail is the best way to reach me, and I will respond to phone calls and texts as I am able to. In addition, handouts will occasionally be distributed in class. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that these handouts arrive home!

VOLUNTEERS

As our program expands, I continue to rely on the help and generosity of our Choral Families to bring their students to and from events and to help us with our performances! I am always looking for people to sell tickets, sign up as drivers, come with us to performances, and more. **I NEED YOU!** Please contact me if you are interested in helping in any of the ways I have mentioned, or any way you might have thought of!

CHS CHORAL CONCERTS AND EVENTS

The following performances & events are currently set for 2016-2017. Please make note of these dates!:

The Sing-A-Thon – Sat, Sept. 24 th	A Holiday Concert – Wed, Dec. 21 st
Choir Camp – Thurs-Sun, Early Oct.	Spring Concert – Thurs, Mar. 9 th
The Renaissance Concert – Sat, Early Nov.	The Farewell Concert – Thurs, May 11 th

These are on our Choral Calendar, located at the Choral Music Website! It is essential that students AND parents bookmark and/or follow the calendar for easy access to updates and events, especially since many events will appear as dates are set for them. It is CRUCIAL that students check the Choir Calendar regularly to know about upcoming events, as it is their responsibility to attend all scheduled concerts. I will work hard to make sure any scheduled Choral Events are announced as early as possible, and will never schedule a concert outside of the school day with less than two weeks notice given.

ATTENDANCE

ATTENDANCE AT ALL CONCERTS IS MANDATORY FOR EVERY STUDENT. Choir is a TEAM SPORT that requires every person to be present, engaged, and motivated to succeed. Our motto is that **EVERY VOICE COUNTS**, and this is especially true for our concerts, both at school and in the community.

The Sports Analogy: If you went to and worked hard in every single practice and then never set foot on the playing field, that would only take you so far, and you would never be as good as someone who saw a real game. The same is true for singing – our foundational work in the classroom only takes us so far, and we need to continue to hone our skills through PERFORMANCE. Keep in mind that we also only get to perform a minimum of six times per year – each of those performances is a playoff or championship game, the only shot we have at getting it right! Just like a team would be weaker starting a game without a regular player, we, too, become weaker when we are missing a voice. It may not seem like a big deal to you, but it's a HUGE deal to our choir, your section, and the people who rely on you.

That being said, you may always miss a concert for the following reasons, with no makeup needed:

- **MAJOR ILLNESS:** If you are vomiting / have a high fever / are otherwise incredibly ill, you should, of course, stay at home.
- **DEATH IN THE FAMILY**
- **RELIGIOUS REASONS**

CONCERT MAKEUP POLICY

During the school year, you have the opportunity to make up the points for a SINGLE MISSED CONCERT. Beyond this single makeup, there are no makeups available. There are two ways to do this:

1. **Don't miss the concert.** It might seem silly to have this as an option, but the truth is: most concert absences are 100% avoidable simply by COMMUNICATING. You can easily do the following things to avoid missing a concert:
 - a. **Check the choir calendar regularly, and talk to Mr. P about any conflict as soon as you know about it.** I promise you I am VERY used to people having conflicts, and I am more than willing to help you solve the problem.
 - b. **Talk to coaches / tutors / other teachers / etc. about the conflict too, as soon as you know about it.** It's way easier to solve a conflict if it's early than it is two days before the concert. If you need help talking to your coach or teacher about the importance of being at the choral concert, please enlist Mr. P's help!
 - c. **Continue communicating.** Don't give up! Usually we can work out a solution that works if we try hard! And again, how do you have time to communicate and problem solve? **By addressing the problem as soon as you know about it.**
2. **Do a concert makeup.** Once again, this is only an option **once a year**, but the points for a SINGLE Concert can be made up by putting together a **Student Makeup Concert**. The expectations and procedures for the Makeup Concert are as follows:
 - a. **Pick repertoire.** The student director must pick a number of new choral pieces equal to the number of pieces they would have performed at the missed concert.
 - b. **Organize performers.** The student director must gather a group of students to cover all parts of the music performed. A minimum of 3 students per vocal part is required.
 - c. **Rehearse the choir a minimum of 2 times for an hour each.** Student may want to rehearse his Makeup Choir beyond the minimum time frame.
 - d. **Set a date for the concert & advertise.** Student must work with Mr. Patton to find a time for the makeup concert, and advertise the date to the campus & community.
 - e. **Create programs & tickets.** Most makeup concerts will be free of charge, but every student attending will need a ticket and should receive a program.
 - f. **Perform the concert in front of an audience!**

Communicate early, communicate often, and above all else: follow the Choir Calendar.

MONEY MATTERS

My number one focus when it comes to Choral Department purchases and events is to offer a high quality Choral experience through our Onsite Program, which is designed to enrich student learning and provide as close to a professional Choral experience at the High School level as possible. I highly encourage all students in the Choral Program to participate in all parts of the Onsite Program, and the bulk of our fundraising efforts are designed to ensure that no student is unable to participate in activities designated as Onsite due to financial restrictions.

You might be wondering exactly where the money goes if you are making a donation or if your student is participating in a fundraiser. Below is what the program spends on a typical Chamber Singers student who chooses to take advantage of the full Onsite Program offerings:

Onsite Program Cost Breakdown

Choral Music Voluntary Donation (critical)	\$150
<i>-Music Purchases & Licensing Fees (~\$100 per student)</i>	
<i>-Festival Registration (~\$30 per student)</i>	
<i>-Choir T-shirt (~\$20 student)</i>	
Voluntary Choir Camp Weekend	~\$300
Voluntary Donation to Costume Upkeep and Cleaning	\$75
Total:	\$525 / student

Currently, our only dedicated source of income is Ticket Proceeds. While our concert attendance goes a long way to help towards covering our yearly Choral costs, the fact of the matter is that they do not begin to cover the yearly choral budget. I rely heavily on the generosity of our choral families and their students who choose to give back to our Choral Community, whether it be through donations, fundraising, or a combination of the two.

That being said: **No student will be denied access to the full extent of the Onsite Program due to financial restrictions.** If the costs are an issue for any family, PLEASE contact me and I will sit down with you and work out a way to make sure your student can fully participate in our Onsite Program activities. We have a lot of options available and I am confident we can work out a solution for everyone who needs assistance.

While we are committed to ensuring every student can participate in all planned activities, we can only plan activities if finances allow. Choir events are an all or nothing endeavor – meaning we find a way for everyone to go, or we don't go.

FUNDRAISING

I know these costs may seem daunting, particularly for those who do decide to participate in everything. Thankfully, there will be several opportunities throughout the year to raise money to help cover the costs of the Onsite Program

Remember that you are not required to participate in fundraisers. They are organized and offered as a way to reduce the cost of the different voluntary activities and trips that are available to Choral students during the course of the school year. If you wish, the voluntary Onsite Program can be covered completely by check or cash, completely by fundraising, or through a combination of both.

THERE ARE TWO MAJOR FUNDRAISING OPPORTUNITIES YEARLY:

THE SING-A-THON: Our biggest fundraiser of the year, The Sing-A-Thon is our only concert that has no set ticket price. Like a Walk-A-Thon, students take single donation pledges leading up to their all day rehearsal & concert. 100% of pledged donations for The Sing-A-Thon go directly to the students and are intended to help cover the cost of the Onsite Program. The Sing-A-Thon is also currently schedule BEFORE our Choir Camp weekend this year, in order to allow student's the opportunity to cover their Choir Camp costs completely before embarking on the weekend.

CONCERT PRESALES: Students also have the option of collecting ticket pre-sales before every major concert of the year (excluding The Farewell Concert). This is especially important for our Renaissance concert, which has limited seating and tends to sell out quickly, but is also an excellent way for them to give back to the choral program the best way they can – through song. Students will have a portion of each ticket they pre-sell applied to their Charms Account balance, with the rest of the pre-sale and door sales going into the general choir fund (and, from there, back to the students in the form of music purchases, costumes, equipment, etc.)

Ticket Pre-sales & fundraising forms can be turned in to the **LOCK BOX** in the Choir Room in one of the ***Choir Donation Envelopes***. The Envelopes allow for students to clearly mark who the donation is from, the amount enclosed, and which fundraiser it is attached to. The Lock Box is a secure & consolidated space that only Mr. P has access to. All fundraisers will come with a Donation Envelope attached to the information, but please see Mr. P if you need more – you should be using one for every donation you turn in!

While the above two fundraising opportunities currently make up the bulk of our fundraising efforts, I am always brainstorming and working to provide more opportunities for students to give back to the Choir Program! If you have an idea for a fundraiser, or would like to make a tax deductible donation, please do not hesitate to contact me so we can discuss the details. ☺

CHARMS OFFICE ASSISTANT SETUP

Once again we will be using the Charms Office Assistant to help us stay organized in a variety of ways. The Charms Office Assistant is a organization suite designed with Music Departments in mind. Students and parents can have one portal for an easy place to access the Choral Website and Calendar, track their contributions to the Onsite Program Costs, keep an eye on what Forms are due or Deadlines are approaching, stay up to date on Events and Fundraisers, access Noteflight scores, submit Rehearsal Logs and Part Testing, and much, much more.

Please ensure you can log in to the Office Assistant by following the steps below:

1. Head over to **<http://www.charmsoffice.com/>**
2. Mouse over the Green “**ENTER/LOGIN**” link in the upper right hand corner.
3. Select: **Parents/Students/Members**
4. Enter the School Code: **calhighsings**
5. On the following page, enter your password. For first time users, this is your students **Student ID #**.

If you get an error saying your password is incorrect, it is most likely due to either my entering your students ID incorrectly, or because of a changed and forgotten password. In the event that you are unable to access your account, please send me an e-mail and I will correct the problem ASAP.

Once you’ve accessed your student information page, there is a plethora of information for you to fill out. You are welcome to submit whatever information you feel comfortable with the school having. I would suggest the following as great pieces for us to have:

- a. E-mail addresses for both you and your student are incredibly helpful, because it makes it easy for me to create communication lists, allowing me to send updates and messages with the push of a few buttons.
- b. Mailing Addresses allow for us to keep up to date with you and your students on events and fundraisers for our choral program. This is especially great to have on our Alumni List. If your student is graduating this year, please consider sharing this information on your Charms Account so that we can keep you in mind (and you can, in turn, keep us in mind!)

WHILE IT IS AN EXTERNAL SITE, OUR DATABASE IS CONFIDENTIAL IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE FAMILY EDUCATIONS AND RIGHTS PRIVACY ACT OF 1974 (FERPA). NO INFORMATION WITHIN THE DATABASE WILL BE DIVULGED TO THIRD PARTIES WITHOUT THE EXPRESS WRITTEN CONSENT PARENTS OR OF STUDENTS WHO ARE 18 YEARS OF AGE. REST ASSURED THAT YOUR INFORMATION WITHIN THE CHARMS OFFICE ASSISTANT IS SAFE AND CONFIDENTIAL.