

# Clear Creek High School Choir Handbook



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We are the music makers,  
We are the dreamers of dreams,  
Wandering by the lone sea-breakers,  
And sitting by desolate streams;  
World-losers and world-forsakers,  
On whom the pale moon gleams;  
We are the movers and the shakers  
Of the world for ever, it seems.

-Arthur O'Shaughnessy, *Ode*, 1974

...in a world of political, economic, and personal disintegration music is not a luxury but a necessity - not simply because it is "therapeutic," but because it is the persistent focus of man's intelligence, aspirations, and good-will.

-Robert Shaw, *"This Is Why"*

A performing group is a microcosm of society. In addition to well documented skills related to music reading, self-expression, self-discipline, and concentration, performers become interdependent. There is no more important skill required in a democratic society than that of sharing common goals with others and working together to achieve them.

-Sally Schott, Texas Music Educators Association President,  
*Texas Music Educator*, 1984.

Music has the power of producing a certain effect on the moral character of the soul, and if it has the power to do this, it is clear that the young must be directed to music and must be educated in it.

-Aristotle, *Politics*



# Why do we teach music?

*(from the Music Educator's National Conference)*

## Music is a **SCIENCE**

It is exact, specific, and it demands exact acoustics.

A conductor's full score is a chart, a graph which indicates frequencies, intensities, volume changes, melody and harmony all at once with the most exact control of time.

## Music is **MATHEMATICAL**

It is rhythmically based on the subdivisions of time into fractions which must be done instantaneously, not worked out on paper.

## Music is **HISTORY**

Music reflects the environment and times of its creation, connecting to the past on an emotional level .

## Music is a **FOREIGN LANGUAGE**

Most of the terms are in Italian, German, or French; and the notation is certainly not English but a highly developed kind of shorthand that uses symbols to represent ideas. The semantics of music is the most complete and universal language.

## Music is **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

It requires fantastic coordination of fingers, hands, arms, lips, cheek and facial muscles in addition to extraordinary control of the diaphragmatic, back, stomach and chest muscles which respond instantly to the sound the ear hears and the mind interprets.

Music is all of these things but most of all -

## Music is **ART**

It allows a human being to take all of these dry, technically boring but difficult techniques and use them to create emotion.

That is one thing science cannot duplicate; human feeling, emotion, call it what you will.

## *That is why we teach music!*

**Not** because we expect you to major in music. **Not** because we expect you to play or sing all your life.

But...

...So you will be **human** ;

...So you will recognize **beauty** .

...So you will be **sensitive** .

...So you will be **closer to an infinite beyond this world** .

...So you will have something to retain for **enrichment** .

...So you will have more **love** , more **compassion** , more **gentleness** .

...In short, **more LIFE!**

*Of what value will it be to make a prosperous living unless you know how to live?*

**THAT IS WHY WE TEACH MUSIC!**

The handbook below is designed to foster the success of the CCHS Choral Department, inform the students and their parents, and address questions and concerns that may arise throughout the school year.

We are excited to lead a choir program that will continue to earn the respect of the larger community through the diligent efforts of students, parents, directors, and administrators. As a choir student, each of you accepts membership into an organization built upon that same pride and commitment to excellence. As a choir parent, each of you accepts the responsibility of understanding the expectations of your child in this successful choir program and supporting his or her endeavors to the fullest extent.

Please take time to read the handbook thoroughly and complete the signed paper by the due date acknowledging that you have read the handbook completely, and please note that you are responsible for all information presented, *including the schedule as presented on the Choir Calendar and all graded participation requirements*. If you should have further questions that are not answered in the handbook, please feel free to call the choir office (281) 284-1878. You may also access the choir's website at [www.clearcreekchoir.com](http://www.clearcreekchoir.com), the best resource for students and parents to refer to.

We look forward to another great year in the Clear Creek High School Choir.

Sincerely,

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# Clear Creek High School Choral Department

The Clear Creek HS Choral Department offers a variety of performing organizations to meet the needs of all students interested in singing. Each choir caters to the specific strengths of each student with regard to their musical ability. All choirs offer performance opportunities and focus on expanding the student's knowledge and use of basic music theory, music history, sight-reading methods, artistic expression and interpretation, cultural significance, vocal techniques, and ensemble singing. In addition to developing individual musical strengths, each group is designed to teach self-discipline and commitment while working together toward a common goal of excellence and fostering an appreciation of choral music.

## **Bel Canto (Second Period) – *Italian musical term that means “A manner of singing that emphasizes beauty of sound.”***

This choir is open to all freshmen women. An audition is required for voicing purposes only. Bel Canto will perform a variety of literature and will sing on all concerts, compete at UIL Concert & Sight Reading and/or a Spring Festival Competition, and will help run any TMEA competitions that CCHS Choir hosts. Bel Canto members are eligible for and encouraged to participate in all solo competitions. A strong desire to sing and a positive attitude are the only requirements.

## **Concordia (Third Period) – *Latin for “harmony,” the Roman goddess of harmony***

Our campus class men's chorus, this choir is open to all freshmen, sophomore, junior, and senior men. An audition is required for voicing purposes only. Concordia will perform a variety of literature and will sing on all concerts, compete at UIL Concert & Sight Reading and/or a Spring Festival Competition, and will help run any TMEA competitions that CCHS Choir hosts. Concordia members are eligible for and encouraged to participate in all solo competitions. A strong desire to sing and a positive attitude are the only requirements.

## **Cantabile (Seventh Period) – *Italian musical term that means “lyrical, melodious, and flowing.”***

Our campus class women's chorus, this choir is open to all sophomore, junior, and senior women. An audition is required for voicing purposes only. Cantabile will perform a variety of literature and will sing on all concerts, may compete at UIL Concert & Sight Reading and/or a Spring Festival Competition, and will help run any TMEA competitions that CCHS Choir hosts. Cantabile members are eligible for and encouraged to participate in all solo competitions. A strong desire to sing and a positive attitude are the only requirements.

## **Kapelle (Fourth Period)**

This choir is open to all sophomore, junior, and senior women. A competitive audition is required for placement into this choir. Kapelle will perform a variety of literature, will sing on all concerts, and will compete at UIL Concert & Sight Reading and/or a Spring Festival Competition. Significant musical skills, a strong desire to sing, and a positive attitude are required as well as a commitment to perform at extra events throughout the year. All Kapelle students are required to do one of two solo activities: tryout for a Region Choir or take a solo to Solo & Ensemble Contest. (Of course, students may do both, but they are **required** to do at least one.) As there is an eligibility requirement for Kapelle, members who become ineligible will be moved to Cantabile.

## **Symphonic Chorale (Sixth Period)**

Our top group, this varsity mixed choir is open to all sophomore, junior, and senior men and women. A competitive audition is required for placement into this choir. Symphonic Chorale will perform a variety of literature, will sing on all concerts, and will compete at UIL Concert & Sight Reading and possibly a Spring Festival Competition. The highest musical skills, strongest desire to sing, and the most positive attitude are minimum requirements. Symphonic Chorale members are also expected to perform at numerous extra events throughout the year as part of their ensemble experience as well as being model choir students in the program. All Symphonic Chorale students are required to do one of two solo activities: tryout for a Region Choir or take a solo to Solo & Ensemble Contest. (Of course, students may do both, but they are **required** to do at least one.) As there is an eligibility requirement for Symphonic Chorale, members who become ineligible will be moved to Concordia (men) or Cantabile (women).

## **Chamber Singers (Fifth Period)**

This choir is open to all sophomore, junior, and senior Symphonic Chorale men and women. Chamber Singers students will have two periods of choir every day (5<sup>th</sup> period Chamber Singers and 6<sup>th</sup> period Symphonic Chorale). This is open by competitive audition to students who have excelled in the choir classroom and have a consistent record of academic success. This a capella group is dedicated to performing music in a variety of songs in all styles and from all periods of music. This choir will sing on all concerts, some contests, and have numerous off-campus community performances (especially in December). Membership in Chamber Singers is reserved for the most dedicated singers. Excellence in singing and sight-reading, a positive attitude, a willingness to work cooperatively, and strong academics are required to be a member of this honor ensemble. As there is an eligibility requirement for Chamber Singers, members who become ineligible will be removed from the group and replaced by another student.

In addition to the curriculum choirs that meet daily described above, additional ensembles will be created for specific performances and competitions. These include:

#### Men's Choir

The Men's Choir will be formed by combining all the men from Concordia and Symphonic Chorale.

#### Varsity Men's Choir

The Men of the Symphonic Chorale may split from the mixed ensemble to create a Varsity Men's Chorus for competitions.

#### Combined Women's Choir

The Combined Women's Choir will be formed by combining women from Cantabile, Kapelle, and Symphonic Chorale.

#### Varsity Women's Choir

The Women of the Symphonic Chorale may split from the mixed ensemble to create a Varsity Women's Chorus for competitions.

#### Ardore – An Italian term that means “ardor”, or “with great passion”

Ardore is an auditioned after-school mixed choir. This choir is open to all non-Chamber Singers tenors and basses and all non-Symphonic Chorale sopranos and altos. Ardore focuses on performing many different musical styles including acapella, pop, and choral literature throughout the school year. This ensemble, depending on the year, may also be utilized to perform at elementary and intermediate school events with our feeder choral programs as well as any spring festival contests.

#### Choral Union

The CCHS Choral Union shall consist of all choir members from all 6 curriculum choirs performing on stage together.

## Goals of the Clear Creek Choir Department

- Develop a sense of the importance of music in the life of each student.
- Develop self-confidence, self-discipline, responsibility, and social interaction skills in each student through positive interaction with teachers and peers.
- Develop the musical potential of each student to the fullest.
- Develop the musical skills of each student, including fundamentals of music theory & sight reading, mastering the use of solfège syllables & hand signs, and singing well in an ensemble.
- Develop a greater understanding and appreciation of our own culture and different cultures through different styles and genres of music.
- Develop an understanding of stylistic traits of different periods of music.
- Develop self-expression through practice and performance during class, rehearsals, and concerts.
- Learn proper concert etiquette through participation in and attendance of live performances.

# Choir Room Rules & Student Expectations

All choir students will...

...be respectful to everyone.

...give 100% every day.

...ask the director when they do not understand something.

...stand or sit using a superior singing posture.

...always use solfège hand signs.

...have their supplies. (Two pencils, folder, music, and sight-reading materials.)

...always know where in the music the director is rehearsing, **even when he is not rehearsing another section.**

...write rehearsal notes the director says in their music.

...not chew gum, eat food, or drink any drinks in the choir room. **Immediate consequences will be given for chewing gum...NO WARNINGS.**

...not use cell phones for any purpose. The directors will follow CCISD guidelines for misuse of cell phones.

...not play the classroom pianos or write on the markerboard without the director's permission.

...clean up after themselves and help keep the choir room neat and tidy.



# Classroom & Rehearsal Expectations

-It is your responsibility to read and follow all of the classroom rules.

-A note signed by a parent, doctor, or the school nurse will be the only excuse accepted for not singing on any day. If you are sick and cannot sing, you will still be expected to participate in the class by standing and joining the class when requested, writing instructions in music, lip-synching lyrics, performing the solfège hand signs, and otherwise participating in non-verbal activities. In short, when you are well enough to come to school but cannot sing for some reason, you are participating in class in every way except for actually making sound with your voice. If a director looks at you, he should be able to forget that you are not singing that day because it appears on the outside to everyone that you actually are participating to the fullest.

-No personal notes or work from other classes may be worked on during class.

-When a director or any other adult is giving instructions, directions, or information, in front of the class, talking must stop!

-Facial tissues may or may not be provided depending on supply. If you anticipate needing facial tissues, you should bring some from home.

-Passes out of the class for bathroom breaks, visits to the nurse, or trips to other areas of the building are available upon request. If it is an emergency that cannot wait (like, you gotta leave NOW!), then do what you need to do to take care of yourself, and Mr. Park or Mr. Stultz will send down a pass to the bathroom or nurse with another student. Other than emergencies, please ask at an appropriate time and in an appropriate manner. If too many students are leaving the classroom for various reasons, passes will be suspended at the discretion of the director except for emergencies.

*BORED DURING REHEARSAL?* Instead of talking, use the time to practice solfège hand signs, silently memorize songs, practice contest music, or do other silent choir work. *Strive to use all of the rehearsal time as effectively as possible! There is ALWAYS something to do!*



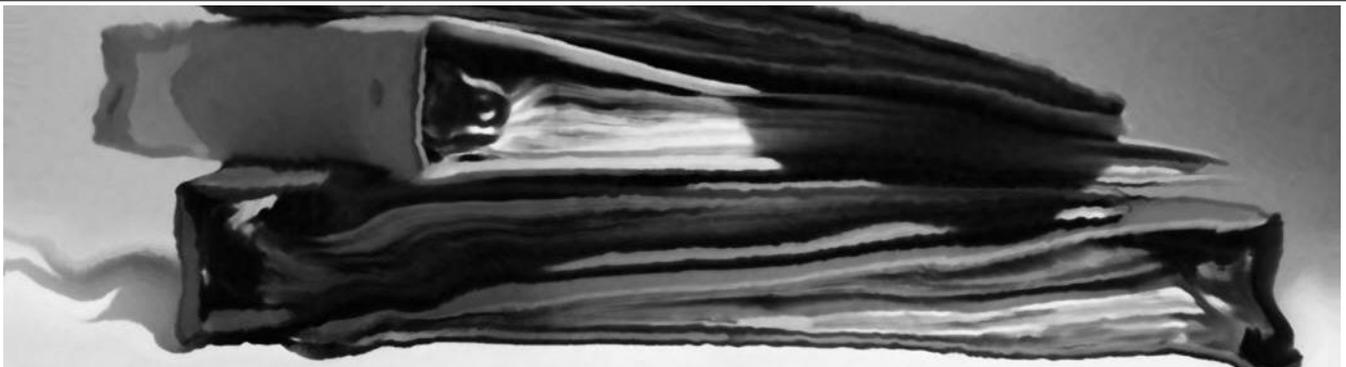
# About Your Folder and Music

You will not be issued an academic textbook in choir class, but your music is considered to be your "textbook" for the class. It should be treated with respect and care. You are responsible for the following regulations regarding folders and music:

1. Students will provide their own choir folder and pencils. Students must put their names on the inside of their folders in permanent ink. The folder must be a black, 1-inch or smaller 3-ring binder with sleeves on the inside, and you must have blank pieces of notebook paper on the inside for notes and reminders. Keep two pencils inside the folder sleeves.
2. Students are financially responsible for their folders and all contents provided by the school.
3. Students are financially responsible for the music provided by the school. Loss or damage to music can result in a replacement fine that can be anywhere from \$1.00 on up (usually not more than \$30) per piece, depending on what music it is.

**PLEASE NOTE: It is never proper to mark in your music with pen - even erasable pen. Always use a pencil. Writing in music in pen will result in a replacement fine.**

4. Students should NOT take folders with them to their lockers or other classes. All folders are to be returned to the folder cabinets after each rehearsal. Students may return to the choir room after school to take their folder home for study and practice. The folder should be returned to the folder cabinet before classes on the next day.
5. Any folder left out will be collected by Mr. Park or Mr. Stultz. The folder will then be held ransom by Mr. Park and Mr. Stultz until they can think of the most gruesome punishment appropriate and legal. :) In all seriousness, please keep track of your folder so you're not fined for missing or damaged music. If you continue to leave your folder and music out, you will be assigned Choir Room Cleaning Duty which will have to be completed after school.
6. If for some reason you do not receive a piece of music, share with your neighbor for the day. See your director after class and tell them the title of the piece you do not have. They'll get you a copy as soon as possible.
7. Only Mr. Park and Mr. Stultz are allowed to issue folders or new music or retrieve copies of music from the choir office or library.
8. If you lose your non-photocopied music, replacement copies will be available after paying a fine. A fine for losing non-photocopied music is the cost of the piece plus postage. If you lose for photocopied music, borrow another student's copy and photocopy it yourself.
9. Students must treat any student librarians with courtesy and respect. A librarian's job can be a thankless one.



# Grading

Grading for the choir program reflects the importance of daily participation and performance. Because of the unique nature of performance ensembles like choir, band, and orchestra, there are not many daily written assignments or tests that make up the grades of the academic core courses. Learning music is a progression that occurs over time -- choirs improve because they build on skills that were learned the day before. This process makes the daily responsibility of the individual student important. Our rehearsing culminates in one or more performances that exhibit the hard work that the students have completed *together*. Therefore, students are graded heavily on their daily participation in the classroom rehearsals and involvement in the concerts.

Your son's or daughter's grade will be determined using the following formula:

Daily: 45% Participation, 5% Writing

Performance: 50%

Daily grades are the grades based on daily work such as participation grades (individual and ensemble singing), quizzes, or daily work. Performance grades are any grades that relate directly to a performance such as attendance at concerts, dress rehearsals, or any required before-school or after-school rehearsals. Because of the importance of your child experiencing the reward of performing in the concert, participation in required before- and after-school rehearsals, dress rehearsals, and concerts is required. This policy is supported by the State of Texas (go to <http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/rules/tac/chapter117/ch117c.pdf> to see the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills, or TEKS, standards adopted by the Legislature, scroll down to Pages C-15 to C-22 for High School Choir) and Clear Creek ISD (click [http://www.ccid.net/Libraries/Student\\_Support\\_Services/2012-2013\\_HS\\_EPG\\_Final.sflb.ashx](http://www.ccid.net/Libraries/Student_Support_Services/2012-2013_HS_EPG_Final.sflb.ashx) to see the Clear Creek ISD High School Education Planning Guide, scroll down to Page 155 for High School Choir). In some cases, it is unavoidable that the student must miss a rehearsal or concert. The policy on a student's absence from a rehearsal or concert follows:

All students are required, as part of their nine-weeks grade, to participate in any mandatory extra rehearsals and performances outside of the classroom setting. Participating in the required rehearsals and concerts are 50% of their final grade. "Participating in the required rehearsals and concerts" means that the student arrives on time to any rehearsals, stays for their entire portion of the rehearsals, arrives at the concert site on time, stands on stage with their choir, sings all of the songs in a professional manner, represents their school positively, stays until the end of the concert, and displays proper audience etiquette during the concert. If the student participates in the rehearsals and concerts in the manner described here, s/he will have a 100 for the rehearsal and concert portion of his/her grade. Not completing makeup work from absences, arriving late to or leaving early from required events, or non-productive behavior during a rehearsal or concert may result in lower grades.

If, for any reason, a student is prevented from attending any rehearsals or concerts for any reason - excused or unexcused, school-related or not - a **phone call and a letter** (e-mail is fine) to the student's director from a parent or guardian as soon as possible explaining the reason why the student cannot or did not attend the

rehearsal or concert. **Regardless of whether an absence is excused or not, s/he will be expected to complete a makeup assignment as follows:**

For a missed **rehearsal**, the student will be given a makeup assignment upon arrival back in class that will detail what was covered in the rehearsal. Mr. Park will schedule a time for all makeup singing assignments to be performed together. The student must attend that makeup grading session before or after school to sing what was covered in the rehearsal for Mr. Park. If the student has a scheduling conflict that cannot be avoided, (s)he must contact Mr. Park before the scheduled makeup session to set up an alternate makeup session. The student will be graded on all aspects of musicianship including but not limited to tone quality, rhythmic accuracy, pitch accuracy, vowel production, tone production, and breath support. More specifically, any musical or vocal details taught in the missed rehearsal must be demonstrated by the student to receive complete credit. Mr. Park will follow CCISD grading procedures in regards to timeline for makeup assignments.

For a missed **performance**, the student will be required to make up the grade in two parts: performance and written analysis of a recording of the concert.

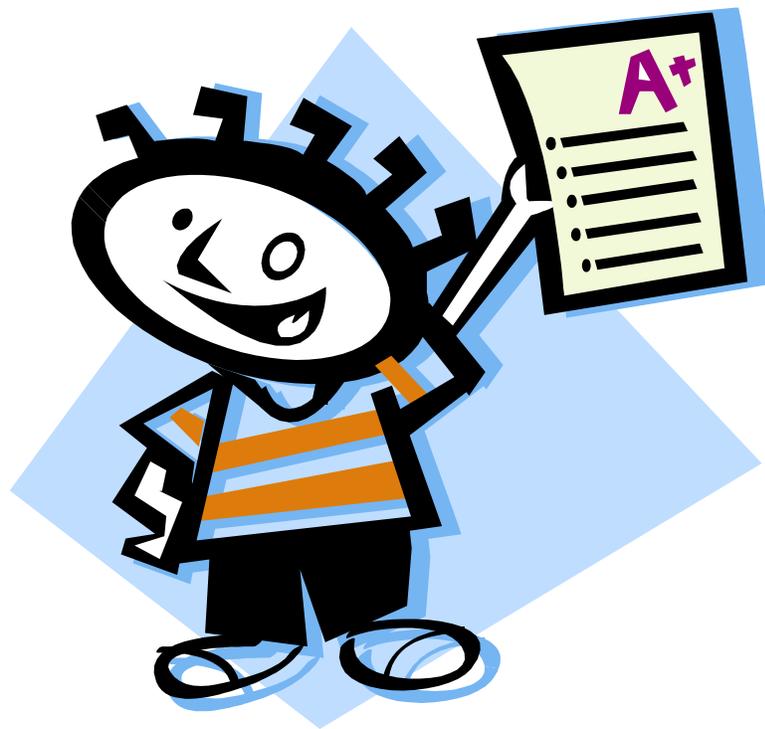
1) For the performance component, Mr. Park or Mr. Stultz will schedule a time for all makeup singing assignments to be performed together. The student must attend that makeup grading session before or after school to sing for the director what was covered in the rehearsal. If the student has a scheduling conflict that cannot be avoided, s/he must contact the director before the scheduled makeup session to set up an alternate makeup session. During this session, the student will perform from memory any music that was sung from memory by the choir in the rehearsal or concert, and the student may use music for any pieces that were sung in the rehearsal or concert with music. The student will sing as a soloist or with a small group of other students making the grade up. The student will be graded on all aspects of musicianship including but not limited to tone quality, rhythmic accuracy, pitch accuracy, vowel production, tone production, breath support, and interpretation. At the discretion of the director, the student will sing solo a capella, with piano accompaniment, or with a recording of the concert.

2) For the written portion of the assignment, the student will be given a recording and program of the concert. The student must write an academic review of the entire concert (not just his/her choir's performance), speaking in a detailed manner of the performances of all choirs, using musical terms and ideas explored in class, including but not limited to aspects of tone quality, blend, intonation, ensemble, interpretation, musical expression, breath support and phrasing, and other musical and artistic ideas. The paper should be 3-5 pages long, 12-point font, one-and-a-half spaced paragraphs (not double-spaced), one-inch margins on top and bottom, and 1.25-inch margins on the sides. Pictures or clip art may be included but does not count toward the 3-5 page amount. All makeup work should be completed by the due date given unless an alternate due date has been worked out ahead of time with the director. If the student does not promptly set up a make-up schedule upon his/her arrival back to school, the grade may remain a zero.

Please note that these make-up assignments are given for excused and unexcused absences. They are not meant to be punitive. They are intended to reflect the importance of the concert preparation and performances as well as give the director a chance to assess the 6-9 weeks' worth of classroom preparation that occurs before a concert. The concert is a major grade, so the makeup work reflects that.

In the past, some students or parents have gotten very upset regarding this makeup assignment. You are free to contact Mr. Park or Mr. Stultz and discuss the matter, but please keep in mind that every other choir, band, or orchestra teacher that they know has no makeup assignment for missed concerts and rehearsals. Every one of their music colleagues says that if a student misses a concert, it is a ZERO for that major grade with no opportunity to make the grade up, and it often results in students being demoted to a lower choir or simply being asked to leave the music program altogether.

Occasionally, there will be a choir student who decides to "work the system" and will take advantage of this system, purposely missing rehearsals and performances without a valid excuse, opting to complete the makeup assignment instead of coming to the concert. Please note that this system is not an "option" for choosing to miss a concert. It's a way to make up a major grade that was missed for a valid reason. To discourage this type of activity, as a general rule, Mr. Park and Mr. Stultz will only allow makeup assignments to be completed in this manner once per year. If an absence from a graded event occurs more than once in a school year, there will be no makeup opportunity allowed, and the grade(s) will remain as a zero. If you have an extenuating circumstance, please contact the director to discuss the matter.



# Communication

Students are given ample notice of scheduled rehearsals, performances, and activities so that conflicts are minimal. As students continue their quest to be responsible adults and perfect the art of balancing and organizing activities and calendars, it is their responsibility to inform parents, employers, coaches, sponsors, and other teachers of choir activities. The choir director will encourage and expect the student to communicate with the various sponsors and generate their own solution to the conflict. Simply stating that, "I won't be at the rehearsal because I have a dance practice," is neither adequate nor appropriate.

Instead, something along the following lines will be outstanding and show maturity and understanding: "I have spoken with the dance teacher and have spoken with you, and I have worked out that my participation in the dance rehearsal in two weeks is more vital than this week's because our show is the following Friday. Is it OK if I come to this week's choir rehearsal but miss next week's so I can attend the dance dress rehearsal? That's OK with the dance instructor, and I realize that I will have a make-up assignment for choir."

**Never, ever go up to Mr. Park or Mr. Stultz and just say, "I can't be at the concert tonight."** It shows a disrespect for your team and what the group is trying to accomplish together. **Would you ever go to your coach and say, "I can't be at the game tonight because I have..."??? NO! So why would you do that to your choir director?**

Instead, a better thing to say would be, "Something came up that is a conflict with the concert tonight, and I need some help in finding a solution," or "There's a conflict with tonight's concert, and I can't figure out how to solve it." Those types of approaches show that you care about the conflict's resolution and respect your director, your fellow choir members, and the choir's goals enough to try to work something out.

When conflicts arise between two organizations, students should try to work out the conflict well in advance by communicating with both directors/sponsors. If the student is unable to work out a solution, the parents and directors will **then** get involved and work out a solution. Learning to work conflicts out through proper means of communication is an essential life skill, and it is one that the CCHS Choir wishes to encourage its students to develop.

# Participation

As a member of CCHS Choir, you are expected to perform in class, before- and after-school rehearsals, concerts, and other programs. It is your responsibility to attend tutoring and **maintain your grades** in order to participate. Frequent academic ineligibility will affect placement in the following year's advanced and after-school choirs as well as preventing participation in numerous events throughout the year such as singing the National Anthem at professional sports teams, pep rallies, and any contest, trip, or competition, and pop show. All student officers and any student in Kapelle, Symphonic Chorale, and Chamber Singers will be removed from their office and those choirs and placed into Concordia (men) or Cantabile (women) if repeated academic ineligibility occurs. At all choir functions, you will be expected to be a true ambassador of CCHS and CCISD, displaying manners, following school rules, meeting deadlines, and always representing CCHS and the choir with pride and dignity.

# *Attendance*

Students should make every effort to be in class each day as participation is the essence of the grading structure. Because of the importance of daily participation, the director may implement a performance-based recorded daily make-up assignment for any excused or unexcused absences from class. Students who expect excessive absences are encouraged to consider a different elective that is based on paperwork or individual accomplishments (instruction that can more easily be accommodated through private tutorials) instead of our choir class which is based almost solely on ensemble participation. *One person can change the blend and sound of an ensemble. That means that, truly, every student counts every day, so please make every reasonable effort to not miss choir classes unless absolutely necessary.*

If Mr. Park or Mr. Stultz determine that there is significant and consistent attendance issues with an advanced choir, he will institute an attendance policy that will require students to make up **daily** work. In doing so, he will follow all school and district rules regarding makeup assignments and timetables.

# *Eligibility*

Choir students are responsible for maintaining high academic standards. Eligibility rules for participation are as follows:

1. Please note that throughout the year, curriculum-based performances (Fall Concert, Winter Concert, Spring Concert) that are a performance grade for the choir do NOT require eligibility to participate. Students must perform on these concerts as part of their choir grade regardless of academic eligibility.
2. All students are eligible the first six weeks of school.
3. At the end of the first six weeks, students with a failing grade in any class (69 or below) will become academically ineligible and may not participate in many activities (trips off campus, participating in singing at pep rallies, participate in any activity that requires admission, or compete at any TMEA/UIIL-related events.)
4. Every nine weeks, if the student fails (below 70%) one or more subjects on a report card, he/she will not be permitted to participate in extra-curricular activities for the next three weeks.
5. Every three weeks, an ineligible student may regain eligibility by passing ALL subjects. S/he will be eligible to participate in choir activities following a one-week grace period. If s/he is failing any course, the student will continue to be ineligible for the next three weeks.
6. Please note that, with the exception of the second progress report of the year (given out at the six-week mark), a student can only LOSE eligibility from Report Cards. A student who passes everything on a report card stays eligible for the next 9 weeks regardless of any progress report grades. A student cannot lose eligibility based on a progress report grade, but failing a class on a progress report can KEEP a student ineligible.

7. Choir officers and any members of Kapelle, Symphonic Chorale, and Chamber Singers must maintain their eligibility status throughout the year. Any student in these groups who becomes ineligible will be on probation for the rest of the year. If a probationary student is ineligible a second time during the year, the student will no longer be an officer and/or will be moved to an alternate choir, thus allowing the student more time to focus on their academic needs.
8. It is possible that during the school year a student may fail a course, but meet the requirements listed in the CCISD Student/Parent Handbook to complete an eligibility waiver. It is CCHS Choir procedure that eligibility waivers will not be considered for individual performance opportunities (District/Region/Pre-Area/Area auditions, Solo & Ensemble, etc.). Because UIL Concert & Sight Reading Contest is considered to be a form of state assessment of our ensemble, the only time Mr. Park or Mr. Stultz will sign an eligibility waiver will be for this contest in the spring. In essence, it comes down to this: if you fail a course and can't participate in an individual activity, that hurts you. If you fail a course and can't participate in a group activity, that hurts the whole choir. Additionally, if you find yourself having difficulty consistently passing your Pre-AP and AP courses, it may be time to consider dropping them from your schedule.

**Please note that some non-UIL events require eligibility due to Texas Education Agency rules.**

These include but are not limited to any event that charges admission (Pop Show, National Anthems at sports events), pep rallies, any competition, and some other performances. Mr. Park and Mr. Stultz will allow ineligible students to participate in any event where it is legal to do so, so if they say that ineligible students may not participate, it is because the state legislature has dictated thus, not because they chose to limit participation.

Any student receiving an incomplete (I) on his/her report card is considered "ineligible" until the incomplete is cleared and passing. An Incomplete on a progress report is considered a failing grade. Students are encouraged to notify their director as soon as possible if they suspect that a grade is less than acceptable. It is sometimes possible to offer suggestions and/or locate appropriate tutors from within the choir program. Remember, we are here to help, but we can't help once the grades are posted.



# Uniforms

Please note that improper or incomplete uniforms may result in students receiving lowered grades for performances.

## Men's Formal Uniforms

The school district provides a black tuxedo jacket and black slacks. The men will be responsible for the following items:

- A white, pleated tuxedo shirt with stand-up, wing-tipped collar
- Tuxedo shirt studs and cuff links (not required, but usually comes with the shirt)
- Black dress shoes (no patent leather, canvas, or suede)
- Black socks

Tuxedo shirts are available at formal ware stores like Al's Formal Wear and Men's Wearhouse

## Women's Formal Uniforms

The school district provides a formal dress. The women will be responsible for:

- Black closed toe pumps, 1" - 2" heel. Black character shoes are recommended.

**NO BLACK BOOTS OR "CHUNKY" SHOES** - plain, closed-toed heels suitable to wear with a formal gown are **REQUIRED**

All students will sign a uniform contract when issued uniform pieces provided by the school. Students will be responsible for their uniform until it is turned in at the end of the year. Damage or loss of uniforms will result in replacement fines that could easily exceed \$100, and these fees must be cleared before the end of the year so no consequences are implemented. Please also note that uniform cleaning fees are paid at the beginning of the year, so students do not need to turn in uniforms already laundered.

## Alterations

The hemline of the choir formal should be exactly 1" off the floor. Care must be taken in hemming the dress or pants. **Note that all hems MUST be temporary!! DO NOT CUT THE DRESS OR TUXEDO PANTS!!! DO NOT USE STAPLES, SAFETY PINS, OR TAPE!!!** It is the responsibility of each young man or woman and his/her parents to see that the necessary alterations are made on his pants or her dress in order that it fits properly. If major alterations are necessary, they must be approved in advance by the choral director (281)284-1878.

## Hair and Jewelry

For men and women, long hair should be worn back and away from the face. Shoulder length hair or shorter may be worn down, but must be away from the face. Ladies: NO BOWS! Hair clips and accessories should be nondescript and blend with hair color. No visible jewelry, such as watches, necklaces, and excessive rings. Post earrings or studs must be worn in concert. Remember, the concert attire is enforced because the choir performance is about **us**, not **you**. Any attire that brings attention to a single person takes away from the group, so just as we like to sing in a blended manner that de-emphasizes the individual's voice, we also strive to appear in a blended manner that de-emphasizes the individual's appearance.

**\*\*\*Improper concert attire (inappropriate shoes, wearing bows in hair, hair covering face, excessive jewelry, missing items, etc.) will result in a lowered test grade for that concert!!!\*\*\***

## Informal Uniforms

For many events, we will wear something a little less formal that still looks unified and professional. Informal uniforms for specific events will be discussed in class, but for things like National Anthems at sporting events, all students (men and women) will wear our choir shirts with formal black pants (no black jeans) and nice black shoes and socks (no tennis shoes or chunky shoes). Please be aware that if we are singing on a playing field that is grass, women may not be allowed to wear heels because they damage the playing field or can get stuck in the dirt while walking on the field.

Other times, we will wear a nice black outfit with red accents of your own choosing. Examples of this may include for women a black pants outfit with red jewelry/belt or hair accessories or a black dress (not the choir formal dress) with red jewelry. For men, it might be a pair of black slacks with a red shirt and black jacket, or black slacks with a black shirt with a red tie. The individual is responsible for finding a nice-looking outfit that is appropriate.

For things like in-school pep rallies, our uniform will be your choir shirt with blue jeans or jean shorts.

Specific dress for specific occasions will be reviewed in class prior to the event, but you should have ready at any time a pair of black pants and nice black shoes (flats for ladies).



## CCHS Choir Letter Jackets

In addition to specific program requirements for choir, the following CCISD general requirements for an award, must be met by the student:

1. Complete successful participation for a minimum of one year in choir;
2. Not leave choir for disciplinary reasons;
3. Not be suspended or placed in an alternative education program the school year the award is received;
4. Not end the one-year period with a probationary status;
5. Receive the recommendation of the respective organization's sponsor;
6. The criteria used for the awarding of a letter jacket shall be the same for all CCISD campuses for each program.

### Fine Arts Awards

All awards to students must meet the criteria set forth by the District and the University Interscholastic League. These guidelines are slated in each individual discipline's performance code. There are very strict UIL guidelines for academic performance in performing arts classes. Teachers are encouraged to discuss any awards to be presented with the principal prior to the student(s) receiving the award(s).

A student may receive only one major award for combined activities during his/her four years in high school and no more than one award per year for participation in the same organization.

1. Award jackets may not be awarded until the student completes successful participation for a minimum of one year in a school program.
2. Leaving the organization for disciplinary reasons will disqualify the student from the award.
3. Ending the one-year period with a probationary status will disqualify the student from the award.
4. The awarding student must receive the recommendation of the respective organization sponsor.\*

\*A student may not receive the recommendation of the choir director, which is required to be awarded the letter, if any of the following have occurred:

1. Excessive behavior problems.
2. Excessive academic eligibility problems.
3. Excessive attendance problems, including any required after-school events.

If students acquire the necessary points to be awarded a letter jacket prior to one full year of participation in the organization, the letter jacket will be awarded at the conclusion of the one-year period.

Choir Awards will be presented to choir students based on a point system of participation and service.

1. TMEA Honor Choir – 2 Points
2. TMEA District Choir – 5 Points
3. TMEA Region Choir – 10 Points
4. UIL Solo (Div. I) Class II – 2 Points
5. UIL Solo (Div. I) Class I – 3 Points
6. One Year's Participation – 10 Points
7. UIL Ensemble (Div. I) Class I – 2 Points

20 points = Awards Jacket

# *Choir Expenses*

The following is an anticipated list of choir expenditures that may occur throughout the year. They are listed to help you plan your budget. Please note that in some cases, fees are approximate. This list is simply an estimate, not a contract! Required expenditures are indicated.

1. CCHS Choir fee (includes choir t-shirt, uniform cleaning fee, booster club membership): \$40.00 (Required)\*
2. Men: tux shirt: \$30.00 appx. (Required)
3. Astros, Dynamo, and/or Aeros Game Bus/Ticket Fee: \$20.00 appx. (participation optional)
4. Solo Festival fee: \$25.00 appx. (participation optional)
5. Musical production fee (if applicable): \$100.00 appx. (participation optional)
6. Pop Show production fee (possible): \$40.00 appx. (participation optional)
7. Choir banquet: \$30.00 appx. (participation optional)
8. CCHS Choir yard sign: \$20.00 appx. (participation optional)
9. CCHS Choir Decal: \$8.00 appx/ (participation optional)
10. Trip fees: varies based on destination (participation may or may not be optional based on which choir is going on which trip. Details will be reviewed in advance during class or through e-mail.)

\*By law, we cannot require participation in the Booster Club. We put this under the required fees because, since every single student benefits from the booster club funds and volunteerism, we expect every family to join the booster club. With that said, it is your right to refuse participation in the Choir Booster Club. If you do this, you still must pay a fee to cover uniform cleaning and choir t-shirt, both of which are required of all students.

Other expenses might include other choir T-Shirts, letter jacket patches, Secret Santa Gifts, choir trip expenses, and professional performances, all of which would be optional.

## *REFUND POLICY:*

Most fees charged to the student involve advance payment for a service or item. In such cases (i.e. accompanist fees, trip fees, game tickets, etc.), the choir has a deadline for receiving reimbursement from the supplier. Because of this, the following policy will be strictly followed: **There will be no refunds in any case where a student has paid for an activity or supply but is no longer able to participate. This policy applies no matter what the reason is for withdrawal and specifically includes but is not limited to the situations of ineligibility, illness, unexpected family travel, or withdrawal from the CCHS Choir.**



# Code of Conduct

The CCISD's Extracurricular Code of Conduct can be found at the following link. All choir students must adhere to the CCISD Extracurricular Code of Conduct.

[http://www.ccisd.net/UserFiles/Servers/Server\\_645402/File/Departments/Policy%20and%20Legal%20Affairs/fm-extracurricular-code-of-conduct.pdf](http://www.ccisd.net/UserFiles/Servers/Server_645402/File/Departments/Policy%20and%20Legal%20Affairs/fm-extracurricular-code-of-conduct.pdf)

Additionally, students must adhere to our Clear Creek High School Choir Code of Conduct. Students who are not in compliance with our Code of Conduct may receive the consequences below.

## *Choir Student Code of Conduct*

1. Students will treat all other people respectfully. Any form of bullying, name calling, threats, hate-speech, volatile and directed language, sexual harassment, or unwanted intimate advances will not be tolerated, including interactions in online, text-based, social media, or other formats.
2. Students will respect other students' physical space and not touch another student without his/her permission. Any amount of physical violence against another student will not be tolerated.
3. Students will not commit any acts that would be considered illegal or against CCISD guidelines. Any amount of theft, use of illegal drugs or paraphernalia, physical altercations, or any other inappropriate or illegal activity will not be tolerated.

Consequences of breaking the Choir Student Code of Conduct:

*If a violation of the Code of Conduct is confirmed to be against another person, the teachers will hold a conference with the student against which the offense has occurred, and the severity of the infraction will be determined by the teachers using a student-centered approach and philosophy.*

1. For minor infractions, the teacher will have a conference with the student who has broken the Code of Conduct. If appropriate and desired, the student against whom the infraction occurred could also be in the conference in order to facilitate healing, self-advocacy, and good communication practices.
2. For more significant infractions that still fall under "minor" infractions, any of the following could happen (listed in no order, and this is not an exhaustive list): student conferences, student-parent conferences, parent notification, administrative notification, administrative disciplinary actions, campus formal write-up (disciplinary referral), or a consequence to be determined.
3. For major infractions (even first-time), any of the following could happen (listed in no order): loss of involvement of specific choir event (not getting to participate in an event, for example), demotion of choir class (moving down a level), being removed from Chamber Singers, removal from choir officer executive council or representatives, or future non-advancement to a higher choir.
4. For the most egregious infractions (even first-time), removal from the choir program could be applied (it could be immediate, or it could be delayed until the next grading period depending on the nature of the infraction). Examples of infractions that would warrant immediate removal from the program include (but are not limited to) stealing money from a choir colleague's purse during class, showing up to a choir event drunk or high, or physically fighting with another choir student during a choir event.

*Note that consequences that result from major and egregious infractions would be discussed with and supported by CCHS administration before they were implemented.*

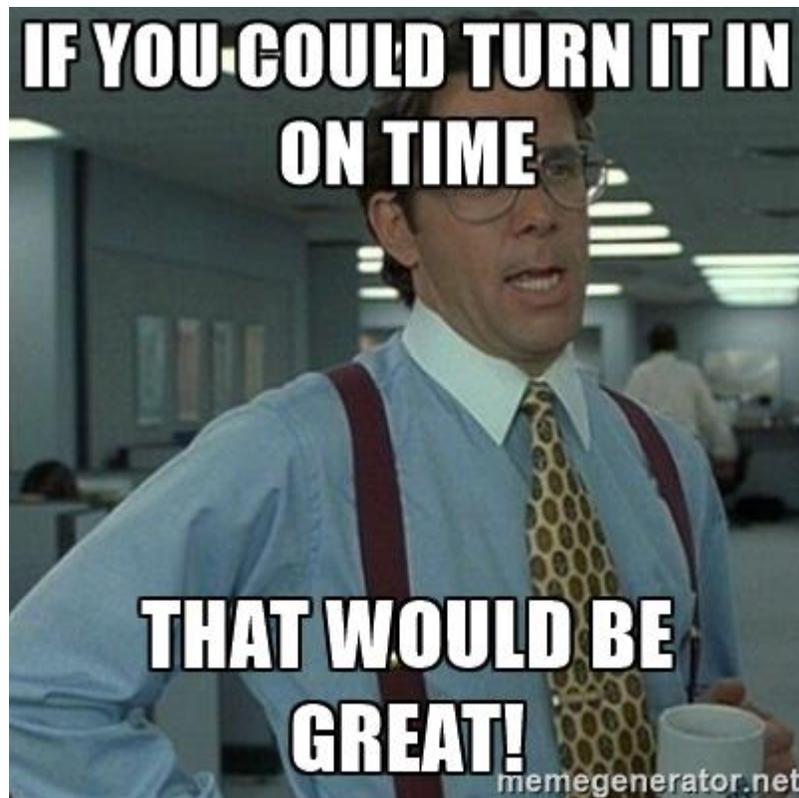
***By signing the page that acknowledges you have read and understand the CCHS Choir Handbook, you are agreeing to this CCHS Choir Student Code of Conduct and CCISD Extracurricular Code of Conduct.***

*Something happens when many students are placed into Symphonic Chorale: they become very lazy about adhering to due dates. This makes it very difficult to plan for events and pay some fees. Additionally, our varsity ensemble should consist of our most responsible students and should provide a model of leadership within the program. We hope that our JV ensemble students look to our varsity ensemble members as mentors, and we hope that our varsity members willingly and effectively step up into that role.*

*As a result, the policy below is being implemented:*

1. All Symphonic Chorale students start the year with 20 points.
2. When something is due, if they turn it in on time, they maintain all of the points they have.
3. For every day late that they turn something in, one point will be deducted from their point total.
4. Once a student's point total falls to 10 points or below, their membership in Symphonic Chorale will be re-evaluated.
5. It is possible for a vocally talented, well-behaved student who has a continual pattern of irresponsibility to be removed from the ensemble based solely on their inability to meet deadlines.

Examples of things that must be turned in include but are not limited to: Beginning-of-year supplies and binder check, beginning-of-the-year forms and fees, Astros ticket money, District Auditions Contract and Fee, Solo & Ensemble Contract and Fee, Pop Show Contract, Fund raiser turn-in, Secret Santa gifts on time, trip payments, homecoming carnival supplies (Oreos, waters, etc.), and so on.



## *Which Region Choir should you audition for?*

Due to a TMEA region realignment that added four more regions in the state (including one in the Houston area), our region has changed our region auditions and performance choirs. There is no longer a Region Men's Choir. In its place is the Region Concert Choir (a mixed choir of young men and women), designed to be a JV Region Choir – a transitional choir to bridge the gap between Middle School Region Choir and the All-State processes.

All choir students (grades 9-12) are eligible to enter into the traditional All-State process just as they always have been. There are four auditions on this track (District, Region, Pre-Area, and Area [State]) with concerts happening at the Region and State levels. The music for this track is of the highest, varsity, All-State level and requires significant independent work. It is rarely suitable for our first-year students because of its level of difficulty, and for that reason we do not recommend that freshmen and first-year choir students audition on this traditional varsity track. Nonetheless, any CCHS student can elect to enter this track in their attempt to pursue All-State. District Auditions happen in late September, Region Auditions are in late October, Pre-Area is in December, and Area is in January. It is a long process that gets progressively more difficult and intense, and students who do not attend a summer All-State camp are at a significant disadvantage to the other auditioning students.

The Region Concert Choir is open to all choir students in 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade as well as any 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders who are in their first year of high school choir. This track is **not** on the All-State track and has only one round of auditions (in October) and one performance (with the Region Mixed and Region Treble Choirs in November). The music for this choir is appropriately challenging music for our JV students.

We are *very* excited that the Region Concert Choir is now an option for our JV students. Over the years, we have seen too many talented freshmen students who made Middle School Region Choir enter the high school All-State process only to find themselves overwhelmed by the difficulty of the music and surprised by the intensity of rehearsals and auditions. Because these talented students have a poor audition experience their freshmen year, they do not audition again later in their high school career even though their skills have progressed. Their freshmen experience tainted their impression of the audition process, and they never regain their interest in auditioning for Region/State again.

The Region Concert Choir is designed to bridge the gap between Middle School Region Choir and the varsity-level Region/State Choir process. While we will support JV students who want to enter the varsity level process, we **highly recommend** these students to do at least one year of the Concert Choir audition process to build the skill set and rigorous practice habits needed for success, even those who made first chair in their middle school region audition. If it is up to us, all freshmen and most upperclassmen first year students will audition for the Region Concert Choir, and most students auditioning for the second year will audition for the varsity route. Nonetheless, this choice is one that each student makes, and we will support the decision.

If you are not sure which audition track to pursue, just ask Mr. Stultz or Mr. Park. We will talk to you about what you want out of the process and recommend the track that we think is best for you.

# FOLLOW US

Make sure to follow, add, or like us on our several social media platforms. All students and parents are encouraged to do so in order to stay connected.

While we do post last minute updates or reminders via social media, it is not our official means of communication to parents and students. For important and official updates, we will use email address submitted through Charms Office.



[www.facebook.com/creek.choir](http://www.facebook.com/creek.choir)



[www.twitter.com/clearcreekchoir](http://www.twitter.com/clearcreekchoir)



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