

GARNER MAGNET HIGH SCHOOL
Ms. Brooke Adkins
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CHORAL HANDBOOK

2024-2025

Dear Choir Students and Families,

Welcome back for the 2024-2025 school year! I want to thank you for choosing to be part of the Garner Magnet High School Chorus Department. I am looking forward to working with everyone to make beautiful music and achieve a standard of excellence.

Attached is the official GMHS Choir Handbook with all the information you will need to be successful! In this handbook, you will find grading policies, needed materials, goals, rules and expectations, and much more. Hard copies of the handbook are available upon request, however, each student will receive a hard copy list of concert dates to “put on the fridge.” My goal is to provide each student with the opportunity to be successful in and out of the classroom. The Choir Department will partake in numerous performances, travel opportunities, community outreach events, social events, and so much more!

I will always be available to you when you have questions or need additional help. Open and frequent communication between students, parents and teacher will benefit our choir program exponentially! The contents in this handbook will be discussed with all students and posted on the class website: gmhschorus.com. If there are any items that you would like further clarification on, please contact me at badkins3@wcpss.net

After reading this handbook, please complete the “GMHS Choir Contract” which will be given out the first day of class. **This is your first grade in choir**, and is due by Friday, September 6th. I look forward to meeting you! Let’s have a great year!

Musically,

Ms. Adkins

Ensembles Offered

In the Fine Arts Department, we offer 4 choral ensembles at Garner Magnet High School:

Beginning Treble Choir: This ensemble is open to all treble voices who have not been involved in the chorus program before. This group is composed of a variety of students representing all four grade levels. This non-auditioned class focuses on basic musicianship and protocol for choral rehearsals and performances. It includes an introduction to sight-reading and proper singing technique using choral literature for treble voices. Music selected will range from the 16th century through current day, including a cappella music, historical literature, as well as music from various cultures, genres, and languages. Students are expected to perform in 4 regularly scheduled chorus concerts (Fall, Winter, MPA, and Spring—see calendar on choral website). Students in this ensemble are able to audition for Die Meistersingers for the following year.

Intermediate Treble Choir: This ensemble will include soprano/alto voices in grades 10-12. Students in this group must already have a fundamental understanding of sight-reading and singing techniques. Music selected is composed specifically for 2-3 part treble voices and involves a wide range of styles, cultures, and languages. Students will perform in all regular chorus concerts and possibly at community events. All students who have completed the beginning course are welcome to continue onto this class without audition. Students are expected to perform in 4 regularly scheduled chorus concerts (Fall, Winter, MPA, and Spring—see calendar on choral website). Students in this group may perform mixed music with the other ensembles. Of course, students from this course may audition for Die Meistersingers for the following year as well.

Men's Choir: This ensemble is composed of any male student representing all four grade levels. This non-auditioned class focuses on various levels of musicianship and protocol for choral rehearsals and performances. It includes a focus on sight-reading and proper singing technique using choral literature for lower voices. Music selected will range from the 16th century through current day, including a cappella music, historical literature, as well as music from various cultures, genres, and languages. Students are expected to perform in 4 regularly scheduled chorus concerts (Fall, Winter, MPA, and Spring—see calendar on choral website). Students in this group may perform mixed music with the other ensembles.

Advanced Treble Choir (Die Meistersingers): This treble voiced ensemble will require the greatest commitment and involvement of any ensemble. Music selected is composed specifically for 3-4 part treble voices and involves a wide range of styles, cultures, and languages. Students must be proficient sight-readers and must have a working knowledge of singing technique. This ensemble will sing throughout the year at regular chorus concerts but also in various community events in our area. All students in this course are receiving honors credit for participation.

Please understand that students in this course have more outside responsibilities. Examine the calendar of expected and graded performances outside of school. If

this is too much of a commitment, please register your child for another course, as students are counting on every member being at every performance expected of them.

Communication

REMINDE MESSAGES, EMAILS, and TALKING POINTS ARE MY MAIN SOURCE OF COMMUNICATION. Students and parents are expected to join and engage in all methods of communication.

Remind Codes for the 2024-2024 school year:

Beginning Treble Choir	Send a text to this number: 81010 Text this exact message: @d3kd62
Intermediate Treble Choir	Send a text to this number: 81010 Text this exact message: @b682a3
Advanced Treble Choir (Die Meistersingers)	Send a text to this number: 81010 Text this exact message: @e427a8g6
Men's Choir (All male voices)	Send a text to this number: 81010 Text this exact message: @a49gkcf

Musical Literature

The literature learned and performed in class will be of high quality and represent a wide variety of musical samples. We will learn music that the North Carolina Music Educators Association suggests through a published music list. Music is used specifically for the purpose of its educational and artistic value. An example of the state list is viewable at: <https://www.jwpepper.com/sheet-music/services-state-festival.jsp?state=NC&stategroup=&stategroupname=#state-info>.

Students will be encouraged to take their exposure to new forms of musical literature seriously. The purpose of the class is not to entertain, but rather to further the musical knowledge and performance proficiency of the students. Such a goal will be the driving force behind all programming and rehearsal decisions.

Choral Curriculum

The curriculum taught in all choral music classes is based on the NC Essential Standards for Music Education.

The goals are condensed as follows:

- Understanding and demonstration of singing technique and vocal pedagogy
- Basic physiological understanding of tone production and care of the voice
- Musical literacy to include sight reading, interpretation, composition and dictation
- Musical harmonic/tonal structure, including scale construction, aural identification, and key signature knowledge
- Performance preparation skills and concert etiquette
- Evaluation, reflection, and critique of musical performance in both written and oral formats
- Understanding music as a product of history and world cultures

Grading Scale

- **40% Rehearsal/Concert Attendance:** If your student is out of school on a dress rehearsal or concert date due to sickness or emergency, I must be notified by a parent/guardian with an explanation. It will then be your student's responsibility to make that time up within one week of their return to school or their grade will result in a zero. Please plan appointments and trips accordingly. **Remember that Chorus is an academic class and Athletics are *extra-curricular*. I must be made aware of any potential conflicts 1 MONTH prior to a rehearsal/concert/event. If I have not been given proper notice of a conflict, this may result in a zero.**
- **40% Rehearsal Preparation:** This is a performing arts course, meaning you have to be present; you can't easily make up the time missed at home. A student will also lose points if they are texting, talking, sleeping, or doing homework. **If your student is sick and cannot sing, they must follow along in the music or complete given tasks - this is not free time.** Participation is required for all students in this course. I know that singing can be very vulnerable, but *this is a completely inclusive and welcoming environment*. I have established weekly rehearsal grades. **If you are not actively participating and engaged in class then your grade will be affected. Be ready to work!**
- **20% Quizzes:** Each semester, the students will be tested at least five times on sight reading and/or new theory material. They will also have singing quizzes where they may sing alone or with a group.

- **Midterm:** For the first semester, 10% of your semester 1 grade will be determined by a singing midterm assessment.

Make-Up Work

Absences due to illness or approved school trips allow for several days to complete make-up work. It is the STUDENT'S responsibility to secure such assignments BEFORE a known field trip and immediately after other unplanned absences, such as sickness. Missed/non-complete assignments may be made up, but a percentage penalty will apply to assignments every day that the assignment is incomplete. If an assignment involves a task that could only be completed on the particular day an activity was assigned (like a class listening assignment), the student will be omitted from that individual assignment or given a time to retake or complete an alternate assignment.

Class Materials

Always come prepared with the necessary materials and be ready to learn:

1. Sheet music
2. Pencil, never pen
3. Water bottle
4. Black binder

Independent Expectations

1. Take responsibility for your own development as a musician.
2. Every time you sing, make it a quality experience.
3. Develop an attitude of wanting to improve each day.
4. Be willing to try new things. Give it a chance and expand your mind.
5. Display an attitude of effort at all times.
6. Come to class prepared to work hard. (**This is not an "easy A"**)
7. Be present for all rehearsals and concerts.
8. Respect the efforts of others and of our differences. A positive and encouraging attitude is mandatory! Chorus is about the ensemble and what is best for the group. Work together!
9. Enjoy experiencing and making beautiful music.
10. Practice concert etiquette at all times, especially during daily rehearsals.

Classroom Expectations

The following expectations are applicable to both daily classroom rehearsals as well as to any field trip or music event held off campus:.

1. Always come prepared with the necessary materials and be ready to learn.
2. Be respectful to self, others, and property
3. Be on time!
4. No ELECTRONICS, food, gum or open drink containers are allowed in the classroom. Water bottles with sealable lids are encouraged as spills often occur on the risers.
5. Learn from both success and failure. Success rarely occurs without many mistakes to precede it! Further, it is okay to be wrong, but don't be content to stay that way!

Uniforms

Uniformity in appearance is important for choral performances. All students will wear the designated uniform for each performance. **No student will perform without the proper uniform**, which can result in a zero performance grade. Students keep their uniform and do not have to purchase another (unless they grow out of it). Students are fitted for the uniforms at school and they are ordered by the director. Tux pieces may be bought separately (if you already own one, do not purchase another one). ALL students will need to purchase closed toe black dress shoes on their own - flats are encouraged. ***Assistance can be provided for any student financially unable to purchase the proper performance outfit***

Sopranos and Altos: Approximately \$80.00 uniform fee

Tenors and Basses: Approximately \$180.00 tuxedo fee

1. Required concert dress for all Tenors and Basses consists of:
 - o Black tuxedo pants and jacket
 - o Black cummerbund and bow tie
 - o White pleated tuxedo shirt with wing-tip collar
 - o Plain white t-shirt (provided by student)
 - o Black (solid) socks (provided by student)
 - o Black dress shoes (provided by student). Black sneakers do not count.
2. Required concert dress for all Sopranos and Altos consists of:

- o Black floor length dresses hemmed to the correct length
- o Solid black closed-toe dress shoes (provided by student). Black sneakers do not count.
- o Black hosiery (provided by student)
- o Hair is up in a neat bun and away from the face
- o Appropriate makeup
- o No jewelry

Performances

Public performance is one of the most effective means of music education assessment. Because chorus is considered an academic course, grades are assigned for participation in all scheduled performances. Unexcused absences from any of these events will result in a failing performance grade. The culmination of all of our hard work is the performance. Performances are **MANDATORY.**

o The only way to be excused from a performance is to send an email at least one month before the performance explaining the reason for your absence. Not having a ride does not qualify as an excused absence. Emergencies can make an absence excused, but a parent must send me an email at most two days after the missed performance explaining why you could not attend. All unexcused absences will result in a grade of a zero.

o If you are excused from a performance, you must complete a make-up assignment. It is up to my discretion whether an absence is excused or unexcused.

I will make the final decision as to whether or not a student may perform. Out of fairness to other students, if a student has shown a lack of discipline in class or has an inordinate amount of absences, he or she may not be allowed to participate. Anyone who misses one or more classes the week before a concert might not sing in the concert. The day of the concert and the dress rehearsal are required for all students in order to perform. This is vitally important for the quality of our choirs.

Out-of-Class Rehearsals

In order to be fully prepared and successful in a performance, you will have to attend rehearsals outside of school. These rehearsals are **MANDATORY**. Dates will be given in August.

o Emergencies can make an absence excused, but a parent must send me an email at most two days after the missed rehearsal explaining why you could not attend.

o All unexcused absences will result in a grade of a zero. **It is up to my discretion whether an absence is excused or unexcused.**

o If students qualify for events like NC Honors Chorus, there is a strong possibility of extra rehearsals. These extra rehearsals will be **MANDATORY**.

GMHS Choral Boosters

The purpose of the Boosters is to support both the students and the director with the necessities for the program. Each parent of a GMHS chorus student is welcome to be a member of the GMHS Choral Boosters! **The only way the Choral Program can thrive is with the help from parents!**

There are some ways parents can assist:

1. Attend the chorus parent meetings
2. Attend all performances
3. Chaperone events off campus
4. Volunteer for choir social events, community outreach events, and field trips.
5. Actively plan and support fundraisers
6. Assist the director upon request

Fair Share & Finances

- I. The choral program at GMHS has a “Fair Share” cost to help acquire the necessary resources for choral activities throughout the year. This Fair Share is simply the monetary difference between the projected program income and the amount needed to fully support our operating budget. This need results in a financial commitment of **\$75.00 per academic year**.
- II. Fair Share funds will benefit all students in the program, as the Choral Boosters will use the money to help pay for sheet music, concert accompanists, piano maintenance/tuning, program printing, transportation and registration fees for NCMEA activities, social events,

and other items that can be viewed on the operating budget. Fundraisers are available to help cover the cost of Fair Share and Uniforms!

III. Pay via check or online at gmhschorus.com. ALL CHECKS ARE MADE OUT TO GMHS Choral Boosters. There is a lock box located in my office in the chorus classroom; any money turned in during the year must go in the lock box in a specifically labeled envelope. Items on the envelope MUST INCLUDE: Name, Date, Class Period, and purpose of payment.

No student will be excluded from chorus due to financial difficulties. The GMHS Chorus Boosters offer a benevolence program to anyone needing help with their chorus fee. Financial Aid Request forms are available upon request: gmhschorus@gmail.com

Due: November 1st

Pay [Here](#)

Chorus Trips

Various off-campus performances may occur throughout the year, though most especially for Die Meistersingers, as it is considered our “touring” group. Various permission forms will be required for each and every trip taken during the year; students MUST have these to participate. Do not be intimidated by a trip, you CAN fundraise your entire portion! We are excited for the itinerary for the upcoming school year!

GMHS Choir Contract (to be signed and returned to Ms. Adkins)

Due: Friday, September 6th

In signing, I am stating that I have read all the pages of the 2024-2025 Choral Handbook, located on Canvas and gmhschorus.com, and that I agree to all terms listed. In signing below, I recognize that there are expenses associated with being in the choral program. Performance uniforms are required and the choral program has a Fair Share support program to help fund the operating budget. Additionally, my child is expected to participate in required choral department rehearsals and concerts at GMHS during the 2024-2025 school year.

Student Name _____ (print)

Student Signature _____

Guardian's Name _____ (print)

Guardian's Signature _____ Date _____

Class Period _____ Graduation Year _____

Parent/Guardian Home Phone _____

Parent/Guardian 1 Cell Phone _____

Parent/Guardian 2 Cell Phone _____

Parent/Guardian 1 Email PRINT:

_____ ****required**

Parent/Guardian 2 Email:
