

Firestone High School Choral Department Handbook

Choral Ensembles and Requirements, pg. 2
Curriculum Guide, pg. 3
Basic Expectations and Assessment, pg. 4
Required Events Calendar, pg. 5
Parent/Student Contract and Contact form, pg. 6
(complete, detach, return)

Goal: To reinforce the skills, knowledge, attitudes and actions that will help prepare Firestone choral members to become more:

Committed
Respectful
Professional
Disciplined
Driven
Inclusive
Helpful

Adaptable
Poised
Sensitive
Intelligent
Focused
Ethical
Productive
Artistic
Diverse
Self-Sufficient
Passionate
Visionary

Mature Beyond Years
Independent (financially, emotionally, physically)

Choral Department Ensembles

Madrigal Singers (10-12, audition required)

- Students are required to participate in Symphonic Choir while a Madrigal Singer.
- Students are required to participate in community civic performances during the school year. Students arrange transportation
- Students may miss up to three civic performances without penalty
- Students must pay for or acquire a renaissance style costume for holiday civic performances and concerts
- Choral department will pay for "black tie" costume.
- Long hair must be set up and back for all performances

Vocal Jazz Ensemble (10-12, audition required)

- Students are required to participate in Symphonic Choir
- Students are required to perform in complete black with accent colors paid for by the students/parents. Long hair must be set up and back for all performances
- Students are required to take care of all electronic performance equipment

Symphonic Choir (9-12, director approval required)

- Students are required to perform in a school-owned robe over black bottoms and shoes, socks or hosiery. Robe cleaning fee (\$8) may be issued. Long hair must be set up and back for all performances
- Male members are required to sing in the Men's Chorus, meeting for several 7:30 a.m. rehearsals prior to a concert or competition. Students are required to purchase and wear men's chorus attire for performances. All men will be graded on attendance and punctual arrival at all rehearsals and performances

Women's Chorus (9-12, director approval required)

- Students are required to perform in a uniform black dress, black shoes (flats preferred), hosiery, paid for by the students/parents. Long hair must be set up and back for all performances

Men's Chorus (9-12, director approval required)

- Students are required to perform in navy blazer (single-breasted), dress khaki pants, white dress shirt, red field tie, black dress shoes and socks, paid for by the students/parents. Long hair must be set up and back for all performances
- All men are required to meet for several 7:30 a.m. rehearsals prior to a concert or competition. All men will be graded on attendance and punctual arrival at all rehearsals and performances

Intermediate Choir (9-12)

- Students are required to perform in complete black, including black shoes and socks, hosiery, or tights, paid for by the students/parents. Long hair must be set up and back for all performances

FHS CHORAL CURRICULUM GUIDE

I. Taking ownership of quality choral literature

A. Research/analysis of each piece presented.

1. Historic context
2. Form
3. Rhythmic elements.
4. Composer insight
5. Tonal patterns
6. Interpretation of text
7. Specific artistic elements of the piece.

II. Proficiency in Music Reading

A. Rhythmic symbols

1. Identify and execute orally and manually.

B. Pitch symbols.

1. Identify and execute vocally.
2. Demonstrate solfeggio/Curwen skills

C. Written dictation.

1. Rhythmic
2. Melodic

D. Sight-singing.

1. Identifying tonal center.
2. Interval identification.

E. Aural scale identification.

1. Major
2. Natural minor
3. Harmonic minor
4. Melodic minor
5. Chromatic
6. Pentatonic
7. Whole Tone

F. Aural triad identification

1. Major
2. Minor
3. Diminished
4. Augmented

III. Vocal Technique

A. Vocal pedagogy.

1. Anatomy.
2. Application and production issues.
3. Health issues.

B. Choral techniques.

1. Vowel unification.
2. Consonant alignment
3. Blend.
4. Textures.
5. Sculpting of phrases.
6. Handling climactic areas.
7. Articulation.
8. Legato a la "grace note"
9. Flow and when to use vibrato.
10. Group dynamics/communication concepts.

C. Performance Needs.

1. Visual unity of ensemble.
2. Facial expression.
3. Posture and poise.
4. Adapting to acoustic environment

IV. Art History Concepts

A. Tracing the origin of printed/choral music.

1. Analysis of cultural eras and relating historical advancements with development of the arts.
 - a. Medieval
 - b. Renaissance
 - c. Baroque.
 - d. Classical
 - e. Romantic
 - f. Impressionistic

REQUIRED PERFORMANCE ATTIRE

(All attire expenses are paid for by the student/parent.)

MADRIGAL SINGERS: Issued Tuxedo/Gown and Renaissance Costume

VOCAL JAZZ ENSEMBLE: Concert Black

MEN'S CHORUS: Navy Blazer (single-breasted), dress khaki pants, white dress shirt, red field tie, dark dress shoes and socks.

WOMEN'S CHORUS: Black formal gown (Ordered in early September.)

INTERMEDIATE CHOIR: Concert Black

SYMPHONIC CHOIR: Issued robes, all black bottoms, hosiery, footwear.

Basic Expectations and Assessment
“Preparing the student for ANY professional career”

Basic Expectations (Expected in any job):

- **BE IN CLASS**
(Unexcused absences from class will result in complete loss of daily participation points and an office referral)
(Post-Secondary obligations must be complete by the beginning of choir class, or with prior arrangement)
(Field trip obligations must be conveyed in advance and work made up)
(Excused absence points must be made up with the teacher in a private conference following the absence. Grade will remain “0” until conference is scheduled. Conference must be scheduled and executed no later than one month after the absence. Conferences can include discussions, singing, or additional assignments)
- **BE PUNCTUAL**
(Each tardy results in deduction of 5 daily participation points. 4 tardies earn an office referral)
- **ALWAYS HAVE NECESSARY SUPPLIES**
(Music, folder, pencil, handouts are always required. No supplies will result in a 5 point daily grade deduction. Be dressed appropriately for concerts and performances. Failure to be dressed appropriately will result in a deduction)
- **CHECK BOARD FOR SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS**
(Where to sit, who conducts warm-ups, goals to accomplish)
- **ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT AT ALL TIMES**
(No electronic devices, personal items, gum, homework, or other distractions. Failure to comply will result in loss of daily participation points)
- **MATURE, PROFESSIONAL DEMEANOR AT ALL TIMES**
(Exhibit self-control, follow directions promptly, stay focused)
(Treat teacher, peers, and property with respect)
(Attitude and demeanor in class are graded under “daily participation” and have a rubric)

Development of Technique (What makes you valuable to our company?)

- **READ MUSIC NOTATION FOR PITCH AND RHYTHM**
(Speed and accuracy development expected. Sight-reading and literature tests will be given)
- **SING ACCURATE PITCHES AND RHYTHM**
(Apply music reading with timing and tuning to other voices)
- **SING AUDIBLY**
(Take risks, experiment with different volumes of sound)
- **SING ARTISTICALLY/EXPRESSIVELY**
(Add elements of vibrato, tone color, phrasing to make an impact)
- **MODEL IN FRONT OF PEERS**
(In an ensemble and as a soloist)
- **CONDUCT WARM-UPS EFFECTIVELY**
(Practice daily in rehearsal so you are confident when you model)
- **TAKE NOTES**
(Always write down concepts covered. Create your own “textbook” from your music)
- **REHEARSE OUTSIDE OF CLASS**
(Expected! Listen to models, practice with friends. Practice makes permanent!)

Assessments

- **Daily Participation** (see “Basic Expectations” and “Development of Technique”): 45 % of student grade
- **Major Performances (Concerts, Competitions, School Events)**: 45 % of student grade
-Publically demonstrates mastery of all objectives. Attendance is mandatory. Calendar list of these events are attached to the handbook. In the unlikely event that a conflict should occur, the student must have parents put conflict in writing and submit eight weeks in advance for exemption
-In order to make up points from any missed excused performance absence, students must write a 15 page paper on a music topic agreed on between student and teacher
- **Tests/Quizzes** (Performance-Based/Sight Reading/Written): 10 % of student grade

Rehearsal Norms and Expectations

Preparing for Class (Separates the true professional from the amateur)

- **HEALTH:** Adequate nightly sleep and daily rest, proper nutrition
(Your body is your instrument. An instrument must be maintained, cared for, and "polished." In order to do professional work, you must be healthy balanced. 94% of the workforce is not appropriately rested and nutritionally balanced)
- **SCORE PREPARATION:** Preparing your material in advance of in-class rehearsals and outside of class practice
(Actively mark all musical concepts in your score. Review and refine outside of class. Mark solfege, counting, harmony, and phrasing as you practice prior to in-class rehearsal)
- **PRACTICE AND PREPARATION:** Knowledge of basic pitch content, rhythm, harmony, and phrasing prior to in-class rehearsals
(Rehearsal is done in class while practice is done outside of class. Basic elements of music must be learned and reinforced outside of class time. Develop and execute many strategies to insure success. Practice alone and with groups of various sizes, listen to models, attend concerts, develop a practice/rehearsal plan etc. True success comes to those who learn, practice, and repeat what they acquire)

Class Rehearsals (Professionalism knows no limits and is the foundation of success and integrity)

- **BODY AND FACE ACTIVELY ENGAGED**
(Rehearse with excellent posture and facial engagement. The professional artist holds the interest of the group and individual integrity above all. Sing with appropriate posture and demonstrate facial engagement when you perform and during rehearsal time)
- **ASK THOUGHTFUL AND MEANINGFUL QUESTIONS AT APPROPRIATE MOMENTS**
(Questions show active thinking and meaningful contribution. Feel free to ask high-thinking and critical questions at appropriate times. Inappropriate or excessive questions at inappropriate times will not be tolerated)
- **DISCUSSION AND TALKING ONLY AT APPROPRIATE MOMENTS**
(Firestone choral rehearsals require significant singer contribution and discussion. When prompted to contribute to a discussion, do so thoroughly and critically. Individual side discussions are not permitted during class rehearsals)
- **SING MUSICALLY, TAKE RISKS, DEMONSTRATE LEADERSHIP**
(True learning and development take place when we take risks and make errors. Do not be afraid to make mistakes and take healthy risks. Firestone choral members have a legacy of ensemble, school and community leadership)
- **POSITIVE WORDS, ACTIONS, AND OUTLOOK**
(Only positive words, actions and philosophies are tolerated in rehearsal. Leave all negativity and "drama" at the door. Choose positive words and an enthusiastic mindset)

Outside of Rehearsal (Go out into the world and be your amazing and wonderful self every day)

- **REPRESENT THE FHS CHOIRS WITH DISTINCTION AND EXCELLENCE OUTSIDE OF THE CHOIR ROOM**
(You are the face of the FHS choirs wherever you go. Represent yourself, your peers, your work, and the FHS choral legacy with excellence every day outside of class. Demonstrate a positive attitude, speak no gossip or negativity, and find ways to make a positive impact in your school and community)

Rehearsal "Sign-Ups"

- **Quote of the Week:** Sign up to present a meaningful quote to your peers. Quotes must be thoughtful, thought provoking, and serious. When you sign up, you are committed to researching and preparing your quote, presenting the quote, dressing for the presentation, and consulting with director prior to presentation
- **Back Rub Music:** Pick a song of any genre to play during our "back rub" body preparation time prior to singing. Songs must be school appropriate (no foul language or mature themes) and exciting! You must arrive to class early to set up your device.
- **Midweek Meditation:** Sign up to present a two minute "meditation" on a quote, idea, theme, or societal event. This is a time to make an impact and teach or make aware something important to you and your peers. When you sign up, you are committed to research, preparation, dressing for the presentation and consulting with director prior to presentation

Firestone High School Choral Department Required Events 2017-2018

Friday September 29	<u>Capital University Fall Concert (Optional Field Trip)</u> (Symphonic, Men's, Women's)	8:00 p.m. Concert 3:00 p.m. School Departure
Tuesday October 24	<u>Fall Concert of Choirs</u> (All Choirs)	7:30 p.m. (6:30 arrival)
Thursday October 26	<u>Westminster Presbyterian Rehearsal #1</u> (Symphonic)	7:00 p.m.-8:30 p.m.
Thursday November 2	<u>Westminster Presbyterian Rehearsal #2</u> (Symphonic)	7:00 p.m.-8:30 p.m.
Saturday November 4	<u>Westminster Presbyterian Dress Rehearsal</u> (Symphonic)	10 a.m.-12 p.m.
Sunday November 5	<u>Westminster Presbyterian Major Work Performance</u> (Symphonic)	5:00 p.m. Concert (4:00 p.m. arrival)
Friday November 17	<u>Kent State University Collaboration Concert</u> (Men's)	Evening TBA
Saturday December 2	<u>Cleveland State University Collaboration Concert</u> (Symphonic)	4:00 PM Concert
Tuesday December 12	<u>Holiday Concert of Choirs</u> (All Choirs)	7:30 p.m. (6:30 arrival)
Friday December 14	<u>Holiday Assembly at Firestone</u> (Madrigals, Vocal Jazz)	AM Assembly
Saturday January 27	<u>OMEA Solo and Ensemble Contest</u> (All ASA voice students)	All day
Wednesday February 14	<u>Choirs in the Round</u> (Symphonic)	7:00 p.m.
Thu February 15-Sat February 17	<u>ACDA Optional Field Trip to Chicago</u> (Symphonic)	Field Trip
Friday March 2 or Saturday March 3	<u>OMEA District Competition</u> (Symphonic, Women's, Men's)	Friday (PM) Saturday (AM or afternoon)
Friday April 20 or Saturday April 21	<u>OMEA State Competition</u> (Symphonic, Women's, Men's)	Friday (PM) Saturday (AM or afternoon)
Sunday May 6	<u>Fairlawn Lutheran Church Concert</u> (Symphonic)	4:00 p.m. 2:00 p.m. arrival
Thursday May 17	<u>Litchfield Spring Concert</u> (Women's)	Evening
Tuesday May 22	<u>FINALE Concert of Choirs and Senior Recognition</u> (All Choirs)	7:30 p.m. (6:30 arrival)
Tuesday June 5	<u>Commencement</u> (Current and 2018-2019 future Symphonic members)	7:00 p.m. (6:00 arrival)

*Men's Chorus refers to all third period Men's Chorus class students and all Symphonic Choir Men

*A grade will be given for attendance at all required events

*Unless notated in field trip information forms, students will arrange and provide transportation to all required events

*Post-Secondary students must attempt to make arrangements to be present for all events during school hours

Parent/Student Contract and Contact Form

One of the goals of the FHS Choral Department is to encourage students to honor commitments, exceed expectations in all things and develop a strong work ethic. These all combine to form integrity.

Parents are the most important influence, modeling these attributes and insisting that their children exhibit them. In an effort to promote communication between the Choral Director, the student and the parent, please complete the following information. This remains in the choral office and will only be accessed when necessary.

Completed form must be returned by Friday September 8 for a passing grade.

Student Name (print)	Cell Phone	<u>Active</u> e-mail address
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Parent/Guardian #1 Name	Relationship
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Daytime Phone #	Evening Phone #	<u>Active</u> e-mail address
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Parent/Guardian #2 Name	Relationship
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Daytime Phone #	Evening Phone #	<u>Active</u> e-mail address
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I have reviewed this packet and understand the basic expectations and assessments of the Firestone High School Choral Department. I understand all individual choir requirements and agree to abide by all rules and policies included in this packet. I agree to honor all performance dates listed on the required events calendar and will acquire proper attire prior to the first public concert.

Student Signature	Date
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I have read this packet and understand the basic expectations and assessments of the Firestone High School Choral Department. I understand all individual choir requirements and agree to help my student honor all requirements and policies included in this packet. I agree to facilitate transportation for all performance dates listed on the required events calendar and will assist my student in acquiring proper attire prior to the first public concert.

Parent Signature	Date
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