



# **Smyrna High School Choir Handbook 2023-2024**

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[www.twitter.com/ChoirSmyrna](https://www.twitter.com/ChoirSmyrna)

[www.youtube.com/@ChoirSmyrna](https://www.youtube.com/@ChoirSmyrna)

Dear Parents/Guardians and Students,

We are so excited to welcome you to Smyrna's Choral Program! We hope you all had a great summer and are ready for a fun and productive year! We are so grateful that you have decided to join this wonderful musical community.

Here are some things you should know about choir:

- Choir is a place for students to experience community, practice excellence, and create beautiful music.
- In choir, students work to develop proper vocal technique, vocal independence, reading and listening skills, self-confidence, professionalism, teamwork, as well as gaining a historical and cultural perspective of the music they are singing.
- Parental support is strongly encouraged! Parents will have a number of opportunities to become involved in your child's success, and we will find ways for you to support the choral program that will fit with your schedule.

Please read all of the information in this packet carefully and return all online forms by **Friday, August 25, 2023**. Feel free to contact us by phone or email if any questions you have were not addressed in this handbook.

We greatly look forward to directing your students this year!!

Sincerely,

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## **Goals**

- Study and perform quality literature.
- Demand a disciplined, professional approach in rehearsal and performance.
- Provide a well-rounded musical experience, including knowledge of music history, musical terminology, listening experiences in a variety of genres, and a strong foundation in music literacy.
- Integrate music into other disciplines of study.
- Properly use and take care of the vocal mechanism.
- Learn and apply performance skills, audition techniques, and concert etiquette.
- Develop leadership skills.
- Encourage and build upon students' strengths and talents.
- Build students' self-esteem and confidence.
- Bring joy to those we come in contact with through music.
- Create a friendly and accepting choral family.

## **Communication**

Communication is most effective when it is proactive, collaborative, and cordial. Email is the fastest and easiest way to reach Mr. Doo ([doog@rcschools.net](mailto:doog@rcschools.net)) and Ms. Cooper ([cooperann@rcschools.net](mailto:cooperann@rcschools.net)). You can also follow Smyrna Choirs on Twitter (@ChoirSmyrna), YouTube (@ChoirSmyrna), the website, and Remind for updates, information, and performance videos.

**Remind101** is a text service you can sign up for that sends text reminders to students/guardians about upcoming events/policies. Text the code associated with your class to 81010 to sign up for messages. (include the @ symbol)

Chamber Choir (2<sup>nd</sup> Period): @shs-cham

Concert Choir (4<sup>th</sup> Period): @shs-con

Treble Choir (5<sup>th</sup> Period): @shs-treb

Advanced Treble Choir (7th Period): @shs-adtreb

Parents (optional): @shs-choirp

**The Smyrna Choir Website** is the central hub of information for the Choral Program. All handouts given to students are posted on each choir's portion of the site. You can also watch videos of past performances.

**It is the student's and parents' responsibility** to check email, social media, and the website regularly. If your contact information changes, please notify Mr. Doo or Ms. Cooper. Parents, please feel free to contact Mr. Doo or Ms. Cooper anytime about your student's progress in school – We are happy to discuss ways we can work together to make their experience a good one!

## **Repertoire**

Repertoire for each ensemble will encompass all periods of music history and all styles associated with the Western Classical tradition. Because choral music has its beginnings in the church, many of the texts we sing will be religious in nature. This is not in an effort to endorse nor denounce any particular theological message. Rather, all music is chosen for its *artistic* and *musical* benefits to the individual and ensemble. With this in mind, students are expected to artistically understand and perform music with texts from a variety of authors, even if they do not explicitly approve of the message.

## **Classroom Materials**

All ensemble music will be provided to each choir member. All materials given to students will be assigned a value; fines will be assessed for any materials not returned at the conclusion of each semester.

All students are provided with a **half-inch, black, three-ring binder**, required at each rehearsal. This folder is for choral music and notes only and should not be used for other classes. With the exception of home practice and out-of-school performances, the folder is to stay in your assigned numbered slot in the choir room. Do not mark on the outside of your choral folder as we will use it for performance

A **pencil** (not a pen) **is required** at each rehearsal. You will need some notebook paper in your choral binder for notes.

## **Choir Fees/Fundraisers**

### **Choir Fees**

Each choir student is required to pay a **\$40** choir fee (**\$50** for Chamber Choir), **due Friday, August 25, 2023**. This fee helps to cover costs such as the purchasing of music, hiring of accompanists, association fees, festival entrance fees, the cost of transportation, uniform cleaning, etc. **Included** in this fee is a **Choir T-Shirt** for all members. Students who take advantage of free or reduced lunch benefits may confidentially speak with Ms. Cooper and Mr. Doo to arrange a modified fee schedule.

### **Philosophy surrounding Choir Fees**

No student will be turned away from the Smyrna Choirs because of financial hardship or inability to pay choir fees. We adhere to an inclusive philosophy, encouraging participation and working with families to devise a plan that includes a combination of delayed payments, scholarships, and fundraising. Parents can confidentially and freely speak with Ms. Cooper or Mr. Doo if needed.

### **Additional Fees**

Additional choral opportunities, such as auditions and participation in Honor Choirs, Field Trips, etc., may require additional fees to cover participation, registration, etc.

### **Money/Payments**

All money should be paid in check/money order or cash so that appropriate records will be in place and payments can be easily tracked. Checks should be made out to *Smyrna High School Choir* and will be deposited in the school accounts by the SHS bookkeeper. If the last name on the check is different than that of the student, please put the student's name in the "memo" line. ***Please put all cash payments in an envelope with the student's name and what the payment is for on it.*** All cash payments will receive a receipt.

Choir fees can be paid via School Cash Online in addition to cash or check. Details will be sent out via email.

## **Performance Attire**

Performance attire will be provided to each student free of charge. This is possible because of student involvement in multiple fundraising opportunities. As these opportunities arise, please participate so that we can continue to provide uniforms for all students.

Students who are not in proper and presentable performance attire will have points deducted from their grade and may not be allowed to perform.

Attire will be ordered in the first few weeks of school and will be the same for each year. Specific information regarding alterations, etc will be given during class.

### **Dress**

Long black concert dress (\$90 to replace), black closed-toe dress shoes, **no perfume**

### **Tuxedo**

Tuxedo (tuxedo shirt, pants, cummerbund, bowtie) (\$70 to replace), Black dress shoes/socks, black undershirt, **no cologne**

***\*\*If a uniform is damaged or lost, students are required to replace them at full cost.\*\****

*Those who require modified performance attire for religious or other reasons should speak with Ms. Cooper and Mr. Doo at the beginning of the school year.*

## **Grading**

Your grade will be calculated as follows:

### **50% Assessments**

*Students will be assessed regularly (once a 9-weeks) to document progress in their musical abilities. Students will be graded based on their growth, not achievement. Students will also have weekly written assessments to complete in class.*

### **40% Performances/Rehearsal Professionalism**

*Students will receive regular grades based on how they rehearse in class. Any after-school rehearsals will also be assessed. All performances and performance reviews will be graded as they appear.*

### **10% Materials**

*Students will receive regular grades based on coming prepared with materials to class. They will also receive grades for turning in additional paperwork and forms.*

## **Performances**

**All performances are mandatory.** Notify parents, coaches, employers, etc. as soon as you are informed of a concert performance. A full choir schedule is available on the choir website.

**IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO KNOW ABOUT CONCERT DATES AND INFORM ALL PARENTS/COACHES OF POTENTIAL CONFLICTS.** All efforts will be made to accommodate students with school-related conflicts, however it is imperative to notify Mr. Doo, Ms. Cooper, and the sponsor of the other activity as soon as a conflict arises so a suitable alternative can be determined. Failure to notify Mr. Doo or Ms. Cooper of a conflict in a timely manner (*at least* two weeks in advance) might result in an inability to solve scheduling problems.

**Call times** are a concert-specific time before the performance. The scheduled call time is when *rehearsal* begins, therefore students should arrive in full concert dress at least five minutes early for roll call. Tardiness will have an extremely adverse effect on students' performance grades. Call times are in the performance location and for students only – no parents or friends, please! **Students who do not yet drive** are still held to this tardy policy, so it is your responsibility to find a ride to events. In most cases, the choir room will remain open after school for those wishing to stay on a weekday after school.

In short, being a part of a performing arts class involves co-curricular requirements that are a part of your grade! Be proactive in maintaining a personal calendar with your dates for family, church, sports, choir, etc! Stay on top of these things and communicate about any potential conflicts!

Students who are unable to perform **for any reason** will be given an alternative assignment, consisting of submitting a recording of themselves singing their part to the concert alone or with a recording, and writing an analysis paper assessing a recording of the concert.

## **Classroom Procedures**

### **Expectations**

In the choir classroom, there are 3 expectations that all students must follow:

1. Respect others.

Respecting other people (including your peers, the directors, and guests) is an essential part of being a successful member of the choral ensemble. We must respect one another in order to grow and perform at our highest possible level. ***This includes: being on time to class with necessary materials, following all instructions, keeping phones and electronic devices put away unless otherwise stated, and having a positive attitude during rehearsals.***



2. Respect yourself.

In order to perform your best, you must give your best effort. By doing so, you show yourself respect and are able to learn and develop as a musician. ***This includes being able to self-reflect and evaluate your performance as a choir member, trying something new, and giving your best effort every day.***

3. Respect the materials.

The classroom materials provided are essential to the learning of all students. In order to maintain a positive classroom environment, all materials (including music, chairs, markers, and rehearsal spaces) must be kept in good condition. ***This includes keeping all food, gum, and drink (except for bottled water) outside of the classroom. Students should not play any instruments or use teacher materials without permission.***

### Consequences

1. Warning/Conference with student.
2. Parent Contact.
3. Administrator referral.

*Each infraction of the classroom rules will be documented.*

***\*\*Any student who has received OSS or has received ISS multiple times may not attend off-campus field trips\*\****

### Restroom Breaks

Students will be able to sign out using the school wide e-hall pass to go to the restroom during class time. Students may not use the restroom for the first or last 10 minutes of the class. It is best practice to enter and exit the room quietly when doing so.

Students may not use the restroom when a director is working with their section so there is not lost instruction. Students who miss excessive class time for restroom breaks may be denied to leave the room during class.

### Practice Rooms

The Choir Room has three areas available for individual or group practice. You may reserve these with a director; please do not enter them without prior permission.

## **Singing Assessments**

Students will be assessed regularly throughout the year via singing assessments. Students will perform excerpts from the music and demonstrate sight-singing ability with Mr. Doo or Ms. Cooper. Students will be graded on their growth, not achievement.

## **Final Exam**

If a student attends all performances AND meets the exam exemption policies outlined by Smyrna High School, they will be exempt from the final exam. Otherwise, students will be given a written exam that covers material from the entire year.

## **Rehearsal Professionalism**

One of the goals of the Smyrna Choirs is to give students the experience of being a professional musician in training. This includes having all class materials, maintaining an accessible and orderly music folder, keeping proper singing posture, and encouraging a rehearsal atmosphere conducive to success.

However, a student's grade in choir is not based on behavior; Rehearsal Professionalism will be dealt with as discipline issues, following the Smyrna Discipline plan. Each of these infractions are documented and will follow the same sequence of consequences listed in the previous page:

- Not being in the seat when the bell rings.
- Leaving folders or trash in rehearsal areas.
- Excessive talking.
- Gum/Food/Drink in rehearsal (except bottled water)
- Poor choral posture when singing.
- Failure to fully participate in classroom activities.
- Any action which might require an attitude adjustment.
- Foul language.
- Acting on a field trip in a manner which does not represent Smyrna High School, your family, or yourself in a positive manner.

## **Choir Officers**

The Choir Officers are a peer-selected and director-approved group of students who distribute information, organize events/fundraisers, and work to improve the choir program.

The 2023-2024 Officers are:

**President:** Rachel Harlan

**Vice-President:** Faith Carbonari

**Secretary:** Logan Watson

**Historian:** Keturah Cesar

**Head Music Librarians:** Lindsey Carcamo, Gwyn Herod, Veronica Robertson

**Head Uniform Managers:** Alyssa Corbin, Reagan Mattingly

If you have any questions or wish to help these students in any way, please reach out to them! They would love for you to volunteer.

## **Classroom Jobs**

There are several roles in the choir classroom that students will have the opportunity to participate in. Students can get excellent leadership and relationship-building skills by taking advantage of these roles if they so choose. These roles were created to help benefit the choral ensemble and classroom environment.

### **Section Leaders:**

These students will be selected by the directors to serve as role models and mentors to those in their section. These students should be seen as leaders in the section and may be asked to take attendance, lead sectionals, or provide feedback to the members of their section. 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade students are eligible for this role.

### **Music Librarians:**

Students may volunteer for this position, which will be approved by the directors. These students will work to assist the Head Music Librarian. Music Librarians will be asked to keep the music library organized and cleaned. They will be responsible for passing out and collecting music. If a student is missing a copy of a piece, the Music Librarians will be the first people they will ask.

**Historians:**

Students may volunteer for this position, which will be approved by the directors. Historians will take pictures at events, performances, and sometimes in rehearsals to send to Mr. Doo or Ms. Cooper for Twitter, the Webpage, and the yearbook.

**Uniform Managers:**

Students may volunteer for this position, which will be approved by the directors. These students will work with the Head Uniform Manager to pass out and collect uniforms from students. They will assist in organizing uniforms in the Uniform Room as well.

**Individual Opportunities****Rutherford County/Mid-State/All-State Choirs**

One of the most prestigious honors a high school singer can receive is an invitation to sing with the Rutherford County, Mid-State, and All- State Choirs. Auditions are held early in the Fall semester, with the Honor Choirs held during the Winter and Spring (see calendar for exact dates). All choir students are encouraged to audition for these choirs! Note – if you audition and are selected for Rutherford County, Mid-State, or All-State Choirs, you are required to attend. Sometimes this includes additional fees for hotel, transportation, or participation fees/music. Please take all dates into consideration when auditioning.

**Voice Lessons**

Voice lessons are offered on a weekly basis during a student's choir class. Students will be excused from choir class into one of the practice rooms for voice instruction (which means parents do not need to transport students after school!). All voice teachers have been vetted by Mr. Doo and Ms. Cooper, are fingerprinted and undergo a background check, and are considered employees of the Rutherford County Schools. Information about the cost of voice lessons will be available in the first few weeks of the school year.

## **Travel**

There will be many occasions when we travel off campus. The destinations will range from very close to very far, however student behavior is to be exemplary regardless of distance or duration. Going on trips is a privilege and not a right; Ms. Cooper and Mr. Doo reserve the right to forbid any student from attending an off-campus function if the student does not exhibit the requisite maturity level needed for such responsibility. Students who have failing grades in their classes will not be permitted to travel.

## **Parent Involvement**

Parents are an integral part to our success! Please be receptive when needs arise and volunteer to help. But mostly, make every effort to attend your child's concerts! Thank you for all you do!

## **Choir Information Form**

Please scan the code below and complete the information by Friday, August 25, 2023.

