

Centennial High School

Choral Handbook 2023-2024

Principal: Dr. Opie Blackwell
Chorus Director: Chelsea C. Burney

On behalf of our administration and myself, I gladly welcome you to the Centennial High School Choral Music Program. You are now a very important member of an ensemble in what has been recognized as one of the finest high schools in the state of Georgia. I sincerely hope you will enjoy being a part of this organization, which continues to build a tradition of superior performance and musical excellence.

I believe the choir program offers many opportunities to the individual student: to demonstrate and build his/her musical ability, to develop leadership skills, and a sense of responsibility, to meet and develop new friends, to participate in musical activities, to perform as a representative of Centennial HS, and to discover the unique thrill of performance through choral singing. We will be constantly working hard to learn music for our performances as our participation in concerts, clinics, and festivals will keep us busy as well as involved.

This handbook is provided to make your orientation to the Choral Music Department a quick and easy task. I encourage you and your parents to read this handbook so that you may better understand our policies, regulations, and your new obligations. A Centennial High School Choir Member should be cooperative, strive for the highest possible scholastic record, develop a wholesome attitude toward the Choir, school, and community, and in general, distinguish him/herself by always doing the right thing at the right time.

I am looking forward to working with each one of you. Your talent and hard work can make this year at Centennial very exciting, fun-filled, and musically rewarding for all of us.

Chelsea C. Burney
Chorus Director
Centennial High School
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Philosophy

Music allows us to celebrate and preserve our cultural heritages, and also to explore the realms of expression, imagination, and creation resulting in new knowledge. Therefore, every individual should be guaranteed the opportunity to learn music and to share in musical experiences.

Choral ensembles are geared towards ensemble performance. Though relevant music theory and history will be learned, it will not be the focus of the course. Aspects of vocal pedagogy will be learned in the class also, though not intended to be a substitute for private music lessons. The choral ensemble experience enables students to receive a well-rounded music education in performance, theory, history, culture, and beyond.

Goals for Choral Ensembles

- Maintain a superior standing in all performing ensembles
- Increase participation and awareness
- Offer new opportunities and experiences for students

Goals for Individuals in Choral Ensembles

- To develop correct vocal techniques.
- To develop fundamental music skills in notation and sight-singing.
- To recognize musical elements and demonstrate expressive qualities in varying styles of choral music.
- To contribute to the blend, balance, and quality of the ensemble by developing the ability to sing a part securely.
- To have opportunities for the enjoyment of music through active participation.
- To develop self-discipline by functioning as a responsible member of the organization.
- To experience successful achievement and pleasure through group involvement.
- To develop personal character traits of leadership, poise, and dependability as well as provide an avenue for self-expression.
- To develop a desire to continue musical experiences.

Guidelines for Success- The Power of WE!!!!

Responsibilities of Choir Members:

- To attend school and rehearsals regularly and account for all absences.
- To make a genuine effort to learn and improve daily.
- To become responsible for actions and assume the consequences thereof.
- To be personally clean and neat, and dress appropriately.
- To have proper respect for those in authority.
- To follow the classroom rules, school regulations, and travel instructions.
- To be respectful of school property.
- To cooperate with fellow choir members and to share with them the responsibilities and privileges that are part of the choral program.
- To contribute positively to the music education of others by performing to the best of one's talent.
- To gain understanding of music and to develop good listening habits.

How Parents Can Help:

- Show an interest in the music study of your child.
- Encourage your child to perform for others when the opportunity arises, whether at home, school, church, or the community.

- Keep a record of the student's various music activities.
- Notify the teacher if your child is to be absent or tardy at rehearsals or performances.
- Teach your child to be punctual at rehearsals and performances.
- Ensure that your child keeps up with classroom studies and makes up missed work.
- Discuss with the director anything that will help her understand your child.
- Attend concerts and other events involving your child. Show your support!!!

General Chorus Conduct and Procedures

We are all here because we have something in common; we enjoy singing. How we sound as a group has a lot to do with how we work together. If you will follow the class procedures listed below every day of the year, the result will be a choral group that truly makes beautiful music.

1. Arrive to class on time. See the CHS handbook for tardy policies.
2. Be prepared for class.
3. No food, drink or gum allowed in the chorus room with the exception of water.
4. Cell phones and other devices may be used ONLY when instructed. Devices are not to be used or seen during independent practice unless told otherwise.
5. Take care of all music assigned to you. Any damage or loss of music will result in a \$3 fee per octavo. This includes writing in the music with ink.
6. Have a good attitude- it results in even better music!
7. Refrain from talking or disrupting any rehearsal or concert.

Bathroom Privileges: It is expected that all students will be in rehearsal for the allotted time each day, however emergencies do arise. If someone needs to use the restroom, choose the proper time to leave (note this should never be while singing). Consequences will arise if the bathroom privileges are abused by an individual or class.

Sickness: If a student is unable to sing because of a sore throat, cough, etc., please notify me at the **beginning** of class. During the class period, sit to the side of the room and follow along with the rehearsal. The student will be expected to mark his/her scores and take any other notes given and to participate with the class in other non-singing activities for the day.

Preparation: Much of the student's grade will be based on preparation for rehearsals and performances with the goal of demonstrating mastery of standards. Preparation for rehearsals includes having all required materials every day and may include some outside practice. If any works are to be memorized, memorization quizzes may be given and should be studied for outside of class time. Preparation for a performance includes having the applicable uniform and music. Failure to be prepared may result in a lowering of the student's grade as seen fit by the director.

All school policies (found in the student handbook) will be followed and any violation of school rules will be handled in accordance to the school's guidelines.

Concerts and Rehearsals

All performances and rehearsals are **REQUIRED!** Students will be graded on preparation/ memorization. Conflicts for concerts should be brought to the director at least two weeks in advance with parent contact. In case of family emergency, the director must be notified by the parent/guardian of the student as soon as reasonably possible. Students who are absent from any scheduled rehearsal or concert should complete the assignments below according to

the number of absences. **Failure to do the required assignment(s) will result in a grade of zero for the missed performance or rehearsal and incomplete assignments (not adhering to all required elements) will result in a lowered grade.**

Please note: Employment or unavailable transportation is **NOT** a valid excuse for absence from a rehearsal or performance.

Missed Rehearsal:

1. Write a 100-word essay on the value of every individual to a musical organization. Include a word count.
2. Write a 350-word report on any composer whose music was performed during the missed rehearsal. Use your own words. Include a works cited at the conclusion of the paper (this includes citing web addresses, if applicable). Include a word count.

Missed Concert:

1. Write a 600-word report on the music of one of the five major historical periods (Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic, or Contemporary). Use your own words. Include works cited at the conclusion of the paper (this includes citing web addresses, if applicable). Include a word count.
2. For every piece you would have sung at the concert, provide the following information:
 - a. Title(s)
 - b. Composer/Arranger
 - c. 50 word biography on composer/arranger
 - d. Write a 100-word paragraph explaining what the text (or translation thereof) means to you.

OR

Submit a recording of you performing your voice part for each piece you learned for the missed concert. You will be graded on accuracy as well as posture and technique.

IMPORTANT: All make-up assignments must be typed (double spaced, Times New Roman 12-point font) and emailed to Mrs. Burney burneyc@fultonschools.org. Make-ups will be graded on content, form, and grammar. Make up assignments are due the date of missed event for scheduling absences. Students that miss due to illness or death in the family will follow the school make-up policy.

Student Activity Conflicts

There are times when students simultaneously participate in an organized sport or performing group. Conflicts occasionally arise when practices and regularly scheduled events take place concurrently. Although every attempt will be made to keep such scheduling to a minimum, conflicts will inevitably arise. Ms. Burney will work with coaches and staff to ensure students are able to participate in all activities.

Fund-raising

Fundraising is a crucial activity for the choir program at Centennial HS. It enables us to purchase those materials necessary to enhance the choral music experience in ways which would normally not be possible through district funding and class fees (such materials include music folders, larger quantities of music, sound equipment, travel for competition, etc.). Because everyone benefits as a result of the fundraising, every choir member is expected to participate as much as possible. Whenever possible, parents/guardians will be notified in advance of all fundraising activities.

Before each fundraiser, you (the student) will be notified if the profit made on the sale will be applied toward the choir budget and/or toward your personal FFA student account. The money raised belongs to the school; the profit earned by a student will be reserved in that student's name and will be used Fine Arts purposes only. Money left in accounts after a student graduates may be designated only to a sibling. If one does not exist, funds will be put toward the FFA Scholarship Fund.

Guidelines and other specifics for each event will be included in the initial information packet given out at the beginning of the fundraiser.

Parent Obligation Fee and Other Financial Obligations

Students enrolled in the choral program at Centennial are required to pay the Parent Obligation Fee of \$65. This fee covers numerous expenses including transportation to events, clinicians, octavo scores, food expenses, accompanists, classroom maintenance, software licensing, FFA base membership, chorus spiritwear shirt etc.

Additional obligations may include the Annual Banquet, honor choir registration fees, field trip/choir tour fees, and recovery for any damaged or lost property.

Students may use money raised in fundraisers to pay fees. In addition, payment plans and assistance may be offered for those in need. If assistance is required, please discreetly notify the director in writing giving the circumstances and specific requests for aid. The director will handle each case individually and may request the FFA for assistance.

Field Trips

As a member of the chorus, the student will have the opportunity to participate in varying field trips. The destinations and purposes will vary greatly depending on the specific trip. Eligibility for the trip will be based on the Centennial High School Handbook and will be strictly adhered to.

Some of the field trips may be optional and involve payments. All payments for the trip must be collected by the deadline given. If money is not collected by the given deadline, or no other arrangements have been made, the student will not be eligible to participate in the field trip and will most likely not be eligible to receive any refund since funds will already be spent to cover deposits, tickets, and other advance materials.

Rules for behavior on the field trip will follow the strictest of Centennial High School and CHS Chorus guidelines. Remember, you not only represent yourself, but the school as a whole and the city of Roswell. Rules for attire may be altered depending on the situation.

Specifics for each field trip will be given with proper notice. All permission forms must be signed and returned with a parent's signature.

Honor Choirs

Throughout the course of the school year, the student will have the opportunity to audition for numerous honor choirs including, but not limited to the following: GA All-state, District Honor Shorus, GA ACDA Honor Choir, Region/National ACDA Choir, and honor choirs sponsored by various colleges. Each of these honor choirs involves different requirements for qualification. Rehearsal of audition materials is ultimately the responsibility of the student; however, the choir director will be available for assistance. In addition, students may be required to perform a preliminary audition for the director before moving on in the process. Students may also be denied the privilege of auditioning for these choirs based on factors such as behavior, academic, and attendance at the discretion of the director and administration.

Uniforms

The formal uniforms are black dresses with pearl jewelry and black tuxedos. All students will be required to purchase or rent the current uniform. All students must wear closed toe, solid black dress shoes and solid black socks/stockings. If a student does not follow the required uniform guidelines, his or her grade will be affected. All singers: One ring per hand as needed, NO bracelets, ONLY the pearl necklaces and pearl earrings. NO other necklaces at all. Hair must be kept and out of the face for all students. **NOTE:** All students must be dressed correctly for each performance. All uniforms will be checked before the concert and anything that is deemed incorrect will result in point deductions based on the grading rubric for performances. If a student arrives without the proper uniform dress or tuxedo the student will not be allowed to perform on stage.

Lettering System

Points are given to students for extra work and/or outstanding achievement worthy of recognition. The accumulation of these points qualify interested students towards a letter, bar, or jewel to be awarded at the end of the year banquet. Students will be given a worksheet outlining the specific point allotment.

Copyright Protection

Student and parents will agree that the student will not perform any selection obtained from Centennial High School for any non-school functions as these pieces are copyrighted to the school upon purchase. The parents and students also agree to not make any photo copies of any musical selections. Parents of the student take full responsibility should any of the above guidelines not be followed. All originals are to be returned at the end of the semester.

Use of photos on the Choral Website

Periodically we update the choral website with photos from trips and choir concerts. If you do not wish for your son or daughter's pictures to be used on the website, please acknowledge this on the Handbook Signature Form.

Changes in Policy

Changes to the policies set forth in this handbook may be altered any time at the discretion of the choir director or the administration. Students and parents will be notified when changes are made.

Any extenuating circumstances which arise in conflict to the policies described will be settled on a case by case basis by the choir director and/or the administration.