

Panther Creek High School



Choral Department Handbook

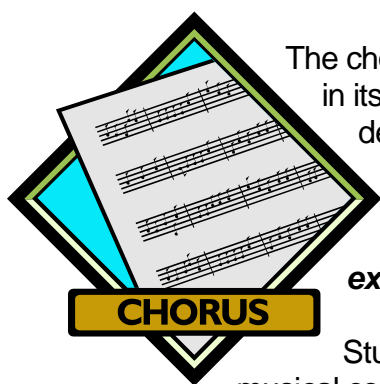
2011-2012 EDITION

Message From the Director

Greetings! My name is Brad Bensen and I am the Director of Choirs and AP music theory courses at Panther Creek High School. I feel blessed to be teaching the students in this program and am quite sure that the time they invest with me this year will be well spent as they perform quality literature, learn more about music and also develop lasting friendships.

As of now, documents as this one are now strictly online. I will make an effort to keep such important items like this in 2 spots—on our class website, <http://www.panthercreekchorus.com> and on the student's Blackboard site for academics at Panther Creek (accessible through the school's main website <http://panthercreekhs.wcpss.net/> under "Student Life"). This handbook will help new choral families get acquainted with how the program works here at Panther Creek and will also serve as a reference for the many procedures related to involvement in an active program such as this one. If there are any items that you would like further clarification or explanation of, please feel free to contact me at bbensen@wcpss.net or call me on my office phone at 919-463-8602.

Program Overview



The choral program at Panther Creek High School is aimed at producing excellence in its students through a challenging music curriculum that focuses on the development of the whole musician—as proficient performer, academic student and caring citizen. The mission set forth for this program will thus be: *“To encourage students to be people of exceptional character and musicianship while conveying personal standards of substance, commitment and excellence.”*

Students in the choral program will have the opportunity to learn music and musical concepts from literature representing a diverse array of styles, historical time periods, cultures, and musical genres. **The music selected will be appropriate for its educational and musical value, rather than its popularity, entertainment value or listener appeal.** *These music courses are indeed academic classes, and students will be expected to learn, participate and demonstrate their knowledge about such elements.* Concepts taught in the choral classes will be based on curriculum standards highlighted later in this handbook. The following elements are true of all choral classes taught at Panther Creek:

- a) Chorus class is an **academic field** requiring preparation, devotion of time, personal commitment, and academic study
- b) Chorus class is a **community** requiring civil behavior and the ability to put others first
- c) Chorus class is a **performing group** requiring excellence and participation from each member to produce a product that people in our community will want to come hear

The Performing Ensembles:

Mixed Chorus: Pd.2 The Mixed Chorus will be comprised of a variety of students representing all four grades. **NEW for 2011-2012—we will have an assistant teacher/co-director that will be helping to lead the class, Mr. Jon Swofford!** This non-auditioned class focuses on basic musicianship and protocol for choral rehearsals and performances. It includes an introduction to music sight-reading and proper singing technique using choral literature for mixed voices (SAB and SATB). Music selected will range from the 16th century through current day, including a cappella music, historical literature, lighter “mainstream” arrangements as well as music from various cultures, genres and languages. Students are expected to perform in 2 regularly

scheduled chorus concerts (Fall and Winter—see calendar near end of document). Having 2 teachers for this course will allow us to break into smaller groups to work with even greater focus than in previous years...prepare for this to be the best Mixed Chorus ever!

Women's Ensemble: Pd. 3 This year-long group will include girls in grades 10-12. Ladies in this group must **already** have a fundamental understanding of sight-reading and singing techniques. Music selected is written specifically for 3-4 part female voices and will involve a wide range of styles, cultures, and languages. Students will perform in all regular chorus concerts, at our District Choral Festival and possibly at a couple of other events in the community. *Honors credit is available to those registered as Vocal III and IV. See below for more information.*

Panther Creek Chamber Choir: Pd. 4 The premier performing group at PCHS, this year-long auditioned ensemble will represent students in the upper grades at PCHS. This class will require the greatest commitment and involvement of any choral class. Students **must** be proficient sight-readers and must have a working knowledge of singing technique. This class will sing throughout the year at regular chorus concerts but also in various community events in our area. *Honors credit is available to those registered as Vocal III and IV. See below for more information.*

Honors Credit:

Available a maximum of 2 times in chorus, honors credit is available during the second semester for those taking a Vocal III or IV placement—which requires the student to have taken at least 2 previous semesters of chorus). Credit is established through out-of-class work, which includes a choice of either a portfolio project or participation in a recital performance at the end of the school year. **Because honors status is reflected in the entire semester of a class, students seeking honors credit should already be signed up for it. If they are not and desire it, OR if they do not want it and are signed up for it, a visit to student services MUST be done within the first week of classes.** Non-completion of honors credit criteria will result in the automatic lowering of a student's final grade by one letter. Students who opt to pursue the credit should treat it seriously, with student initiative and planning in advance to complete it with excellence. Guidelines for honors credit will be provided to students within the first two weeks of school on Blackboard and a copy will also be available on our website.

Supplies/Materials

Students may need the following materials in every class rehearsal:

- **Water bottles filled with WATER are recommended for ALL choral rehearsals.**
- Loose-leaf paper
- Pencils (NOT PENS! Choral music markings MUST be made in erasable pencil)
- Music (distributed in folders owned by PCHS)



Consider donating any of the following items to our classroom:

Tissues, computer/copy paper, #10 size envelopes, 9V and AA alkaline batteries, hand sanitizer, Clorox and Windex wipes. THANKS!

Classroom Expectations

Rules

The following rules and expectations are applicable to both daily classroom rehearsals **as well as to any field trip or music event held outside of campus**, regardless of time or day.

1. Be respectful to self, others and property.

- Students are to behave in a way that they cause **no disruption** to teaching or to other student's learning while being considerate of others' needs, feelings and belongings; Singing is a personal art; it is rude and hurtful to make fun of other's efforts...

2. Be on time!

- Plan trips to lockers, bathrooms, water fountains and visits with friends before the tardy bell rings. **Note tardy policy below.** Excessive tardiness may waive trip and/or performance privileges.

3. No ELECTRONICS, food, gum or open drink containers are allowed in the classroom.

- Cell phones may NOT be used during class. This WILL be enforced.
- Only **water** in plastic bottles with replaceable lids is allowed and in fact *encouraged*; An hour and a half is a long time to sing without staying hydrated—64oz a day is recommended for singers. There is a water fountain in the room for refills.
- DO NOT chew gum or eat other food during class.

4. 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!**

Discipline

It is my opinion that there are no bad students, just bad decisions. Disciplinary actions will be based on school-wide conduct codes.

- 1) Verbal warning (warning may not necessarily be phrased, "This is your warning!")
- 2) Parent contact
- 3) Lunch detention
- 4) After-School detention (ASD)—assigned by administration
- 5) Office Referral for Out of School Suspension—assigned by administration

Examples of inappropriate behaviors

- Doing anything besides the task at hand (i.e. cosmetic make-up, homework for another class, talking, **using/texting on a cell phone**, music player, camera, or any type of device)
- **Being tardy for class (3 times warrants an automatic lunch detention—school policy!)**
- Defiance or disrespect to student or teacher, including collegiate teaching interns
- Inappropriate language
- Obvious lack of or unwillingness to participate, including sleeping or eating in class

****Trips, performance opportunities and class incentives may be revoked depending on the quantity and severity of such discipline infractions.***



Make-up Work

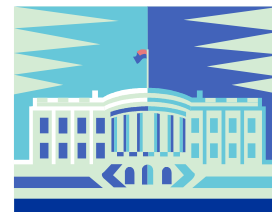
Absences due to illness or approved school trips are allowed several days to complete make-up work. **It is the STUDENT'S responsibility** to secure such assignments BEFORE a known field trip and immediately after other unplanned absences, such as sickness. *Missed/non-complete assignments made be made up, but a percentage penalty will apply to assignments that take more than 5 days to complete.* 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 (unless an alternate assignment is assigned to take the place of the missing grade).

SMART Lunch/Listening Lab (new!)

It is the expectation that all students at PCHS attend **4 SMART lunch sessions** throughout the semester, which will be documented on report cards in all classes at PCHS. **Schedule: Monday A and Wednesday B.** There will be at least 1 voice-part sectional per quarter, which will be required by **ALL** choral students (including off-campus lunch students). Additionally, “**music listening labs**” will be offered to secure SMART lunch credit (where music will be played once a week in both the band and chorus rooms for students to listen to while they eat). If I am not in lunch duty or have department meetings, the chorus room will be open for students to each lunch in. Students may also come for tutoring and individual practice. Students need to sign in with the date and initials on the SMART lunch clipboard. *Tutoring sessions may be REQUIRED for students who are not demonstrating success on various assessments and quizzes.*

Student Leadership

Several opportunities exist for students to be involved in department leadership. The following positions will be either elected or appointed by the director in the Women's Ensemble and Chamber Choir:



- **President:** Elected by peers, represents class at choral meetings, helps director manage and recognize student needs, and coordinates music rehearsals in the absence of the director. The President will also help promote the choral department as a whole and will act as a Historian to keep photographic or video media samples throughout the school year for viewing at an end of year presentation. The President may also attend monthly Booster meetings as a liaison between the students, director and parents.
- **Vice-President/Secretary:** Elected by peers, assists president and director with music related issues, organizes class meetings/social events, helps to maintain/promote class morale. Also is responsible for helping to promote public performances in the community (advertisement) and will help maintain a chorus bulletin board (if available). Responsible for the management of print music resources and class rosters (**will help take roll daily on a regular basis**). Creates electronic communication sources for class updates on Facebook or class email lists.
- **Treasurer:** New for 2011-2012, this student will check all deposits made by students before deposit into our new class safe. Integrity, accounting skills and responsibility are the obvious prerequisites.

Performance Activities

Performances: Concerts

Public performance is one of the most effective means of music education assessment. Because chorus is considered an **academic class**, grades are assigned for participation in all scheduled performances. **Unexcused absences from any of these events** will result in a

failing performance grade. We need ALL of our students for our performances—each person makes a difference!

- Regularly scheduled **concerts will be graded events**, counting **20%** of the student's quarter grade (1 concert per quarter), assessed on the following criteria:
 - Proper preparation: Correct outfit, on-time, present for warm ups with group
 - Singing with appropriate energy/attitude
 - Focus, discipline and teamwork ethic (i.e. before concert and between songs)
 - Off-stage etiquette and discipline
- All reasons for absences will be considered excused or unexcused at the discretion of the director. **Any reason besides an unexpected emergency or sickness will need to be approved BEFORE the concert occurs.** *It is rare that concert absences for reasons other than illness will be approved.* **Because concerts are scheduled months in advance, and students/parents have access to these dates, poor planning on behalf of the performer will not be excused (such as not having a ride).** Students/parents will need to take initiative to deal with any such issue before the actual date of a performance.
- If a student is **absent from school** (due to illness) on the day of a concert, he/she should contact Mr. Bensen so that planning can be made on the night of the concert to rearrange singers, soloists, etc. If the student feels marginally better, he/she might come to the concert as an audience member and do a written critique of the performance due the next school day attended. Otherwise, when the student returns, a signed note from a parent, stating that his/her child was sick is necessary to allow a grade substitution, **which will be a written paper due 5 days after the missed concert.**
- Any additional performance that is determined as a “graded/mandatory event” will be announced at least 1 month prior to the activity. Students that have conflicts must communicate immediately with Mr. Bensen; an alternative assignment may be necessary for those with non-flexible commitments
- According to board policy, students in **OSS** on the day of a concert (or other performance) are **prohibited** from participating in that performance. Such students will have to make the grade up through an individually assigned activity (like a music history paper) or take a failing grade for the event.

Outside-of-Class Rehearsals

Occasionally, outside-of-class rehearsals will be scheduled if necessary to prepare for a performance.

- **Rehearsals will be held the DAY BEFORE the concert in the auditorium from 2:30-4:30.** If the director decides that a rehearsal is not required, students/parents will be notified several weeks in advance.
- Because a choral group is always incomplete if missing any of its members, **it is important that all members are present.** For this reason, such rehearsals will be **GRADED** events, based on participation, and meeting the general expectations.
- Students should plan to stay for the entire rehearsal. **Because there are a maximum of 2 after-school practices per semester, sports practices will not be an acceptable reason for a student missing, though a pre-determined school game will be an excused absence.**

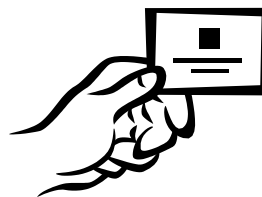
Concert Attendance: Audience Members

Concerts are a great way to see the progress of the individual students as well as the program as a whole. These events are designed to be informative, enjoyable and hopefully inspiring. Important information:

- a. Most concerts will last about **1 hour to 1 hour and 20 minutes**. It is hoped that parents, extended family and friends will come and support the efforts of our students.
- b. **Admission will be charged** at regular concerts, as it is a main avenue to support the budget of the program. Additionally, numerous expenses are associated with every concert we perform—admission is necessary to help with such costs. Determined during the 2009-2010 school year, **a general admission of \$5 will be charged for all arts class performances. Children 6 or under are free.** However, a concert punch card is available for purchase which allows 10 ticket uses for just \$35. More information follows.
- c. Some concerts may be professionally recorded. Such recordings are high quality and act as a great keepsake of the event. Consider purchasing a CD! Otherwise, personal video recordings are allowed considering no duplication or circulation of the recording is made.
- d. **For those experiencing financial difficulty, a 1 use- Concert Pass is available directly from Mr. Bensen** before the day of the performance. Students should see him directly to get a pass. Our goal is to turn nobody away from our concerts, but we do hope that people without the ability to pay at the time of the event will reimburse the Choral Boosters at the rate of \$5 per ticket.



Concert Punch Cards



Last year, we began the use of Concert Punch Cards and had great success. We are selling these cards again for **\$35.00** allowing up to 10 tickets/uses. Because typical concert admission is \$5, a punch card that is fully used allows concert entry at a reduced cost of just \$3.50 per concert. The cards are good for regular chorus concerts only—not the talent show, spring musical, band/drama/dance concerts or other “special” events. Because the card is punched by ticket takers, card holders get to bypass long lines at the ticket window, resulting in a speedier entry into the auditorium. An example of how it works is following:

- a. Jenny is in the Women’s Ensemble and will perform in 4 regular concerts; her parents and younger sibling come to the first concert and 3 punches are used. For the next concert, her grandparents also come along with the original 3 family members, using 5 more punches. The last 2 punches are used by her parents for the next concert and the card is completed and discarded (10 punches). Remaining admission will need to be paid for her last concert.
- b. Johnny is in the Mixed Chorus (1st semester only) and will perform in 2 concerts. His family of 2 parents and 2 siblings come to see him in 2 performances. The card gets punched 4 times per concert using up 8 punches. Even though they didn’t use all 10, the card still was cheaper than paying \$5 per concert ticket (8 x \$5 is \$40; the card is just \$35). Of course, Johnny could invite a friend to accompany his family to the concerts and would use the entire card.

The cards should facilitate an easier entry flow for our concert audiences at while also offering a discount so that all family members can attend. The choral boosters also receive

payment for these cards at the beginning of the school year when there are so many necessary expenses. This is a win-win for everybody! **Please consider purchasing one!**

Cards will be sold during the first week of school as well as at the first concert in the ticket booth. See last document in this book for order information.

Performance Outfits

- Uniformity in appearance is important to choral performance. Individuality should be expressed during student's clothing choices for school days, NOT at concerts--- we are to look as one cohesive group! Therefore, all students will wear the designated outfit for each performance. No student will perform without the proper outfit, which can result in a zero performance grade.
- Assistance can be provided for **any** student financially unable to purchase the proper performance outfit. The Choral Boosters will be organizing fundraisers throughout the year to help defray some cost. It is the **responsibility of the student/parent** to communicate a financial need to the director or appropriate booster organization member (President or Treasurer) A benevolence request application is attached at the end of this document.
- Jewelry for the women in 3rd and 4th period is a set that can be purchased at cost at the time of dress sizing. No other jewelry should be worn.
- Used dresses and tuxedos MAY be available from previous students; this will be discussed in class.



Mixed Chorus:

Girls: -White dress shirt w/ribbon belt ordered in class **\$30.00**
-SOLID black ankle or floor length skirt OR slacks
-SOLID BLACK DRESS shoes (**closed toe**)



Guys: -Black dress pants with visible black belt (shirt should be tucked in)
-Black dress shoes and BLACK socks
-White long-sleeve dress shirt with traditional collar.
-Black tie (provided by chorus dept. to be returned immediately after the concert).

Women's Ensemble:

-Black polysatin dress Cost: **\$68.00** (price went up this year)
-Black closed toe dress shoe with heel 2" or less (purchase on own)
-Pearl necklace and earrings **\$10.00** **TOTAL: \$78.00**



PC Chamber Choir (PCCC):

Guys: -Black tuxedo outfit (from Savvi formalwear) consisting of:
-white mandarin-collar tuxedo shirt w/ black studs and top button
-black tuxedo adjustable-waist pants
-black 1-button tuxedo coat
-solid **black dress shoes and black socks** (purchase on own)
-Black vest (borrow from choral boosters and **TURN IN** at end of year!)
TOTAL: \$135.00; includes alterations for present and future!



Note: Outfits will be ordered slightly larger to accommodate some future growth.

Girls:

- Black velvet/crepe back satin dress: Cost: **\$85.00**
- Closed-toe black DRESS SHOE with heel 2" or less (purchase on own)
- Necklace, earrings and optional hair pins: **\$10.00** **TOTAL: \$95.00**



Outfit procedures:

- **Mixed chorus students should purchase outfits on own**
- *Girls in all periods will try on sizing garments with booster parents one day during class (to determine basic sizes/fit—probably **Sept. 2**)*
- *Boys in PCCC will be measured in class by a representative from Savvi Formalwear*
- *Payment will be due **before** outfits are ordered (**checks made out to the Panther Creek Choral Boosters**); students with money already in their fundraising accounts may pay with an Account Access Form (explained below)*
- *Students that are provided outfits through the Choral Booster's benevolence fund should participate in fundraisers to help pay back the booster organization. **Outfits that remain unpaid for will remain property of the organization and must be returned DRY CLEANED at the end of the school year***

Choral Booster Organization

The choral booster organization is an incorporated group of parent volunteers. No dues or fees are required for membership. All choral parents are welcomed to be involved with the organization.

The group exists for the benefit of both choral students and the choral program itself. "Boosters" help support the program by assisting the choral director with numerous program elements, including fundraising, managing financial accounts, organizing concerts, coordinating trips, and completing numerous other tasks that are necessary for the success of the choral program.

The Boosters will generally meet once a month in the chorus room at the school.

Information for each meeting will be sent out in an email format and on the website to remind families of the meetings. Parental involvement is highly encouraged and greatly valued!



Fair Share

Started last school year, the choral program at PCHS implemented a "fair-share" cost to help acquire the necessary resources for choral activities throughout the year. This fair-share is a financial commitment that is being based on procedures that other Wake County high school chorus classes already use to help fund their programs. The actual request is quite small compared to similar programs and **can be paid via the following means:**

- Acquiring community donors (see attached information) **OR**
- Participating in fundraising activities that the Choral Booster organization will implement throughout the school year **OR**
- By cash/check payment.

Ideally, **NO OUT-OF-POCKET** expense should be necessary. Fair-share funds will benefit **all** students in the program, as the Choral Boosters will use the money to help pay for *concert accompanists and security, piano maintenance/tuning, program printing, transportation and fees for choral events/adjudication activities, payment for substitute teachers when choral activities take place outside of school, and other items that can be viewed on the operating budget.*

As many of us have experienced considerable financial difficulties, school programs such as ours have equally been impacted. Program fundraising totals and donations have diminished over the last couple of years, yet the size and needs of the program have continued to grow. The operating budget of the Choral Boosters is now subsidizing additional expenses while remaining committed to helping students with financial needs. Our 2011-2012 Booster operating budget is just shy of \$16,000. Planned Booster-specific income is expected to provide \$8-10K of this (through concert admission/pass cards, our talent show--*Panther Creek's Got Talent*, a silent auction planned for our December concert, and through family and community donations). An expected shortfall of about \$6300 remains. To cover this amount, a per-student participation cost is being requested as follows, **DUE OCTOBER 1st:**

- **Mixed Chorus** (pd. 2) Fair Share Amount: **\$36.00** (1-semester class)
- **Women's Ensemble and Chamber Choir** (pd. 3 & 4) Fair Share Amount: **\$61.00** (for year-long students)

Students that have additional financial needs or extenuating circumstances should contact the choral boosters directly for assistance and/or consideration for a limited number of FairShare scholarships. Detailed information on the operating budget and designation of fair-share funds will be provided at the parent meeting on Tuesday, August 30th.

Student Fundraising



The choral program operates on an annual budget, supported by the Choral Boosters while also receiving some money from the school for instructional music purchase. Fundraising efforts will be made to help fund the operating budget as well as for the financial needs of the students themselves (as related to choral expenses). Each student in the choral department may maintain a personal fundraising account through the Choral Boosters to help offset various costs through the year. Here are the answers to some frequently asked questions:

How do I earn money to put in my account?

Several fundraisers are held throughout the year to offset various choral expenses throughout the year. Direct cash deposits are not accepted. Only fundraising monies are available to student accounts. *Additionally, for students who have not met the FairShare commitment by Oct. 1, fundraising monies UP to their class FairShare amount will be automatically applied to this obligation. Profits above this will reside in the student accounts.*

For what purposes can I use the money in my account?

Students may use their fundraising dollars to pay for any of the following (provided no outstanding monies are owed to the Booster Club):

- **Fair-share commitment fulfillment**
- any or all of chorus outfit and alterations (a receipt must be provided!)
- any or all of chorus trip expenses (including the Spring Trip, All-State or Honors Chorus, etc.)
- any or all of various other expenditures (T-shirts, CDs, pictures, etc.)

How do I check my account balance?

The Choral Boosters Treasurer will produce a monthly statement at Choral Booster meetings. Attending these meetings is the most accurate way to get these balances. Mr. Bensen will give out balances to students several times during the semester, especially before trips and other events that require payment.

How do I use money in my account?

Option 1:

1. Pay for your expenses up front (cannot reimburse "spending money" – only items payable to the Choral Boosters).
2. Complete an "Account Access Request" form (available online and in the chorus room; also, a copy is attached at the end of this handbook) and **obtain a parent signature.**

3. Turn in the form to Mr. Bensen or the Booster Treasurer. Your reimbursement check will be mailed to you or delivered to you by Mr. Bensen.

Option 2:

1. Before the payment is due, obtain an "Account Access Request" form.
2. Complete the form and turn in to Mr. Bensen on or before the date the payment is due.
3. If the amount due is more than your account balance (or the amount you want to use), simply pay the difference by cash or check. **Make checks payable to PCHS Choral Boosters.**

What happens to the money at the end of the school year if it is unused?

At the end of each school year, students must choose one of the following four options for any money left in their accounts. They may:

- be reimbursed for earlier choral expenses (same academic year only)
- carry it over to the next year
- donate it to the Choral Boosters
- donate it to another student (must specify in writing which student; get a parent's signature)

It is the student's/parent's responsibility to request any reimbursements during the year. The Choral Boosters will assume any money unspent is to be left in their accounts until the following year, **unless the student is a senior or will not be taking chorus again, at which point, the money will be donated directly to the Booster Club.**

Trips

Various off-campus performances will occur throughout the year, though mostly for the Chamber Choir, 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.

We will probably be taking a chorus trip in the spring. The trip will involve some sort of performance and assessment, as well as extracurricular activities that will be educational and supportive of group unity and community. The trip is **NOT** mandatory but is a great way for the students to bond and strengthen their understanding of competitive performance. **In general, the trip will be limited to around 50 students.** *Because of this limitation, the students in the year-long classes will have the priority in going.* Information about the trip will be distributed sometime in September. Deposits/payments will be taken in increments throughout the year. More trip info will be discussed at the first Booster meeting, including potential destinations.

Choral Class Curriculum

The curriculum taught in all choral music classes is based directly on the National Standards for Music Education. The standards are basically as follows:

- Goal 1: Be able to sing music of a variety of levels, languages, ranges, styles, and cultures (including foreign languages such as Spanish, Latin, Italian, French, German, African dialects, and English with **both sacred and secular** texts)
- Goal 2: Be able to play instruments with some degree of proficiency: (basic piano skills/percussion)
- Goal 3: Be able to "improvise"-- make up music or be creative with what is printed
- Goal 4: Compose music! Variety of levels
- Goal 5: Read and write music to a high level of understanding (included sight-reading, composition assignments and worksheet materials)
- Goal 6: Listening to and analyzing music
- Goal 7: Evaluating musical performance: own, others, recordings, classroom rehearsal
- Goal 8: Linking music to other curriculums: Literature, Art, History, Science (Physics), Basic Math, Foreign Languages
- Goal 9: Understanding music in relation to history and culture

The literature learned and performed in class will be of high quality and will represent a wide variety of musical samples. We will also learn music that the North Carolina Music Educators Association suggests through a published music list for our state. Such music is **often sacred in nature**, due to its role in the historical development of classical music literature, though religious themes will not be the focus of my teaching. An example of the state list is viewable at:

http://www.jwpepper.com/branch/branch_index.jsp?&loc=WIN

Students will be encouraged to take seriously their exposure to new forms of musical literature. ***The purpose of the class is not to entertain (or to train students to be entertainers), 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.

Some additional topics that will be discussed this semester may include:

- Careers in music unit
- Vocal Health unit
- Cultural differences in music performance
- Dictation and composition
- Music theory: general music reading/writing, various scale theory, etc.
- Concert Etiquette unit
- International Phonetic Alphabet
- Solfege and sight singing units

Grading

1. Classwork/Homework 20%

Classwork may include worksheets, journal entries, essays, oral discussions, etc. Any classwork not completed in class is automatically homework unless otherwise specified. Little homework will be assigned, but may occasionally arise from time to time and will be graded under this category. If an item has not been turned in on time, it will be recorded as a ZERO, though, in MOST circumstances, I am willing to accept late work for an appropriate grade penalty, not to exceed 20%. Additionally, extra credit may be available via attendance at SMART Lunch sessions.

2. Performance Attendance 20%

For performances, each student has a responsibility to other members of the choral class. The absence of a single singer will affect the total group's performance. Students should arrive on time, dressed correctly and ready to warm up at the scheduled time. Performance etiquette, timeliness, singing energy and musical preparation will be the main areas of assessment for this grade.

3. Quizzes 30%

Students will be expected to complete both written and **singing examinations** testing knowledge of musical and conceptual elements discussed in class. Because this is a high school course, students should be able to discern if they need to take notes whenever new concepts are presented, even if I don't specifically tell them to do so. Some of the concepts that might be present on such assessments include knowledge of vocal part, singing tone, physiology/anatomy of the vocal mechanism, music theory and history, as well as vocabulary/terminology examinations. A variety of testing methods will be used for the benefit of the students, including oral presentations, multiple choice, essays, self-evaluations, fill in the blank, etc.

4. Classroom Participation 30%

Includes daily involvement in questioning/answering, oral contributions, apparent singing effort, usage of appropriate posture, being on task, work ethic, etc. A common PCHS arts department grading rubric is used for the objectification of participation grades. A copy of this rubric is available on the chorus website, www.panthercreekchorus.com Every 2 weeks, a participation grade will be entered equaling 10 points per day. Unexcused school absences will deduct an automatic 5pts per day, Note: good discipline does not necessarily mean good participation. Participation is an active process that should be obvious in daily rehearsals and out of class performances.

****Grade entries will be posted online every Monday, as concurrent with PCHS grading procedures.**

FINAL EXAMINATIONS: As per Wake County school legislation, a comprehensive semester final exam will be given comprising 20% of the student's overall grade. **Thus, items 1-4 above comprise 80% (40% each quarter) with the exam weighing 20%.** Students should WISELY PLAN for these examinations THROUGHOUT the semester. Senior exemptions will follow the school's policy.

TENTATIVE Choral Department Calendar

Dates and times listed below are subject to change. Please monitor event times and dates as published on the program website and other documents sent home. Items in **BOLD are mandatory for all students.*

Date	Event	Place	Time
8/30	Meet the teacher/Booster Mtg. 1	Chorus Room	7-8:30 PM
9/1	Signed handbook form due		
9/2	Girls outfit fitting—all 3 classes; Payment due by Sept. 2 for Girls	Chorus Room	During Class (DC)
9/9	Butter Braid Fundraiser Kick-Off		DC
9/16?	Tuxedo Sizing for pd. 4. Payment due by Oct. 2	Chorus Room	DC
9/21	Butter Braid Money/Forms Due		DC
9/23	NC Honors Chorus Auditions (involves only select students)	UNC-G	TBA
10/4	Collegiate Symposium at Middle Creek HS; select students—optional	Middle Creek HS	6:30 ?
10/14	Homecoming Football Game: Chamber Choir Members	PCHS Stadium	7pm/TBA
10/24	After-school Rehearsal—ALL	Auditorium	2:30-4:30
10/25	Fall Concert	PC Auditorium	7 PM; report @6:15
11/1	Honors Chorus Rehearsal—select students	Enloe HS	3:30-5:30pm
11/12-13	Honors Chorus—select students	Winston-Salem	All Day
11/14	Chamber Choir to perform at NCMEA Conference	Winston-Salem	Leave pchs ~ 8:30am; return 7pm
12/15	After-school Rehearsal?????—ALL	Auditorium	2:30-4:30
12/16	Winter Concert	PC Auditorium	7 PM; report @6:15
1/3	All-State Zone Rehearsal--select students	Garner HS	3:30-6:30PM
1/11-12	PCHS Talent Show Auditions	Auditorium	TBA
1/27-28	All-State Chorus—select students	Greensboro Coliseum	All-Day
1/31-/2-2	Talent Show Rehearsals—Select Students Only	Auditorium	2:30-5:00
2/4	Talent Show!	Auditorium	7:00 pm
3/6	District Choral Festival—all second semester students	Meredith College	TBA
3/27	Spring Chorus Concert	PC Auditorium	7 PM; report @6:15
4/14	Spring Trip to NYC???		TBA
4/24	Cary Choral Classic	PCHS	7pm
5/22?	End-of-year Chorus Concert	PC Auditorium	7 PM; report @6:15
5/31?	Honors Credit Recital	Dance Room	7pm
6/1	Chorus Banquet	Commons/Aud.	6:30pm?

Sample Account Access Form—copy as needed or print additional off from
www.panthercreekchorus.com : “Documents”

Panther Creek Chorus
Reimbursement/Payment Request Form

1. Student Name: _____ 2. Date of Request: _____

3. Nature of request:

- Make a payment for choral expenses:
What is payment for? _____ Amount: _____
- Be reimbursed for previously paid choral expenses:
What is reimbursement for? _____ Amount: _____
- Donate to _____ (student) from my account. Amount: _____

4. If a reimbursement, Please make check payable to (name of parent; cannot be student):

5. Student Signature: _____

6. Parent Signature: _____

Booster Use Only

__ Approved __ Denied; reason: _____ Balance: _____

Panther Creek Chorus
Benevolence Request Form

The following student/family, _____ is making a request for benevolence/scholarship funds, as available to help with choral expenses.

Benevolence funds may be used for the following items (please check, as appropriate):

- Required outfit expenses
- FairShare commitment
- Other: _____

The amount requested is: \$ _____ How much money can the student/family pay back to the choral boosters:

- None
- A partial amount: _____
- All

Parent name(s): _____ Parent Signature: _____

Contact Info: email: _____ Phone #: _____

Choral Handbook Release Form

Please sign and return by Sept. 1st:

I have read the online Panther Creek Choral Handbook and understand/agree to the policies and procedures listed in the document.

Student Name: _____(print)

X _____
Student Signature Date

Parent Name(s): _____(print)

X _____
Parent Signature Date

Fundraising Permission and FairShare:

In signing below, I recognize that the choral program has a FaireShare support program with a financial commitment from choral students in the amount of \$36 for Mixed Chorus and \$61 for the Women's Ensemble and Chamber Choir. Additionally, I also understand that my student's fairshare can be paid via cash/check, **or** by finding community sponsors **or** through booster-sponsored fundraisers. I also understand that some grants/scholarships may be available to those with considerable financial need, but that a benevolence request application must be turned in with this sheet. Additionally, my child has permission to participate in choral department fundraisers at Panther Creek during the 2011-2012 school year, but I also acknowledge that he or she *has no obligation to do so*.

X _____
Parent Signature

Video and Audio Recording Consent:

Because of the nature of performing arts courses, it is necessary to record audio and sometimes video clips of class rehearsals and performances. Such recordings are used exclusively for in-class assessment, critiques and learning assignments. Please sign below indicating that you are aware that your child will be recorded in a group setting for assessment purposes.

X _____
Parent Signature

Internet Posting Consent:

Choral classes are both social and academic groups that represent the school as a vital part of its identity and culture. Many pictures of individual students and student groups may be taken throughout the year. Parental permission is necessary to post any picture of students online where their faces are clearly visible. The choral department may post such pictures of individual students on our website or the school's site. Student names will NOT be displayed on web pages. Please sign below indicating permission to include your child in such postings

X _____
Parent Signature