

The PCEP Choirs

2009/2010 HANDBOOK



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From the Directors

Welcome to the 2009/2010 school year with the PCEP Choirs! As always, we look forward to another wonderful year of teaching, learning, and music making with you.

Last year we had some wonderful musical experiences such as the Fall Concert presented with the PCCS Orchestras, the combined holiday concert, Sounds of the Season, where we presented John Rutter's Magnificat along with the Ypsilanti Symphony Orchestra and guest soloist Glenda Kirkland, and our spring concert with Measure for Measure, a men's choral society. PCEP's Festival Singers were honored by an invitation to perform at the Michigan Music Conference this past January, and all of the choirs received Superior and Excellent ratings at the MSVMA District and State Choral Festivals. In addition, the choirs received high ratings at the Music In The Parks Festival held in Cincinnati, Ohio including madrigal Singers winning best overall high school, Allegro!, Dulcissima, Chamber Choir, Madrigal Singers, and Festival Singers all won a First Place Trophy in their respective divisions and the PCEP choir program received the Esprit de Corps award for the third consecutive year!

This year, we will present three major concerts: the Fall Concert on October 13, our holiday concert "A Winter's Song" on December 15, and Singsation on May 11. The choirs will also continue the annual tradition of holiday caroling in downtown Plymouth in December. In addition, Festival Singers have been invited to perform on stage at New York's famed Carnegie Hall on April 17 with works of modern choral composer Eric Whitacre under his direction. This is a fabulous opportunity for our students to work with Mr. Whitacre and perform at Carnegie Hall. A preview concert will be held for the local community on April 1 at the Cherry Hill Village Theatre.

As usual, we need parental support for all of these activities and are looking for parent volunteers assist with pre-concert preparations, post-concert clean-up, wardrobe and music library organization, concert publicity, chaperoning for MSVMA Choral Festival trips, and fundraising. If you are interested in assisting in any of these areas please contact us. If you have any questions or concerns please call or e-mail us and we will get back with you as soon as we are able. Please understand that with over 300 students in the choir program we will do our best to respond promptly.

We look forward to another awesome year. "Forever let my spirit sing"

Sincerely,
Jennifer L. Kopp & Shelley Klippel

2009/2010 **REQUIRED** Choir Events Outside of School Hours

October 12, 2009	Fall Concert Dress Rehearsal 2:30-5:00pm
October 13, 2009	Fall Concert Call: 6:00pm, Curtain: 7:00pm
November 27/28, 2009	Festival Singers - Holiday Caroling in Downtown Plymouth Friday: 5-8pm; Saturday 1-4pm
December 4/5, 2009	Park Singers - Holiday Caroling in Downtown Plymouth Friday: 5-8pm or Saturday 1-4pm
December 11/12, 2009	Allegro - Holiday Caroling in Downtown Plymouth Friday: 5-8pm or Saturday 1-4pm
December 18/19, 2009	Dulcissima - Holiday Caroling in Downtown Plymouth Friday: 5-8pm or Saturday 1-4pm
December 14, 2009	A Winter's Song Dress Rehearsal 2:30-5:00pm
December 15, 2009	A Winter's Song Concert Call: 6:00pm, Curtain: 7:00pm
January 14, 2010	Coffee House Concert Call: 6:00pm, Curtain: 7:00pm
April 1, 2010	Festival Singers present the works of Eric Whitacre <i>at the Cherry Hill Village Theatre</i> Call: 6:00pm, Curtain: 7:00pm
May 10, 2010	Singsation Dress Rehearsal 2:30-5:00pm
May 11, 2010	Singsation Concert Call: 6:00pm, Curtain: 7:00pm

The PCEP Choirs

Expectations, Attendance and Grading Policies

WE ARE A TEAM!!!

The rest of your choir is depending on you for the following:

- * To come to each rehearsal with a positive attitude about working hard.
- * To attend all rehearsals and performances required of your choir.
- * To come to class each day on time, wanting to sing and eager to tackle the task at hand.....**MAKING MUSIC!!**

General Choir Room Expectations:

1. Please come and visit us in the choir offices, but always knock or wait to be acknowledged before you enter. **NO STUDENT SHOULD EVER BE IN THE OFFICE WITHOUT A STAFF MEMBER PRESENT.**

2. ALL choir students have access to the choir calendar by visiting www.pcepchoirs.org and clicking the "Calendar" link. The choir calendar is constantly updated with concerts, events and dates that you will be required to attend. Resolve conflicts before they arise. Feel free to come to a director for help in resolving a conflict. Many times we, as teachers, can approach/help with another teacher/coach if we are informed in plenty of time.

3. The best time to communicate with your director regarding conflicts, setting up times for extra help, finding out about make-up work, etc., is after school, or right at the end of a rehearsal. Immediately **BEFORE** a rehearsal is **NOT** a good time, as we are focused on the rehearsal about to happen. You should be focused on getting your folder and materials and getting to your seat so you are ready for warm-up. If and **ONLY** if there is an **EMERGENCY**, you may speak with a director who is not warming up the choir **AFTER** warm-ups.

4. You are to go to the restroom, get water, and take care of personal matters between classes. There is a water fountain in the classroom. You may use it before and after rehearsals. Bottled water from vending machines is to be purchased before or after class. Do not ask to go to the restroom or get a drink of water during class.

5. **YOU** are **ONLY ALLOWED** to have bottled water at your seat. You may not have drinks from fast food restaurants in class or at after-school rehearsals. There should **NEVER** be a pop/water bottle on any piano in the music facility. **IF** you see one, please remove it immediately.

6. Food, drinks, or GUM are not allowed in rehearsals, in practice rooms, or in the ensemble rooms.
7. Do not brush hair, spray perfume or hairspray, apply scented lotions, apply nail polish, or put on make-up in the choir room. Use the restroom for personal grooming.
8. All backpacks and books are to go on the floor next to the risers. These items are not to be at your seats. The only items at your seat on a daily basis are your choir folder, which contains a sharpened pencil AT ALL TIMES. Ladies may put their purses under their chair. You are expected to make sure you have a pencil PRIOR TO REHEARSAL BEGINNING!!! There are pencil sharpeners in the classroom, please use them prior to the beginning of class.
9. Your folder is your textbook in choir. Replacement costs for music and sight-reading materials varies from class to class. If you lose or destroy your folder you will need to replace it immediately so that you have materials to use in class each day. If you find your lost folder you will be reimbursed when lost materials are returned.
10. Cell Phones: as per district policy which forbids cell phone usage, cell phones should not be visible or audible in any choral rehearsal during or after school. If it comes to a director's attention that a choir student has used a cell phone for any reason during a rehearsal, said student will be removed from the choir. DON'T RISK IT!!
12. Represent PCEP in a positive, mature manner and you will further develop pride in your choral department. You are your biggest advocate for choral music by your attitude about music, your directors, and your performances. Your attitudes are a DIRECT REFLECTION OF YOUR DIRECTORS AND THE PROGRAM. We expect students in the choir department to be DRUG FREE and GOOD EXAMPLES OUTSIDE OF THE SCHOOL. Both you, as students, and we, as teachers, have a responsibility to fulfill if we are to be successful.
11. Any student member of an extracurricular organization (e.g. choir/dance team/cheerleader/student council/athlete, etc.) representing themselves, or their organization in an unfavorable, questionable or illegal manner through electronic media (i.e. websites, personal home pages, blogs, text messages, chat rooms or similar websites/files accessible through a server or internet) or using electronic communication devices in such a way as to bring discredit, dishonor or disgrace on their organization or members of any other school organization including themselves (i.e. camera phones, digital photos, electronic descriptions) will be subject to the disciplinary actions determined by appropriate school officials and/or organization/directors, including probation or dismissal from the organization.

Attendance and Grading Policies:

1. Tardies: You are to be IN YOUR SEAT with your folder and pencil when the tardy bell rings. Multiple tardies will be reported to the appropriate Asst. Principal for assignment to detention, according to school policy.

2. Being tardy to an after school rehearsal or performance will result in a grade cut for that "assignment". Concert grades typically count as multiple test grades.

3. Poor daily attendance affects the participation and performance grade in choir. It is impossible to "make-up" a rehearsal. Therefore, it is imperative that students stay healthy and come to school. Excessive absences may result in removal from the program.

4. ALL PERFORMANCES AND AFTER SCHOOL REHEARSALS ARE A MANDATORY ELEMENT OF THE CURRICULUM! If you are in choir only for a fine arts credit, please rethink your choice. Every member of a performing ensemble is vital to the ensemble as a whole. Failure to attend a performance is equivalent to receiving a "zero" on a research paper. Just as you spend weeks researching and preparing a paper, you spend weeks rehearsing and preparing for a performance. You receive no credit on your paper if you do not turn it in; you receive no credit for a performance if you do not perform.

5. There are only two excused absences from an after-school rehearsal or performance: **personal illness** or **family emergency**. WORK OR EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES ARE NEVER CONSIDERED AN EXCUSED ABSENCE FOR A REHEARSAL OR PERFORMANCE. Advance notice is given for all rehearsals and concerts in order to give you time to communicate with your employer, coach, etc.

a. Personal Illness -

If personal illness prevents you from attending an EXTRA REHEARSAL, call the choir room at 734-416-7765 and leave a message with a director or on the voice mail. You may also e-mail us. Please call or e-mail if you will not be at an extra rehearsal, EVEN IF YOU MISSED SCHOOL THAT DAY! Many times students will miss class for reasons other than illness. FAILURE TO COMMUNICATE WILL RESULT IN A GRADE CUT. Upon returning to school, present a note, signed by a parent, stating the reason for your absence. If a note is not turned in within 3 days of the absence it will result in an unexcused absence and a grade of a zero will be given. Parents may also contact a director regarding the absence via phone or email.

b. Family Emergency -

If possible, please notify a director as soon as possible. As with personal illness, a written note is required upon return to the school.

6. If your performance absence is excused by your director, you will be required to complete an alternate assignment which will replace the concert grade. There will be no exceptions to this policy. Deadlines will be set accordingly.

7. If your choir is going on a competition trip, you are expected to go on the trip as we are singing as a team.

8. **ALL CHOIR CLASSES HAVE WRITTEN WORK OUTSIDE OF CLASS.** In addition to concert and rehearsal grades choir students will have homework assignments. These assignments may consist of marking music, theory and responsibility grades. Many times responsibility grades are a matter of you taking important papers home to your parents that require a signature. A grade is given to you for returning that paperwork with a valid signature by the due date.

9. Participation grades: As choir is a performance based class, great importance is placed on the efforts and team-work necessary to produce a quality choral experience. Students earn participation points each day. This grade is determined by the individual student's focus, teamwork and positive contribution to the rehearsal as demonstrated by completion of written work, being actively and positively engaged in rehearsal, and being ready to begin on time. Remember: **TODAY'S PREPARATION DETERMINES TOMORROWS ACHIEVEMENT!!**

10. Tests & Quizzes: Choir students are tested on music theory and general music knowledge. Some tests are in written form, and others may be performance-based (or sung).

**2009-2010 Expectations:
Park Singers, Allegro!, & Dulcissima**

We are VERY excited about this school year with the PCEP Choirs! We have outstanding leadership in our upperclassmen singers and our incoming freshmen have been trained by the BEST middle school directors around. All students in all choirs have been auditioned and placed because of the GOOD qualities they possess. EVERY singer is an IMPORTANT part of the "team". Some are stronger singers and stronger leaders than others, but EVERY PERSON is VALUABLE.

With an enrollment of approximately 300 students, our standards are VERY high in all of the choir classes. Our choir department prides itself and is known throughout the state for the following:

1. Students who receive a MUSIC EDUCATION.
2. Choirs that sing with a healthy, mature SOUND.
3. Choirs that perform interesting, challenging and entertaining music.
4. Choirs that can SIGHT-READ at a high level of excellence.

That being said, to remain in a performing choir will require that YOU, the SINGER, do the following:

1. Have excellent attendance
2. Be at every performance
4. Have excellent behavior in class, at rehearsals, performances, and on trips.
5. Be at EVERY after school rehearsal. There will be VERY FEW of these, but YOU MUST BE IN ATTENDANCE.

If you feel that these expectations are too high, see a director NOW. We can get you scheduled out of choir and into an elective where less of a time commitment is required.

**2009-2010 CHAMBER CHOIR, MADRIGAL SINGERS,
FESTIVAL SINGERS EXPECTATIONS
Tuesday p.m. & Extra Rehearsals**

I am so VERY excited about this school year. Everyone in this class was auditioned and placed here because of the GOOD qualities, musical and otherwise, that I feel you possess. Every person in this choir is an important part of the team. Some are stronger singers and leaders than others. Nonetheless, EVERY PERSON IS VALUABLE. This choir prides itself on the following:

1. TONE - a homogenized rich, freely-produced, mature SOUND
2. REPERTOIRE - music that is challenging, interesting and varied and age-appropriate.
3. MUSIC READING SKILLS - the ability to learn systematically through time-efficient rehearsal techniques.
4. SCORE PREPARATION - Should be able to follow simple written instructions in marking your music.

As a requirement of this class, Festival Singers has mandatory Tuesday after-school rehearsals and many extra performances. If you have a job or are involved in another extra-curricular activity, keep Tuesday after-school (from 2:30-3:30pm) FREE. Your grade is based on EARNING POINTS PER MARKING PERIOD - these rehearsals are worth a significant number of points. Failure to meet attendance expectations at these rehearsals may result in being dismissed from this choir. However, those of you who know me understand that I WILL WORK with you in situations, when it is warranted.

If you feel that I am expecting too much of you or you will not be able or willing to meet these expectations, now is the time to get your schedule changed to another choir class where so much will not be expected of you.

You will be provided a detailed rehearsal calendar. Please make this available to your PARENTS and keep it in a visually accessible location for YOURSELF. I will remind you, but the responsibility for attendance lies with you, the singer.

I am very serious about your grades, behavior, and commitment. You must prove to me by your grades and behavior that you care about the singers sitting around you - the CHOIR.

Let's continue the reputation of excellence in Chambrigals!

UNIFORM INFORMATION

Students in the Park Singers, Allegro! and Dulcissima will be provided a uniform for formal performances with the choir department. Members of Chamber Choir and Madrigal Singers will be given information on how to purchase their uniform (required).

PARK SINGERS, ALLEGRO!, DULCISSIMA: Black Robe with Colored Stole.

CHAMBER CHOIR: Tuxedo

MADRIGAL SINGERS: Black & White Dress

Male students should also have appropriate black/dark dress shoes and black dress socks to wear with their robe. For ALL performances, men are to be clean shaven and hair styled appropriately. If a male student has long hair he will be expected to have it pulled back and out of his face.

Female Students should have black skirt with black hose or black slacks (no jeans), and appropriate, comfortable closed-toe black shoes for performing. Flip-Flops and sandals are not appropriate or allowed on stage. All ladies must have their hair completely out of their face - pulled back - during all performances. Jewelry is limited to small tasteful earrings and a watch. Necklaces and excessively big jewelry are not appropriate.

Part of the choir-department-fees pay for robe fitting and hemming and dry-cleaning at the end of the year.

CHOIR SHIRT INFORMATION:

The choir department, like other performing organizations, has a Choir Shirt that is worn throughout the year to show department unity/spirit, on trips, and for informal performances. Any choir student or parent can purchase the shirt below.

PCEP Choir T-shirt – S, M, L, XL - \$10

Parents are also encouraged to purchase T-shirts as well.

CHOIR FUNDRAISING INFORMATION

The PCEP Choir Boosters offer fundraising opportunities in order to help offset the total cost of the choir competition entry, transportation, and music purchase. Fundraising is not mandatory but strongly encouraged as every dollar earned goes directly to supporting the students' education.

Due dates for fundraiser monies and forms are set on the fundraising calendar and students are reminded daily through announcement in the classroom. Students on the delinquent list will not be allowed to begin another fundraiser until they have cleared.

BANK DAYS are due dates for turning in fund-raising monies.

CASH ONLY!!! Due to the inordinate number of insufficient check fees the booster club incurred in the past, we have a **CASH ONLY PAYMENT** policy. **NO** personal checks will be accepted, **ONLY** cash or money orders will be accepted.

Procedure for turning in money:

Fill out an envelope next to the safe in the Booster Office - **COMPLETELY**. Name, Period, Amount & Purpose, i.e., Candle Sales, NYC trip, bank day, etc. **NO LOOSE CHANGE MAY BE TURNED IN!** Once your envelope is filled out accurately, you will put that in the safe. **NO MONEY FOR FUNDRAISING OR FOR A BANK DAY IS TO BE GIVEN TO A DIRECTOR OR LEFT ON OUR DESK!!!!**