

HHS Chorus Handbook

2017-2018

Dear Chorus Parents and Chorus Members,

It is an honor to welcome both new and returning students to the Hardaway High School Choral Program! GO HAWKS! My primary goal as the director of choirs at Hardaway, is to provide students with multiple opportunities for growth as singers, musicians, chorus members, and as human beings. Thank you for allowing your student(s) to be under my tutelage.

For those of you who do not know me, my name is Brianne Marcades. As the director of choirs, I oversee all operations within the choral program, teach and direct each choral class, and prepare the students in those classes for a multitude of musical activities throughout the year.

Please read the contents of this handbook very carefully.

This handbook is designed to provide a general understanding of what you and your students may expect this year in chorus. Contained within the pages of this handbook are the goals, procedures, discipline and grading policies for all chorus classes, among other important items. ***While I am always available for consultation,*** this Handbook serves as a primary form of communication with my students' parents and guardians. ***All students*** are also responsible for this information. Most items of the Handbook will be discussed with students in detail during the first 2 weeks of school, and will, of course, be referenced and reviewed throughout the school year.

Thank you for your support in your child's endeavor to study music. You, as their parents and guardians, make it possible for us to accomplish our goals. I know we can have a great year if we work together!

Sincerely,

J. Brianne Marcades

Bachelor of Music in Vocal Performance, Texas Tech University, 2003

Master of Music in Vocal Pedagogy/Music Education, Columbus State University, 2005

Goals

I. Two primary goals for students as individuals are posted in my classroom.

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With my instruction and guidance, students will:

- learn to make a healthy, correct and beautiful *choral* vocal sound;
- become literate in the language of music (we will read and write/notate music)

I have found that some students feel overwhelmed and discouraged when they realize that there are so many things to learn about being a vocalist and a musician. Any professional musician, including me, would confess that the path they followed to get where they are today was daunting at times. I encourage students to realize that the one thing they can ALWAYS control is their attitude. While preparing students for the Georgia All-State auditions one year, I came across a statement which I think perfectly depicts the role of ANY musician in a group setting, whether old or young, instrumental or vocal, novice or experienced. This statement speaks of *attitude*, and it, along with my goals for them, is now clearly and prominently posted in my classroom. I ask that it be **the students'** primary goal, while in my chorus classes and in any performance or appearance:

“My primary goal as a member of this ensemble,
is to give myself and others the opportunity
to make the best music possible.”

I ask that you join me in encouraging cooperative attitudes as we work for excellence.

II. I also have several goals for us as a group,
some specific to this year and some for the future of the program.

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1. Increase the number of rising Freshmen who enter and remain committed to the HHS Choral Program each year;
2. Grow the program as a whole through recruiting and retention;
3. Prepare concerts for school and community events, both on and away from campus;
4. Perform at LGPE (Large Group Performance Evaluation) and any other such events for the purpose of adjudication or instruction, including, but not limited to: Columbus State University High School Choral Workshop, Southern Star Festival in Atlanta, Georgia;
5. Participate in GMEA and Georgia-wide events such as, but not limited to, the following: All-State Chorus Auditions, District 3 Honor Chorus, Governor's Honor Program, Solo and Ensemble, Literary Meet;
6. Participate in fund raising activities throughout the year to raise money for the individual choir member and for the group's expenses at large;
7. Build community and comradery among members of the choral program by providing opportunities to experience music events and happenings in the community and beyond, including, but not limited to trips, choir tours to middle school feeders, musicals, symphonies, and community performances.
8. Further my experience and continue my education by attending conventions for music educators, participating in ensembles and performing solos in the community, and attending musical and cultural events in the area and abroad.

Rules/Consequences

To ensure the success of the chorus, these rules must be followed by all students regardless of age, musical talent, or musical ability. They will be posted in my classroom as a reminder, and there will be consequences for breaking rules (section *Consequences*). They are as follows:

Rules

1. Be PRESENT
 - Come to class (and turn in assignments) on time.
 - Trips out of class for the RR will be limited so that we can Get. Busy. Learning!
2. Be RESPONSIBLE
 - Food, drink, gum, and candy of *any kind* are **NEVER** allowed in the chorus room.
 - o Students can bring water to class, in a CLEAR water bottle, only if they feel they will need it during our class time. Trips to the water fountain will be limited. Students are expected to hydrate themselves before and after class.
 - Come to class prepared.
3. Be RESPECTFUL
 - Exhibit a great attitude
 - Your fun should never infringe upon someone else's learning/teaching experience.
4. Be AWESOME!
 - Be ready to learn and give your very best effort!

Consequences

Please be sure that you and your students are familiar with the Discipline Handbook provided by the administration of Hardaway High School. There are several steps in the disciplinary process. Chorus director will handle consequences for disciplinary issues on a case-by-case basis. Habitual and/or severe infractions (including, but not limited to, severe physical misconduct such as fighting, severe verbal misconduct, and generalized uncooperative behavior) will be handled by the administration. A student's continued participation in chorus will be based on overall behavior, attitude, effort, and consistent respect for the rules, and is subject to the discretion of the director. If there are habitual behavioral problems, a student could be permanently removed from the chorus program. At the director's discretion, and if proven necessary, other rules will be implemented. Students will be informed of any such changes.

Detention

If a student breaks a classroom rule (ie. gum/food/candy, missing materials – pencil, music, refusal to participate), the student will sign a detention notebook, and bring home a form for your signature. It is expected that the detention be served within 2 school days (ie...assigned on Monday...should be served on Wednesday). If detention is not served, it automatically becomes a double detention, and Ms. Marcades will contact the parent by email and phone. If the double detentions are not fulfilled, and there has been an attempt to contact a parent, the infraction is then referred to the office. On the 3rd infraction of any kind, an attempt will be made to contact parent by email and phone. Parent contact will be made earlier if the infraction is deemed severe.

Required Materials

1. Your brain.
2. Your voice.
3. A 1 in., black 3-ring binder with pockets. Clear pockets on outside are ok. This notebook is ONLY used for chorus...NO OTHER SUBJECT...and stays in the classroom at all times.
4. Ruled notebook paper (any width) kept in folder (just a few sheets is fine).
5. Pencil w/eraser (EVERY DAY!)
6. Formal Uniform (see "Uniforms")

Grading

Chorus students are assigned grades at the end of each nine-week grading period based upon:

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|--|-----|
| 1. Vocal Assessments (includes: Concerts and any in-class singing assessments) | 60% |
| 2. Daily Grade: Participation/Attitude/Being on Task and on Time/Materials | 25% |
| 3. Quizzes | 15% |

Your students know that a large portion of their grade in chorus is based on participation, remembering and following the rules/procedures and demonstrating what they have learned, such as posture and breathing for singing. Another significant part of their grade will come from their participation in concerts and performances throughout the year. All 3 concert dates for the year have been set. A "Required Dates" sheet is sent home during the first week of classes. ***All dates are subject to change based on availability of facilities and accompanists.*** There are some things that are out of my control. I do my best to plan ahead, and I poll students and parents about the most convenient times for extra practices when needed. It is my hope that you will be prepared to honor your commitment to this group regardless of any changes. If a change occurs, you will know about it as soon as I do. I hope that parents and family members will make arrangements to attend our concerts. Both your students and I will be proud to show you what we have accomplished!!!

*** Any students participating in the Large Group Performance Evaluation event in March will be asked to participate in some extra rehearsals. These will be decided upon within the first month or so of school. Other extra practices may be necessary when preparing for a concert, so that we can give our best product. An example would be a combo rehearsal for 2 classes that are singing a song together. I will keep you as informed as possible. Please check your email and the school website and REMIND text alerts for frequent communication.***

Policies and Procedures

Attendance Policy

Chorus class meets every day. Students cannot adequately learn, layer difficult skills, participate and contribute if they miss class. Students are evaluated on a very regular basis. Absences make this process difficult. Inevitably, there will be times when a student has to miss a regular, school day rehearsal for an unexpected illness, a doctor appointment, or orthodontist appointment. However, excessive absences of this kind *could* adversely affect a student's grade, due to the fact that a significant percentage of the overall chorus grade is based on whether or not the child is in class, *participating* and *demonstrating* what he/she knows. Students are required to make up any missed quizzes or assignments. OPTIONAL: Student can get back missed points for the day(s) missed by attending an after school individual practice session ON FRIDAYS ONLY. Student can

practice ***30 minutes for each missed class day in order to earn back full points.*** If you are unable to schedule an appointment for your child at some other time than during their chorus class, please have your child inform me of the situation ahead of time if at all possible. It is the responsibility of the student to come and speak with me about such matters before, after or outside of class only.

In the case of extended illness or injury, the instructor will make exceptions and special provisions for the student.

The nature of what we do as choral musicians, and the volume and frequency at which we “turn out” a product, demands some time outside of class for rehearsal, and most of our performances and concerts are outside of class time, too. This requires a special type of commitment. ***Every Student will receive a calendar the first week of school, listing all required rehearsals and concerts of the entire year. Please plan accordingly!*** Attendance at each after-school rehearsal, dress rehearsal, performance, concert and chorus function is ***mandatory***. Missing such an event (whether on or off campus) is unacceptable unless extreme circumstances arise. It is the responsibility of the student and the parent/guardian, to communicate with me about such matters. At the discretion of the director, student could be asked to ATTEND a performance without PARTICIPATING in it. (see below)

ISS Policy

Being absent from class because of ISS will affect a student’s grade quite severely, especially if one finds him/herself there often. Instructor will send work to the ISS instructor for each day he/she is absent. Completed assignments, which can be submitted on the first day back to chorus class from ISS, will be graded and accepted for only partial credit. ISS excludes students from participating in FRIDAY PRACTICE TIME to gain back lost points, but he/she will be required to come and make up work/instruction/practice which was done during missed class days. Frequent assignments to ISS will result in removal from the program.

Tardy Policy

Students are required to be in the door before the bell finishes ringing. Within 5 minutes of entering the classroom, student should have put belongings away, taken folder from slot, taken his seat, and ***completed warm-up activity for the day.*** Any tardy timed at over 5 minutes past the bell, will be handled by referral in the office. Student is considered ***skipping*** if he/she is anywhere in the building without the permission of instructor, and discipline will be handled according to that infraction. See Consequences.

If a student is tardy, he/she will receive a verbal warning/student conference. The third time a student is tardy, he/she will be assigned detention, and Ms. Marcades will attempt to make parent contact. If there is a 4th tardy, and parent contact has been attempted (whether successfully or not), and detention(s) have been assigned (whether served or not), the tardies will be referred to the office. (see section “Detention”)

Concert/Performance Policy

Absence from a ***concert/performance*** will be considered ***excused ONLY*** under the following circumstances:

- documented sickness (note from doctor and contact from parent required), specifically, illness that causes throwing up, fever, diarrhea
- death in the family (contact from parent required),

- unforeseen emergency on the day/evening of the concert (contact from parent required)-car accident

Student will receive a “Missed Performance” form on the first day back at school. Within 3 days, including that day, the student needs to return form to instructor with accompanying doctor’s note/written explanation, AND parent needs to please contact instructor in order for the absence to be excused. If one or both are not done within determined time frame, absence will be recorded as UNexcused and treated as such.

In the event of an *excused or unexcused absence*, the student is asked to do the following for the make-up grade:

1. Ms. Marcades asks that the student perform certain sections of the concert literature for memory, with piano accompaniment, in class, on a day following the concert. If the absence was excused, the student may sing his/her part with another singer, and other singers will join to complete the voicing for the piece (ie, if student is an alto in an SATB choir class, Ms. Marcades will select another alto to sing with the absent student, and also select a Tenor, Bass and Soprano). If the absence was unexcused, the same procedure will take place, but the student will not be able to have another person on the part with him/her. No one will sing alone. Excused absences can be made up to as high as an 80, but an unexcused absence can only be made up to as high as a 70.
2. Any student who misses more than 1 concert during the school year will be in severe danger of failing the class for the semester and for the year.
 - If a student is struggling with the common cold, or even with something that is not contagious but has caused a sore throat or discomfort, ***it is asked that student still attend the concert.*** Student who may have lost his/her voice, but is feeling ok for concert, is encouraged to be on stage with choir members, mouthing the words so as to receive credit for the event. Extra points may be made up if student cannot sing, but can otherwise participate normally. If a student loses his/her voice due to vocal abuse, students grade will suffer. All absences will be handled on a case-by-case basis by the instructor, but there are very few occasions in which a student is unable to come and participate to some degree.

*****Failure to comply with these make-up assignments, in the case of both excused and unexcused absences, will result in the loss of points for that concert.*****

Other school activities/Schedule Conflicts

The chorus encourages participation in activities outside of music such as sports, academic teams, etc. Inevitably, however, a scheduling conflict will arise. In this case, Ms. Marcades and the other involved coach/sponsor will try to arrange a compromise so that commitments are not broken. PLEASE attempt to handle any conflicting schedules in a responsible manner. Act early (get all of your extra-curricular commitments on your calendar *right away!*)! Be upfront; be honest; be responsible! Don’t wait until the last minute to work out the logistics of your busy high school schedule. Your chorus team is counting on you!

Travel Policy

Any and all rules, regulations, policies and procedures set forth by Ms. Marcades AND in the above referenced Hardaway High School Discipline Handbook, do not change shape or form in any manner when the chorus is traveling. Equally important as our behavior while at Hardaway HS, if not more important, is our behavior off-campus. Remember that you continue to be associated with

this school, this choral program and with your instructor and all others involved, whether on campus or abroad. Disciplinary action will be sought for those who do not take this seriously. Rules concerning travel away from campus are to be left to the discretion of the director, and will be introduced, reviewed and enforced as she sees necessary.

When the chorus travels in or out of town for a performance, competition or educational field trip, **NO ONE IS PERMITTED TO JOIN OUR GROUP/MEET UP WITH US AT ANY TIME, FOR ANY REASON.** Prolonged socialization with anyone who is not a parent chaperone will need special permission from Ms. Marcades PRIOR to event. Chorus functions are just that: HHS Choral Functions. They are meant to encourage and facilitate growth and friendship among its members. Above all, the safety of the students is of the utmost importance. This security will not be jeopardized in order to suit social demands. If Ms. Marcades has knowledge of or reason to believe that a member is not adhering to this policy, consequences as severe as removal from the program could occur. The only exception occurs in situations such as LGPE and All-State Chorus, where HHS students are in direct contact with students from other schools. While students will be instructed to **STAY WITH** our group in situations such as this, it is permissible for students to moderately interact with other students. If it seems like a bad decision, it probably is. When in doubt...ask **FIRST**.

It is my wish that every student attend each and every social function, but I cannot give students rides to or from functions in my vehicle.

Finally, all students are expected to follow directions given by any and all adult sponsors accompanying the choirs on a trip. Any disrespect or blatant disregard for an adult sponsor will be followed with immediate disciplinary action.

Financial Hardship Policy

No student will be denied the right to participate in mandatory or voluntary chorus activities because of financial hardships. ***Please contact the instructor concerning these issues***, and all will be dealt with in a strictly confidential manner. There will be opportunities to fund raise this year to assist with uniforms, GMEA sponsored activities and trips. Students: please note that it is not acceptable to mention a financial hardship at the last minute, and then use this as an excuse. Any activity that requires the participation of all students in the choral program is not optional. If given enough time, your instructor can help with just about any challenge that may arise this year, whether logistical (i.e. not having transportation to a concert) or financial. **DO NOT WAIT TO CONTACT ME WITH CONCERNS!**

Uniforms/Dress Code Policy

Part of performing is not only being musically prepared, but also providing an atmosphere of professionalism as well. Students are expected to dress appropriately for class according to the dress code for Hardaway High School. ***Also, students are required to obtain a uniform for chorus performances, appearances and concerts.*** (Please see section on Financial Hardships.) Our appearances as the Hardaway High School Choral Department (both formal and informal) are meant for the education, enjoyment and entertainment of the audience and the ensemble. They are not a platform for students to express their individuality. Part of every performance grade will be based on one's adherence to these uniform policies. ***Ms. Marcades will not permit students to perform if they are in violation of the dress code that follows:***

Formal Uniforms (Choral Uniform Rental Fee = \$25 for women and \$30 for men)

WOMEN

Black dress - provided by Choral Boosters and ***covered by the Choral Uniform Rental fee***

Each woman is responsible for providing her own:

1. Black stockings (**PLEASE NOTE: This is NOT optional **)

- may be knee highs, thin/nylon/dress “socks” – no bare feet

2. Black, closed-toe dress shoes. No “stiletto” heels. No tennis shoes. No flip-flops. No exceptions. (When in doubt, ASK!)

Hair and Accessories

1. Hair must be styled in such a way that it is pulled out of face and away from eyes. Hair should not be worn draped over one or both shoulders.
2. Hair cannot be dyed or boldly highlighted with an “unnatural color” for any concert or performance (including, but not limited to: bright fuschia reds or pinks, blues, greens, purples)
3. Steer clear from makeup, styling, and items in general which are flashy and meant to draw attention. Natural makeup with color on cheeks and lips is appropriate for stage.
4. Stud earrings in pearl, gold, or silver ONLY. No necklaces and no bracelets, please. One conservative ring may be worn on each hand.

MEN

Tuxedo (vest, dress shirt, pants, black bow tie), provided by Choral Boosters and covered by the Choral Uniform Rental fee

Each man is responsible for providing his own:

1. White, short-sleeved undershirt (Many men forget this item when they wear the tuxedo uniform. Every man MUST wear an undershirt. The tuxedo shirt is thin and slightly transparent, and this does not look appropriate for our formal performances.)
2. Black, plain belt
3. **Black socks**
4. Black, closed-toe dress shoes. No tennis shoes. No flip-flops. No exceptions.

* Men must be clean-shaven, and the only jewelry permitted will be small studs (one per ear) if ears are pierced.

***** Please do not wait until the last minute to gather these items. Pants should be in good condition, ironed and appropriately hemmed if necessary. Shoes and belts should also be in good condition and should be plain in appearance. Students not in compliance may be asked to sit out of a performance. PLEASE contact Ms. Marcades for help if needed. Do not wait until the last minute! *****

Music Policy

Each student is responsible for all music assigned to him/her over the course of the year. In preparation for a concert, a student is more than welcome to take music home for extra practice; however, *student must seek permission from the instructor in order to do so*. If music is misplaced or lost, *student will be responsible for replacing it (\$10/piece lost)*.

Please remember that the black, choral folder (see “Required Materials”) is meant to *stay in the classroom*. This folder should be for CHORUS ONLY; it should not be habitually taken in and out of the classroom, serving other purposes in other classes. As detailed in the “Grading Policy” section of this handbook, a portion of the chorus grade will come from Notebook Checks. If student DOES NOT have his/her notebook on the day of the check (or on any day), there will be a grade penalty.

Students should not take music home and make photocopies. THIS IS ILLEGAL. For instructional purposes, instructor will use photocopies on some occasions; however, this is mostly done in an effort to preserve the quality of the originals we already have in the HHS Choral Music Library.

Bathroom Policy

Students are allowed to use the restroom as needed, but instructor permission must be obtained, and this permission will be given based on where we are in a lesson/rehearsal. It is not always a good time to be excused from class. Students need to keep this in mind when asking. Students may not use the restroom in the first 15 minutes or last 15 minutes of class (this is school policy). Students should wait, if at all possible, for a time in class that will cause the least amount of a disturbance, such as a change in activity. Students are asked to **ONLY USE** the RR in the auditorium hallway unless it is out of order. In this case, Ms. Marcades will make an announcement about which main building RR should be used.

Lotions/Scented Items/hand Sanitizer

Please do not use any form of scented lotions, sprays, perfumes or colognes while in the choral suite. Such items are not allowed. Please apply such items while still in the RR or in the auditorium hallways and the outside areas.

Additional Information

Private Lessons

While many students will have opportunities to work with Ms. Marcades individually throughout the year for one reason or another, private lessons, while not expected, are highly recommended by all serious musicians and are considered the gateway to success in performance. In private lessons, the student may receive individualized instruction that is not possible to attain in an ensemble setting. Prices, schedules, and length of lessons vary from teacher to teacher. Please contact me if your student desires to take lessons, and I will happily provide a comprehensive list of teachers I recommend. Also, students are asked to inform me if they are already taking voice lessons, and I prefer the opportunity to converse with those students about their experience with lessons. As an educated and experienced vocalist, I gear my teaching in class toward the Italian concept of healthy, “bel canto” (beautiful) singing, and I implore the relaxation techniques of the late Dr. McClosky. Students can become easily confused and conflicted if more than one vocal philosophy is presented to them.

Word-Pressing Guidelines

Please follow these guidelines when asked to submit a typed assignment for Ms. Marcades:

- 12-pt., Times New Roman Font
- Default settings for margins
- Paragraphs are a minimum of 5 sentences long; NO spaces between paragraphs
- No more than double-spaced lines
- Heading in top right-hand corner as follows: John Smith - Number assigned to you
Chorus – block
Date
Makeup Assignment: Fall Concert

Director's Availability

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions, comments, concerns or accolades! You may reach me during 6th period at (706) 748-2766. After hours rehearsals are a very normal occurrence in this program. If you cannot reach me after 3:45pm, it is because I am in rehearsal. That being said, you may also contact me via email: marcades.joy.b@muscogee.k12.ga.us

I use REMIND to communicate very frequently with my students and parents. I encourage you to sign up for REMIND (instructions went home on day 1) so that you can be in the loop right with your students. The best way to contact me is via email. I usually don't check my school email between the hours of 5pm-7:45am. Thank you for your patience in hearing back from me according to this time frame.

Thank you for supporting your child in his/her endeavors to study choral music at Hardaway. I expect that this will be an exciting year for everyone involved in the program. Let's have a great year!