



CHOCTAWHATCHEE HIGH SCHOOL CHORAL POLICIES 2008-09

1. *Conflicts*

Students should be able to participate in a variety of school-sponsored activities: musical, scholastic, athletic, etc. Being aware that conflicts will occur in the scheduling of practices, games, rehearsals, matches, and performances, the following guidelines will be used:

- a. Conflicts will be avoided as much as possible.
- b. A performance or game will take precedence over a practice or rehearsal with no penalty or punishment involved in the missed practice or rehearsal.
- c. If a performance and a game occur at the same time, the student will be given the opportunity to choose the activity in which he/she shall participate and thereafter suffer no penalties for having made that choice. The student will make the director aware of his/her choice at least one month prior to the event.
- d. Choctawhatchee High School activities will take precedence over non-school related activities.

2. *Grading*

Grades will be based on knowledge of concepts, demonstration of skills and participation in chorus activities (during school time and outside of school time).

Weekly/Daily/Class Work/Homework Grades – 30%

You will receive weekly and daily grades based heavily on participation in class, effort demonstrating skills in class, attitude displayed in class, and behavior in class.

Time will be given in class to do class work. Please use this time wisely. Unfinished class work becomes homework for that day.

Participation:

In order to fully participate each day you...

Need a positive attitude

Must show a willingness to work

Have your pencil, music, and folder(s)

Skills:

Correct singing posture – standing and sitting

Good breath support and breathing technique

Free, open, and natural tone quality/vocal sound

Intonation and pitch accuracy

Good diction – clarity of consonants and purity of vowels

Phrasing of musical line

Vocal and facial expression

Stage presence

Rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic sight-reading

Memorization of vocal part(s)

Class work/homework:

The class work/homework will give you a chance to practice what we've been going over in class.

Tests/Performance/Rehearsal Grades – 70%

There will be tests throughout the year on the various music concepts we're working on in class.

Because this is a performance-based class, we will have after-school/evening rehearsals and performances. Proper participation, attitude, and behavior are expected for both types of events.

All students are required to attend all rehearsals and all performances. Grades are earned for both rehearsals and performances.

An unexcused absence from a rehearsal will result in a zero for that rehearsal.

An unexcused absence from a performance will result in two zeros.

Excused absences are:

Personal illness

Death of an immediate family member

Prior permission from the director

Unexcused absences include, but are not limited to:

Homework

Job

Didn't arrange for transportation

Forgot

Fell asleep

In order for Ms. Denham to *consider excusing* an absence it must be explained. The student should return to school with a note of explanation from the parent (written by the parent, signed by the parent, and a phone number listed). If a note is not received within 3 days of the absence, it is considered unexcused. Please remember that this process does not replace any of the Attendance procedures for the school, nor does an excused absence for the school day automatically excuse a student from a rehearsal or a performance.

3. Uniforms

A uniform is required and will be worn at each performance. Having the correct uniform will be part of the grade for performances. The dress uniform can be purchased at BeaChelle's in Uptown Station. A Green Chorus T-shirt is worn for casual performances. Please see the 'Uniform Information' page in this packet for more details. Cost factors have been considered by the director in selection of the uniform.

Uniforms are the financial responsibility of each individual choral student and are not paid for by the school. No student will be kept out of the choral program because they don't have a uniform. Please notify the director as soon as possible if there is a financial difficulty obtaining the uniform so that every effort may be made to assist the student.

4. Auditions

No student will be auditioned OUT of the choral program. A level of performance will be available for each student. Auditions will be held in May for Select Chorus and Madrigals. These auditions will be based on vocal production, musical skills, interest and willingness to devote outside time.

5. Festivals/Trips

The Chorus will enter the Florida Vocal Association District I Festivals. All chorus members will attend the District Choral Festival and will perform in a girls or boys chorus, and Select/Madrigals will also perform in a mixed chorus for evaluation by three concert judges and one sight-reading judge.

Participation in Solo/Ensemble Festival in November for evaluation by a judge will be on a *voluntary* basis with the understanding that once committed, the member is responsible for learning the music, attending rehearsals, paying their fees, and paying their accompanist (if applicable) regardless of whether or not they actually perform the day of the festival.

State Festival is a tradition at Choctawhatchee High School. Choruses receiving Superior ratings at District Festival qualify to participate. This Festival will be held in April, and includes charter bus transportation, up to 3 nights in quality hotels, and visiting a theme park, or other local attractions, after the performance. Students should plan on attending. The cost is between \$250 - 350, depending on travel costs, hotel costs, and theme park admission costs. Several fundraising activities are provided for students to earn all or part of the trip expenses. The more money we have in our account, the lower the cost per student will be. A payment schedule will be released at a later date. **Students who earn OSS during the school year will not go on this trip. Students in legal trouble will not go on this trip.**

Money paid for festival/trip fees may be non-refundable.

Behavior while out of the building must be impeccable. Any student who chooses to behave otherwise runs the risk of being issued a written referral at school or being removed from Chorus. If the student chooses to do something illegal, law enforcement will be called, and the parents will then be responsible for picking up their child in person *immediately*, at *their* expense.

6. Academic Eligibility

There is no minimum grade point average required to participate in any chorus class or to perform in local concerts and performances. Currently, there are guidelines in place requiring the student to have a 2.0 GPA from the previous 9 week grading period and not be failing more than one class to be eligible to participate in any competitions and festivals including Solo/Ensemble and District MPA. Students who are ineligible to participate at these Festivals because of their GPA will be exempt. Their grade in chorus will not be lowered because of non-participation. These students might be ineligible for the Spring Trip.

7. Awards

Chorus awards are presented at the Spring Concert to outstanding 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grade students. Selection for these awards is based on scholastic chorus average, musical skills and knowledge, leadership, natural ability, and participation in Solo/Ensemble Festival, All-County, and the Florida All-State Choruses. Traditionally, the Seniors receive their Senior Ribbons during the awards portion of the evening.

8. Fundraising

Our program relies on fundraising and donations to buy music, pay festival fees, pay for transportation, pay accompanists, etc. We receive no funds from the school budget. Participation in fundraising activities is optional and not mandatory. If a student willingly participates in a fundraiser, he/she is responsible for payment in full of the merchandise or for returning unsold merchandise. Failure to do so may result in expulsion from chorus or chorus activities. If the student is raising money specifically for his or her account, 'overage' will not be given back to the student as this money is not extra money.

9. Classroom Procedures

- a. Be on time for class/rehearsal
- b. Get your assigned folder and go to your seat
- c. Have a pencil each day
- d. Once the rehearsal/class has started, please don't talk amongst yourselves - we have lots to accomplish!
- e. Bring bottled water (no sodas, juices, etc.) if you need to drink water during class - trips to the water fountain and back are distracting
- f. At the end of rehearsal/class, straighten your area
- g. Put your folder away in the correct number
- h. Do not go into the office or closet areas without permission

10. Classroom Rules/Expectations

- a. Be here on time
- b. Participate
- c. No food or gum - you can't sing with it in your mouth - bottled water only!
- d. Be courteous and respectful of other people (teachers, students, visitors, etc.) and their belongings
- e. Always display an attitude of cooperation and a desire to do your individual best while working within the group
- f. When we are out as a group, remember that you represent Choctaw!

11. Chaperone Information

We will need parent volunteers and chaperones for a variety of events. Anyone wishing to volunteer (help with a fundraiser, help in the classroom, etc.) or chaperone an event will need to fill out a Volunteer Affidavit in the front office with Karen Anderson.

12. Choral Parent Meetings

The Choral Parents meet monthly (exception: January) at 7 pm in the Chorus Room. These meetings provide our parents with an opportunity to stay up-to-date on Chorus information, events, fundraisers, chaperone needs, etc.

13. Contact Information

You may contact Ms. Denham via e-mail at DenhamJ@mail.okaloosa.k12.fl.us or by calling the school at 833-3614 ext. 666 and leaving a voicemail.

Updated info can also be found in the following places:

- at <http://choctawhschorus.okaloosaschools.wikispaces.net>
- on the Chorus page of the school's website