

Apex High School Choral Department
Student/Parent Contract
2008-2009

Dear Parents and Students,

I hope that the beginning of the school year has been smooth and that you are settling into a routine that works for your family. We have three chorus classes this year. Men's Chorus meets 1st period with 22 boys. Intermediate Women's Chorus meets 2nd period with 50 girls, and Honors Women's Chorus meets 3rd period with 40 girls. Being in chorus is a privilege! In order to maintain the success of our program, I need your help and support. Please read the following contract, sign and return it by Aug. 29.

Like some of you, my family will also be adjusting to a new routine. I am due to have a baby August 28th. I am planning on teaching until I go into labor. I will be out six weeks from my delivery date. Rachel McKee will be subbing for me while I'm gone. Mrs. McKee has a Bachelors Degree in Flute and Voice from Meredith College and a Masters in Voice also from Meredith. She was recently the Choral Director at St. David's. She teaches private voice and flute lessons. Mari Palmer will also be in a few times a week to work breathing and technique. She is a private voice teacher in the area and teaches many of our students. I am excited to have both of them come and work with our students. Please remind your child to treat them with kindness and respect. Chocolate always works!

Throughout the year, you can find course descriptions, updated parent letters, Booster info, volunteer lists, and the yearly calendar posted on our web page. <http://www.apexhigh.com/clubs/chorus/> It is linked to the Apex High home page.

Each quarter I will send home a copy of the student's interim and an updated parent letter with current events. I will also send home the interim through email. I cannot do this without a legible parents email address. You may not receive interims until I return from maternity. The bulk of the grades will be when I return. Return each interim signed the next day for a 100 test grade. One day late is a 50 and after that the grade results in a 0. I will post on the web site at least a week in advance as to when the interim and parent letters will be coming home. It's an easy 100 and is a great way to pull up low test grades. It also increases communication.

Literature Studied: Students will be required to sing a variety of choral literature both secular and sacred. Students will not be expected to believe, practice or worship any of the sacred literature, but will be asked to sing and study it as a part of our world's music history. Music originated in the church. It is simply another style of music that is crucial to learning. Most of the sacred selections that we sing are state adapted.

Grading Scale:

40% Rehearsals/Concerts: Each out side of class rehearsal is worth 100 points. Each major concert is worth 200 points. If your child is out of school (sick/funeral) on a rehearsal or concert date, I must be notified by the parent with an explanation. It is the child's responsibility to make that time up before the quarter ends or their grade will result in a 0. You receive the calendar for the entire school year on the first day of school. Please plan Doctor and Dentist appointments accordingly. If a child is well enough to stay at school all day, then they are well enough for a rehearsal or concert. Please notify me immediately of Apex Athletic conflicts so that I may handle it with the coach in a timely manner. I do try to plan the calendar around as many of the athletic events as possible. If transportation is a problem, please notify me ASAP so that I can find your child a ride. The school also has an activity bus that runs for after school activities Mon-Thurs.

30% Class Participation and Classroom Rehearsals: If you are talking or eating, how can you be singing? Points are deducted for not trying, doing other work, eating, sleeping, drinking (other than water), or disruptive behavior. Each student receives 20 points a day, 100 points week. Each unexcused absence is a 0 for that day. I do check attendance pretty frequently. The school rule is over 10 absences a semester results in an F.

30% Tests/Quizzes /Projects: Each quarter, the students will be tested at least once on sight reading or on new theory material. Because of limited time with the performing schedules, music history may be presented in paper or project form. Each quarter, the students will also be given a singing test in groups of 2, 3, or 4. They will be tested with other students who sing different parts. This allows me to get to know the students and their voices. They are graded on their individual progress. Their grade will

reflect their growth as singer, and not compared with other student's grades. Make up work needs to be turned in within 1 week. It is the child's responsibility to make up that work.

Expectations: These are posted in the room 1st quarter.

1. Take responsibility for your own development as a musician.
2. Every time you sing, make it a quality experience.
3. Work to master basic music skills.
4. Develop an attitude of wanting to improve each day.
5. Be willing to try new things. Wait until a piece of music is ready to be performed before you have an opinion. Give it a chance and expand your mind.
6. Display an attitude of effort at all times.
7. Come to class prepared to work hard.
8. Be present for all rehearsals and concerts.
9. Listen carefully. Critical listening improves the quality of a choir.
10. **Respect the efforts of others, and of our differences. Girls, keep the drama out of T5.**
11. Enjoy experiencing and making beautiful music.
12. Show willingness to work with others.
13. Choir is a group effort, but every individual counts. Working together is the key.
14. Practice concert etiquette at all times, especially during rehearsals.
15. Make a positive contribution. Don't be a distraction.

Uniforms: The purchase of a uniform is mandatory. Dresses are \$55 and tuxes are \$120. You only have to buy them 1 time unless your child grows. You can then buy tux pieces not the entire tux. Extra bling, blings are \$5. Students will need solid black, closed toe dress shoes. Each student has a chorus account where fund raiser money is kept. I suggest using that money to pay for the uniforms. Tux and dress money is due September 9.

Choral Boosters and Financial Responsibilities: Each parent is considered to be a member of the Choral Boosters. It is up to you to get involved. We will have volunteer sign up sheets for different activities throughout the year at our booster meeting October 14. Our booster secretary has accounts set up where all money fund raised are kept. They may use that money for any chorus activity. If the money is not used at the end of the year, that money rolls over to the next year. If that student is a senior, the money goes into the general budget or to a sibling's account. Because of facilities, we have to have our concerts off campus. Our auditorium holds 230 and we usually have 400-600 people in attendance. This requires money. The school gives us a budget for some of our music and supplies, but that is it. The facilities that we rent charge anywhere between \$300 and \$4000 to use. This includes other Wake County schools. They are not free to use. We usually charge \$3 admission to offset some of the cost. We do try to have at least 1 free concert a year. In the past handling money has been a nightmare for me. Several years ago, I added up the money that I was collecting from kids for certain things and made a list. I took that total and divided it amongst the total of kids that I taught and came up with a total. I started a fair share. The students fund raise or pay for that total in the fall. This saves me a lot of class time and a lot of heart aches. I would have several thousands of dollars in the trailer at once and that is not safe. The parents seem to like this system much better. This year's fair share is \$90. It is due November 18th. At our meeting on October 14th, you will receive a detailed list of what the \$90 covers. It covers things like dinner before each concert, festival fees and bus rentals (school buses are not free), and the banquet.

Money: There is a lock box in the trailer on the wall near the black table. When your child turns in money, they put it in there. The box is emptied once a week by a booster officer. Under the table are labeled envelopes. Checks are made out to Apex Choral Boosters. All money goes in a labeled envelope and into the lock box. When you want to use fund raiser money, you put a labeled empty envelope into the lock box, and that money will be used for that event. Your only mandatory responsibilities are the uniform and fair share. After the first year, you only have the fair share. Anything else is extra. If there is a financial problem at home, please contact me for help.

Spring Trip: Each year we go on a Spring Trip. Last year I took the entire chorus to Disney World. This year I sent in an audition to sing at the Kennedy Center in Washington DC for the Memorial Day Celebration May 22-25. We were accepted. Our conductor is Z. Randall Stroope. The trip is only open to Men's Chorus and Honors Women's Chorus (1st and 3rd Periods). See attached sheet for details.

Fund Raisers: See attached sheet for details about our fundraisers this year. You will be pleased to know that we have gone back to our original cheesecake and cookie dough company. Yeah!

Please read the attached information and school year calendar. I apologize for the lengthiness of the letter, but you will not receive another newsletter until I return from maternity. **Please put the calendar on your refrigerator.** I will not be at Open House but look forward to seeing you October 14th at 7:00 in the auditorium. Any confusion will be made clear then. Our first fund raiser kicks off today. The Intermediate Women's Chorus will perform at our first meeting on the 14th. Thank you for encouraging your child to participate in the arts at Apex High School.

My office has moved to Mr. Koechlings's old office, beside of Mrs. Winter's office. It is located near the auditorium. I do not have an answering machine in there. Email is best or you can leave a message on the 2236 number. I have planning 4th period and will be in my office the majority of that period. Please feel free to email me with any questions or concerns. I will check it several times a week.

Heather Copley
Apex High School Choral Director
hcopley@wcpss.net
(919)387-2236 for messages
(919)387-3016 office

I have read and understand the contract, calendar, and financial obligations, and am willing to participate and work hard towards the success of the program. Please sign and return this form by August 29. If you are not willing to sign this contract, please see a counselor ASAP to get your schedule changed.

Parent's Signature _____

Student's Signature _____

Date _____

Parent's Email (print neatly):
