

August 2022

Dear Students and Parents,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the Warner Robins High School Chorus program! Our program is known throughout our community for its outstanding tradition of musical and academic excellence. I'm honored and excited to become a part of this tradition.

Since this is my first year leading the program at WRHS, let me introduce myself!

I grew up in Central Florida, and graduated from Stetson University with my bachelor's degree in Music. I did my Master's in Music Ed at Columbus State University, and my DMA in Music Ed at Boston University.

I taught at Albany State University, preparing future K-12 music educators, and then decided to become one myself. I taught for 3 years at Lee County Middle School East, and 2 years at Mossy Creek Middle School here in Houston County. All my choruses consistently achieved high ratings at LGPE, and I've taken students to All-State every year.

I also LOVE musical theatre. I taught drama on the middle school level, and have directed, played piano in the pit, and acted in shows on the college and community level.

In my spare time, I'm probably walking, hiking, or attending a concert somewhere!

Now for more information about the handbook. This handbook has been compiled to provide each student with the means and capabilities to achieve success in the chorus program. Outlined in this document are procedures, rules, and requirements concerning the upcoming year; therefore, each student and parent/guardian should take time to carefully read through this document, and keep it on hand to refer to later. I will also post the handbook in our Google Classrooms.

If you have any questions and/or concerns, my contact information is listed below. E-mail is the preferred and most efficient method of communication. Please sign and return the attached contract to me by the end of Monday, August 15th. This will count as a Minor Grade.

Can't wait to meet all of you. It's going to be a GREAT year!

Dr. Deanna Weber

Chorus Director, Warner Robins High School

deanna.weber@hcbe.net

478-929-7877, Ext. 3842

## Warner Robins High School Chorus Syllabus/Handbook

Instructor: Dr. Deanna Weber

Email: deanna.weber@hcbe.net

Room: T-57

Office Phone: 478-929-7877, Ext. 3842

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

Chorus classes at Warner Robins High School are performance-based ensembles designed to provide the student with the opportunity to develop and improve individual musical and vocal skills through the study of varied choral repertoire. Additionally, students are expected to develop self-discipline, self-esteem, and teamwork-based skills. Students **MUST** have a desire to sing and develop their talents as singers and musicians.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

1. Students will develop vocal technique and aural skills for singing beautifully and artistically as ensembles and soloists (note: students will never be required to sing alone in front of classmates, parents, and other non-fine arts staff).
2. Students will fluently read music.
3. Students will develop an understanding of music theory and music history and its relation to performance.
4. Students will develop an appreciation for various styles and genres of music.
5. Students will perform a diverse body of vocal repertoire with accuracy and expressiveness.
6. Students will develop an understanding of musical terminology.

### **MATERIALS:**

- Pencil (1 pencil is provided by the Director) – Students must have a pencil with them every day.
- 1-inch black binder (provided by the Director).
- Sheet music (provided by the Director) – Any lost/damaged music will be replaced at the student's expense. Do not write in music with pens!

### **GRADING:**

**45% Major Grades**—Performances, after-school rehearsals, tests. Students are in a performing group; therefore, they are expected and required to participate in all concerts that may not occur during the school day.

**20% Minor Grades**—Quizzes, classwork, homework

**15% Daily Grades**—Daily participation grades - Students will receive a weekly active participation grade. Since this is a performing group, students must participate in every rehearsal to be adequately prepared for concerts. Students earn up to 20 points per day toward their weekly participation grade. This adds up to a possible weekly grade of 100.

**20% Final Exam** - Each class will be given a cumulative final exam at the end of each semester. Any material covered throughout the semester may be on the exam.

#### **A NOTE ON SINGING CULTURALLY AND RELIGIOUSLY DIVERSE MUSIC:**

Throughout the year, students may perform the music of various religious and cultural backgrounds. This music is used for instructional purposes and is handled with sensitivity. All music we perform is meant to be viewed historically and is chosen to help students understand musical concepts and traditions. If there are any questions or concerns about the performance of specific pieces of music, please contact the Director.

#### **CHORUS TRIP 2022-23**

We hope to be able to take a chorus trip this spring. Additional information is coming soon!

#### **WARNER ROBINS HIGH SCHOOL CHOIRS:**

**Bella Voce:** Open to any students wanting to sing treble repertoire at the beginning level. This class teaches students how to sight-read, the basics of music theory, and proper singing technique.

**Concert Choir:** This class includes intermediate treble singers. Singers moving up from Bella Voce must complete an audition for the class. This class continues instruction in sight-reading, music theory, and proper singing technique.

**Concordia:** This is the school's Advanced Treble Chorus. Placement in this class is based on sight-reading ability, quality of tone production, and general work ethic exhibited in other classes. To enroll, students must have completed a year within another WRHS chorus or demonstrate exceptional musical ability. Membership is through audition only.

**Choraliers:** This choir serves as the school's flagship vocal ensemble singing complex choral repertoire. Placement in this class is based on sight-reading ability, quality of tone production, and general work ethic exhibited in other classes. Choraliers is a long-standing tradition at WRHS, and membership is through audition only.

#### **OFFICER REQUIREMENTS & DESCRIPTIONS:**

Students will have leadership opportunities in the choral department. The available positions for the 2022-2 school year include Student Conductors and Section Leaders. Before applying, students interested in officer positions must understand the work and responsibility that is required.

## **ALL OFFICERS**

1. An officer is expected to hold the position for the entire school year.
2. An officer is expected to continuously lead by example inside and outside the chorus classroom.
3. An officer is expected to participate in ALL performances, activities, and rehearsals.
4. The Director reserves the authority to remove an officer from his or her position due to disciplinary issues, failure to complete assigned tasks, and/or the mistreatment of other students.

## **Student Conductor**

He or she may be asked to conduct the choir in the absence of the Director, lead warmups, assist with attendance, run sectional rehearsals, assist with uniform checks at concerts, and take attendance at dress rehearsals and concerts. Other duties may be assigned throughout the year.

## **Section Leaders**

Section Leaders will assist the student conductor by reporting absences, missing music, etc. at the beginning of rehearsal. Additionally, they will occasionally lead sectionals as deemed necessary. Section Leaders will report any conflicts/situations of concern within the section to the Director.

## **DAILY PROCEDURES:**

1. Vocal warm-up: posture, breath support, vowel shape, diction, blend, balance, range, and other skills as needed.
2. Sight-reading: rhythm and pitch.
3. Daily announcements
4. Rehearsal: part-work on choral literature including elements of music theory and history.

## **REHEARSAL POLICIES:**

Choir members must be in the room in their assigned seats when the bell rings. Students must have their pencil, folder, and all music for the class period. Choir students are not to be in the music library, storage rooms, practice rooms, Director's office, hallway, bathroom, or at the water fountain without the permission of the Director.

Talking during "stops" is not permitted. Choir members must not talk, sing, etc. anytime the Director or Student Conductor is addressing the group. Failure to meet these requirements will result in a deduction from the daily grade and potential disciplinary action.

At the end of each rehearsal, each student should place his or her folder in the folder cabinet. If a folder is found at the incorrect location at the end of rehearsal, points will be deducted from the student's daily grade.

#### **CHORUS ROOM RULES:**

- Be on time to class every day. The school's tardy policy will be enforced.
- Students will refrain from having phones and other electronic devices out during class. If a student is seen with a phone in class, the item will be confiscated and turned in to the front office at the end of the day.
- No food or drinks are allowed in the chorus room. Only resealable bottled water is permitted.
- No gum.
- Students must have permission to enter the practice rooms. Non-chorus students are not allowed in practice rooms at any time.
- Students should not touch any keyboards in the classroom at any time, unless permission is given by the Director.

#### **DAILY & CONCERT ATTENDANCE POLICY:**

The school's tardy and attendance policy will be enforced each day.

Attendance at concerts, performances, and all after-school rehearsals is required and graded. Understandably, there will be conflicts and emergencies that arise throughout the year. If a student misses any concert, major performance, or after-school rehearsal for any reason, they will be given a make-up assignment at the discretion of the director.

Examples of excused absences: medical emergency/personal injury, death in the family.

Examples of unexcused absences: work, oversleeping, transportation, Driver's Ed, babysitting, homework, lack of planning/coordinating with other school organizations.

#### **SICK DAY POLICY:**

There are no sick days permitted in chorus classes. If a student is well enough to be at school, theoretically, he or she should be well enough to rehearse. However, this is not always the case. Please let Dr. Weber know if you don't feel well enough to sing. You may still participate in rehearsal by following along in the music. Students should take notes as if they are actively singing and participating in the rehearsal.

#### **HALL PASSES:**

Each student will be issued one hall pass per semester that can be used up to three times. Each time it is used, it will receive a hole punch. Students should save these passes for trips to the bathroom.

## **FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS SUMMARY:**

I will do my best to keep financial obligations to a minimum! However, we do require some funds in order to run the choral program. These are as follows:

**Chorus Dues:** Dues are \$30 per semester, or \$55 for the year if they are paid in full during the Fall Semester.

Payments are accepted in the forms of cash or check.

When turning in any money to the Chorus Department, it must be in a sealed envelope with the student's name, class/choir, payment amount, and the payment's purpose (e.g. Chorus Dues, etc.) on the front.

**Extracurricular events** such as All-State Chorus, All-State Reading Chorus, District Honor Chorus, High School Choral Days, Trips, etc. will require additional fees. Participation in these events is optional.

**Fundraisers** will be held throughout the year to assist with various financial obligations for Chorus (i.e. Dues, trips, etc.). The director will keep a fundraising account for each student.

## **UNIFORMS:**

**ALL CHOIRS will follow the GMEA Guidelines for "CONCERT BLACK" attire.**

**Ladies** will wear a floor-length black dress with sleeves or jacket, OR floor-length black skirt and black blouse with sleeves or jacket, OR floor-length black pants and black blouse with sleeves or jacket. (LEGGINGS ARE NOT PANTS!) Blouses will hang below the waist of a skirt or pants by 3 inches. Also, all ladies are to wear black shoes that completely encompass the foot. Flip flops or sandals of any kind present a safety issue when maneuvering steps or risers, and are not acceptable attire.

\*In the interest of comfort and safety, please do NOT wear high stiletto heels.

**Gentlemen** will wear a black, long-sleeved dress shirt, black pants, black socks, and black shoes that completely encompass the foot. Flip flops or sandals of any kind present a safety issue when maneuvering steps or risers, and are not acceptable attire.

\*No necklaces, bracelets, or large earrings are permitted. Small rings may be worn.

NOTE! The Chorus Department owns several donated outfits from previous members. Students will be allowed to rent and/or purchase these items from the Chorus Department if needed. Please see Dr. Weber to inquire about this.

Students who are not properly dressed for a concert will not be permitted to perform on stage. They will be excused from the performance and will be given a written make-up assignment.

## **CHORUS DUES:**

Dues are \$30 per semester, or \$55 for the year if they are paid in full during the Fall Semester.

WRHS Chorus is a non-profit organization. We do not keep or accumulate money for personal or private use. Every cent paid goes back into your child's music education, and none is kept for profit. Chorus Dues are used to pay for expenses incurred by the Chorus as a whole, rather than paying for individual student expenses. Group expenses include but are not limited to LGPE registration, accompanist fees, piano tunings, chorus T-shirts, bus transportation, music expenses, equipment expenses, etc. While the Chorus does receive some money from the County Board, it is a mere fraction of the amount we need for all the expenses we incur throughout the year in running a very active Chorus program.

Payment plans can be worked out for students who request them. If no payment plan has been requested, the student has not spoken to the Director, and the Chorus Dues have not been paid, the student will not perform until they meet this obligation.

## **CHORUS FUNDRAISERS:**

The Chorus program provides several fundraisers throughout the year to help with the above costs. Our two biggest fundraisers are the Cookie Dough Sale first semester, and the Cheesecake Sale second semester. More info to come!

## **INFO ON MAJOR EVENTS:**

Fall Concert: Our first major concert of the year! All groups will perform, and solos and small groups are encouraged.

GMEA All-State Chorus Auditions: This is a highly rigorous audition process to join the Georgia Music Educators Association All-State Chorus. Those who wish to audition must pay an audition fee and meet with Dr. Weber for after school rehearsals. The All-State event is held at the Classic Center in Athens in February.

District Honor Chorus: Students are nominated by the Director to participate in this event. It takes place over two days in January.

Holiday Concert: This festive evening will take place in our school theatre and involve all choirs. Some of our piano class students will be featured.

Pre LGPE/Literary Concert: This concert prepares students for Large Group Performance Evaluation (LGPE). It takes place in the theatre and involves all choirs. Our Literary soloists and ensembles will also perform.

Large Group Performance Evaluation (LGPE): Our choirs will perform for three judges and receive a rating. This event takes place during the school day.

Literary Competition: This annual competition features our boy's solo, girl's solo, Tenor-Bass Quartet, and Treble Trio. The team will be auditioned in the fall and will practice after school.

Spring Trip: We are planning an exciting trip this year in conjunction with the band. Stay tuned!

Spring Concert: This will take place in our school theatre and involve all choirs. This is a more informal concert and will feature a number of pop and Broadway selections.

Chorus Awards Night: This night will celebrate students' achievements in the Chorus Department.

Graduation: All students in Choraliers, Concordia, and Concert Choir are required to perform at Graduation.

### **CHORUS AWARDS:**

At the end of the year, the chorus hosts our annual awards night. Recognition will be given to students who perform well at the following functions: District Honor Chorus, Literary, All-State Chorus, and LGPE.

Students enrolled in choir 4 semesters will Letter in Chorus. Every 2 semesters beyond this, Students will earn a Service Pin. Seniors with at least 8 semesters will receive the "Singing Demon" plaque.

Four students will be recognized by the Director: Most Improved, Most Outstanding, Distinguished Service, and the Director's Award.



## **Student-Parent-Teacher Contract**

Please return this form signed by Monday, August 15th. It will be counted as a grade.

I acknowledge I have read the Warner Robins High School 2020-21 Chorus Handbook in its entirety and agree to adhere to the guidelines and rules outlined therein. Failure to meet these expectations will result in appropriate outlined consequences.

By signing this contract,

- I agree to pay the Chorus Dues for this year, OR I will be in contact with the Director to discuss possible options.
- I agree to adhere to the uniform guidelines outlined by the Director.
- I have reviewed the expectations and responsibilities of a Warner Robins High School Chorus Member or Parent/Guardian, including the attached calendar.
- As a student, I agree to come to class each day presenting my best self. I will contribute to the well-being of others help to create a positive learning environment each day.
- I understand the Director reserves the right to change any portion of this syllabus/handbook at any time to better fit the needs of students and the WRHS Chorus Program as a whole.

### **SOCIAL MEDIA OPT-OUT**

By checking this box, I do NOT give the Chorus Department and Warner Robins High School permission to publish photos or videos of my student to social media accounts run by school faculty. Examples include posting photos/videos of school events such as concerts, fundraising events, etc.

### **CONTRACT ACCEPTANCE**

Student Name (printed)

\_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature/ Date

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature/ Date

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