

**FORT MYERS HIGH SCHOOL CHORAL DEPARTMENT
2009-2010 HANDBOOK**

MR. MATT KOLLER, DIRECTOR

WWW.GREENWAVECHOIRS.NET

ENSEMBLES

SOUNDWAVE – Show choir and SATB concert choir

VERDIGRIS – Advanced women's choir

INFLUX – 16 voice a cappella choir

FERMATA – Beginning women's choir

PURPOSE

The Fort Myers High School Choral program is designed to help you realize the tremendous beauty of music through the appreciation of and the participation in a successful vocal music experience. In this group, you will be challenged to broaden your musical scope by learning and performing a vocal repertoire representative of different periods and styles. Through the experiences of musical expression and interpretation of these works, I hope that you will develop a higher sense of self-worth, discipline, musicianship, and pride in your school. *The most successful chorus students strive for "excellence" both as individuals and as an ensemble.*

More than any other class at this school, the choices you make in regards to participation, behavior, attendance, and commitment have a direct impact on the other members of the choir. As a result, your careful attention to the policies that embrace these issues is most important and will not only benefit you, but the group's performance as a whole. You are always encouraged to put forth your best in every part of the rehearsal process!

This program benefits you by providing curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular musical opportunities. You will have the opportunity to combine a love of singing, dancing, and acting and are exposed to many different musical styles and historical time periods through this performance medium. This high-energy group has a commitment to service that will enrich the community by providing entertainment for the community and by encouraging younger children to explore another avenue of self-expression that will keep them involved in worthwhile activities at school.

COMMITMENT

Each student makes up an important part of the choir, and because all of these parts are so intertwined in ensemble music making, your commitment reflects your responsibility to the group. Commitment includes timely arrival to class, concentration on the music and the director's instructions, mature behavior during rehearsal, and a positive and helpful attitude towards the other students. Just as you will be held accountable for any disruptions, you will also benefit greatly from active participation in choir.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Your attendance must reflect your commitment to learning and to the ensemble.

Chorus is a performing arts program; therefore, you are expected to attend ***ALL*** performances. *Concerts are a key component in every student's grade.* Parents and students should take the time to mark them down in their calendars!!! Many concerts take place at a location other than FMHS. The dates for these concerts are posted on our website (see p. 6). We strive to make a positive impact on the community, and your attendance at all performances is required.

Concerts are an integral part of any chorus program. There is no way to make up the experience if a concert is missed. Most concert dates are provided early in the year so that families can avoid scheduling any conflicting appointments or trips around those dates. I typically do not add a performance with less than two weeks notice, however, it does happen on occasion.

Excused absences: Illness; death in the family; other emergency situations; pre-arranged absences (i.e. religious reasons) where parent note is received at least two weeks prior to the concert. In order to receive a passing grade for the concert, a student will be required to complete a make up assignment. This make up assignment is required for any absence for any reason other than a death in the family. It is the student's responsibility to obtain the make up work.

Unexcused absences: Students who have an unexcused absence from a concert will be awarded 0 points out of the total and will not be given an opportunity to make up the work.

It is your responsibility to notify your place of employment about rehearsal and performance dates. You should submit a copy of the performance schedule along with rehearsal dates to your employer at the beginning of the school year. Employers are happy to work around your schedule if they know it well in advance. They are usually less willing to work around your schedule when they find out the day before. Work is an unexcused absence under any circumstance.

The rehearsal directly before any performance is mandatory for all members (singers/dancers, band, crew). Performance order, last-minute blocking changes, and other important show revisions are reviewed at these rehearsals. Unless excused by the director in advance from the dress rehearsal, a student will not perform unless he/she is in attendance.

PERFORMANCES

Strive for a complete performance. It is not enough for you to know your part or dance moves. It is your understanding of how everything works together for a complete performance that will make us excellent.

DAILY PARTICIPATION

*We all like to have fun before and after class in the chorus room, but once rehearsal begins it **must** be taken seriously.*

You are expected to be in your assigned seat with a pencil (and any previously distributed music) by the time that the bell rings. You must have a PENCIL for class. You are expected to stand and sit with the group whenever instructed during the rehearsal and should actively take part in all stretching and warming up to the best of your ability.

Your participation is critical to your classmates and time is precious; therefore, permission to leave the room will only be given for an extreme emergency.

Chewing gum or consuming food or drink is prohibited (*this includes LUNCH*). Talking during rehearsal is not permitted.

Active participation includes listening, learning, rehearsing, and eventually mastering proper group vocal techniques and dance techniques through the music. You should recognize the importance of every element of the rehearsal. Your complete attention should be given to the director and his instructions. If you are sick and cannot sing you must participate in rehearsal in every way except phonation.

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

Great choirs are great because of consistent excellent rehearsals. There is no room for misbehavior, shenanigans, or excessive talking during rehearsals.

Students are expected to exhibit self-discipline and a sense of pride as a member of the chorus department. Each member represents the choral program, as well as FMHS and should behave accordingly-- in school and out. Students are expected to be respectful to students, teachers, parents, and/or any adult who may be placed in charge.

Any student who exhibits excessive or severe misbehavior, whether during class, at a performance, or while at an off-campus chorus-sponsored activity, may be disciplined in one or more of the following ways:

- Removal from activity
- Removal from room
- Parent phone call
- Discipline referral
- Parent conference
- Suspension from chorus events

SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS

Each member of the vocal department is required to purchase a black folder. These folders will be ordered in the fall each year. This folder should last for the entire time that a student is a member of the vocal department.

Students must bring to chorus:

1. Their black chorus folder with all music in it.
2. A *mechanical* pencil to keep inside the folder.
3. A black and white composition book.
4. If it is a dancing day in Soundwave, students must be prepared in dance clothes.

Students will be held responsible for materials assigned to them, including sheet music and their chorus folder. Sheet music is the most expensive part of the chorus curriculum. *Students who damage or destroy a copy of music will be charged \$5 to replace it.*

1. Do not fold, tear or otherwise mutilate music.
2. Use only pencil for marking your music
3. Music folders will be assigned. Each folder will be numbered to match a slot in the music rack.

DO NOT USE MUSIC THAT IS NOT YOURS

It is imperative the all students have their folder and all music at every rehearsal. Section leaders will keep track of which students have their music each day. Failure to have your folder and music will result in a 3 point deduction from the daily participation grade.

CUBBIES AND CLEANLINESS

Cubbies will be provided to members of *Soundwave*. No other choral department member (or FMHS student) may utilize a cubby unless approved by Mr. Koller. No other area of the room is to be used for storing books and supplies for your other classes. If there are books and supplies left in class, they will be taken to the lost and found or the library. We all have to use this room. Let's keep it clean.

GRADING POLICY

In order for chorus students to achieve the highest grades possible, it is important for both students and parents to be aware of the chorus grading policy. As a performance-based class, a significant percentage of points are awarded for participation in performances. Students must be responsible about informing their parents and attendance at concerts because of the big impact these events have on their grade. Read on to understand how points are earned in each category.

Concert Attendance

In order to receive full credit for concerts, each student must:

1. Attend all scheduled performances!
2. Arrive FORTY-FIVE MINUTES before scheduled performance time.
3. Wear the appropriate uniform.
4. Follow the code of conduct.
5. Use proper concert etiquette when watching others perform.

Class work

This category includes sight-reading, part-singing, music literacy, music appreciation, music analysis, composition, journal writing, and more. Students are responsible for keeping their chorus folder up to date by checking with other

students and with the director about missed work. Students are expected to leave their folders in the chorus room all year.

Daily Participation

A student will receive an “A” for participation if they:

- **Always** arrive on time.
- Participate **constantly**.
- Listen **constantly**.
- **Always** have required materials.
- **Always** use singing posture when appropriate.

There will be times when students are asked to evaluate their own performance in chorus class.

TEAMWORK

A team-based ensemble requires 100% commitment 100% of the time, which means planning ahead, balancing a busy schedule, and making sacrifices on occasion.

RISERS AND EQUIPMENT DON'T PUT THEMSELVES AWAY!
(neither do bowls of ice cream, music, folders, shorts, belts, socks, sneakers etc...)

We need every student, senior through freshman, to do his or her fair share of loading, unloading, storing, assembling, sweeping, and whatever else needs to be done. Risers MUST be set up and ready to go PRIOR to the start of rehearsal. NOBODY is too good for a little manual labor. ☺

At the end of rehearsal trash must be cleaned up, folders stored, and equipment put away. Everyone will stay until this is completed.

HALL PASSES

It is my responsibility to use the entire class period for instruction. Please try to use the restroom, schedule guidance appointments, etc. between classes. Hall passes will be given out only in the case of an emergency.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are one of the most exciting parts of being in chorus. Remember that field trips are a privilege. Students who do not meet chorus and/or school guidelines may lose that privilege.

CHORAL ACTIVITIES

Participation in the activities listed here is not required, but is greatly encouraged. Before and/or after school study sessions and/or rehearsals are required in most cases. Students must meet academic requirements and are responsible for transportation and expenses associated with these events including sheet music, accompanist tapes, accompanist fees, travel and lodging.

All State Chorus:

All State Chorus is an audition-only chorus that practices and performs in Tampa over three days in January. In order to participate, students must pass two challenging auditions. It is recommended only for students with solid musicianship skills. We are only permitted to audition a certain amount of students each year. If too many students are interested, we will have an audition to audition.

Solo & Ensemble:

This event is for students interested in being adjudicated as a soloist or as part of a small ensemble. Students must choose music from an approved list with their director. A piano performance category is also available.

All County Chorus:

This honors choir is made up of students selected to represent the best of each high school in the county. Fort Myers High is hosting All County in 2009-2010, and we want an excellent representation from our school. There is no audition required this year. You must be selected by your director in order to participate.

CHORAL MPA

Choral MPA (music performance assessment) is a **requirement** for all choirs. It is mandatory that you participate. This is an extremely important performance as our scores for performance and sight-reading are published state wide. If you miss MPA for ANY REASON, you will receive two zeros for the concert portion of your grade. An opportunity to make up these grades WILL NOT be given.

FUNDRAISING

All students are encouraged to participate in the chorus fundraiser because *all fundraiser money benefits chorus students*. Students are not required to participate, but those who do may be rewarded. The funds we raise are used to pay for things such as music, bus transportation, uniforms, accompanists, awards, hospitality, MPA fees, clinician fees, and more. There are no individual student accounts. All of the funds raised go into the internal chorus account maintained by the Fort Myers High School bookkeeper.

Information regarding fundraisers will be sent home as soon as it is available.

UNIFORMS and CONCERT ATTIRE

Girls in *Fermata* and *Verdigris*: black concert dress, nude hose, black character shoes, pearls. These items may be purchased from Mr. Koller.

Guys: (you will be informed if you need these items) full tuxedo, black socks, black dress shoes. The tux should consist of a white tux shirt, black bow tie, black cummerbund, formal black shoes and the tux coat and pants. The tux may be purchased at any local retailer.

Each member is required to wear all of these items to every performance. Students not in the correct attire will not be allowed to perform and will not receive credit.

Show choir attire for *Soundwave* will be provided through generous donations for the 2009-2010 school year.

COMMUNICATION

Most problems are simply a *lack of communication*. Students must discuss any conflicts or problems with the director (contrary to popular belief, I can't read minds!) I am always willing to talk with any parent/student about concerns or questions. If you would like a conference, we can meet after school (on certain days) or during my planning period, which is period 6 this year.

E-MAIL: (works best): matthewwcko@leeschools.net

PHONE: (239) 334-2167 x. 236 (Choral Department Office)

The best way to contact me is by email. Phone messages often get lost but I can usually respond to an email the very same day. Even if you would like for me to call you, the best way to ensure that I get the message is to send me an email. There have been a few occasions where an email did not get through to my account. If you don't get a response from me, please call me to make sure I got it.

WEBSITE

The Fort Myers High School Choral Department website is located at www.greenwavechoirs.net. This website will contain all calendar dates and other necessary information. Bookmark it, and check it regularly. All performance dates and other pertinent information will be posted there. It is YOUR responsibility to check this website regularly.

STUDENT LEADERS

Their fellow classmates elect student leaders for each choir after school starts.

President: He or she must possess the ability to take on great responsibilities. The president will work closely with the director and serve as the voice of the choir. All students should carefully weigh this choice, as they will be the spokesperson for the entire choir.

Vice President: He or she will assist the president and be able to take on the responsibilities of the president if the president is unable to fulfill his/her position. The vice-president will assist the president and be in charge of social events.

Secretary: The secretary will be in charge of attendance reporting. The secretary will receive attendance reports each day from the section leaders. They will log those reports and submit them to the director each day. The secretary should possess good organizational skills and have a good attendance record. He or she will take roll, post announcements concerning the choir, write thank you notes, and help the director with secretarial duties.

Treasurer: The treasurer must be a trustworthy individual who will handle the collection of money from fund-raiser and ticket sales. The treasurer should possess good organizational skills and be good with numbers.

Historian: The historian will be responsible for taking pictures and video as well as collecting pictures and video from vocal department members. The historian will keep the bulletin board updated and compile an end of the year video to be presented at the choir banquet.

Section Leader: One or two members of each section will be chosen by the director to serve as section leader. Section leaders will serve as role models and teachers for the rest of the students in their sections. Each section leader should possess the highest level of proficiency as a vocalist. They must also be well respected by the section in order to be an effective leader.

Dance Captain: Chosen by the director based on experience and ability. These students are responsible for dance and skill execution.

Student Librarians: Student librarians will assist the director in keeping the music library neat and orderly. They will also be responsible for checking folders periodically and collecting music when appropriate.

AUDITORIUM USAGE

There is a separate handbook for anyone using or working in the auditorium. It is also located on the chorus department website. Please read it if you are one of these individuals.

LADDER OF SUCCESS

These items are just a few suggestions of ways to improve your ability, love, and knowledge of our curriculum:

Excel in All Performances

- Work hard each day to be prepared musically and physically
- Take all performances seriously and give 100%
- Encourage parents/guardians, friends, principals, and teachers to attend concerts
- Attend all rehearsals and shows
- Take care of your instrument—your VOICE

Maximize your Talent

- Work hard each day to improve and form good singing habits
- Work outside of the class on the music and choreography
- Apply previously learned material to each rehearsal or performance
- Listen and use your pencil
- Sing with expression
- Raise your level of sight-reading skills
- Take private voice lessons
- Attend a choir summer camp

Present a Positive Image of our Choirs to the Community, School, and Peers

- Have pride in our choir
- Communicate to others what we do and hope to accomplish
- Be competitive, but appreciate the abilities of others
- Pass every class every marking period
- Participate in All County Chorus

Keep a Positive Attitude Throughout the Year

- Always look ahead and see the desired goals we are working toward
- Don't let personalities get in the way of our unified effort. Work together to move forward and progress.
- Encourage each other in a positive way
- Always give respect to all members of our group
- Be dependable and active
- Maintain a genuinely positive attitude
- Be a team player

Attend live performances of theatre, dance, and music at all levels!

AUDIENCE ETIQUETTE

There will be times when we have the opportunity to view performances from other schools and ensembles. You are a Greenie, and are expected to behave properly, whether by yourself or as a member of our group.

When attending a concert you

WILL:

1. Applaud appropriately
2. Acknowledge excellence
3. Learn from what you see and hear

WILL NOT:

1. Mock the performance
2. Call out the names of friends in the show
3. Use your cell phone or other wireless device during a song/performance
4. Complain or brag that “we’re better than them”, because it doesn’t matter

**Fort Myers High School
Choral Music Department
Matt Koller, Director**

Dress Order Form

As stated in the handbook, all girls in the FMHS choral department are required to purchase a dress for concert use.

Please note the size of the dress your daughter will need and enclose a check in the amount of \$70.00 made payable to FMHS. This will cover the cost of the dress, shipping, and tax.

Please use this size chart.

ORDER SIZE	0	2	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	24	26	28
Bust	28	30	32	34	36	38	40	42	44	46	48	50	52	54	56
Waist	24	25	26	27	29	31	33.5	36	38	40	42.5	45	47	49	51
Hips	32	34	36	37	39	41	43.5	46	48	50	52	54	56	58	60
Skirt Lth	45	45	46	46	47	47	48	48	48	48	48	48	48	48	48

Student Name _____

Please order dress size _____

**PLEASE RETURN IN AN ENVELOPE BY
*FRIDAY, AUGUST 28th***

