



**Henderson County  
High School  
Choral Handbook  
2014-2015**



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# Henderson County High School

2424 Zion Road  
Henderson, KY 42420

3 August 2014

Dear Students and Parents,

Welcome to the 2014-2015 edition of the Henderson County High School Choral Program! We are excited to have you join us as we enter into another successful year. Over the past fifty years, our program has been developing a reputation of excellence as a DISTINGUISHED choral program in the state of Kentucky. This year, our goal is to build upon this success, and through hours of hard work from each individual, we can reach new heights this year!

Read over all of the information contained within this handbook very closely with a parent or guardian, and make sure that you file this document in a safe place for reference throughout the year. Included in this packet, you will find this year's expectations and policies on grading, fundraising, and conduct that you will be expected to follow throughout your career in our ensembles.

Membership in our program will not only enable you to become an educated singer and lifelong musician, but it will also shape you into a more determined, responsible, well rounded, and disciplined individual. The friendships, memories, and experiences that you gain in our program will last forever. The sense of pride and feeling of ensemble that you will experience this year will help to develop you into a better citizen and help to better our community.

You will find my contact information at the end of this packet. Feel free to contact me at any time with any concerns or questions.

Sincerely,

**John M. DeFerraro**  
Director of Choral Activities  
Henderson County High School

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## **Description of Ensembles**

### **Concert Choir**

The Concert Choir is the Flagship Choir of Henderson County. It is a large, non-auditioned choral ensemble comprised of beginning and intermediate singers, male and female. The course covers music history, music theory, and intermediate vocal pedagogy. Training in sight singing, choral blend, concert etiquette, and expressivity will be developed throughout the year. Members are a mix of under- and upperclassmen, and membership is open to any Henderson County High School student, regardless of previous experience.

### **Chamber Choir**

The Chamber Choir is an auditioned ensemble comprised of intermediate and advanced singers, male and female. The course covers music history, advanced music theory, foreign language diction, and advanced vocal pedagogy. Training in sight singing, choral blend, and expressivity will be greatly developed upon throughout the year. Ensemble members are mostly upperclassmen, and must pass an audition in order to be placed in this course.

### **Show Choir**

The Show Choir (name to be changed in Fall 2014) is a sixteen-member, highly selective ensemble comprised of advanced singers, male and female. This contemporary a cappella ensemble's literature contains doo-wop, vocal jazz, and modern pop and rock songs. Ensemble members are limited to upperclassmen, and effective December 2014, must currently be, or previously have been, in Chamber Choir in order to be placed in this course.

**PLEASE NOTE:** This ensemble will have several extracurricular performances, including during-school and out-of-school functions, which should be taken into consideration when auditioning for this group. Before participating in off-campus performances in which they will miss part of the school day, their grades will be checked to make sure that they are excelling in the classroom.

## **Uniform Policy**

There are two uniforms for Henderson County High School Choirs:

A-uniform or 'A's – Choir-issued Tuxedos and Dresses

B-uniform or 'B's – Choir Shirt and Black dress pants/knee-length skirt

With their tuxedos, gentlemen should wear a white undershirt, solid black dress shoes, and solid black socks. Ladies are to wear black hose and black closed-toe shoes with a maximum of a 1" heel. The purpose for this policy is to present a chorus that is as unified visually as they are in their singing. Expectations for each concert will be handed out before every performance event. **DUE TO UNPROFESSIONAL DECISIONS MADE DURING THE LAST SCHOOL YEAR, THERE WILL BE NO EXCEPTIONS TO THESE STANDARDS.**

## **Attendance Policy**

Daily attendance in choir is required in order to learn the music and develop the true sound of the ensemble. If ONE member is absent, it will detract from the rest of the group and hamper the development of the entire choir. In order to get the full points, you must be on time, in proper attire, follow directions from the director or chaperones, and stay for the entire duration of the rehearsal or performance. If you leave early, it detracts from the work of the other ensemble members, thus hurting the choir as a whole. If there is a dire emergency, please ask the director for permission to leave.

**Attendance at concerts is mandatory, as it is the final evaluation of the singers in a public setting.** If there are any extensive circumstances, the choir director must be notified as soon as the student becomes aware of the conflict. Excused absences as defined in the Student Code of Conduct include death of an immediate family member or extreme personal illness. If a student misses a concert for an acceptable reason, they must complete a make-up assignment under the direction of the choir director.

If there are any extra after school rehearsals, they will be announced **at least two weeks in advance.** This is to ensure that all students can find a ride to and from rehearsal, and to make sure that all students have time to schedule off from work. **NOTICE: NOT HAVING A RIDE OR A COMMITMENT AT YOUR JOB IS NOT AN EXCUSE FROM ANY CONCERT OR REHEARSAL!**

## Grading Policy

The grading policy for all ensembles is based on a combination of several grades. See the below list for the breakdown of the system used each semester.

Daily Performance – 40% of Total Grade  
 Concert/Rehearsal Attendance – 30% of Total Grade  
 Semester Progress Reviews – 15% of Total Grade  
 Semester Writing Projects – 15% of Total Grade

A- to A+ = 92% to 100%  
 B- to B+ = 82% to 91%  
 C- to C+ = 70% to 81%  
 D- to D+ = 60% to 69%  
 F- to F+ = 0% to 59%

**Daily Performance Points** are the ten daily points awarded to students as they walk into the choral classroom. Should they meet the expectations of the choral director, they will retain all of these. However, students will have points removed each time they are not actively performing in an appropriate manner in the choral classroom.

**Concerts and Rehearsals** are mandatory, as one of the established goals of a musical ensemble to perform music. **IF** a student qualifies for make-up material, it will consist of a written assignment that compensates for all class time spent preparing for a concert, but most concerts represent nine weeks' worth of work.

**Semester Progress Reviews** may be assessed in two ways – a singing exam or a written exam. The singing portion will be completed through individual assessment, in which students will demonstrate their sight-singing and vocal capabilities on national standards for performance, which vary in complexity by grade level. Written tests will cover the areas of theory, history, and diction. Both the singing and written tests evaluate and ensure the personal growth of each choir member.

**Semester Writing Projects** will vary; however, students should expect to complete a weekly journal entry and at least one major paper per nine weeks. The writing rubrics will be created by the students, and given to the students prior to the assignment of the paper. This rubric will be followed when grading the work of each student.

## **Choral Code of Conduct**

Each student is expected to meet the following rules in order to earn all daily participation points, as well as avoid being referred to the office. All disciplinary rules of Henderson County High School apply to the choral classroom, just as the following rules do. Choir is a group activity, so true progress can only occur when the entire ensemble follows all of the below policies.

1. Upon entering the room, grab your folder and move quietly to your seat before the tardy bell rings.
2. Have a sharpened pencil in your folder and be ready to add markings to your music.
3. Leave all candy, gum, food, and soft drinks in the cafeteria. Capped bottles of water are permitted.
4. Utilize proper posture when singing – seated or standing.
5. Save talking for after class. If you have a question about the music, please raise your hand and ask the director.
6. Be engaged at all times. If the director is working another voice part, follow your own part and see how they work together.
7. Listen for musical instructions given to other voice parts. Often times, they will apply to your voice part as well.
8. Treat others as you would want them to treat you, be they your peer, chaperone, substitute, or the director.
9. Use the restroom before you enter the choir room. If you have a medical condition, please consult the director in private.
10. HAVE FUN! Singing in an ensemble is a great gift, and the result of hard work is an outstanding product.

Singing in harmony can only be achieved by working in harmony during every minute of rehearsal. If all of us follow these policies, the day will be much more productive and enjoyable for each student. If you have any problems, know that my door is always open. I am more than willing to help you in any way that I can.

## **Choral Calendar of Events**

The Choral Program at Henderson County High School performs regularly for the public of Henderson and across the state. Below, you will see this year's complete schedule.

*Please be looking for upcoming informational letters and website updates!*

<http://hchschoirs.weebly.com/calendar.html>

## **Required Performances for ALL Choral Ensembles**

Fall Concert w/ Univ. of Evansville – October 28<sup>th</sup>, Neu Chapel – Evansville  
(Oct. 27<sup>th</sup> – Dress Rehearsal w/ Orchestra)

Alice P. Taylor Candlelight Service – December 7<sup>th</sup>, First United Methodist

Winter Concert – December 12<sup>th</sup>, Henderson's First Baptist Church

Henderson County Arts Fest – February 21<sup>st</sup>, HCHS Gym/Choir Room

All-County Sing – April 20<sup>th</sup>, Henderson Fine Arts Center

District KMEA Festival\* – April 21<sup>st</sup>, Glema Mahr Center, Madisonville

Spring Concert – April 30<sup>th</sup>, Henderson Fine Arts Center

*State KMEA Festival\* – Week of May 4<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup>, University of Louisville*

*\* = If any choirs gets a Distinguished rating at District, they will travel to Louisville to participate in the State Choral Festival.*

HCHS Graduation – May 22<sup>nd</sup> (Tentative Date)

## **OPTIONAL / Non-Mandatory Events**

Bluegrass Choral Music Festival – September 5<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup>, Lexington

Second District Honor Choir – September 15<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup>, Owensboro

KMEA All-State Choir Auditions – October 16<sup>th</sup>, Henderson

Opening Act for Home Free / acoUstiKats – October 18<sup>th</sup>, Henderson

National High School A Cappella Festival – November 17<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup>, Kettering, Ohio

University of Kentucky Male Chorus Day – January 23<sup>rd</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup>, Lexington

KMEA All-State Honor Choir – February 4<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup>, Louisville

Voices in Harmony (A Cappella Competition) – March 13<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup>, Lexington

HCHS Spring Musical – March 16<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup>, Henderson

## **Choral Formal Attire Fee**

Due to the wear-and-tear on our formal attire (tuxedos and dresses), as well as 50% growth in the choral program, we will be reinstating the “Formal Fee” this year. This money will be spent on cleaning, repairing, and replacement of apparel for our students.

**This year’s fee is \$40.00, payable to HCHS Choir. The deadline is Sept. 23<sup>rd</sup>, in order to allow for shipping and alterations before the Fall Concert. This fee is non-refundable after it has been paid.**

## **Other Fundraising Obligations**

Due to the nature of our activity, there are several other costs that are very high (sheet music costs, concert programs, rental fees for the Fine Arts Center, CD production of performances, performance attire, choral risers, sound equipment, etc.). It is for this reason that our program has implemented group fundraisers to compensate for these necessary costs for our choirs to maintain their status within the community and region.

The focus of this year’s fundraising will go towards the following items in order.

- 1) Essential classroom items (music, folders, etc.)
- 2) Replacing the BROKEN digital piano
- 3) Sound and Recording equipment for the choral classroom
- 4) Travel opportunities for all students

If a student or parent/guardian has any issue with the fundraising for the choral program, contact the director immediately. The sooner that we know about a problem, the sooner that we can work together and arrive at a satisfactory conclusion.

### **Potential additional expenses:**

Lost Music Fee\* – \$5 to \$30

Choir Shirt – TBD (typically a one time expense)

*\* = Our music IS our textbook in choir. If you destroyed or lost your math book, you would be responsible for replacing it.*

## **Fundraising Calendar**

All funds and orders should be turned in to the choral director as soon as possible so that they may be documented and processed by the school treasurer, and credited to our choir account. Below, you will find several of the fundraisers for this year.

### **August – Garbage Bag Sales**

*Consists of assorted sizes from bathroom to large leaf bags.*

### **September/October – Choir Calendars**

*Customizable calendars with 5 dates added per customer!*

### **November/December – \$1 Chocolate Bars**

## Parent Organization

Parent involvement is crucial to the operation of our choral program, particularly to help facilitate the effectiveness of the chorus, and to grant all parents the chance to actively participate in the education of their student. It is similar in function to existing group for the band program and several of the athletic teams, but without access to separate monetary accounts.

The **Henderson County Friends of Music** will meet on the second Thursday of each month at 6:30pm in the HCHS Choir room. All parents and guardians of choir students are automatically a part of this organization, and are highly encouraged to participate. Likewise, invested members of the community and choir alumni are also welcome to attend. Our first meeting is **AUGUST 14<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm in the Auditorium!**

This year, we will need a large number of chaperones for various school trips, including the District and State KMEA Festivals. For each of our concerts, a small number of parent volunteers will be required to keep our students safe and organized.

Through this partnership, the director will work hand-in-hand with the Friends of Music officers to complete the management operations of the choir, and provide a community voice in the direction we take. Each voice has the chance to contribute to the program!

Elections for this year will occur on **September 11<sup>th</sup>** in order to prepare for our Fall Concert. Our current officer openings are as follows:

**President / Vice President / Secretary**

For more info on what each officer does, please visit our website:

<http://hchschoirs.weebly.com/important-documents.html>

Also, Like Us on Facebook and Twitter!

<http://facebook.com/HendersonChoirs/>

<http://twitter.com/HendersonChoirs>

If you have any experience in the areas of sewing, bus driving, video/audio recording, computer technology, food preparation, building relationships with local businesses, or any other skill,

please e-mail Mr. DeFerraro at

[John.DeFerraro@henderson.kyschools.us](mailto:John.DeFerraro@henderson.kyschools.us).

**WE NEED YOUR HELP TO SUCCEED!**

## **General Travel Conduct Expectations**

*In addition to the following, ALL rules of the Henderson County Code of Conduct apply when on a school-related trip or function.*

1. You are representing your family, your school, your community, and yourself. Good manners are a plus wherever you are!
2. Students **MUST** travel with their chaperone groups. These will be assigned by the director, and will be required to check-in at various times. Tour schedules are “tight,” and we need to stay together to avoid delays.
3. If you feel ill, tell your chaperone or Mr. DeFerraro immediately.
4. Review your itinerary; be aware of your responsibilities.
5. It takes time to move a large group... Be patient, and arrive on time.
6. Eat properly & sleep at night. Every student must eat breakfast on over-night trips! This is a time for announcements – you must be present.
7. Students **MAY** take cell phones with them, but they **MUST** turn them off while inside venues and on tour. If you use a cell phone at an inappropriate time/place, it will be confiscated until the end of the trip. Parents will have emergency contacts, and we can relay emergency messages to your student immediately.

## **Bus and Motorcoach Instructions**

1. Do not leave personal items on a bus overnight.
2. Food and drink may only be taken on board if permitted by the director. A clean bus leads to a happy driver, which will make us have the best tour experience possible!
3. Please treat the driver(s) with respect! They have our lives in their hands.
4. Do not use the restroom on the back of the bus, unless permitted by the driver. Some busses do not have functioning units! We will take restroom stops at regular intervals.
5. Do not disembark unless you are told to leave the bus. Do not **RUN** once you disembark!
6. Please, no flash photography while on board the bus or motor coach. This can distract the driver, and lead to an unfortunate accident.
7. Remain seated while the vehicle is in motion.
8. iPods/mp3 players may be taken; however, the volume must not disturb the individuals sitting around you.

## Hotel Instructions

1. The first step when you get in your room is to read the emergency information regarding fire safety and inclement weather warnings.
2. At curfew, you are to be in your room. No one may enter rooms except for chaperones or the director. Keep the noise level down.
3. Respect areas for other hotel guests, including elevators and lobby.
4. Room phones will be turned off to outside calls. If you need an adult, you will have the room number for Mr. D. Do not leave your room unless you have spoken to him!
5. Keep your room locked. Do not prop the door open.
6. No student is ever allowed in a room of a person of the opposite gender.
7. At least one chaperone will be monitoring the halls at all times.
8. Do not order food for delivery to your room – Eat at mealtime!

## What to Pack

1. Toiletries – You can't keep everyone clean with what hotels provide!
2. Cameras and plenty of film/memory cards.
3. Hotel rooms usually have a hair dryer – share!
4. Snacks should be securely packed – hotel machines are expensive, and you cannot visit them in the middle of the night.
5. Proper clothing – If a formal event/concert is to be attended, you will be expected to wear appropriate clothing for the venue. For other times, follow the school guidelines for our dress code.
6. Medications – Procedures for this process will be outlined prior to departure.

## What \*NOT\* to Pack

1. Prohibited items according to school and board policy.
2. Inappropriately rated videos.
3. Video game systems.

**If you violate these rules and expectations, you may be asked to leave the tour or trip immediately. All school rules and policies will be enforced JUST as though we were in the classroom.**

## **Choral Contract Agreement**

By signing the next page, I verify that I have read and understand the material contained within these pages. I agree to all of the obligations and responsibilities that rest on my shoulders as a member of the Henderson County High School Choir Program.

If I break any rules in the Code of Conduct, I will accept any reasonable consequence assigned by the director or other designee. If I have a D or F in any class, have three or more unexcused absences in any class, receive more than five days of In-House, or have unpaid book fines, I understand that I may lose all of my travel rights as a part of the choral program.

I will adhere to the directions of the teacher, be they musical or otherwise, understanding that these directions are in my best interest. I will respect my peers, and be punctual for all rehearsals and performances for the entire school year. I know what means to look and act professional in all that I do.

If I am unable to make a rehearsal or concert, I will contact the director as soon as I am aware of the conflict. If my reason for missing is deemed as excusable, I will complete a make-up assignment, which will be due no later than one week after the concert. I understand that the assigned make-up work will be equal in effort to the amount of class time put into preparing for the concert itself. I know that I cannot plagiarize this work.

Over the next year, I promise to grow as a musician and as a person. I understand completely what is expected of me, and by working as a member of the ensemble, I will represent **Colonel PRIDE** to my friends, to Henderson County High School, to my community, and to myself.

If I have any questions about choral activities, I understand that the choral director, John DeFerraro, may be reached by phone (270-831-8876) or by email at [John.DeFerraro@henderson.kyschools.us](mailto:John.DeFerraro@henderson.kyschools.us).

My parent or guardian and I must sign and return the forms on the next two pages of this handbook by the end of the first full week of school, which is Friday, August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2014.

**Student and Parent/Guardian Information**

Please detach, complete, and return this form by 8/15/14.

Student Name (Print): \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Home Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name (Print): \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone / Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Secondary Emergency Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone / Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**I, \_\_\_\_\_ (parent/guardian),  
and my child have read, understand, and agree to abide by the guidelines  
outlined in the 2013-2014 HCHS Choral Handbook. If I have any questions,  
I know that I may contact the choral director at any time.**

P./G. Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Director Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



### **Student and Parent/Guardian Make-Up Policy**

Please detach, complete, and return this form by 8/15/14.

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read, understand, and agree to abide by the following policy regarding make-up work for missing a concert.

### **Henderson County High School Choir Policy Regarding Make-Up Work**

Should a conflict arise with a performance, I will contact the choir director **as soon as I am aware of the issue** by **written communication** (letter or e-mail).

I agree that the primary **function of a choir is to sing** as an ensemble, and that this almost always occurs at occasions outside of the school day.

I agree that concerts are a proper formal assessment method to end a unit of study, which is beneficial to my student and as an **act of service** to the community.

I agree that others depend on my individual performance as a **member of the team** that works together to put together a concert.

I agree that all make-up work for a concert should make up for **all of the class time** that it took to prepare for the concert.

I understand that this is usually **nine weeks worth of school** or more.

I acknowledge that the choir director will be **as fair as possible** when coming up with an alternate assignment for my, or any, student.

I agree that one week after the concert has finished is a reasonable time frame to complete any make-up work for a concert **IF I am excused**.

Student Name (Print): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

P./G. Name (Print): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

P./G. Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_