

**Panther Creek
High School**



Choral Department

Handbook

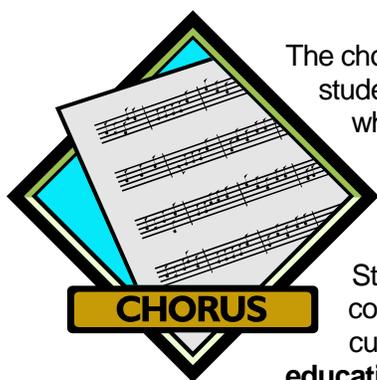
2016-2017 EDITION

Message From the Director

Greetings! My name is Brad Bensen and I am the Director of Choirs and AP music theory courses at Panther Creek High School. I feel blessed to be teaching the students in this program and am quite sure that the time they invest with me this year will be well spent as they perform quality literature, learn more about music and also develop lasting friendships.

As of now, documents as this one are now strictly online. I will make an effort to keep such important items like this in at least 2 spots—on our class website, <http://www.panthercreekchorus.com> and on the student's new Canvas site for academics at Panther Creek (accessible through the school's main website <http://panthercreekhs.wcpss.net/> under "Student Life"). This handbook will help new choral families get acquainted with how the program works here at Panther Creek and will also serve as a reference for the many procedures related to involvement in an active program such as this one. If there are any items that you would like further clarification or explanation of, please feel free to contact me at bbensen@wcpss.net or call me on my office phone at 919-463-8602.

Program Overview



The choral program at Panther Creek High School is aimed at producing excellence in its students through a challenging music curriculum that focuses on the development of the whole musician—as proficient performer, academic student and caring citizen. The mission set forth for this program will thus be: *“To encourage students to be people of exceptional character and musicianship while conveying personal standards of substance, commitment and **excellence**.”*

Students in the choral program will have the opportunity to learn music and musical concepts from literature representing a diverse array of styles, historical time periods, cultures, and musical genres. **The music selected will be appropriate for its educational and musical value, rather than its popularity, entertainment value or listener appeal.** *These music courses are indeed academic classes, and students will be expected to learn, participate and demonstrate their knowledge about such elements.* Concepts taught in the choral classes will be based on curriculum standards highlighted later in this handbook. The following elements are true of all choral classes taught at Panther Creek:

- Chorus class is an **academic field** requiring preparation, devotion of time, personal commitment, and academic study
- Chorus class is a **community** requiring civil behavior and the ability to put others first
- Chorus class is a **performing group** requiring excellence and participation from each member to produce a product that people in our community will want to come hear

The Performing Ensembles:

Mixed Chorus: Pd.2 The Mixed Chorus will be comprised of a variety of students representing all four grades, though mostly underclassman. This non-auditioned class focuses on basic musicianship and protocol for choral rehearsals and performances. It includes an introduction to music sight-reading and proper singing technique using choral literature for mixed voices (SAB and SATB). Music selected will range from the 16th century through current day, including a cappella music, historical literature, lighter “mainstream” arrangements as well as music from various cultures, genres and languages. Students are expected to perform in 2 regularly scheduled chorus concerts (Fall and Winter—see calendar near end of document). A limited number of students may be able to audition go move up into the Women's Ensemble (girls only) or Chamber Choir (boys only), if scheduling allows for the second semester. There are usually a limited number of such spots, but those interested should consider their auditions as starting at the beginning of the year, including class participation, academic success and vocal skill/technique.

Women's Ensemble: Pd. 3 This year-long group will include girls in grades 10-12. Ladies in this group must **already** have a fundamental understanding of sight-reading and singing techniques. Music selected is written specifically for 3-4 part female voices and will involve a wide range of styles, cultures, and languages. Students will perform in all regular chorus concerts, at our District Choral Festival and possibly at a couple of other events in the community. *Two Honors Credits will apply to Proficient and Advanced level students in this class. See "Curriculum and Honors Credit" for more information.*

Panther Creek Chamber Choir: Pd. 4 The premier performing group at PCHS, this year-long auditioned ensemble will represent students in the upper grades at PCHS. This class will require the greatest commitment and involvement of any choral class. Students **must** be proficient sight-readers and must have a working knowledge of singing technique. This class will sing throughout the year at regular chorus concerts but also in various community events in our area. *Two Honors Credits will apply to Proficient and Advanced level students in this class. See "Curriculum and Honors Credit" for more information.*

The Catatonas Our auditioned contemporary a cappella group! A non-credit extracurricular ensemble, The Catatonas are made of about 15-18 students who rehearse during 2 SMART lunch sessions per week. Generally, only the most capable and committed upperclassman students are considered for the group. Auditions are held in early September and will be limited to the Chamber Choir students only.

Supplies/Materials

Students may need the following materials in every class rehearsal:

- **Water bottles filled with WATER are recommended for ALL choral rehearsals.**
- Loose-leaf paper
- Pencils (NOT PENS! Choral music markings **MUST** be made in erasable pencil)
- Music (distributed in folders owned by PCHS)



Consider donating some of the following items to our classroom:

Tissues, AA & 9v alkaline batteries, hand sanitizer. THANKS!

Classroom Expectations

The following rules and expectations are applicable to both daily classroom rehearsals **as well as to any field trip or music event held outside of campus**, regardless of time or day.

- 1. Be respectful to self, others and property.**
 - Students are to behave in a way that they cause **no disruption** to teaching or to other student's learning while being considerate of others' needs, feelings and belongings; Singing is a personal art; it is rude and hurtful to make fun of other's efforts...
- 2. Be on time!**
 - Plan trips to lockers, bathrooms, water fountains and visits with friends before the tardy bell rings. **Note tardy policy below.** Excessive tardiness may waive trip and/or performance privileges.
- 3. No ELECTRONICS, food, gum or open drink containers are allowed in the classroom.**
 - Cell phones may NOT be used during class. This WILL be enforced.
 - Only **water** in plastic bottles with replaceable lids is allowed and in fact *encouraged*; An hour and a half is a long time to sing without staying hydrated—64oz a day is recommended for singers. There is a water fountain in the room for refills.
 - DO NOT chew gum or eat other food during class.
- 4. Learn from both success and failure.**
 - Success rarely occurs without many mistakes to precede it!; Further, **It is okay to be wrong, but don't be content to stay that way!**

Discipline

It is my opinion that there are no bad students, just bad decisions. Disciplinary actions will be based on school-wide conduct codes.

- 1) **Verbal warning** (warning may not necessarily be phrased, “This is your warning!”)
- 2) **Parent contact**
- 3) **Lunch detention**
- 4) **After-School detention (ASD)—assigned by administration**
- 5) **Office Referral for Out of School Suspension—assigned by administration**

Examples of inappropriate behaviors

- Doing anything besides the task at hand (i.e. cosmetic make-up, homework for another class, talking, **using/texting on a cell phone**, music player, camera, or any type of device)
- **Being tardy for class (3 times warrants an automatic lunch detention—school policy!)**
- Defiance or disrespect to student or teacher, including collegiate teaching interns
- Inappropriate language
- Obvious lack of or unwillingness to participate, including sleeping or eating in class

****Trips, performance opportunities and class incentives may be revoked depending on the quantity and severity of such discipline infractions.***



Make-up Work

Absences due to illness or approved school trips are allowed several days to complete make-up work. **It is the STUDENT’S responsibility** to secure such assignments BEFORE a known field trip and immediately after other unplanned absences, such as sickness. *Missed/non-complete assignments made be made up, but a percentage penalty will apply to assignments that take more than 5 days to complete.* If an assignment involves a task that could only be completed on the particular day an activity was assigned (like a class listening assignment), the student will be omitted from that individual assignment (unless an alternate assignment is assigned to take the place of the missing grade). Students should utilize SMART Lunch for make-up of quizzes.

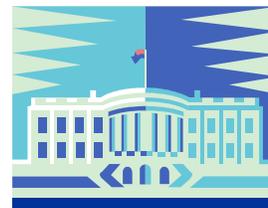
SMART Lunch

It is the expectation that all students at PCHS attend **4 SMART lunch sessions** throughout the semester, which will be documented on report cards in all classes at PCHS. Two days a week, the chorus room will be open for those needing help with class-related activities (Tuesdays and Thursdays). More advanced student-leaders may partially be involved in these sessions as peer-leaders. There may be at least 1 voice-part sectional per quarter, which will be required by **ALL** choral students. Additionally, extra-curricular group rehearsals may be held during lunch periods as well. If I am not in lunch duty or have department meetings, the chorus room will be open for students to eat lunch in. Students may also come for individual practice but must ask for use of the 2 small “practice” rooms, with a first-come, first-served process for reservation. **Students need to sign in with the date and initials on the SMART lunch clipboard.** *Tutoring sessions may be REQUIRED for students who are not demonstrating success on various assessments and quizzes.*

Student Leadership

Several opportunities exist for students to be involved in department leadership. The following positions will be either elected or appointed by the director in the Women’s Ensemble and Chamber Choir:

- **President:** Elected by peers, represents class at choral meetings, helps director manage and recognize student needs, and coordinates music rehearsals in the absence of the director. The President will also help promote the choral department as a whole and will act as a Historian to keep photographic or video media samples throughout the school year for viewing at an end of year presentation.



The President may also attend monthly Booster meetings as a liaison between the students, director and parents.

- **Vice-President/Secretary:** Elected by peers, assists president and director with music related issues, organizes class meetings/social events, helps to maintain/promote class morale. Also is responsible for helping to promote public performances in the community (advertisement) and will help maintain a chorus bulletin board (if available). Responsible for the management of print music resources and class rosters (**will help take roll daily on a regular basis**). Creates electronic communication sources for class updates on Facebook/Twitter or class email lists.
- **Treasurer:** this student will check all deposits made by students before deposit into our new class safe. Integrity, accounting skills and responsibility are the obvious prerequisites.

Performance Activities

Performances: Concerts

Public performance is one of the most effective means of music education assessment. Because chorus is considered an **academic class**, grades are assigned for participation in all scheduled performances.

Unexcused absences from any of these events will result in a failing performance grade. We need ALL of our students for our performances—each person makes a difference!

- Regularly scheduled **concerts will be graded events**, counting **20%** of the student's quarter grade (1 concert per quarter), assessed on the following criteria:
 - Proper preparation: Correct outfit, on-time, present for warm ups with group
 - Singing with appropriate energy/attitude
 - Focus, discipline and teamwork ethic (i.e. before concert and between songs)
 - Off-stage etiquette and discipline
- All reasons for absences will be considered excused or unexcused at the discretion of the director. **Any reason besides an unexpected emergency or sickness will need to be approved BEFORE the concert occurs.** *It is rare that concert absences for reasons other than illness will be approved.* **Because concerts are scheduled months in advance, and students/parents have access to these dates, poor planning on behalf of the performer will not be excused (such as not having a ride or scheduling other appointments).** Students/parents will need to take initiative to deal with any such issue before the actual date of a performance.
- If a student is **absent from school** (due to illness) on the day of a concert, he/she should contact Mr. Bensen so that planning can be made on the night of the concert to rearrange singers, soloists, etc. If the student feels marginally better, he/she might come to the concert as an audience member and do a written critique of the performance due the next school day attended. Otherwise, when the student returns, a signed note from a parent, stating that his/her child was sick is necessary to allow a grade substitution, **which will be a written paper due 5 days after the missed concert.**
- Any additional performance that is determined as a “graded/mandatory event” will be announced at least 1 month prior to the activity. Students that have conflicts must communicate immediately with Mr. Bensen; an alternative assignment may be necessary for those with non-flexible commitments
- According to board policy, students suspended from school on the day of a concert (or other performance) are **prohibited** from participating in that performance. Such students will have to make the grade up through an individually assigned activity (like a music history paper) or take a failing grade for the event.

Outside-of-Class Rehearsals

Occasionally, outside-of-class rehearsals will be scheduled if necessary to prepare for a performance.

- **Rehearsals MAY be held the DAY BEFORE the concert in the auditorium from 2:30-4:30.** If the director decides that a rehearsal is not required, students/parents will be notified several weeks in advance.
- Because a choral group is always incomplete if missing any of its members, **it is important that all members are present.** For this reason, such rehearsals will be GRADED events, based on participation, and meeting the general expectations.
- Students should plan to stay for the entire rehearsal. **Because there are a maximum of 2 after-school practices per semester, sports practices will not be an acceptable reason for a student missing, though a pre-determined school game will be an excused absence.**

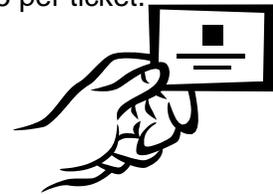
Concert Attendance: Audience Members

Concerts are a great way to see the progress of the individual students as well as the program as a whole. These events are designed to be informative, enjoyable and hopefully inspiring. Important information:

- a. Most concerts will last about **1 hour and 20 minutes**. It is hoped that parents, extended family and friends will come and support the efforts of our students.
- b. **Admission will be charged** at regular concerts, as it is a main avenue to support the budget of the program. Additionally, numerous expenses are associated with every concert we perform—admission is necessary to help with such costs. PCHS charges a **general admission of \$5 for all arts class performances. Children 6 or under are free.** However, a concert punch card is available for purchase which allows 10 ticket uses for just \$35. More information follows.
- c. Some concerts may be professionally recorded. Such recordings are high quality and act as a great keepsake of the event. Consider purchasing a CD! Otherwise, personal video recordings are allowed considering no duplication or circulation of the recording is made.
- d. **For those experiencing financial difficulty, a 1 use- Concert Pass is available directly from Mr. Bensen** before the day of the performance. Students should see him directly to get passes. Our goal is to turn nobody away from our concerts, but we do hope that people without the ability to pay at the time of the event will reimburse the Choral Boosters at the rate of \$5 per ticket.



Concert Punch Cards



Concert Punch Cards allows concert entry at a reduced cost of as low as \$3.50 per concert. The card sells for **\$35.00** and allows up to 10 tickets/uses, though is given as a **free gift** to any who make a family/personal **donation of \$100** or more (this does not include community/business donations; the “gift” amount = \$65 for tax purposes as a \$35 value has been received in return). The cards are good for regular chorus concerts only—not the talent show, spring musical, band/drama/dance concerts or other “special” events. Because the card is punched by ticket takers, card holders get to bypass long lines at the ticket window, resulting in a speedier entry into the auditorium. An example of how it works is following:

- a. Jenny is in the Women’s Ensemble and will perform in 4 regular concerts; her parents and younger sibling come to the first concert and 3 punches are used. For the next concert, her grandparents also come along with the original 3 family members, using 5 more punches. The last 2 punches are used by her parents for the next concert and the card is completed and discarded (10 punches). Remaining admission will need to be paid for her last concert. Her family saved \$15 and avoided long lines!

- b. Johnny is in the Mixed Chorus (1st semester only) and will perform in 2 concerts. His family of 2 parents and 2 siblings come to see him in the 2 required performances. The card gets punched 4 times per concert using up 8 punches. Even though they didn't use all 10, the card still was cheaper than paying \$5 per concert ticket (8 x \$5 is \$40; the card is just \$35). Of course, Johnny could invite a friend to accompany his family to the concerts and would use the entire card.

*The cards should facilitate an easier entry flow for our concert audiences at while also offering a discount so that all family members can attend. The choral boosters also receive payment for these cards at the beginning of the school year when there are so many necessary expenses. This is a win-win for everybody! **Please consider purchasing one!***

Cards will be sold during the first week of school as well as at concerts in the ticket booth. See last document in this booklet for order information.

Performance Outfits

- Uniformity in appearance is important to choral performance. Individuality should be expressed during student's clothing choices for school days, NOT at concerts--- we are to look as one cohesive group! Therefore, all students will wear the designated outfit for each performance. No student will perform without the proper outfit, which can result in a zero performance grade.
- Assistance can be provided for **any** student financially unable to purchase the proper performance outfit. The Choral Boosters will be organizing fundraisers throughout the year to help defray choral expenses. It is the **responsibility of the student/parent** to communicate a financial need to the director or appropriate booster organization member (President or Treasurer). A benevolence request application is attached at the end of this document.
- Jewelry for the women in 3rd and 4th period is a set that can be purchased at cost at the time of dress sizing. No other jewelry should be worn.
- Used dresses and tuxedos MAY be available from previous students; this will be discussed in class.



Mixed Chorus:

- Girls:**
- White dress shirt w/ribbon belt ordered in class (“quadrille tunic” **\$33.00**)
 - SOLID black ankle or floor length skirt OR slacks
 - SOLID BLACK DRESS shoes (**closed toe**)

- Guys:**
- Black dress pants with visible black belt (shirt should be tucked in)
 - Black dress shoes and BLACK socks
 - White long-sleeve dress shirt with traditional collar.
 - Black tie (provided by chorus dept. to be returned immediately after the concert).



Women's Ensemble:

- Black polysatin dress Cost: **\$67.00**
- Black closed toe dress shoe with heel 2” or less (purchase on own)
- Pearl necklace and earrings **\$11.00** **TOTAL: \$78.00**



PC Chamber Choir (PCCC):

- Guys:**
- Black tuxedo outfit (from Savvi formalwear) consisting of:
 - white mandarin-collar tuxedo shirt w/ black studs and top button
 - black tuxedo adjustable-waist pants
 - black 1-button tuxedo coat



- solid **black dress** shoes and **black** socks (purchase on own)
- Black vest (borrow from choral boosters and TURN IN at end of year!)

TOTAL: ~ \$145.00; includes hem length alterations for present and future!

Note: Outfits will be ordered slightly larger to accommodate some future growth.

Girls:

- Black velvet/crepe back satin dress: Cost: **\$90.00**
- Closed-toe black DRESS SHOE with heel 2" or less (purchase on own)
- Necklace, earrings and optional hair pins: **\$10.00** **TOTAL: \$100.00**



The Catatonas At Cappella Group:

Boys wear the tux from Chamber Choir minus their jackets. A special vest is ordered for each boy, costing \$19.00. Girls wear an inexpensive black dress from Target online (or similar), costing about \$35.00 (TBD).

Outfit procedures:

- *Girls in all periods will try on sizing garments with booster parents one day during class (to determine basic sizes/fit: **Aug30-31 for 4th pd. Girls; Sept 8-9 for 3rd pd. Girls; Sept. 13-14 for 2nd period girls**)*
- *Mixed chorus items (besides the blouses) should be purchased on own—please don't wait until the week of the concert to secure the items.*
- *Boys in PCCC will be measured in class by a representative from Savvi Formalwear on **Sept 7.***
- *Payment will be due **before** outfits are ordered (**checks made out to the Panther Creek Choral Boosters**)*
- *Students that are provided outfits through the Choral Booster's benevolence fund should participate in fundraisers to help pay back the booster organization. **Outfits that remain unpaid for will remain property of the organization and must be returned DRY CLEANED at the end of the school year***

Choral Booster Organization

The choral booster organization is a **501c3 incorporated group of parent volunteers**. No dues or fees are required for membership! All choral parents are welcomed to be involved with the organization. The group exists for the benefit of both choral students and the choral program itself. "Boosters" help support the program by assisting the choral director with numerous program elements, including fundraising, organizing concerts, coordinating trips, and completing numerous other tasks that are necessary for the success of the choral program. **Volunteers that help by coming in during the day to help with program needs** (like outfit sizing, fundraiser distribution, student transportation, etc.) as well as those who **chaperone** on trips **MUST register as a WCPSS volunteer** by going to ANY Wake County school and letting them know that you need to register as a volunteer. Up until October 31, the registration application is available Monday-Friday during regular school hours. However, AFTER Oct. 31, registrations can ONLY be completed on MONDAYS.

The Boosters will generally meet once a month in the chorus room at the school. **Information for each meeting will be sent out in an email format and on the website to remind families of the meetings.** Parental involvement is highly encouraged and greatly valued!



Fair Share

The choral program at PCHS has a "fair-share" cost to help acquire the necessary resources for choral activities throughout the year. This FairShare is simply the monetary difference between the projected program income and the amount needed to fully support our operating budget. This need results in a financial commitment that is being based on procedures that other Wake County high school

chorus and band classes use to help fund their programs. The actual request is quite small compared to similar programs and **can be met via the following means:**

- a. Acquiring business/community donors (see attached information) **OR**
- b. By cash/check payment

Fair-share funds will benefit **all** students in the program, as the Choral Boosters will use the money to help pay for *sheet music, concert accompanists and security, piano maintenance/tuning, program printing, transportation and fees for choral events/adjudication activities, payment for substitute teachers when choral activities take place outside of school, and other items that can be viewed on the operating budget.*

The operating budget of the Choral Boosters helps to subsidize program expenses while remaining committed to helping students with financial needs. Our annual Booster operating budget is around \$22,000. Planned Booster-specific income is expected to provide \$14k of this (through concert admission/pass cards, through family and community donations, and program specific fundraising). An expected shortfall of about \$8000 remains. **This year, we are intentionally doing less fundraising so as to request less of our students and their families as well as less solicitation in our community. A slight increase in FairShare is thus being implemented.** A per-student participation cost is being requested as follows, **DUE OCTOBER 3rd:**

- **Mixed Chorus** (pd. 2) Fair Share Amount: **\$37.00** (1-semester class) Includes Chorus T-Shirt
- **Women's Ensemble** (pd. 3) Fair Share Amount: **\$62.00** (for year-long students) Includes Chorus T-Shirt
- **Chamber Choir** (pd 4) Fair Share Amount: **\$80.00** (for year-long students) Includes Chorus T-Shirt and covers several additional costs associated with this particular group

Students that have additional financial needs or extenuating circumstances should contact the choral boosters directly for assistance, fundraising options and/or consideration for a limited number of FairShare scholarships. Detailed information on the operating budget and designation of fair-share funds will be provided at the **parent meeting on Tuesday Sept. 6th at 7pm in the chorus room.** **At this meeting, you will also have an opportunity to pay for these expenses as well as register as a volunteer at PCHS...we definitely hope to see you there!**

Student Fundraising



The choral program operates on an annual budget, supported by the Choral Boosters while also receiving a limited amount of money from the school for instructional music purchase. Fundraising efforts will be made to help fund the operating budget as well as for the financial needs of the students themselves (as related to choral expenses). Here are the answers to some likely questions:.

So what is the benefit of being a compliant 501c3 organization?

There are several benefits. First, we will not be required to pay taxes on our “income” (fundraising, concert ticket sales, donations, etc.). Second, those who donate to us can CLAIM A DEDUCTION on their annual taxes! (though donations made that receive a benefit, such as a “free” punch card are only deductible up to the point of that subtracted value—thus a \$100 donation that rewards the giver with a punch card valued at \$35 gains a \$65 deduction receipt). Third, we officially qualify for grants and “grant-matching” donations from some large local corporations. In general, being a 501c3 saves us (and perhaps earns us!) more funding to be used for the benefit of our organization and its students.

Pre-501c3 we had student accounts, which no longer exist, so what is fundraising for?

Fundraising will remain, as it always has, a means to help our program offer a well-rounded music experience, as offered at any other high school, and to help choral families afford the various costs associated with the program. Because **FairShare** is directly linked to benefiting the entire choral program

as a whole, students can fundraise to help to meet their FairShare commitments if they have financial issues in paying their fee. More info will be available when we begin our first sales drive.

What do I do if I can't afford my performing outfit?

It is the mission of the choral boosters to help students with financial needs to acquire the items needed to participate in class. One way that we can help to defray these costs is that we often have several used outfits that are offered at a reduced price—either through the booster group itself or through individual students selling previously worn performing outfits. Second, students/families can request benevolence to help subsidize the cost of the outfits. Certainly we understand that performing outfits are not inexpensive but we ask that those with financial needs try to help defray cost from the general group by partnering in fundraising activities. Ultimately, the choral boosters will work to ensure that EVERY child has the outfit specifics that they require!

How do I request benevolence?

At the end of this handbook, as well as on our website, will be a new “benevolence request” document. The document explains the benevolence procedure and features a short form that requests basic info from the student/family requesting the financial assistance. This form can be turned in directly to the choral director, the choral booster President or the Treasurer. Of course, benevolence through the choral boosters can ONLY be used to assist with financial burdens related to chorus class expenses.

Will fundraisers be aimed at benefiting specific events— like FairShare fulfillment or the spring trip?

Most fundraising will benefit the overall operating budget, especially related to fulfilling our projected income deficit and meeting benevolence needs. However, once our main program and student needs have been fully met, we will be able to do some specific/directed fundraising for events like the spring trip. This should be helpful to those who are NOT going on the trip knowing that participating in fundraising is indeed benefiting their particular class's needs.

So fundraising profits can't be banked in a personal accounts to be used for events like the spring trip?

Correct. However, when money is raised via fundraising, some money (equitably tied to amounts raised by those participating on the field trips) will go to subsidize the overall trip cost for the entire group. Each student that goes on the trip will have a lower trip cost through fundraising activities. The more that fundraise, the lower the cost!

Trips

Various off-campus performances may occur throughout the year, though most especially for the Chamber Choir, as it is considered our “touring” group. Various permission forms will be required for each and every trip taken during the year; students MUST have these to participate.

The year-long classes (Women's Ensemble and the Chamber Choir) will probably be taking a chorus trip to **Disney World in Orlando FL** in the spring (April 27-30) The trip will involve some sort of performance and assessment, as well as extracurricular activities that will be educational and supportive of group unity and community. The trip is NOT mandatory but is a great way for the students to bond and strengthen their understanding of competitive performance. **We hope to fill 2 buses with students and interested chaperones, who pay the same amount as the students (total of 110 people, maximum).** Chaperones MUST be approved WCPSS volunteers. Information about the trip will be distributed sometime in September. Deposits/payments will be taken in increments throughout the year and will be payable online. More trip info will be discussed at the first Booster meeting.

Choral Class Curriculum

The curriculum taught in all choral music classes is based on the NC Essential Standards for Music Education, viewable at: <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/acre/standards/new-standards/arts/music/9-12.pdf> The goals are basically as follows:

--*Understanding and demonstration of singing technique and vocal pedagogy*

- Basic physiological understanding of tone production and care of the voice
- Musical literacy to include sight reading, interpretation, composition and dictation
- Musical harmonic/tonal structure, including scale construction, aural identification and key signature knowledge
- Performance preparation skills and concert etiquette
- Evaluation, reflection and critique of musical performance in both written and oral formats
- Understanding music as a product of history and world cultures

Musical Literature:

The literature learned and performed in class will be of high quality and will represent a wide variety of musical samples. We will also learn music that the North Carolina Music Educators Association suggests through a published music list for our state. Such music is **sometimes sacred in nature**, due to its role in the historical development of classical music literature, *though religious themes will not be the focus of my teaching*. Music is used specifically for the purpose of its educational and artistic value. An example of the state list is viewable at: http://www.jwpepper.com/branch/branch_index.jsp?&loc=WIN

Students will be encouraged to take seriously their exposure to new forms of musical literature. ***The purpose of the class is not to entertain (or to train students to be entertainers), but rather to further the musical knowledge and performance proficiency of the students.*** Such a goal will be the driving force behind all programming and rehearsal decisions.

Honors Credit:

Starting back to the beginning of the 2012-2013 school year, honors weighted curriculum has been revised by the Department of Instruction to include new target knowledge and proficiency standards. 4 levels of proficiency now exist—*Beginning, Intermediate, Proficient and Advanced*. All students determined by their directors (through content knowledge, performance ability, participation standards, literacy, etc.) to be in the Proficient and Advanced Levels automatically receive Honors Credit. However, it is the expectation that such credit merits enrichment or expansion activities to validate the credit. Thus, choral students at the Vocal 3 and Vocal 4 levels must complete a **Concert Evaluation Project** for EACH semester that they are enrolled in these levels. The project consists in the visiting of off campus choral performances at other schools/colleges, etc. and written reflections about these concerts. Clearly defined guidelines (updated Fall, 2014) for the project are posted on the PCHS Chorus website (under “documents”). Students should take seriously this project as the non-completion of it will result in the automatic lowering of a student’s final grade for the semester by 1 letter (as an “A” in Honors Credit is worth 5 quality points and a “B” is worth 4, the lowered average will be the same as the higher grade letter in a non-honors credit course—i.e. B in honors is the same quality points as an A in non-honors, etc.).

Grading

1. Classwork 50% (Includes Homework and Class Engagement)

Classwork may include worksheets, journal entries, essays, oral discussions, etc. Any classwork not completed in class is automatically homework unless otherwise specified. Little homework will be assigned, but may occasionally arise from time to time and will be graded under this category. If an item has not been turned in on time, it will be recorded as a ZERO, though, in MOST circumstances, I am willing to accept late work for an appropriate grade penalty, not to exceed 20%. Additionally, extra credit may be available via attendance at SMART Lunch sessions. Class engagement Includes daily involvement in questioning/answering, oral contributions, apparent singing effort, usage of appropriate posture, being on task, work ethic, etc. A common PCHS arts department grading rubric is used for the objectification of participation grades. A copy of this rubric is available on the chorus website, www.panthercreekchorus.com Every 2 weeks, a participation grade will be entered equaling 10 points per day. Unexcused school absences may deduct an automatic 5pts per day, Note: good discipline does not necessarily mean good participation. *Class engagement/participation* is an active process that should be obvious in daily rehearsals and out of class performances.

2. Performance Attendance 20%

For performances, each student has a responsibility to other members of the choral class. The absence of a single singer will affect the total group's performance. Students should arrive on time, dressed correctly and ready to warm up at the scheduled time. Performance etiquette, timeliness, singing energy and musical preparation will be the main areas of assessment for this grade.

3. Quizzes 30%

Students will be expected to complete both written and **singing examinations** testing knowledge of musical and conceptual elements discussed in class. Because this is a high school course, students should be able to discern if they need to take notes whenever new concepts are presented, even if I don't specifically tell them to do so. Some of the concepts that might be present on such assessments include knowledge of vocal part, singing tone, physiology/anatomy of the vocal mechanism, music theory and history, as well as vocabulary/terminology examinations. A variety of testing methods will be used for the benefit of the students, including oral presentations, multiple choice, essays, self-evaluations, fill in the blank, etc.

***Grade entries will be posted online every Monday, as concurrent with PCHS grading procedures.*

FINAL EXAMINATIONS: As per Wake County school legislation, a comprehensive semester final exam will be given comprising 20% of the student's overall grade. **Thus, items 1-4 above comprise 80% (40% each quarter) with the exam weighing 20%.** Students should WISELY PLAN for these examinations THROUGHOUT the semester. Senior exemptions will follow the school's policy.

PLEASE CONTINUE FOR MORE INFO BELOW....

TENTATIVE Choral Department Calendar

Dates and times listed below are subject to change. Please monitor event times and dates as published on the program website and other documents sent home. **Items in BOLD are mandatory for all students.*

Date	Event	Place	Time
8/26-27	Chamber Choir Retreat	Haw River Park	~3pm depart; return ~4pm Sat.
8/30-31	Chamber Girls outfit sizing		
9/2	Signed chorus handbook forms due	Chorus Room	
9/6	Meet the Chorus Teacher/Booster Mtg. 1: Includes introductions, an overview of the classes, FairShare and fundraising explanations, budget details, trip planning, etc.	Chorus Room	7:00-8:30pm
9/6	Butter Braid Fundraiser Kick-Off	Chorus Room	DC
9/7-8	Outfit Sizing: Girls 3 rd Pd.	Chorus Room	DC
9/7	Chamber Choir BOYS tuxedo sizing	Chorus Room	DC
9/13	Catatone Auditions (open to 4 th pd. Only)	Chorus Room	3:15-4:45pm
9/13-14	Outfit Sizing: Girls 2 nd Pd.	Chorus Room	DC
9/20	Butter Braid Money/Forms Due		DC
9/30	NC Honors Chorus Auditions (involves only select students ~15)	UNC-G	TBA; during school
10/13	Chamber Choir: State Fair Choral Competition	Dorton Arena	TBA: ~ 7-9pm
10/26	After-school Rehearsal—ALL	Auditorium	2:30-4:15
10/27	Fall Concert—Includes Matinee	PC Auditorium	4:30, 7pm. Report 3:45pm
11/2	Honors Chorus Rehearsal—select students ~ 3-7	Enloe HS	3:30-5:30pm
11/5-6	Honors Chorus—select students ~3-7	Winston-Salem	All Day
11/11	Butter Braid Delivery	Chorus Room	2:15-4:15pm
11/14	Chamber Choir: Cary Choral Classic	Green Hope HS	7pm-8:30pm
11/15	Chamber Choir: Cary Choral Classic	Green Hope HS	8am-2:15pm; 7pm concert
12/9	Chamber Choir Sing at NC Capitol (?)	NC Capitol	TBD-- ~ 1pm?
12/14-16	Spring Musical Auditions	TBD	After School
12/19	After-school Rehearsal?????—ALL	Auditorium	2:30-4:15
12/20	Winter Concert—Includes Matinee	PC Auditorium	4:30, 7pm. Report 3:45pm
1/14	ECU Choral Leadership Clinic: Select Students	ECU	7am-4pm
1/26	Mid-Year Graduation Ceremony: Chamber Students TBD	PC Auditorium	7pm
1/27-28	9-10 Invitational Honors Choir: By audition only	Wingate Univ.	All Day; Concert 3pm Sat.
2/4	Catatonas: A Cappella Competition	Pittsboro	TBD
2/28	Duke Chapel: Eric Whitacre Concert (optional)	Duke University	7pm? TBD
3/7	District Choral Festival—all second semester students	Meredith College	TBA—likely 11am-2pm
3/28	Spring Chorus Concert	PC Auditorium	7 PM; report @6:15
3/30	All-State Chorus Zone Rehearsal: Select Students	Cary HS	4-7pm
4/20-22	Spring Musical: Select Students	PC Auditorium	7pm
4/26-30	Chorus Trip to Disney World	Penn.	Leave 6am
5/5-6	All-State Chorus: Select Students ~12	Raleigh Convention Center	All Day; Concerts 2-5pm Sat at Memorial Auditorium
5/16	Catamount Colors ARTS performances	PC Auditorium	TBD—7pm?
5/23	End-of-year Chorus Concert	PC Auditorium	7 PM; report @6:15
5/26	Chorus Banquet	Commons/Aud.	6:00pm?

Choral Handbook Release Form

Please sign and return by Sept. 2nd :

I have read the online Panther Creek Choral Handbook and understand/agree to the policies and procedures listed in the document.

Student Name: _____(print)

X _____
Student Signature _____ **Date**

Parent Name(s): _____(print)

X _____
Parent Signature _____ **Date**

Fundraising Permission and FairShare:

In signing below, I recognize that there are some expenses associated with being in the choral program. These expenses are not funded through the school, so it is necessary to request choral department members/boosters to help meet the financial needs of the program. Performance outfits are required and the choral program has a FaireShare support program to help fund the operating budget. A financial commitment exists for choral students in the amount of \$37 for Mixed Chorus, \$62 for the Women's Ensemble and \$80 for Chamber Choir. Additionally, I also understand that my student's FairShare can be paid via cash/check, **or** by finding community sponsors and that financial assistance exists in cases of need. Outfit expenses can likewise be paid via cash/check or through requested benevolence. I also understand that some grants/scholarships may be available to those with considerable financial need, but that a benevolence request application must be turned in before expenses are due and purchased items (i.e. outfits) must be returned to the choral boosters after they have been borrowed. Additionally, my child has permission to participate in choral department fundraisers at Panther Creek during the 2016-2017 school year, but I also acknowledge that he or she *has no obligation to do so*.

X _____
Parent Signature

Video and Audio Recording Consent:

Because of the nature of performing arts courses, it is necessary to record audio and sometimes video clips of class rehearsals and performances. Such recordings are generally used for in-class assessment, critiques and learning assignments. As of 2014, the Department of Instruction requires that students in performing groups get recorded for use on a teacher-assessment component required for all Arts classes. Please sign below indicating that you are aware that your child will be recorded in a group setting for assessment purposes. Additionally, it is likely that DPI will be sending home its own permission form for these recordings, which will be used solely for teacher assessment.

X _____
Parent Signature

PANTHER CREEK HIGH SCHOOL CHORAL BOOSTERS BENEVOLENCE POLICY

A Benevolence Policy is required by the IRS when assistance is provided to organizations, governments and individuals by a 501c3 organization. This policy clearly defines what kind of assistance may be provided, in what situations it may be provided and how it is to be provided. This policy provides the IRS documentation of benevolence disbursements and establishes benevolence funds are being distributed fairly.

1. Benevolence will be provided by the Panther Creek High School Choral Boosters in a non-discriminatory fashion, based on verified need and/or merit, to a charitable class large or indefinite enough that providing aid to members of the class benefits the community as a whole.
2. A Benevolence Committee will be annually created by the PCHS Choral Boosters Officers and a Chairman will be appointed by the PCHS Choral Director.
3. The PCHS Choral Boosters Officers will determine set guidelines for the Benevolence Committee in regards to:
 - The Charitable class to offer Benevolence. (All students involved in PCHS Choral Department Classes and PCHS Choral Events)
 - The criteria to receive Benevolence. (Financial Need)
 - The maximum Benevolence amount the Benevolence Committee is authorized to approve for a recipient per year. (\$150 Total for Cash and Non-Cash Benevolence to be used for goods, fees or services such as but not limited to Fair Share, Supplies and Tickets)
4. Procedures Established for Benevolence:
 - A Benevolence Form will be required and kept with our accounting records to include the recipient's name and address, costs associated with providing the assistance, the amount distributed to the recipient, a complete description of the assistance provided, purpose for which the aid was given, manner in which the recipient was selected, charity's objective criteria for disbursing assistance, verification of benevolence need, any relationship between a recipient and members, officers, trustees or donors of the charitable organization and the composition of the committee approving the assistance.
 - A PCHS Choral Boosters Officer will receive the Benevolence Request and submit a Benevolence Form to the Benevolence Committee for their review.
 - Within our set guidelines, the Benevolence Committee will have the final approval or denial of who receives assistance, how much assistance they will receive and what supporting documents are required per request. Requests outside our set guidelines will be decided by the PCHS Choral Boosters Officers.
5. An annual budget expense line item for Benevolence will be set up for the distributions of cash and non-cash benevolence items. Cash Benevolences will be paid directly to the vendor on behalf of the student. Non-cash Benevolences will be by waiver of costs for any goods, fees or services provided by the PCHS Choral Boosters.

***Panther Creek High School Choral Boosters
Benevolence Form***

Date of Benevolence Request: _____

Recipient's (requestor) Name: _____

Recipient's Street Address: _____

Recipient's City, State, Zip Code: _____

What is benevolence request for? _____

What is the total cost of the item/event involved in this request? \$_____

How much can the recipient contribute toward this expense, if any: \$_____

****Costs of Assistance: Total Amount Requested from Choral Boosters**_____

PARENT Signature: _____

For Booster Use Only

Amount Distributed _____

Date of Disbursement _____ Check # _____ or Fee Waiver _____

Complete Description of Assistance Provided: _____

Charity's Objective Criteria for Approval or Denial of Benevolence: _____

Verification of Benevolence Need: _____

Relationship between Recipient and Members, Officers, Trustees or Donors of this Charitable Organization, if any: _____

Committee Members approving Benevolence: _____
