

A decorative graphic on the right side of the page features three overlapping circles in shades of blue. Two thin blue lines intersect at the top right, forming a triangular shape that frames the circles. The circles are arranged in a descending staircase pattern from top right to bottom right.

# Basic High School Choirs

Choral Handbook 2009-2010

Greetings Choir Students & Families! This is our revised handbook, which includes all of the nuts and bolts of our organization and is the go-to guide for policies, procedures, and goals. I am so pleased to have the opportunity to work with our students this year. We are already off to a successful start and I cannot wait to see all of the wonderful things to come this school year!

**Sincerely,**  
**Ms. Lynne Ricci, Director of Choirs**

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\*\*\*All Forms – Field Trip, Medical, etc. must be turned in by Friday, September 11, 2009.\*\*\*

## Objectives

Choir is designed as a study in vocal production and music fundamentals. Students will have many opportunities to sing for personal enjoyment and perform a variety of choral literature.

Our Choir Goals are:

- 1) To develop correct vocal techniques
- 2) To develop fundamental music skills in notation and sight singing.
- 3) To recognize musical elements and demonstrate expressive qualities in varying styles of choral music.
- 4) To contribute to the blend, balance, and quality of the ensemble by developing the ability to sing a part securely.
- 5) To develop confidence in performing by practicing performance etiquette and decorum.
- 6) To have opportunities for the enjoyment of music through active participation.
- 7) To develop self-discipline and leadership skills by functioning as a responsible member of an organization.
- 8) To experience successful achievement and pleasure through group involvement.
- 9) To develop personal character traits of leadership, poise, and dependability as well as provide an avenue for self-expression.
- 10) To develop a desire to continue musical experiences throughout your life.

## Classroom Conduct & Operating Procedures

We are all here because we have something in common: we enjoy singing. How we sound as a group has a lot to do with how we work together. No matter what, I ask that you come to class everyday ready to give your best efforts: you will receive nothing less from me in return. We will truly make beautiful music together if you follow the class & rehearsal procedures listed below:

- Be Respectful.
- Be On Time.
- Be Prepared.
- Be Clean.
- Be Yourself.

## Rehearsal Expectations

- Rehearsals will begin on time.
- Disruptions within the classroom will not be tolerated.
- Making music will be our first and last goal.
- NO ENSEMBLE IS BETTER THAN ITS REHEARSALS!
- Singers are expected to treat the conductor/teacher and each other with utmost respect. Singing can be a very vulnerable & personal activity.
- Each singer should be in his or her chair or on the risers prepared to begin rehearsal on time (that's two classroom procedures in one sentence: what now??? ☺). Being late causes you to miss a portion of warm-ups, limiting your ability to get the most out of rehearsal. Rehearsal is not over when the bell rings or when the singer thinks it is, but rather when the conductor says it is over.
- Turn off "noisemakers" (cell phones, watches, etc.) before rehearsal begins. If I hear a cell phone, it's mine. You can pick it up in the dean's office after school.
- In general, no talking. This means no talking while a section is rehearsing with the conductor. Use that time to further learn your part so that when we get to you, you are more than ready to sing well. Unnecessary talking=rehearsal distraction and will be disciplined according to the conductor/teacher and BHS disciplinary guidelines.
- Have your folder with music and pencil in hand during every rehearsal. A pencil in a book bag across the room, or a folder with music at home is insufficient. Expect periodic "pencil, sight-reading, and memory checks."
- The singer remains personally responsible for the condition of the choir folder and music once it is distributed.
- Singers are expected to remain actively engaged in the rehearsal at all times. There is always room for improvement in individual performance. Hard work is expected. It is not optional. Keep talking to a minimum (worth mentioning again).
- Follow directions... the first time they are given. Positive and cooperative attitudes result in a fun and productive atmosphere. Don't ask why, just do it!
- Upon receiving music, singers should number all measures, using a pencil only, and make marks in their music as instructed by the director.
- Singers are responsible for the care of the choir room. When rehearsal is completed, put all supplies away, throw away trash, and take all personal items with you as you leave. (The choir room is not your personal locker. However, if you are taking two or more choir classes, you can have a locker in our performing arts hallway. Please see Ms. Ricci for a locker request form.)
- STAY INFORMED by updating your personal calendar! Listen; read all communications for updates; check the calendar; ask, if you are unsure of something. The more involved you are, the more fun choir can become.

## Rehearsal Expectations (continued)

- If a student chooses to break a classroom procedure/goal, the following sequence of events will occur:
  - 1) First Time: Verbal warning to student (documented); loss of points
  - 2) Second Time: ½ hour detention; loss of points, parent contacted by phone
  - 3) Third Time: One hour detention; loss of points, parent contacted by phone
  - 4) Fourth Time: Parent/Teacher Conference; loss of points; possible loss of opportunity to perform.
  - 5) Fifth Time: Referral to Dean, parent/teacher conference; loss of points, loss of performance time, possible removal from the BHS Choral Department.

\*\*\*If a student causes a major problem or blatantly breaks school rules, he/she will be sent directly to the dean with a referral.\*\*\*

- Students are to remain in the classroom at all times unless permission has been granted to leave. Written passes are obtained from Ms. Ricci. Any abuse in the privilege may result in the denial of a pass. Excessive time away from class may result in the deduction of participation points. No student is to be out of the room at any time without the director's knowledge.

### **Tardies**

When students are tardy, they interrupt the learning process and disrupt the class in session. Students are expected to be punctual. What constitutes student tardiness? A student not being physically present in his or her assigned classroom and seat at the time the tardy bell rings. Students lose 10 participation points each time they are tardy to class. Tardies will result in a low citizenship grade. Excessive tardies or tardiness on the day of a performance may result in alternate status/or forfeiture of the performance, based on the decision made by the director. This decision will be based on attitude, discipline, and attendance. Excessive tardiness to rehearsals will result in a parent/teacher conference and/or phone call home to parent and may result in possible removal from a choir class.

### **Student Grading & Evaluation**

Choir seldom requires "traditional" homework or written assignments as in other classes. However, you are responsible for practicing your music at least 10-15 minutes each evening. This can be done by reviewing the lyrics, speaking the lyrics to the rhythm of your part as we have learned in class, mental preparation (i.e. singing through the song in your head as you look at your sheet music) or just singing and/or playing out your part with your voice or other instruments. The director will know if you have been practicing or not at home: remember, no ensemble is better than its rehearsals and lack of practicing will add up over time. Here's a big hint: one way the director will know if you have been practicing at home is by your questions about our music. You will naturally want to know more about a choral piece or about music in general the more you study, listen, and practice music. As you have learned how to read in the English language or in multiples languages, we must also learn how to read music or keep up our music-reading skills. Even vocalists are expected to read music now, and this is a skill you will definitely acquire by being in the BHS Choirs.

Keep in mind that most of your work is done in class by participating and being a responsible member of your ensemble. Grade evaluation is based on more than just musical & singing ability. Each day, each student makes a choice on how he/she will conduct himself/herself and how he/she will behave during class/rehearsal or performance. No matter what the choice or behavior, **the student must accept the consequences of his/her choices and behavior.** The superior choral music student will demonstrate:

- 1) Positive contribution to class, rehearsals, and performances
- 2) Consistent and punctual attendance
- 3) Interest in the content of the class
- 4) Qualities of leadership within a given section and the choir as a whole
- 5) Attentiveness, a conscientious attitude, and earnest concern for others
- 6) A willingness to grow musically and personally
- 7) Consistent improvement
- 8) Respect for class materials, equipment, classmates, and director
- 9) Exemplary musicianship and vocal skill
- 10) A desire to work hard to meet the National, State, and CCSD Music Standards

Attitude, Maturity, and Personal Growth, as already noted, are major considerations in arriving at a grade. As each individual choir student works on achieving these concepts on a personal level, the choir will benefit as a whole on a positive level.

The effort you put into this class is very important. Each time you enter this room and follow the classroom procedures, you will receive 20 points. All you need to do to keep these points is to do your best and follow the rules and procedures for 50 minutes each day.

An outlined explanation of the daily grading system is as follows:

Enter class quietly, get folder, go to assigned seat, follow class procedures	+20 points
Tardy to class (unexcused)	-10 points
No music, folder, pencil, journal or day planner	-20 points
Gum, candy, food or drink in class (except bottled water)	-10 points
Disrupting class, not following classroom procedures	-20 points
Excused absences (with note from parent/see Attendance)	-10 points

Unexcused absence	-20 points
Performance at concert (including proper performance attire)	+400 points
Performance at Festivals/Competitions (performance attire)	+600 points
Excused absence from performance (see Performances)	+200 points
Unexcused absence from performance	+0
Voice Tests (scheduled & pop quizzes)	+100 points
Vocabulary Tests/Rhythm Tests/Melody Tests	+50 points
Extra rehearsals (always scheduled in advance)	+400 points
Excused absence from rehearsals (see Extra Rehearsals)	+200 points
Unexcused absence from rehearsals	+0
Choir Journal (spiral notebook for vocab. & writing assignments)	+400 points
Attend one performance of the BHS Musical (Nov. 19-21)	+300 points
Wear your choir shirt on the day of our concert	+100 points
Participating in either Madrigal Dinner or Halloween Carnival *	+300 points

\*(during applicable school years, must work one shift)

Make-up work or extra credit can be done to earn points toward an unaffected nine week or semester grade. Points taken away for rule infractions, tardies, or unexcused absences cannot be made up. Any make-up work must be completed and turned in no later than one week after the end of your absence.

Your daily points will be totaled with any points earned on written/oral tests as well as performance points. The total points earned will then be fit into a percentage scale as follows:

90%-100%=A

89%-80%=B

79%-70%=C

69%-60%=D

59% or lower=F

You may access your grades on ParentLink. Grades are updated weekly.

## Attendance, Extra Rehearsal, Performance, Student Activity Conflicts

### Attendance

Attendance is crucial for every choir member! Due to the nature of the course, when a student is absent, he/she misses a rehearsal and that cannot be made up. In the long run, the choir suffers from individual student absences because that student was not in school to learn his/her part along with the rest of the choir. If a student has an excused absence, he/she may make up the participation points by doing make-up work or extra credit. This privilege is not extended for any unexcused absences or trancies.

**In order for a student to be considered excused by Ms. Ricci, they must bring in an excuse note to Ms. Ricci signed by their parent/guardian stating the reason for the absence (this note must be brought in the day after the absence) -OR- a phone call from your parent on the day of the absence to Ms. Ricci (799-8000 ext. 4050) will be accepted. (This is a 24-hour number-if the school is closed, you must dial "1", then "1" again before the extension.**

### Extra Rehearsals

Many times the difference between a superior and poor musical performance is the amount of rehearsal time spent in preparation. Extra rehearsals allow for many things: individual and small group work, help from visiting clinicians, and more time for "extra polishing." They are vital for any good performing organization.

ALL EXTRA REHEARSALS ARE REQUIRED. They will not be scheduled unless absolutely necessary. You will always be notified of extra rehearsals well enough in advance to make arrangements to attend (the director aims for 2 week notices at the least; it is a 1 week notice rarely unless the performance opportunity is more than worth it for the students i.e. a once-in-a-lifetime-opportunity in our community that has randomly found its way to our choir room door).

**If students are late or have to leave early, they must have a written note from their parent or guardian. Excuses will be accepted for missing an extra rehearsal only if notification is received prior to the rehearsal. The director will determine whether an absence is excused or unexcused. WORK IS NOT AN EXCUSE TO MISS REHEARSAL – YOUR GRADE WILL SUFFER!** Concert Choir & Chamber Singers will definitely have extra rehearsal and/or sectionals before our scheduled CCSD Choir Festival and Annual Choir Trip in Spring 2010. **Any student who does not attend this rehearsal will not perform in pre-festival, festival, or our out of state festival performance. In addition, if you do not perform in pre-festival, you are not eligible to perform at festival or in our out of state festival performance.**

\*Chamber: If we have the opportunity to go to the UNLV Madrigal Festival in November 2009, there may be extra rehearsal in order to be prepared for performance. Stay tuned for more on this opportunity.\*

### Performances

**Performances are the most important part of being in choir.** We work daily to be prepared for performance. When performing, students gain a deeper appreciation of music, a greater feeling of unity from the organization, people, and the audience, and a love of the arts and humanities.

**There is no other way as a director to duplicate a performance for the student who is absent.** There is no other means to make-up the unique thrill of performing, feeling the reaction from the audience, or the excitement of knowing the hard work in preparation for the performance was worthwhile.

Every member of the choir plays a vital role in the success of the entire organization. As a director, I

cannot expect a total commitment from any one student without expecting the same amount of commitment from every member in the choir. Therefore, the following rules apply to performances:

- 1) ALL PERFORMANCES ARE REQUIRED! Including Out of Town Festivals/Performances
- 2) Students are required to attend all performances for which a 2 week notice is given. Work schedules **MUST BE ADJUSTED TO FIT THE PERFORMANCE SCHEDULES** as absences due to a student's job are considered to be unexcused.
- 3) Grades for each performance will be based on the following:
  - a. Punctuality
  - b. Following Instructions
  - c. Positive Attitude
  - d. Proper Dress
  - e. Stay for Entire Concert
  - f. Exemplary Behavior
- 4) Students will only be excused from a performance due to a personal illness, death in the family, or an emergency over which the student has no control. **Students will not be excused because they do not have a ride.** Students will not be permitted to perform if they are absent on the day of a concert.
- 5) The director must be notified of an expected absence prior to the performance. The choir room phone number is 799-8000, ext. 4050. This is a 24-hour number.
- 6) The director will determine whether an absence from a performance is excused or unexcused. If excused, it is the students' responsibility to get make-up work. If unexcused, the student will not be given the privilege of making up the points lost due to his/her absence. See Make-Up Work for Missed Performances.
- 7) No points will be taken away from any student who cannot attend a performance due to religious observations. However, a 2 week notice must be given to the director.
- 8) Students will perform **at the discretion of the director** based on attitude, GPA, discipline, adherence to rules, tardies and attendance.
- 9) Students who are not attending ALL PERFORMANCES and REHEARSALS will be subject to removal from the BHS performing choirs.

### Student Activity Conflicts

There are times when students participate in both sports and performing arts. The following guidelines from the CCSD Student Handbook will be followed in the case of activity conflicts:

- 1) When a practice or rehearsal and an event are scheduled simultaneously, the EVENT takes precedent.
- 2) When 2 practices or rehearsals are scheduled simultaneously, the students may SELECT the event in which she/he will participate. He/She should make the decision, whenever possible, at least seven (7) days in advance. He/She should advise the coach or Ms. Ricci immediately.

- 3) Under no circumstance will the student be penalized for his/her decision; that is, class grades are not to be lowered or unreasonable make-up work required, the student will not be benched, nor will the student's ability to earn a letter be impaired because of the decision.
- 4) In case of a disagreement among the parties concerned, the matter should be referred to the administrator or administrators in charge for a solution.

\*\*Athletes – please check your practice and game schedule with your day planner as soon as you receive the schedule from the coach-this way we can try to work the conflicts out early. Better yet, it would be great to give Ms. Ricci a copy of your practice/game schedule, so that she can also try to come out to some of the games if her schedule permits. ☺\*\*

### **Make-Up Assignments for Missed Performances**

**Absences from a concert are excused at the director's discretion. Unexcused absences CANNOT be made up. Not having a ride is an unexcused absence.**

Excused absences can be made up in one of the two following ways:

**1) Create a concert of your own made up of similar logistics to the concert you missed.**

- a. Must be of equal length of time
- b. Of all the music performed live, your solos or ensembles must be equal the number that you would have performed had you been present. Music must be approved by the director first.
- c. An audience of at least 50 people must be obtained
- d. Admission must equal that of the missed performance and proceeds must go to the general choir account
- e. Live accompaniment must be used
- f. The event must be publicized and concert programs must be printed
- g. The event must be as formal (concert dress and etiquette) as the missed performance
- h. The director must be available to attend

**2) Write an eight to ten page report on a composer, musical time period, instrument, performer, or music educator. The report must be double spaced, typed, and include references. Please see Ms. Ricci for the written guidelines.**

\*\*Make-Up Work must be done in a timely manner to be considered for a grade. You will have two weeks from the time you are absent to present the make-up work.\*\*

### **Fundraising & Fees**

Fundraising is an integral and crucial part of our choral organization. Without fundraising, most of our

students would not be able to afford our choir trips and tours in the spring or our chamber choir retreat in late summer. This enables us to purchase materials necessary to enhance the choral music experience (such materials include uniforms, music folders, large quantities of music, sound equipment, festival transportation, etc.) that district funding may not normally provide on a year-to-year basis. Since everyone will directly benefit from fundraising, **every choir member is expected to participate as much as possible**. Whenever possible, parents/guardians will be notified in advance of all fundraising activities.

Before each fundraiser, each student will be notified on the percentage or amount of profit that will be credited to his or her choir account. Most of the fundraisers we will do throughout the year will be for the travel expenses of each student, but some will be for the general choir account so that we can obtain materials for the entire choral program: students are expected to participate in both individual & general choir fundraisers. The money raised belongs to the school and will be placed in that student's name: **the profit earned will be applied for travel purposes & fees only**.

Monies earned are encouraged to apply to the current school year. If a student stays in choir throughout all four years of high school, monies will be rolled over each year. However, these students are still expected to participate in the fundraisers of the upcoming year even if their expenses are covered for the upcoming year. We are trying the "roll over of funds" policy to encourage our students to stay committed to choir during their time here at Basic and to reward that commitment. If a student drops out of choir for a semester or a school year, all individual funds will be forfeited to the general choir fund. When a student graduates Basic High School, their funds are forfeited to the general choir fund.

If a student shows outstanding drive in fundraising & earns a record number of funds for the choir over the course of four years, a special honor will be bestowed upon them and will be specific to the personality of the student, such as a special award at choir banquet, a music scholarship in their name, or a special donation of materials made in their name to the choir program. We know the money raised belongs to the school, of course, but the students need to feel a sense of ownership in the classroom. This is an opportunity to reward dedicated years of hard work and community service, which is key to our organization and is only second to the musical commitment the students make to Basic High School and to Ms. Ricci as young, talented, and skilled musicians.

Any lost, stolen, or damaged materials are the responsibility of the student, and will be charged accordingly. **STUDENTS MAY BE CHARGED A FEE FOR LATE PAYMENTS ON FUNDRAISERS AND/OR TRIP PAYMENTS.**

**\*\*All proceeds from fundraisers must be turned in two weeks following the initial start of the fundraiser. If monies are not turned in within this time frame, all profit will go to the BHS Choir Program and it will result in a fine.\*\***

**All BHS Choir Students will be required to participate in the following fundraisers to help purchase the materials needed to run our program:**

- 1) Cherrydale Farms Fundraiser (late September-early October 2009) – each student is asked to sell \$60 worth of items.**
- 2) Car Wash (TBA 2009-2010) – each choir student is required to sell two tickets.**

**We appreciate your hard work and efforts to keep our program running smoothly.**



influences that these opportunities have on her students: they become more musically-advanced at a faster rate by participating in these special choirs.

## Uniforms

The Basic High School Choirs must uphold a reputation of looking very professional. All uniforms must be wrinkle-free and in mint condition for all performances. Student wearing wrinkled uniforms or incomplete uniforms may lose the privilege to perform and will lose half of their points for the performance. Uniforms are the property of BHS and must be returned in a timely manner. (If you choose to buy your uniform for all the years you are here at Basic instead of rent, please see Ms. Ricci for exact cost.) Students can choose to rent the same uniform year after year, but must turn in uniforms at the end of the year so it can be dry-cleaned for the next year. Students will be fined if they do not turn in their rented uniform at the end of the year.

### Uniform Break-Down:

All women in Women's Ensemble, Concert Choir, and Chamber Singers wear formal gowns. We go through one of the most reputable companies in the business, which is Southeastern Apparel. You are responsible for any alterations that need to be done to your gown. Do not cut your gown if you are renting a gown. All women will need **closed-toe, black, low heeled shoes and skin-tone pantyhose. No jewelry or colored hair accessories are to be worn.** When you graduate or leave the choir, you must return your gown (if rented) in good condition or you will be fined \$70.00 which is the actual cost of the gown.

All men in Concert Choir and Chamber Singers wear standard tuxedo. The tuxedo includes: shirt, tie, cummerbund, jacket, studs, cufflinks, and pants (and vest for Chamber Singers). When you graduate or leave the choir, you must return your tuxedo (if rented) in good condition or you will be fined \$100.00 which is the actual cost of the full tuxedo. You will be responsible for obtaining **black dress shoes (no tennis shoes) and black socks** to be worn with the tuxedo.

Basically A Cappella will need to purchase an outfit that they will use exclusively for Basically A Cappella. All uniform requests must be approved by Ms. Ricci. You must have a uniform chosen by the last week in September.

## Choir T-Shirt & Day Planner

All Choirs: Members of the BHS choirs are required to pay a \$50.00 uniform fee which helps to cover the purchase of our annual Choir T-Shirt (the design changes every year) that will be used for our casual performances (assemblies, football games, on tour, etc.) as well as our fundraisers on and off campus. When the fee is paid, the students will receive their shirts.

All choir students must use their day planner that Basic High School provides to all students. Do not throw it out or lose your planner! There will be periodic day planner checks for points-it is part of your choir equipment (pencil, folder, music, journal, day planner). Make sure you have your planner everyday for possible adjustments and changes in choir schedule.

## Minimum G.P.A. & Attendance

Choir students are very visible in school and must represent BHS in a responsible fashion. It is imperative that you keep your grades up and attend ALL of your classes on a regular basis. There will

be times where you will miss school due to performances and trips. If your grades are not up to par or you have had too many absences, your teachers can keep you from these performances. That's not good. As you are aware, if you are not at these performances, you are jeopardizing the ensemble and our performance. Your grade in choir will suffer if this situation occurs. Therefore, the following rules will apply:

- 1) **All choir students must maintain a minimum Grade Point Average of 2.0.** On report card day, Ms. Ricci will check your grades (bring your report card to class). Anyone without a 2.0 will not be able to perform the following quarter (this includes traveling). Parents will be informed/called if it is within a few days of the performance/trip. Anyone who is ineligible for 2 consecutive quarters may be subject to removal for the BHS choirs.
- 2) **Choir students may have no more than 10 overall absences a semester** (this is very generous). It is important that you attend all of your classes everyday: missing one class counts as a full day absence. It's not worth it! Go to class. If you have over 10 absences, you will be ineligible for the following semester. Parents will be informed of this situation by phone or mail.

**\*Utilize Parentlink to keep up with the current changes in your grades. There's no excuse. 😊\***

**\*Ineligible students are still required to attend performances (unless they are during school hours) to receive credit for that performance. Students must write a critique on the concert and turn it in to Ms. Ricci on the next school day following the performance. If the performance is during the school day, another make-up assignment will be given (see Make-Up Assignment for Performances).**

**\*Truant students could be made ineligible to perform. If you do not care enough to go to all of your classes, including choir, you must not care enough to perform.\***

## Choir Tours & Travel

Traveling to perform is a big deal for our organization and our school. This is a privilege and only students who display the proper execution of all classroom rules, attend all performances/rehearsals and have the permission of the director may attend. However, it is important that we have all of our choir students in attendance as our blend and balance will suffer when missing several, even just one, person from our group. All out of town trips are required for Chamber Singers & Concert Choir. Depending on the school year, the Women's and Men's Ensembles may qualify to travel depending on if we have a good representation of each section. Our trip this school year will be to San Diego with the nationally & internationally acclaimed Heritage Festivals. The estimated cost of the trip \$310 for each student. There will be plenty of fundraising opportunities so students can avoid paying out of pocket. We CAN do it. Parents and students will be required to sign a form stating their intention to attend or not attend the trip by the specified date to be determined. **Once a deposit has been made, no refunds (on any portion of the trip) will be given, and you are responsible for the total amount of the trip payment.** We travel with a tour company and the money cannot be refunded: once we commit, we commit. A complete schedule and trip guidelines for each trip will be issued to each student and parent in advance. Students are required to follow all trip rules as outlined in the trip guidelines. As we get closer to our San Diego trip, there will be a separate packet on BHS Choir Travel Procedures that goes into more detail.

## Music Room Responsibilities & Choir Letter Requirements

Music is a part of the choir equipment owned by the school and careful handling of it will extend its usefulness. Music should be kept in your choir folder when not in use. Please do not use pen to mark your music – PENCIL ONLY! Any damaged or lost music/folder must be replaced by the person in which it is assigned. Each time music is passed out, your music number will be recorded on an inventory sheet. If your music is not returned in good condition, you will be fined for the amount of the music. You are responsible for keeping your folder in good shape. You are also responsible for returning your folder to its assigned place after class everyday. **You may be fined \$1.00 each time your folder is left out. Music is due back to Ms. Ricci one week after our major concerts (Fall, Winter, Spring, and Festivals). This keeps our music library in good shape, as an up-to-date resource.**

We are to keep the choir room clean and neat at all times. This room is not a personal locker for all of your belongings. Sometimes we will clean the choir room as a class. If you are asked to throw something away, do it. If you are asked to sweep/mop the floor, do it. If you are asked to put something away, do it. If you are asked to help someone (especially with holding something heavy), do it. Chores are more fun with more people helping anyway. We have to support each other to truly be successful. Do not hang items in the storage room without permission-only access this area with help from Ms. Ricci.

Choir Letters are awarded on a point scale system. It takes 30 points total to get a choir letter. Once the letter is earned, students can earn choir bars, 15 points each, for their letter. Here are the approved ways to earn points toward your letter or pins:

Points	Goal/Task
5	Taking private lessons on a regular basis w/proof (lesson time card/signed approval)
3	Successful completion as a Choir Officer, Section Leader, Student Accompanist/Director
1	Auditioning for Chamber Singers or BAC
3	BAC (or similar) participation
2	Barbershop Quartet or school-sponsored ensemble
2	Auditioning for CCSD Honor Choir
5	Completing the CCSD Honor Choir
3	Solo & Ensemble Festival
5	All-State Solo & Ensemble Festival
2	Auditioning for NV All-State Choir
5	Completing the NV All-State Choir
1	Performing with another BHS Performing Arts Ensemble
1	Participation in a community choral ensemble

1 Singing the National Anthem at a BHS event, not with a choir

1 – 5 Other approved projects & activities

Students must keep track of their point totals and be ready to document said totals at the end of the year on our Application for Letter & Pins form.

\*\*\*We will honor points earned in previous years toward choir letters. For instance, a goal that earned you 30 points in the past will now earn you 3 points, but is worth the same weight as we are dealing in multiples of 10, rather, dividing old point totals by ten. If you are still confused, feel free to see Ms. Ricci about your points.\*\*\*

### **Senior Cords & Private Voice Lessons**

Senior cords will go to ALL senior choir members who have been upstanding members of the choir department during their senior year (this will be determined by the director). The senior cords are worn at graduation, you have to buy them (payment collected in April), and will be given out at the end of the year choir banquet. Check with Ms. Ricci on the price of the cords.

\*\*Upstanding member=attend all concerts, no behavior infractions, and no action on their part that will bring disgrace to the BHS Choral Program. \*\*

Private Voice Lessons are highly suggested and should be a part of every serious choir student's curriculum. Please see Ms. Ricci for a list of recommended teachers. Plan for 2-3 extra rehearsal hours for each hour you spend weekly in the voice or piano studio. If you are seriously considering on doing Solo & Ensemble or auditioning for college scholarships (you can get \$\$\$ even if you are not majoring in music in college), you should consider taking voice lessons.

### **Parent Boosters & Extra-Curricular Choral Groups**

This summer has been simply amazing! We have so many caring, awesome families in our choral program at Basic, so Ms. Ricci would like to re-launch our Choir Parent Booster Association for the 2009-2010 choir school year. This organization is meant to provide support through active participation in choir events, activities, and yes, even some fundraising. If you are interested in helping our program this year, Ms. Ricci encourages you to sign up. Our first meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 17<sup>th</sup> at 5 P.M. We can move the meeting to 6 P.M. if it is more convenient for families. If you would like more information on this organization, please call Ms. Ricci at 799-8000 ext. 4050. The support of the parents and families is an important component to our success, and together, with the support of our families, we will move forward in a positive direction.

Our biggest event as of now seems to be our Fireworks booth on the corner of Mic N Mac's. We are looking for a family to train this summer 2010 to run the booth in summer 2011 along with help from Ms. Ricci and other parents & families. If your son or daughter is a freshmen or sophomore in choir, and you are looking for an opportunity to give back to the community, this is it! Please call Ms. Ricci if interested. This opportunity alone can pay for the student trips: that is how successful we were this summer. Let's keep it going! ☺

### **Vocal Health**

Students are also encouraged to maintain their health as their primary instrument is their voice. A sore throat virus or cold can hit all the members of a choir and can prevent the progress of the group. Some tips for good vocal health include taking your vitamins daily, drinking 8 or more glasses of water a day, refraining from yelling & screaming, eating balanced, healthy meals, 8 hours of sleep per night, and taking vocal rest (meaning no talking...gasp!) to prevent strain. Gone are the days of the rock-star lifestyle: singing artists such as Ne-Yo and Keri Hilson go on serious health plans by dieting and sticking to a strict work-out regimen while on tour. Imagine that. So be good to your voice and your health. Your voice will start to thank you soon enough-just trust. You are encouraged to ask Ms. Ricci questions on vocal health throughout the year.

### **Tentative Schedule of Events**

**Please see separate flyer with all calendar dates. Ms. Ricci's my.ccsd.net and the choir website will have the most up-to-date calendar throughout the school year: both of these sites are under construction and will be up and available soon.**

### **National Music Standards**

1. Singing, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.
2. Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.
3. Improvising melodies, variations, and accompaniments.
4. Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines.
5. Reading and notating music.
6. Listening to, analyzing, and describing music.
7. Evaluating music and music performances.
8. Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts.
9. Understanding music in relation to history and culture.

**What is Music?** *Daniel Mooney, New York*

*Music is a science*

It is exact, specific, and it demands exact acoustics. A conductor's full score is a chart, a graph which indicates frequencies, intensities, volume change, melody, and harmony all at once and with the most exact control of time.

*Music is mathematical*

It is rhythmically based on the subdivisions of time into fractions which must be done instantaneously, not worked out on paper.

*Music is a foreign language*

Most of the terms are in Italian, German, or French; and the notation is certainly not English-but a highly developed kind of shorthand that uses symbols to represent ideas. The semantics of music is the most complete and universal language.

*Music is history*

Music usually reflects the environment and times of its creation, often even the country and/or racial feeling.

*Music is physical education*

It requires fantastic coordination of fingers, hands, arms, lips, cheeks, and facial muscles, in addition to extraordinary control of the diaphragmatic, back, stomach, and chest muscles, which respond instantly to the sound the ear hears and the mind interprets.

*Music is all these things, but most of all,*

*Music is art*

It allows a human being to take all these dry, technically boring (but difficult) techniques and use them to create emotion. That is one thing science cannot duplicate: humanism, feeling, emotion, call it what you will.

*Music is taught in schools*

not because you are expected to major in music  
not because you are expected to play or sing all your life  
not so you can relax  
not so you can have fun

*But ...*

so you will be human  
so you will recognize beauty  
so you will be sensitive  
so you will be closer to an infinite beyond this world  
so you will have something to cling to  
so you will have more love, more compassion, more gentleness, more good-  
in short, more life

Of what value will it be to make a prosperous living unless you know how to live? That is why music is taught.