

Vista Murrieta High School

Choir Program

Handbook

2022-2023

"In the Vista Murrieta High School Choir Program, all are welcome. Whether you are the most experienced vocalist or a new musician trying to find your voice, there is a place for you here. Every day our members discover and try new things, connect, and react to each other, respect and respond to one another, and give their full effort in every step along the way. Above all, our members bring to life beautiful music that brings out the best in us that we then share to our community and to everyone around us."

Table of Contents

- ✓ Welcome
- ✓ Member Expectations
- ✓ Ensembles
 - Concert Choir (Women's Ensemble)
 - Chorale
 - Treble Ensemble (Advanced Women's)
 - Chamber Choir
 - Jazz Choir
- ✓ Grading Policy
- ✓ Performances
- ✓ Concert Attire
- ✓ Fundraising
- ✓ Trips
- ✓ Behavior Expectations
- ✓ Choir Room Expectations and Regulations

Welcome!

The VMHS Choir Program is dedicated to training singers in developing their musical skills for both personal and public enjoyment. The program consists of beginning, intermediate and advanced groups. Placement into groups is determined by students' auditions, achieved prerequisites, recommendations, and previous commitments to the program. Placement in advanced classes means a student has achieved a high degree of technique and performance, a history of commitment to and enthusiasm in the program, as well as an attitude of teamwork and dedication. Throughout the year each group will have the opportunity to perform for community and school concerts, competitions, and other activities. Choir students will be exposed to various styles of music and will have the opportunity to raise the level of their musicianship skills. VMHS choirs consistently achieve "Superior" rankings at festivals throughout California and have had the opportunity to tour nationwide.

To be part of the VMHS Choir Program means to be part of one of the leading choral organizations in Southern California. This program strives to exemplify the VMHS motto of C.L.A.S.S. in all rehearsals, performances, and common interactions with students and our community. The VMHS choir students produce a professional product on a consistent basis and are held to the highest expectations to keep their musical and decorum standards at the necessary level.

Member Expectations

Students will:

- Learn about the vocal music making process through warmups and proper singing techniques
- Experience choral literature from many styles and musical periods
- Increase musicianship skills through notation and sight singing
- Perform in and around the community sharing the art of choral music
- Develop a “team” spirit and approach to music making

Class Conduct and Expectations:

- Attend all classes regularly and on time
- Attend all scheduled performances and rehearsals
- Cooperate with and respect those in authority as well as those around you
- No gum, food, or drink in the classroom at any time (other than bottled water)
- No phone or tablet use during rehearsal unless otherwise authorized
- Let’s have fun and be a team!

Ensembles

The VMHS Choral Department is comprised of various ensembles ranging in level of rigor and performance expectations. Whether a student has been singing in choir since 3rd grade or is just starting out, there is place for them in one of our choirs! It is important to note that NOT all choirs travel, compete, perform on campus, or participate in activities outside of class time and concerts. ALL choirs must perform at concerts. Our choirs are sequential, meaning the goal is that a student’s avid participation will result in the necessary growth to promote them to the next level of choir the following year.

Concert Choir

This choir is the starting choir for 99% of all soprano and alto students. In this course, student learn the fundamentals of reading music, sight singing, and working and performing with an ensemble. Additionally, students gain performance experience through concert performances and observation of advanced choral groups. Any student may enroll in this course without audition. To skip this course, students must audition and display a strong understanding of choral music basics as well as have at least 1 year of high school choir experience. This course is not repeated. Completion of concert choir guarantees enrollment into Advanced Chorale unless auditions prove readiness for Treble Ensemble or Chamber Choir.

Chorale

Chorale is a mixed voice, SATB choir for singers with a decent amount of choral experience. This ensemble is also the beginning choir for new tenor and bass voice students. This ensemble focusses heavily on music theory and choral vocal technique. Students in this ensemble perform at least four times a year at our concerts with the possibility of additional campus performances.

Treble Ensemble

Treble Ensemble is an upper-level treble voice choir for grades 10-12. This ensemble focusses on the more advanced sides of being in a choral ensemble as well as the choral world while also diving into music theory and ear training. Students in this ensemble are expected to participate and enroll in at least one other choir at VMHS. This ensemble performs throughout the year at various concerts, festivals, rallies, community events, out of state events, and theme parks. For a full list of performances, please visit the website. This ensemble does travel.

Chamber Choir

Chamber Choir is an upper-level mixed voice, SATB choir primarily made up of primarily 11th and 12th grade students. This ensemble focusses on the more advanced sides of being in a choral ensemble as well as the choral world while also diving into music theory and ear training. Students in this ensemble are expected to participate and enroll in at least one other choir at VMHS. This ensemble performs throughout the year at various concerts, festivals, rallies, community events, out of state events, and theme parks. For a full list of performances, please visit the website. This ensemble does travel.

Jazz Choir

This course is designed to highlight the jazz style of singing. Genres of jazz music studied include swing, be-bop, doo-wop, rock n' roll, Latin, and ballad. Students enrolled in this ensemble are expected to have a strong musical ability both in a group and solo. Students will learn their music in sectionals and at home with the aim of learning style and performance techniques during class. This ensemble travels to festivals as well as performs throughout the year in collaboration with the VMHS Jazz Band.

Grading Policy

Primarily, students are graded on their overall contribution to the group. Students are required to actively participate in all rehearsals and performances. They are expected to make reasonable progress in their own musicianship, theory, and vocal skills. Students are expected to contribute to the general welfare of the group by striving to achieve the highest ideals of teamwork and musicianship. Most importantly, a student cannot learn the music or contribute to the group if they are not present. Attendance at all choir functions (in and out of school) is heavily graded. Excused absences must be cleared by the director 2 weeks BEFORE the event (if possible). Absences for illness, injury, or family emergency will be cleared on a case-by-case basis. Unexcused absences will result in a severely lowered grade.

General Grading Breakdown

| | |
|---------------------------|-----|
| Participation/Citizenship | 50% |
| Concerts | 25% |
| Sight Reading/Theory | 10% |
| Reports & Discussions | 15% |

*Off campus performances are included in the grade for travelling groups.

Citizenship is determined by Mr. Krug and is based on several factors:

- Classroom behavior and attitude
- Cooperation with other students, volunteers, and instructors
- Attendance
- Class participation

Performance Commitment

It is understood when auditioning for any of our choirs that one will be performing on a consistent basis in front of audiences both large and small, on campus and in the community. Therefore, all choir performances are **mandatory**. If we have members missing performances, it alters the sound of the group and therefore the product which will altogether affect the moral of the program. As choir members, one commits to each performance and communicates any and all conflicts early to resolve any issues. We acknowledge that students are involved with many other programs on campus and conflicts are bound to happen, however, this campus is designed to work together harmoniously with very little conflicts of events. If something comes up, it can be resolved if addressed early and with the proper decorum and respect. Each student is urged to write down all calendar events and triple check all new events before making a commitment to said events as to allow for as few conflicts as possible.

Concert Attire

ALL STUDENTS MUST SIGN AND RETURN AN OUTFIT LOAN AGREEMENT

All Choirs Casual:

- Choir T-shirt OR Choir Polo (will designate)
- Jeans either blue or black
 - No holes, rips, tears of any kind
- No jeggings or leggings/yoga pants
- Closed toe shoes

All Choirs Professional:

- Guidelines:
 - Arms and legs must be fully covered
 - Hair must be out of face
 - No flashy jewelry or make up
 - No non-natural toned make up
 - No patterned or non-black-colored clothing
- Semi Formal Black
 - Acceptable tops:
 - All-black long sleeve dress shirt
 - All-black long sleeve sweater
 - All-black blazer, sport coat, or suit jacket
 - All-black long sleeve full-length dress
 - Acceptable bottoms:
 - All-black full-length dress pants
 - Masculine dress pants must include a black dress belt
 - All-black floor-length skirt
 - Acceptable shoes:
 - All-black dress shoes
 - All-black closed-toe dress flats
 - Metal buckles ok
 - All-black closed-toe wedge heels no bigger than 2 inches

Fundraising

Students in the VMHS Choral Program are expected to fundraise throughout the year.

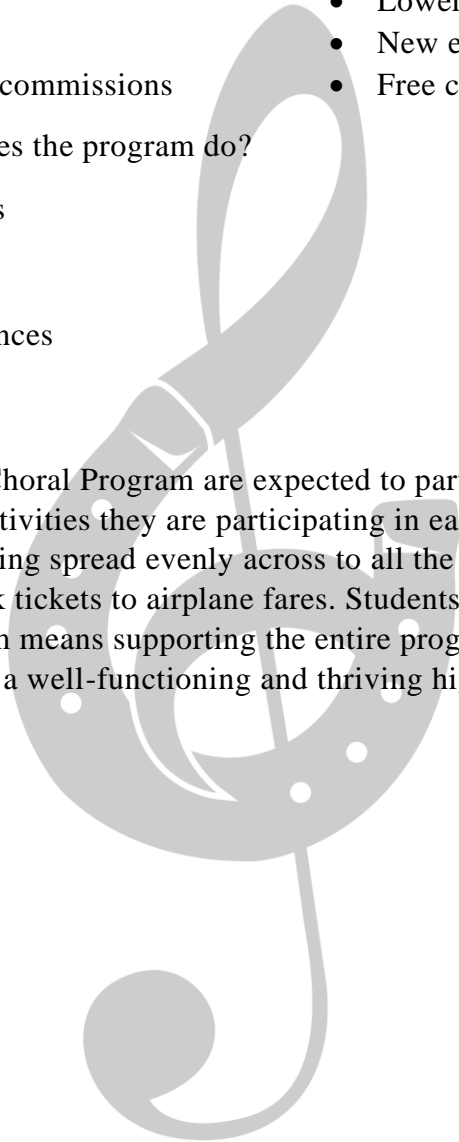
Benefits to fundraising:

- Buses to festivals
- Sheet music
- Guest clinicians
- Original composition commissions
- End of the year banquet
- Lower trip costs
- New equipment for program
- Free choir merchandise

What types of fundraisers does the program do?

- Restaurant fundraisers
- Concerts
- Donations
- Community performances
- Car Washes
- Chocolate Sales

All members of the VMHS Choral Program are expected to participate in all fundraisers regardless of what trips or activities they are participating in each year. This is due to the fund from each fundraiser being spread evenly across to all the needs of the program from music cost to bus fees to park tickets to airplane fares. Students are expected to understand that being part of the program means supporting the entire program and that in doing so, they will reap the benefits of a well-functioning and thriving high school choir experience.



Trips

Students in the choral ensembles at VMHS will travel throughout the year to various festivals, concerts, or other performances.

Travel:

- To travel to our destinations, students will be taking one of two arranged versions of transportation: school bus or preassigned carpool.

Chaperones:

- For all in state trips, the VMHS Choir Program travels with a student to chaperone ratio of 10-1. Out of state trips call for a 5-1 ratio.
- Chaperones are selected based off need of males and females as designated by the group, availability, and in most cases on a first come, first served basis.
- Seniority does not guarantee a chaperone spot on a trip. Spots will be divided evenly amongst those interested and done so in a logical fashion.
- For destinations such as theme parks, students may be “checked out” to stay at the park with a parent or guardian over the age of 21 after the rest of the group has left the destination.

Behavior Expectations

The Vista Murrieta High School Choir Program has a reputation of CLASS, respect, high performance, and consistency. The members of its ensembles are expected to uphold behavior standards that follow the same reputation and represent what the program has come to be known for.

This includes...

- On campus
- On tour
- At festivals
- During concerts
- At school related events
- Whenever you wear a VMHS Choir shirt

Students need to be aware that when they are identified as one of our own, they are representatives of the program and what it stands for. As a result, they must follow what VMHS has come to boast most proudly and what our program shows most consistently, do things with C.L.A.S.S.

Choir Room Expectations and Regulations

Food and drink (in classroom):

- GUM – dispose upon entry into classroom
- Students may only drink water during class time. All other drink must be put away or thrown out.
- All beverages brought into classroom must be bottled. No open cups or Starbucks style containers.
- All food must be put away into backpacks upon entry into class.

Food and drink (During Lunch):

- GUM – dispose upon entry into classroom
- All beverages brought into classroom must be bottled. No open cups or Starbucks style containers.
- All food trash must be cleaned up before leaving your space at lunch time. Failure to do so loses choir room lunch time privileges for a week and exponentially grows. In other words, CLEAN UP YOUR MESS.

Decorum:

- Students will always walk in the classroom.
- Students will use regular talking or singing voices in the classroom (unless instructed).
- Students will refrain from any form of public displays of affection (PDA).
- Students will refrain from lap sitting, laying on, lifting, or carrying another student in the classroom.
- Students will refrain from using any profane language including racial or culturally insensitive content. Jokes, gestures, or any other humor of this kind is also included.
- Students will always use please, thank you, excuse me, and address individuals by name.
- Students will always be courteous to one another.
- Students will always raise their hands before asking a question or making a comment.
- Students will refrain from any audible yawning or belching.

Equipment:

- Students will refrain from playing on the classroom grand piano.
- Students will not deliberately damage any classroom equipment. Doing so will result in the student reimbursing the school for said equipment.
- Students will refrain from touching or damaging any of Mr. Krug's personal property.

- Students will refrain from drawing on the classroom whiteboards.
- **MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS:** only ukuleles or guitars allowed in choir room. **NO OTHER MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS ALLOWED FOR THE SANITY OF MR. KRUG AND ALL OTHERS.**
- Microwave:
 - No seafood.
 - If heating liquid, must be covered.
 - If cooking something that requires liquid, make sure there is liquid in it.
- Refrigerator:
 - For day or class period use only.
 - If repeated items left at the end of the day, privileges lost for program.

Facilities:

- Students do not have access to the choir room restroom. Student restrooms are located just outside the hallway doors in between west and south halls.
- Students will refrain from going through classroom cabinets.
- Students will return their chairs back to their designated taped location at the end of each class period.

Materials:

- Students are responsible for their music folder and all music in it. Students sign a contract at the beginning of the year acknowledging their responsibility for the cost of replacement if lost or damaged.
- Students shall refrain from ever taking responsibility for another student's music folder.
- Students are responsible for their choir vest or dress. Students sign a contract at the beginning of the year acknowledging their responsibility for the cost of replacement if lost or damaged.

Program merchandise:

- Students will not tamper with or alter any choir t-shirts or polos. They are intended to be worn as is without knotting or cropping.

Please detach, sign, and return this portion of the handbook.

I, _____ hereby accept my responsibilities as a member of the VMHS Choir program. I acknowledge that if my actions go against the guidelines of the program, my grades will suffer, I will have opportunities taken away, or I will be removed from the program entirely.

Student Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____