

Pella Christian High School Choral Handbook

2011-2012

Mr. Timothy Van Voorst, Director
(641) 628-4440 – School
(641) 628-3734 – Home
vanvoorstt@pceagles.org – Email

Introduction

Welcome to another great year at Pella Christian High School! I am excited to get the year started and make music with each one of you. Our choral department has so much to offer all who are a part of it. Music is a wonderful gift from God as well as a vital part of everyone's life.

I hope your experience this year will prove to be God-glorifying, fun, educational, and stimulating!

Ensembles

Cantus – A non-auditioned ensemble open to males in grades 9-12 that prepares students for a lifetime of singing. In addition to learning the repertoire, students will learn proper vocal technique and music theory. Commitment to every minute of rehearsal and concert is needed and expected. Cantus will sing a varied repertoire of literature selected from antiquity to the present in two-part, three-part, and four-part men's voicing.

Solstice – A non-auditioned ensemble open to females in grades 9-12 that prepares students for a lifetime of singing. In addition to learning the repertoire, students will learn proper vocal technique and music theory. Commitment to every minute of rehearsal and concert is needed and expected. Solstice will sing a varied repertoire of literature selected from antiquity to the present in two-part, three-part, and four-part women's voicing.

Concert Choir – An auditioned ensemble open to students in grades 10-12. Auditions take place in the spring of the previous school year. Skills learned in Cantus/Solstice will be built upon and a new level of excellence is expected. Commitment to every minute of rehearsal and concert is needed and expected. Concert Choir performs a varied repertoire of literature selected from antiquity to the present.

Chamber Choir – An extra-curricular, auditioned ensemble made up of Concert Choir members. Like the other choirs, members of Chamber Choir must be committed to excellence in rehearsals and performances. The chamber choir will perform mainly sacred music in area churches.

Officers (Concert Choir)

The responsibilities of the officers consist of helping to oversee the outside activities of the choir, and assisting Mr. Van Voorst in responsibilities. The officers must set a good example for the choir, be comfortable with people, and be willing help to take up the responsibility of organizing various activities.

Student Accompanists

The student accompanist is responsible for accompanying the choir when requested, and should be ready at all times to assist in playing voice parts when needed.

Voice Lessons

Voice lessons are given to all choir students before, during, and after school. A schedule will be made soon after school begins. Lessons make one third of each quarter's grade. Lessons are evaluated on participation, effort, and progress.

Evaluation

Grades are based on rehearsals, lessons, and performances, each being worth one third of your quarter grade. Attitude, improvement, participation, assignments, and tests will all be factored in to your grade. (See contract for more information).

IHSMA Solo/Ensemble Contest

The state Solo/Small Ensemble Contest is a wonderful opportunity that all students should take part in at some point in their time at Pella Christian. This spring semester event provides students an opportunity to select a song, memorize it, and perform it for an appointed judge. The judges give a score to the student based on musicality, interpretation, and skill level, and give encouraging and helpful criticism to each individual to better understand the song, and how to better sing it with their vocal talent. It is encouraged that students work with Mr. Van Voorst for individual instruction before the contest.

OPUS (Freshmen Only)

The Iowa Choral Directors Association sponsors a music festival for middle school and ninth grade students each fall. Singers are selected throughout the entire state of Iowa through recorded auditions. The entire process is based on individual effort. Singers must be personally motivated to make time and effort to learn the music, pitches, and rhythms. Mr. Van Voorst will offer before or after school rehearsals and help each interested student. This process is not easy, however rewards for those who audition can be tremendous.

***Let Mr. Van Voorst know ASAP if you are interested in OPUS

All-State

The Iowa High School Music Association sponsors an All-State music festival (band, choir, orchestra) each fall. Singers are selected throughout the entire state of Iowa through district auditions. The entire process is based on individual effort. Singers must be personally motivated to make time and effort to learn the music, pitches, and rhythms. Mr. Van Voorst will offer before or after school rehearsals and help each interested student. This process is not easy, however rewards for those who audition can be tremendous.

***Let Mr. Van Voorst know ASAP if you are interested in All-State.

2011-2012 Choral Music Dates (bold dates = required attendance)

August 27	All-State Camp at Waukee H.S.
September 10	SCICDA All State Rehearsal (Indianola)
September 20	Opus Audition CDs Due
October 11	Fall Concert
October 22	All-State Auditions
November 15	Little Hawkeye Conference Festival (@ Newton HS) (Concert Choir only)
November 17	Opus Honor Choir Festival
November 17-19	All-State Music Festival
December 15	Christmas concert
February 6	SC-ICDA Honor Choir (selected Concert Choir members)
February 23	Winter Concert
March 31	Solo & Small Ensemble Festival (includes piano solos/duets)
April 12-13	Dordt College High School Choir Festival (Concert Choir only)
May 9	Spring Concert
May 19	Graduation (Concert Choir only)

PLEASE PUT THESE DATES ON YOUR CALENDAR TODAY!
REMEMBER, MISSING A CONCERT = A ZERO FOR THAT PORTION OF YOUR GRADE.
Family vacations are NOT excused absences!

Lettering Requirements

- I. The required points for receiving a letter is 200 points. A letter consists of a chenille lyre shaped letter with PCHS inscribed on it, a choir emblem and a service bar.
- II. Activities for earning points.
 - A. State Music Activities.
 1. Selected for the All State Chorus - 150 points.
 2. Auditioning for the All State Chorus but not accepted - 50 points.
 3. Accompanist for All State Groups - 15 points per ensemble.
 4. Solo and Ensemble Contest activities
 - a. Solo - Division I rating - 50 points
 - b. Solo - Division II rating - 30 points
 - c. Solo - Division III rating - 10 points
 - d. Ensemble - Division I rating - 40 points
 - e. Ensemble - Division II rating - 20 points
 - f. Ensemble - Division III rating - 10 points
 - g. Accompanist for any Solo-Ensemble Event - 10 points per event
 - B. Choral Festival Activities
 1. Selected as a soloist at a Choral Festival - 50 points
 2. Selected as a member of the 9th grade Opus Honor Choir - 40 points
 3. Audition for the Opus Honor Choir -20 points
 4. Participation in a College Festival Choir - 20 points
 - C. Concert Choir Membership
 1. Choir member - 10 per year.
 2. Choir officer - 5 per office held
 3. Report Card Grades
 - a. A - 5 points per semester
 - b. B - 3 points per semester
 - c. C - 1 point per semester
 4. Concert Choir accompanist – 20
 - D. Chamber Choir Membership
 1. 5 points per performance
- III. Additional service bars can be earned for each additional 100 points earned after the first 200 points.
- IV. Each individual can earn a maximum of four service bars (500 points).

Behavioral Expectations

Tardy Policies:

- When the tardy bell rings, you must be in the room or you are considered tardy.
- You will have one minute after the tardy bell rings to grab your folder and get to your seat. Otherwise you will be counted tardy.
- If you are late for an excusable reason (taking a test, talking to another teacher, etc.), you must bring a pass.
- Students more than five minutes late will be counted absent.

Rehearsal Etiquette:

- No food or drink is allowed in the music room **at any time**. (water is allowed)
- Deposit gum in the garbage as you enter the room. Chewing gum during rehearsal will result in a tardy.
- When you enter the classroom take **your** folder from its slot. If it is missing, tell your teacher; do not take a different folder.
- You will be assigned a place to sit, and you are expected to sit there. If you have a concern or conflict with your neighbor, let your teacher know confidentially, outside of class.
- One minute after the tardy bell, a chord will sound and warm-ups will begin. At this point, stop talking, stand, and refrain from socializing.
- The only appropriate times for talking are before warm-ups and during breaks in the middle of class. Don't talk unless called upon. Raise your hand if you have something to contribute.
- Use the bathroom before or after class. Exceptions will be made for illness or emergency.
- Only use the drinking fountain when you are not supposed to be singing.
- Good posture is important. Utilize proper singing posture both when standing and sitting.
- You are expected to participate in all classroom activities, regardless of how crazy they may sound ☺
- You are expected to be attentive during rehearsal and follow your music while we sing (until it is memorized). Do not work on homework, read books, apply make-up, style hair, write notes, text, etc. during rehearsal.
- If you are unable to sing, let your instructor know before class begins. This will prevent the instructor from marking your score down for not participating fully. Even if you are ill, you will still be expected to stand and sit with the class and you must follow along in your music. Sickness is not an excuse to work on other things during class time.
- Have a pencil available at all times and use it to mark the conductor's directions in your music.
- Your instructor will dismiss you from class. Do not get out of your seat to put your folder away before you are dismissed.
- Carefully place your folder back in its correct slot before leaving each day. Do not leave your folder at your chair, on top of the cabinet, or in another place.
- Treat the music, folders, chairs, and other equipment with the utmost respect. You should never touch any of the band instruments in the room (even if you play them). You must pay for any music or equipment you damage or lose. Mistreatment of equipment or throwing of any object will immediately result in a detention.
- Treat your classmates, teachers, and accompanists with respect, and respect the music we make.
- Come to class with a positive attitude each and every day.
- Consequences for poor rehearsal etiquette include reminders of appropriate behavior, discussions with the teacher after class, parent calls, detentions, and removal from class.

Choir Contract *(Signed copy is due by Friday, August 26, 2011!)*

Membership in an ensemble offers many valuable and personal learning experiences. Therefore, it requires that each student accept a large amount of responsibility. I hereby agree to uphold my responsibility as a member of the Pella Christian High School Choir Department by following the rules and guidelines of this organization.

1. I will arrive at rehearsal on time with my music, a pencil, and a good attitude. Gum chewing will NOT be allowed at ANY TIME in the music room. (I will find gum receptacles clearly marked and in view in which to dispose of the gum in my mouth). Failure to do so will result in a detention.
2. I will be responsible for keeping all dates, as given to me by my director open and clear of other responsibilities. In the rare chance that I cannot be at a concert (funeral, severe illness) I will talk to Mr. Van Voorst **AND** have my parents contact Mr. Van Voorst prior to the event.
3. I will attend all scheduled performances, rehearsals and sectionals unless excused in advance by Mr. Van Voorst. I understand that I will always be given at least one week advanced notice before any required activity, and that most rehearsals and performances will be announced far in advance. **Therefore, it is understood that jobs and work are not acceptable excuses.**
4. I understand that my grade in choir will be determined by the following:
 - a. Daily participation/effort (attitude, cooperation, attentiveness, alertness, punctuality, and preparedness) 33.3%
 - b. Attendance at performances 33.3%
 - c. Lessons, tests, and music assignments 33.4%
5. Concert Attire
 - a. Cantus
 - i. It is my responsibility to secure a white dress shirt (no polos or tshirts), black dress pants, black socks, and black dress shoes. A tie will be provided for me by the school and must be returned in the condition it is received.
 - b. Solstice
 - i. It is my responsibility to secure a black or white or black/white pattern dress OR "dressy" black/white top and skirt or dress pants, and low-heeled, closed-toed black dress shoes that all meet school dress code guidelines.
 - c. Concert Choir
 - i. Women: I assume responsibility for my choir robe. It will be issued to me in clean condition. I accept the responsibility of securing my own black low-heeled, closed-toe shoes and black pantyhose.
 - ii. Men: I assume responsibility for my choir robe. It will be issued to me in clean condition. I accept the responsibility of securing my own black pants, black socks, and black dress shoes.
 - iii. Everyone: I will return my robe and music by the designated deadlines at the end of the year. I realize that there will be a report card hold if I do not turn in my uniform.

-----**(Please remove this portion and return it to Mr. Van Voorst)**-----

Student/Parent Choral Handbook Contract

I, _____ (print student name), **have received the Pella Christian High School Handbook, Contract, and Calendar, and I understand the responsibilities therein.**

Student's Signature/Date

Parent's Signature/Date

This signed form is due by no later than Friday, August 26, 2011.