

# Sycamore High School Choral Program Handbook

2015-2016



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## Introduction

Welcome to the Sycamore High School Choral Program! You have chosen to be a part of a Choral Program whose graduates have gone on to first-tier college and university academic programs, as well as successful careers in music and the entertainment industry. The reputation and quality of the SHS Choral Program is the result of the hard work, passion, and dedication that students, teachers, and parents continue to give.

This handbook is designed to help you become familiar with the Choral Program and its procedures, as well as to give you valuable information that you will need throughout the year. At the end of this handbook are the important dates affiliated with choral program responsibilities. Please keep them and the handbook for future reference.

## Team Effort

The education of your child is a cooperative effort among student, teacher, and parent. Each part of that team needs to feel the support of the other two in order to facilitate a positive learning environment. I am a musician and teacher dedicated to helping your children achieve their best in one of the most enjoyable and accessible of the arts – MUSIC! We are very lucky to have a strong core of parent volunteers who work tirelessly for all of the students in the Choral Program. All parents will have the opportunity to volunteer at some time during the year, as their schedule permits. Please take a moment to complete the [Google Form](#).

Vocal Booster meetings will be held just about monthly to keep parents informed and to help plan and carry out Choral Program events and activities. There are no membership dues, and all parents of curricular (and extracurricular) choral program students are automatically considered members. Parents of all students are invited and encouraged to attend so as to be part of the conversation to maintain and further develop the vibrancy of the HS choral program, and nurture and support the opportunities for students of all skill levels. Further, it is a great way to get to know other parents from your grade level as we work together in our effort to give Sycamore High School Choral Program students the best experiences possible. Please refer to the [Choral Calendar](#) for meeting dates and times.

I love teaching at Sycamore High School! I know this is going to be a wonderful year of music making. If you ever have any questions, comments, or concerns, you are always welcome to call or [email](#); [email](#) is preferred since we have a community phone in the music office and I am not alerted as to when I have a voicemail. I look forward to having a fantastic year together!

Sincerely Yours,



Ken Holdt  
Director of Choral Activities

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## **Membership Requirements**

Membership is based on several important factors:

### Musical Ability

You do NOT need to be a good singer to join choir. You must, however, have an interest in continually striving towards your greatest potential. To become a great singer takes consistent effort and practice. If you are contributing your very best to your voice part, then you are doing your share to further the progress of the entire choir. Therefore, the chief requirement is that you strive to sing your part to the very best of your ability.

### Willingness to Work

Each person must be willing to put forth the necessary effort throughout every rehearsal to make the Choral Program the best it can be. In addition, work outside of rehearsals may be necessary to be prepared for class. Students achieve excellence only with an extraordinary work ethic.

### Attitude

A positive attitude will help you accomplish and enjoy many things in life. Working together as a team requires treating each other with respect and kindness. Negative attitudes are unhealthy, interfere with team progress, and will not be acceptable in or out of the choir room. If you have an honest and legitimate concern, please come and discuss it with the director before you share it with anyone else. This increases their respect for you and accelerates your maturation process.

### Choice

To be admitted to one of the choirs at Sycamore High School, you must want to become a member. No one is forced to join against his or her will. Please keep this at the forefront of your mind at each rehearsal. Because you choose to become a member you have no excuse for not giving *all your effort all the time!*

## **The Ensembles**

### *Curricular*

#### Aviator Chorale

Aviator Chorale is a competition ensemble, comprised of 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade students. Many members are new to choir at Sycamore High School, while others have experience in choir and are called upon to act as leaders. Primary goals of this ensemble consist of fundamental vocal technique, ensemble skills, basic music literacy, and ear training through the preparation and performance of a variety of appropriate repertoire. Aviator Chorale Women and Men rehearse as separate sections of the same class one period every school day and perform together as Aviator Chorale at several concerts and sometimes other venues throughout the year. Private voice lessons are encouraged for all members of the Aviator Chorale.

#### Bella Voce

Bella Voce, a competition ensemble of the Sycamore High School Choral Program, is comprised of 10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade students who sing soprano and alto parts. Admission to this ensemble is the result of demonstration of specific skills at audition. Primary goals of this ensemble consist of honing fundamental vocal technique, ensemble skills, intermediate to advanced music literacy and ear training, through the preparation and performance of a variety of appropriate repertoire. Bella Voce rehearses as a class one period every school day, and performs at several concerts and other venues through the school year. Private voice lessons are highly encouraged for all members of Bella Voce.

#### Select Ensemble

Select Ensemble a competition ensemble of the Sycamore High School Choral Program, and is comprised of 10<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade students. Students who are interested in challenging repertoire and challenging themselves should consider this ensemble. Commitment to ensemble responsibilities is highest with this ensemble, which has the potential for extended rehearsal on days in which students are not in school (Saturday, Friday, or Monday), and 20-minute rehearsals directly after school when called by the director, with as much advance notice as possible. Admission to this ensemble is the result of demonstration of specific skills at audition. Primary goals of this ensemble consist of developing advanced vocal technique, high level blend ability and ensemble skills, and advanced music literacy and ear training through the preparation and performance of a variety of appropriate repertoire. Select rehearses one period every school day performs at several concerts and represents the Choral Program in the community at other venues throughout the year. Private voice lessons are highly encouraged for all members of Select Ensemble.

## The Ensembles (cont.)

### *Extra-Curricular*

#### Sycamore High A Cappella Group (SHAG) and Sycamore Women's Ensemble of Excellent Trebles:

SHAG and SWEET are comprised of 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade students. Admission to these primarily *a cappella* ensemble is the result of a demonstration of specific skills at audition. Primary goals of this advanced ensemble consist of developing an *a cappella* singing style through exposure to music from all periods (Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic, Impressionist, Modern, Post-Modern, Popular, etc.), strengthening vocal independence from instrumental accompaniment, providing opportunities for students to work in leadership capacities where possible, nurturing concert poise and stage etiquette, and heightening students' awareness and ability to establish and recreate excellent intonation and blend. SHAG and SWEET are one of several ensembles who often represent Sycamore High School in the community and therefore perform throughout the school year in addition to the Choral Program concerts. SHAG and SWEET rehearse as extra-curricular groups after school on Tuesdays from 2:30 – 4p or 4p – 6p. A Performing Arts Program Fee of \$75 (payable to Sycamore Community Schools) is assessed in order to defray the cost of performing arts programs. A Madrigal, SHAG, or SWEET Fee of \$50 is assessed for all members to defray costs incurred throughout the year as part of the SHAG/SWEET performance calendar. (For curricular choir members, this is in addition to the \$50 curricular choral fee; there are separate costs associated with each ensemble.) Admittance to SHAG and SWEET will be limited to members of the curricular choral, band, orchestra, programs or Acting Ensemble classes, unless otherwise specified. Curricular choir program students will be given preference at time of audition. **PLEASE NOTE: MEMBERS OF CURRICULAR ENSEMBLES WHO ARE ALSO IN EXTRA-CURRICULAR ENSEMBLES WILL RECEIVE CURRICULAR CREDIT FOR PERFORMANCES.**

Madrigal: Madrigal is an extra-curricular ensemble similar to that of SHAG and SWEET. Madrigal is comprised of all SHAG and SWEET members plus a small number of additional personnel. Rehearsals for Madrigal are after school on Tuesdays from 2:30 – 4p or 4p – 6p. A Performing Arts Program Fee of \$70 (payable to Sycamore Community Schools) is assessed in order to defray the cost of performing arts programs. A Madrigal, SHAG, or SWEET Fee of \$50 is assessed for all members to defray costs incurred throughout the year as part of the Madrigal performance calendar. (For curricular choir members, this is in addition to the \$50 curricular choral fee; there are separate costs associated with each ensemble.) SHAG/SWEET members only pay \$50 for their participation in their respective ensemble, NOT \$35 for SHAG/SWEET *and* \$50 for Madrigal. The fee for extra-curricular group members defrays costs incurred throughout the year as part of the Madrigal performance calendar. This ensemble is open to all students of Sycamore High School. **PLEASE NOTE: MEMBERS OF CURRICULAR ENSEMBLES WHO ARE ALSO IN EXTRA-CURRICULAR ENSEMBLES WILL RECEIVE CURRICULAR CREDIT FOR PERFORMANCES.**

## **Performance Attire**

Performance attire is required for each choir member as the Sycamore High School Choral Program maintains a professional appearance when in public. It is important for everyone to look professional to enhance the performances for the audience by eliminating distractions.

Aviator Chorale Women and Men: Aviator Chorale members' performance attire comes in the form of school-owned robes and therefore students will likely not need to purchase anything for their performances. Due to the nature of the performance attire (ankles to the ground are visible), shoes, socks, and dress slacks must be black and appropriate for a concert (no sneakers). Aviator Chorale Ladies are to wear black flats or low-heeled shoes. Students are assessed in part on ability to dress appropriately. Men are to wear collared dress shirts and ties for performances.

Bella Voce: All Bella Voce members' performance attire comes in the form of school-owned green dresses. Members must provide their own, or purchase, black character shoes. Pearls are also part of the performance attire and are provided through the Choral Program. Returning women may already have some parts of this performance attire. Students are assessed in part on ability to dress appropriately.

Select Men: Most of Select men's performance attire comes in the form of school-owned black tuxedos, long tie, and vest. Members must provide their own black socks and dress shoes, and a **white dress shirt**. The dress shirt should be a white, non-button-down-collar, long-sleeve, and have a normal cuff. Men may perform *sans* (that's French!) tux coat on occasion. **\*NEW THIS YEAR\* All Select Men will be responsible to have tuxedo, faux patent leather (shiny) shoes for performances. Opportunities to purchase will be arranged for in the fall.** Students are assessed in part on ability to dress appropriately.

Select Women: All Select women's performance attire comes in the form of black, school-owned dresses purchased through the Choral Program. Pearls are also part of the performance attire and are provided through the Choral Program. Members must provide their own black character shoes – required. Returning women may already have some parts of this performance attire. Students are assessed in part on ability to dress appropriately.

## General Performance Attire Information

Performance attire should be clean and pressed when worn for performances. Ladies' and gents' hair should be brushed and away from the face. No jewelry (unless specifically named as part of the performance attire), including watches, wristbands, or earrings should be worn, unless they may not be taken off for religious reasons (please provide an accompanying note of explanation from home). Small metal stud earrings for ladies may be worn if absolutely necessary. Only basic stage makeup (no glitter) and no cologne or perfume should be worn (allergies!). Deodorant good; cologne bad. Students are assessed in part on ability to dress appropriately.

## Classroom Responsibilities and Expectations

Students' responsibility is to C.A.R.E.:

### COMMUNICATE

#### ATTEND ALL REHEARSALS AND PERFORMANCES

#### RESPECT PROPERTY AND EACH OTHER

#### EXECUTE REHEARSAL PROCEDURES

#### Communicate

- Call or email if you are going to be absent.
- Let the director know well in advance (a **minimum of 2 weeks** for tardiness or absences from dress rehearsals, concerts, or other performance activities) about any schedule conflicts.
- If you would like some extra help, just ask. If the director can't help you, he'll find someone who can.
- If you are ever troubled or unsure about something that has to do with the program, please come talk to the director.

#### Attend All Rehearsals and Performances

- Be at all rehearsals and performances on time...which means early! There's a difference between *being present* and *being ready*.
- Being absent from a performance is very serious. When even just one member of a performing ensemble is absent, the total musical experience is diminished for all.

#### Respect Property and Each Other

- If it's not yours, **DON'T TOUCH IT!!**
- Candy, food, drinks, books, book bags, and purses, are not permitted at your seat in the choir room. Water bottles are allowed for those who often get thirsty.
- No chewing gum in the choir room, mirrored room, or auditorium – it is a choke hazard! Detentions will be issued.
- Respect the right of others to learn, and the teacher to teach by not causing an interruption to the rehearsal. Use good judgment to always know what time it is: is it time to visit or work?
- Look at the person speaking to you.
- If you cannot say something positive, do not say anything at all.
- No public displays of affection are permitted in or around the music area, or on off-campus trips or performances.
- Do not use the choir room to store your personal property (bags, books, clothes, projects, lunches, etc.).



## **Classroom Responsibilities (cont.)**

### Execute Rehearsal Procedures

- Be in your seat, ready to make music when the bell rings.
- Stop immediately when the conductor stops.
- Raise your hand if you have a comment, question, or answer.
- Stay in your seat or place on the risers unless you have permission to do otherwise.
- If you are not able to sing (due to illness or other reason), please see the director **immediately** when you enter the room to receive an alternative assignment.
- Cell phones and iPods should be put away in the choir room during rehearsal (no ear buds!). Instances where some are discovered or ring during class may be referred to your grade level administrator.

Remember your P.R.I.D.E.

**Personal Responsibility In Daily Effort!**

Discipline Plan for those that forget to C.A.R.E.:

Teacher Detention

Removal from the classroom

Second removal from classroom results in school detention and parental contact

### Tardy Procedure

In a music class where every member is contributing to the overall success of the ensemble, lateness and absences have a negative effect on the entire class. Students must be responsible and be on time. The SHS tardy procedure (listed in the SHS Student/Parent Handbook) will be in effect:

Tardiness is excused only with a pass from the office or another teacher.

3<sup>rd</sup> unexcused tardy – Holdt Detention and parental contact

4<sup>th</sup> – Holdt Detention and parental contact

5<sup>th</sup> – Administrator Detention and parental contact

The consequences of action continue in the Student Code, but I won't continue them here because we won't have the problem (right?).

### **Choir Program Grading Procedure (First, Second, and Third Quarters)**

Dress Rehearsal Participation & Contribution	40%
Performance Participation & Contribution	35%
Quizzes and Assignments	15%
Growth Quotient	10%

### **Choir Program Grading Procedure (Fourth Quarter)**

Class Attendance, Daily and Dress Rehearsal Participation & Contribution	40%
Performance Participation & Contribution	35%
Quizzes and Assignments	15%
Growth Quotient	10%

Rehearsal Participation & Contribution grades are earned by meeting the Classroom Responsibilities and Expectations. Students earn points for each rehearsal they attend. An unexcused absence will result in earning 0 points.

Choir is a **co-curricular performance-based** class. Therefore, choir students are required to attend rehearsals and performances beyond regular school hours. Every effort will be made to advise you of any changes to the announced rehearsal schedule well in advance so that you may plan your time productively. These extra rehearsals will be kept to a minimum to be respectful of your time. Please mark your calendars now for the [dress rehearsal and concert dates](#). If getting a ride to these performances might be a problem, arrange a ride you can count on, or let the director know at least a week in advance so that they can help you find a ride. Students should have transportation home no more than 30 minutes after the end of a concert. **Tardiness due to transportation issues is not excused.**

Performance Attendance and Contribution grades are earned by being present, on time, in proper performance attire, participating positively and fully, and last but not least, PERFORMING (Faces! Body posture! Connection with the text!). 100 points will be earned for each dress rehearsal and performance. An unexcused absence will result in earning 0 points. Excused absences will result in a 0 until appropriate makeup work is completed. **See absence procedure on next page for more information.** Again, your dress rehearsal and performance grades will be based upon meeting expectations in the following areas: arrival, dress code, cat-calling, electronic devices, when to clap, back stage etiquette, stage furniture (not touching the drapes when coming on/off stage), food and demonstrating appropriate behavior regarding personal belongings at rehearsal and concert.

If a student exhibits inappropriate behavior in class, during dress rehearsals, or at a concert, a student may be removed from the performance and not given an opportunity to make up the missed performance. Do *your* job! Please. :-)

Part of performing is the behind-the-scenes portion known as stagecraft. This means getting risers and shells placed and struck (removed) after the concert. 30% of your concert grade for one concert this year will be earned through your ownership of the setup and strike process for one concert this year.

### **Absence Procedure**

ABSENCE FROM REHEARSAL, DRESS REHEARSAL OR PERFORMANCE: Choir students will not be excused from rehearsals except in cases of health-related appointments, extreme emergency, or religious reasons. If you anticipate an unavoidable absence from dress rehearsal or concert, submit **\*ONLINE\*** a Sycamore High School Music Department [Absence Notification Form](#) **two weeks in advance** of the absence. **Failure to turn in appropriate paperwork at least two weeks in advance of the absence results in an unexcused absence, regardless of reason.** A note from Attendance Office is due upon the student's return from any excused absence. Those on athletic teams should communicate their practice/ game schedule with the director before the season begins to find a workable compromise when necessary. These conflicts will be handled on a case-by-case basis in conjunction with the coach.

### [Submit notification form](#)

Students who have an excused absence from a performance may make up for that part of their grade by completing an appropriate makeup assignment, usually a research paper assigned by the director. If you anticipate an unavoidable absence from a performance this year, please submit **\*ONLINE\*** a written request to the director for approval right away. **Any excuse given within less than two weeks of a performance (with the exception of emergencies) will be considered unexcused and will not be able to be made up.** All research paper content requirements will be dispersed **following the concert.** Students will have two weeks to complete the assignment.

The Choir Calendar is distributed during the first full week of school. This is done so that you can plan your year accordingly. Please do not schedule college auditions/visits, SAT/ACT tests, vacations, or anything else at a time that will conflict with a required choral performance.

Students are required to participate in all performance activities as part of the fulfillment of the course requirements. This may include several local and area opportunities.

Quizzes and Assignments grades will be an average of the grades for all written and aural quizzes and assignments. If a student has good attendance, pays attention and participates fully in class, and turns things in on time, it is reasonable to expect that these grades will be very good.

All students have great potential to do well in choir. Students who attend class and participate, have a good attitude, turn in assignments, and work hard will have a good grade at the end of the grading period. Git 'er done guys (in the non-gender specific sense)!

### Semester Exam Procedure

At the end of each semester, students will take a written cumulative exam. The exam will give students a chance to demonstrate the knowledge they have acquired over the course of the semester.

### **Concert Etiquette: Information for students, parents, and families**

Concerts are the culmination of hundreds of hours of diligent work from students. It is our goal to make our concerts professional and of the highest caliber. As part of students' music education, they will be assessed on their knowledge of the role that the audience plays in the success of our concerts. As the students prepare for their performance, they also prepare to be excellent audience members. Thank you in advance for your cooperation with setting a good example for your children as an audience member.

Our concerts are "formal" events, and as such, the manner of audience dress affects the mindset of the performers and therefore influences the caliber of their performance. For example, when choirs perform at Carnegie Hall, everyone in the audience is dressed in their best. The same holds true at our concerts at Sycamore High School or any other venue, creating an atmosphere in which concerts are something special.

Our concerts are frequently recorded, and therefore students will be instructed on the following expectations of general concert etiquette:

1. **Please, no cell phones, iPods, iPads, or the like.** Music is the art of sound. It is imperative that the auditorium is as quiet as possible in order to hear all the beautiful sounds from the students. Even when silent, the bright screens from these mobile devices are distracting to audience members around you.
2. **Refrain from flash photography.** This is distracting and disruptive to the performers. We have a photographer who will take photos throughout the performance and post online for viewing and downloading.
3. **Refrain from talking during performances.** Voices are easily picked up by professional microphones during recording. Stress will be given that audience members ought to be courteous to the performers, their hours of effort, and to those audience members seated in one's vicinity.
4. **Refrain from yelling or screaming a student's name.** Younger children may be inclined to try to get the attention of older siblings. The context of a concert is different from that of a sporting event.

**For the little ones:** Performances tend to last about an hour in length. This is a long time for young children (and sometimes older children as well) to sit still or remain quiet. Students will be instructed that if they or anyone they are with as audience members become restless, it is best for everyone (performers and other audience members) for them to exit the auditorium during applause.

**Late Arrivals:** Concert etiquette dictates that if one arrives late for a concert, similar to any professional auditorium or theatre, it is most appropriate to be admitted into the auditorium as soon as there is a moment of applause. Students will be instructed as to the usher's role in facilitating this. Likewise, if one must leave the concert for any reason, it is most appropriate to wait until there is a moment of applause before re-entering the auditorium. The sound of doors opening and closing as well as the light spilling in from the hallway is distracting to both the performers and the audience.

### **Concert Etiquette (cont.)**

**When am I supposed to applaud?** When it is appropriate for the audience to make noise and what kinds of noise are appropriate is an important one. Students will be instructed to watch the conductor for cues. It is appropriate to applaud when the conductor enters the stage, when the choir enters the stage, or when a choir is seen for the first time. When a selection is concluded, students will be instructed to wait until the conductor's arms are down (signaling the true end of the piece) before applauding. Sometimes the silence that follows a piece is part of the experience. If a major work or a sectionalized piece is performed, it is proper etiquette to wait until all movements are complete before applauding.

### **Music Resources**

#### Use and Care of Music

- Do not fold, tear, or otherwise mutilate music.
- Do not make excessive markings on the music- *always use pencil, not ink!*
- If a student is issued a music folder, the folder should be kept in the assigned folio cabinet in the choir room. If a student would like to take their music home to study, they must bring their music folder back with them to class the next day. Students missing music from a folder will be responsible for the replacement cost of missing music.

Copyright Law: Sometimes making photocopies of music is necessary due to titles being Permanently-Out-of-Print, on backorder, not available in octavo format, considered Public Domain, or if the copies that the Choral Program owns are delicate. *Photocopying music without written consent and paying appropriate permissions fees from the publisher is illegal.*

### **Private Lessons**

Private lessons are the best way to enhance the instruction you receive in choir. Students who study voice privately develop their vocal technique much more quickly than those that do not. Private lessons provide weekly one-on-one instruction to help students develop the specific skill set they need as a singer where teachers work not only on vocal technique, but also on performance and presentation skills, text interpretation, and foreign language diction. In private voice lessons, students work on a variety of solo repertoire appropriate to their development level. Voice teachers coach their students on their solos for choir, for their studio recitals, district and state Solo and Ensemble Festival, area competitions, and college scholarship auditions.

The Choral Program maintains a list of recommended voice teachers. Please [contact the director](#) for advice on how to begin voice lessons or check out the information on the choir Blackboard websites.

While voice lessons will have the most impact on a student's performance in choir, piano and other instrument lessons are also very important. Piano lessons and the ability to sight-read well have been proven through volumes of research to be corollaries.

### **Outside Affiliations**

Participating in other musical organizations is highly encouraged. Singing in a religious community or general community choir (such as the Cincinnati Children's Choir, or other places like the University of Cincinnati's College-Conservatory of Music Preparatory Department) is a great way to build your vocal and musicianship skills. Also, playing an instrument in band or orchestra will make you a better singer; and likewise, singing in choir will make you a better player on your instrument.

Anyone considering majoring or minoring in music in college should consider learning to play the piano, either through keyboard classes at SHS, or through private study. Before joining an outside musical organization, please be sure their schedule does not conflict with your commitments to the SHS Choral Program.

### **Communications**

#### Choir E-mail List

Email may be sent out to inform all choral families about choir news and upcoming events. Occasionally, additional emails might be sent out to the list, but this will be kept to a minimum out of respect to your crowded Inbox.

#### Bulletin Boards/ Chalkboards/Wall Postings

Check the chalkboards and choir room banners daily for important information. This is one of our primary means of communication, so students are responsible for the information posted.

#### Website

Check the choir Blackboard website or [www.aveschoir.org](http://www.aveschoir.org) to find choir related documents, [concert calendar](#), and other information.

#### Mailings

Occasionally information or invitations might be sent through the mail.

## **Performance Opportunities and Special Events**

### School Concerts

The Sycamore High School Choral Program presents several concerts throughout the year. The Variety Show, Winter Concert, Fine Arts Concert, and Spring Concert and Awards Night involve all choirs from Sycamore High School.

### Solo and Ensemble

In the third quarter, students will be encouraged to elect to participate in the Ohio Music Education Association District 14 Solo and Ensemble Contest. At this event, soloists and small groups perform for a judge who evaluates them. The educational experience of preparing and performing a solo or small ensemble is invaluable. Other choral students are encouraged to sign up for a small ensemble if they wish; or, if they study voice privately, to sign up for a solo performance.

To participate as a soloist, the entry fee and names of your song selections will be your responsibility to turn in; keep your eyes peeled for deadlines! Soloists, NOT THE DIRECTOR, are responsible for providing two original copies of their music for the judge.

Semester Exam: Students may earn credit for their final exam by registering for and taking a solo or ensemble (except Madrigal, SHAG, or SWEET) to Solo and Ensemble Contest. Since the event occurs after the semester has ended, students will receive an A for their semester exam assuming they will participate in Solo and Ensemble Contest. Grades will be changed and the exam taken in the event a student registers for and does not perform at Solo and Ensemble Contest.

### OMEA District 14 Honor Choir

The District 14 Honor Choir is made up of the finest vocalists and musicians in the surrounding counties. **Auditions will be done by Mr. Holdt in October. The date of the concert is Sunday, October 25<sup>th</sup> at Milford High School.** Keep your eyes peeled for more information. Being selected for this choir is a great honor.

### Variety Show

The Variety Show is the largest fund generator in which the Choral Program participates during the course of the year, taking place this year on **Friday, October 9th**. Students from all over the Sycamore High School community participate in this performance demonstrating the diversity of talents we have in Sycamore. Acts from previous years have included scenes from musicals, multicultural dance,

American Sign Language interpretations of familiar songs, garage bands, and vocal and instrumental soloists. Please come out and support members of the Choral Program through this event!

### **Field Trips and Travel**

All choirs may have out-of-town concert performance trips scheduled for the year (i.e. District and State Choir Festivals, American Choral Director's Association conferences, performance tours). Choir trips are a reward for hard work and dedication to the Choral Program, and it is hoped that as many students as possible may participate.

Below are travel procedures for the Choral Program.

- A travel itinerary will be provided for each major trip.
- The parent or guardian of each student will need to complete and sign an Emergency Medical Form. Students will not be allowed to travel with the choir without this form.
- Students are asked to be careful and safe. If an accident, injury, or illness does occur, the chaperone in charge should be notified at once. The chaperone will then notify the director.
- Chaperones and student leadership are to be treated with courtesy and respect at all times. They are the delegates of the director and the Choral Program.
- Chaperones will be in charge of each bus. They will be responsible for calling roll and maintaining good conduct. No bus will be permitted to leave a stop until the roll is called and all students accounted for.
- All students must travel to and from performances on buses, not in personal cars. Any student who needs to depart a performance with his/her parent or guardian should submit a request signed by the parent/guardian at least three days in advance of the performance. If approved, the parent/guardian must appear in person to pick up the student from the director.
- Proper behavior is expected on a school-sponsored trip. Undignified conduct or reckless behavior may result in disciplinary action, suspension from school, and/or dismissal from the choir.
- Students may not leave their rooms after curfew or lights out.
- Students may not visit rooms/floors occupied by the opposite sex.
- POSSESSION OR USE OF ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, OR NARCOTICS IS FORBIDDEN. These matters will be turned over to legal authorities.
- Additional procedures may be announced for each specific trip.



## **Financial Considerations**

### Program Costs

Choral families, alumni, friends, and area businesses augment the Choral Program budget provided by the school through fundraising and community support. Enhanced instruction and active choral participation afforded by this program are accomplished through a budget with expenses including, but not limited to, payments to accompanists and choreographers, clinicians, music purchases, travel related costs of competitions, director participation in professional conferences, concert recording, OMEA large-group competition registration, classroom equipment, technology, and numerous concerts. In an active high school Choral Program, a typical year's expenses can exceed \$15,000. In addition, students bear a portion of the cost of distinctive performance attire that enhances choral performances. Membership in this exceptional program brings with it a financial responsibility.

### Fundraising Expectations

All expenses are paid through the hard work of students and parents. Each student is expected to purchase certain parts of his or her choir performance attire (see page 7), and pay a \$50 fee that includes coverage of performance attire cleaning, upkeep, and alterations. This obligation can be paid online.

### [Pay Choir Fees](#)

### Fundraising Opportunities

The fundraising goal is accomplished through several fundraising opportunities. This year, we are considering a number of options that include:

- *Ads and sponsorships:* The Choral Program produces an attractive program that is distributed for free at all concerts. The program would include students' names, their ensembles, and promotional information about the Sycamore High School Choir. With this fundraiser, students may solicit advertisers and sponsors whose names and businesses will then appear in the program. Individual ads and sponsorships range in price depending on size. Because the program's printing costs are relatively low, the Boosters are able to provide the most support to students through this program ad book.
- *Patrons of the Choral Program:* Families or businesses who want to show their additional support of the program may do so by making a monetary donation to the Vocal Boosters.

These families and businesses will be recognized in the program booklet (above) by their level of sponsorship. It is our goal this year to fundraise \$1500 this year in this manner.

- *Direct Sales:* The decision as to which direct sale options to pursue in any year is made in conjunction with the Vocal Boosters. Students might sell chocolates, cheesecakes, cookie dough, candy, or other items. The cost of these items represents a proportionally greater share of the sale price than that of other fundraising alternatives. Students are credited with the profit from these sales.

### **Choral Program Awards**

The excellence of the Choral Program and its students are celebrated following the Spring Concert in May at the Awards Night. Students of all groups, curricular and extra-curricular, are individually recognized for their contribution to the Program. None of us is as strong as all of us, and each has an important part to sing.

Additionally, Awards Night is an opportunity for students who stand out from their peers to also be recognized.

### **Outstanding Aviator Chorale Member, Outstanding Bella Voce Member, Outstanding Madrigal Member, and Outstanding Select Member Awards**

One student from each ensemble will be recognized as the Outstanding Member of that ensemble. Outstanding musicianship, leadership, participation, and character are the criteria for this award. While the director will select the Outstanding Member, members of each choir will be afforded an opportunity to make suggestions as to who they feel should be recognized. Nominations of students for whom the director should give special consideration will be taken by private ballot during the third or fourth quarter.

### **Outstanding First Year, Outstanding Second Year, Outstanding Third Year, and Outstanding Fourth Year Awards**

Students from all choirs will be considered for these awards. Students who demonstrate an exceptional level of musical skill, maintain high choral academic standards, demonstrate strong commitment to choral learning and putting those skills into practice daily, demonstrate a willingness to support others in the program, offering organizational help (filing music, organizing concert attire, collecting and organizing forms, repeatedly asking "What can I do?", never asking "what do I get for this?", etc.) **without being asked**, and those who conduct themselves with respect in regard to themselves and to others will be selected.

**Outstanding Senior Award**

For a graduating senior who demonstrates a critical value to the program in commitment and participation, including some, but not limited to: serving as student conductor, participating in OMEA Solo and Ensemble Contest in several events over several years, participating in extra-curricular choral and vocal activities, offering organizational help, actively participating in rehearsals (maintaining eye contact with director, helping others stay on task, etc.), acting as a dance captain, and consistent concert attendance.

**Outstanding Twofer Award**

For a student enrolled in two curricular choral ensembles who exemplifies much of the other descriptors of the other awards.

**Outstanding Choral Actor Award**

For a student in any grade level who demonstrates excellent presence, poise, and in-character ability while on stage. Our job goes beyond singing notes, rhythms, and styles accurately. The Outstanding Choral Actor will be someone who exudes conscious performance at all times while on-, and off-, stage. Criteria for this award are facial expressions and body postures that clearly communicate forethought about what the piece is communicating (ie. Smile!, furrowed brow, head on a swivel, other body connection to the music on the whole).

**Choral Medallion Award**

The Choral Medallion Award is the Choral Program's top award, most often awarded to a fourth-year senior. The winner acts as the sole representative to the Sycamore High School Community for the Choral Program being recognized as such at the Senior Recognition Night in May. This student will not only possess many of the attributes for the other above awards, but it is likely that this student has taken on a high level of leadership and ownership of the Choral Program, actively advocating for it in the school and greater community. This student likely will have sought to further her- or himself through enrollment or participation in more than one curricular and/or extra-curricular ensemble, as well as having enrolled in additional courses in music at Sycamore High School or other venues.

**Vocal Booster Scholarship(s)**

The Sycamore Vocal Boosters are pleased to award two \$500 scholarships to graduating seniors who have auditioned and have been accepted to a music program (declared major or minor), or students who will somehow continue their musical pursuits (ensembles, private lessons, etc.) at an accredited

college or university. Qualified students participating in a Sycamore sponsored curricular or extracurricular choir during their senior year can apply online to a Google Form during spring break. The document will be scored with a Rubric. Scholarship winners will be announced at the Spring Concert during the Awards presentations. A Booster representative will provide specific criteria during the fourth quarter to choir members.

### **Music as a Standard of Intelligence**

The discipline of Music is now recognized in the area of brain research as one of the eight kinds of intelligence. Studies have affirmed that music enhances a student's success in logical reasoning and math skills. Those students gifted in music tend to remember patterns in sound, content and rhythm. Those who are exposed to music on a regular basis are better able to reduce stress and anxiety, while enhancing their creative thinking. Music is one of the 40 Developmental Assets proven to promote positive behavior in youth, enable them to more easily avoid at-risk behavior, and become resilient adults. In addition, music has long been recognized as the universal language that crosses all boundaries of age, culture, and nationality. The arts have a unique ability to communicate the ideas and emotions of the human spirit. Connecting us to our history, our traditions, and our heritage, the arts have a beauty and power unique in our culture. At the same time, a growing body of research indicates that education in the arts provides significant cognitive benefits and bolsters academic achievement, beginning at an early age and continuing through school. The Sycamore High School Choral Program is proud to offer this asset to our youth and this gift to our community.

### **Vocal Boosters**

Vocal Boosters give support to the Choral Program. They assist the director with approving a budget for the Choral Program, organizing parent volunteers for concerts and other Program activities and helping where requested. All parents are strongly urged to be an active and contributing volunteer for this organization. Your active participation is vital to the success of the Choral Program.

**All Vocal Booster Meetings occur on the last school-day Monday of most months (no meeting December, June, or July) begin at 6:00 pm in the Choir Room (Room 260) and we make an effort that they last no more than one hour.**

### **Advocacy**

All across the country, school districts are facing tight budgets and rigorous testing mandates. Now more than ever, our state and national legislators need to know how important the Performing Arts are to any school that values a complete and balanced Education. Below are some websites that can help you be an "advocate for the arts."

[www.flmusiced.org](http://www.flmusiced.org) (click on "Music Advocacy" or "Legislative Information")

[www.supportmusic.com](http://www.supportmusic.com)

www.musicfriends.org  
 www.menc.org  
 www.vh1.com/partners/save\_the\_music/home.html  
 www.music-for-all.org  
 www.artsusa.org/public\_awareness  
 www.amc-music.org

This is certainly not a complete list of Music Education advocacy websites, but these are sites that can help you be a better advocate for keeping the Arts in our public schools.

**\*\* ALL CURRICULAR FEES ARE DUE BY WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2015 \*\***

**\*\* ALL EXTRA-CURRICULAR FEES ARE DUE BY WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2015 \*\***

ALL CURRICULAR CHORAL GROUP MEMBERS \$50.00  
 ALL EXTRA-CURRICULAR CHORAL GROUP MEMBERS \$35.00

**Fees include choral group shirts, accompanists, choral classroom supplies, and performance attire cleaning/alteration/replacement.**

*If a student is in both curricular and extra-curricular groups, a payment is required for BOTH ensembles. There are specific costs specifically related to your group.*

[Pay Curricular and Extra Curricular Choir Fees](#)

[Choral Program Calendar Online](#)

**Choral Program Calendar**

August				
12th	Wednesday	Schedule Pick Up for Classes and New Choral Student Fittings	10:00 AM - 12:00 PM	Choir Room
24th	Monday	Vocal Boosters Meeting	6:00 PM	Choir Room
27th	Thursday	Madrigal Auditions	2:30 - 4:30 pm	Choir Room
September				
1st	Tuesday	Madrigal @ Curriculum Preview	5:30 PM - 8:00 PM	Choir Room
4th	Friday	PROGRAM BOOK ADS DUE by 3:00p by upload to www.aveschoir.org		

8th	Tuesday	All-Choral-Parents Meeting 2015-2016	7:00 PM	Choir Room
18th	Friday	Character Shoe \$\$ Due (Select and Bella)		
21st	Monday	Variety Show Auditions	3:00 PM - 6:00 PM	Auditorium
28th	Monday	Vocal Boosters Meeting	6:00 PM	Choir Room
29th	Tuesday	All-Choral Program Rehearsal for Homecoming Football Game	2:30 – 3:30 pm	HS Soccer Stadium
October				
2nd	Friday	All-Choral Program Performance @ Homecoming Football Game	6:00p - post-halftime	JH Stadium (games now start @ 7p!)
5th	Monday	Variety Show Dress Rehearsal Act I	2:30 – 4:30 pm	Auditorium
6th	Tuesday	Variety Show Dress Rehearsal Act II	2:30 – 4:30 pm	Auditorium
7th	Wednesday	Variety Show Dress Rehearsal for All Choirs	2:30 – 3:30 pm	Auditorium
9th	Friday	Variety Show Call time for students: 5:45p	7:00 PM	Auditorium
16th	Friday	Madrigal: SSB/Alma @ Senior Night Football	6:45pm call	JH Stadium
19th	Monday	Honor Choir Rehearsal @ Milford HS	6:00 PM – 9:00 PM	Milford High School, 1 Eagles Way, Milford, OH 45150
22nd	Thursday	Honor Choir Rehearsal @ Milford HS	6:00 PM – 9:00 PM	Milford High School, 1 Eagles Way, Milford, OH 45150
24th	Saturday	Honor Choir Rehearsal @ Milford HS	1:00 PM – 5:00 PM	Milford High School, 1 Eagles Way, Milford, OH 45150

25th	Sunday	Honor Choir Concert: 2:30pm call / 4:00 pm concert	2:30 PM Call	Milford High School, 1 Eagles Way, Milford, OH 45150
26th	Monday	Vocal Boosters Meeting	6:00 PM	Choir Room
November				
20th	Friday	Select Men Only: Tuxedo Shoe \$\$\$ Due	Online Payment	
19th	Thursday	Madrigal: NHS Inductions	6:15 PM - 7:30pm	Choir Room / Auditorium
23rd	Monday	Vocal Booster Meeting	6:00 PM	Choir Room
30th	Monday	Winter Concert Setup: last names A – H	2:30 – 3:30 pm	Auditorium
December				
6th	Sunday	Select Only: Feast of Carols @ CCM Call time @ HS 2:15pm	5p Performance	University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music
7th	Monday	Winter Concert Dress Rehearsal	2:30 – 5:30 pm	Auditorium
8th	Tuesday	Winter Concert: Call time 5:00p	7:00 PM concert start	Auditorium
9th	Wednesday	Winter Concert Strike: last names A – H	2:30 – 3:30 pm	Auditorium
10th	Thursday	Select @ Montgomery Woman's Club (12:45p)	Eat lunch @ 11:00a	Kenwood Country Club
11th	Friday	OMEA Solo and Ensemble Forms and \$\$\$ DUE by 3:00p	3:00 PM	Choir Room
16th - 18th	Weds. - Fri.	Select Ensemble Community Perfs. (Exam Week Schedule)	11:10a - 4p	Various Locations
January, 2015				

12th	Tuesday	Madrigal: 9th and 10th Grade Parent Meetings	6:00p call / done @ 6:45	Auditorium
19th	Tuesday	Madrigal: Academic Fair	6:00p call / done @ 8:00 PM	Commons / Choir Room
21st	Thursday	8th Grade Day	All Day	
23rd	Saturday	D14 OMEA Solo and Ensemble Contest Do Not Schedule SAT this day!	8a - 4p	Elder High School, 3900 Vincent Ave., Cinci, 45205
25th	Monday	Vocal Booster Meeting	6:00 PM	Choir Room
28th	Thursday	Cabaret Auditions (NOISES OFF students audition first)	2:30 - 4:30 PM	Choir Room
February				
4th	Thursday	ACM & Select Men to JH Boy Choir	6:45 am call	Meet @ JH
19th	Friday	Cabaret Set Up: All Performers Called	2:30 pm - 4:30 pm	Commons
20th	Saturday	Cabaret Dress Rehearsal	3:00 PM - 6:00 PM	Commons
20th	Saturday	Cabaret	7:00 PM - 10:00 PM	Commons
TBD	TBD	Madrigal Visits the JH	ALL DAY	Meet @ JH
22nd	Monday	Vocal Boosters Meeting	6:00 PM	Choir Room
24th	Wednesday	Fine Arts Concert Setup: Last Names I – R	2:30 – 3:30 pm	Little Theatre
March				
2nd	Wednesday	Fine Arts Concert Dress Rehearsal	2:30 – 5:30 pm	Little Theatre
3rd	Thursday	Fine Arts Concert: 5:00p call	7:00 PM	Little Theatre



4th or 5th	Fri. or Sat.	Select, BV and ACL/ACM: D14 Large Group Competition. Do NOT schedule SAT test for Saturday.	2:30p - 10:00 pm	Taylor High School, 56 Cooper Avenue, Cleves, OH
7th	Monday	Concert Strike: Last Names I – R	2:30 – 3:30 pm	Little Theatre
14th - 17th	Mon. - Thurs.	Conducting Workshops For All Choirs During Class This Week		
<b>Spring</b>	<b>Break</b>	<b>Vocal Booster Scholarship Info Available On <a href="http://www.aveschoir.org">www.aveschoir.org</a></b>		
28th	Monday	Vocal Boosters Meeting	6:00 PM	Choir Room
29th	Tuesday	Madrigal Cancelled in deference to the Spring Musical		
29th	Tuesday	Select: Student Conductor Tempo Auditions and Interviews	During Class	Choir Room
31st	Thursday	Select: Student Conductor In-Class Auditions	During Class	Choir Room
April				
1st	Friday	Seniors: Senior, elementary, and baby pics due!	11:59 PM	<a href="http://www.aveschoir.org">www.aveschoir.org</a>
5th	Tuesday	Madrigal Rehearses: 2:30p - 4:00p in deference to the Spring Musical	2:30 PM - 4:00 PM	Choir Room
8th	Friday	Bella Performance Attire Return	During Class	Choir Room
19th	Tuesday	Select Community Performance @ Peterloon (12:15p)	Eat Lunch @ 11:00a	Peterloon
22nd	Friday	Select Performance Attire Return	During Class	Choir Room

25th	Monday	Vocal Boosters Meeting	6:00 PM	Choir Room
26th	Tuesday	Madrigal: OMEA D14 Meeting	5:30p - 6:30p	Choir Room / Room 257
May				
3rd	Tuesday	Madrigal Performance Attire Return	4:00 PM - 6:00 PM	Choir Room
5th	Thursday	Spring Concert Setup: S – Z	2:30 – 3:30 pm	Auditorium
6th	Friday	Curricular Groups Auditions for next school year	2:30:00 PM - 6:00 PM	Room 257
10th	Friday	Madrigal: Underclass Awards	7:30 am call	Choir Room / Auditorium
11th	Wednesday	Spring Concert Dress Rehearsal	2:30 – 5:30 pm	Auditorium
12th	Thursday	Spring Concert & Awards Night: 5:00p Call	7:00 PM	Auditorium
13th	Friday	Concert Strike: Last Names S – Z	2:30 – 3:30 pm	Auditorium
16th	Monday	Vocal Boosters Meeting	6:00 PM	Choir Room
20th	Friday	Madrigal (including graduating seniors! :-)) Performs @ May Festival	Music Hall, Downtown	Cincinnati
23rd	Monday	Select Ensemble and All Choral Program Seniors Sing @ Graduation	5:00 pm call	Choir Room / Xavier University
		Alma Mater and Song of Farewell		(Cintas Center)
26th	Thursday	Choral Program Juniors (next year's seniors!) Lunch and Planning Session	11:10 AM (after exam)	Choir Room