**Park Crest Middle School**

**Puma Choirs Handbook**

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**OBJECTIVES**

-**To develop** technical and vocal skills necessary to sing, both as a member of an ensemble and as a soloist, and to develop the skills necessary to read and write in musical language.

-**To promote** the success of the entire Puma Choir Program as well as the individual student. Music is fulfilling! However, there is no satisfaction to be found in mediocrity. Each student must be willing to sacrifice individual desires for the good of the choir.

-**To increase** the amount of achievement and satisfaction each student receives from being in choir. **What you get out of choir depends on how much you put into it.** Each student is expected to exude enthusiasm and a noteworthy work ethic, as well as striving to reach a high standard of musicianship and leadership.

-**To build** leadership and character. The Puma Choir Program is equated with outstanding character and citizenship. We work to ensure proper conduct, consideration, and courtesy as a vital part of the participation of students, both in the choir room and in all public situations.

-**To promote and encourage** each and every student to work together toward specific goals and objectives. Students will be trained in both leadership skills and skills necessary to follow a leader.

**PHILOSOPHY**

The Puma Choral Program at Park Crest Middle School, with the support of our principal, Mr. Zach Kleypas, operates under the following philosophy:

*The Park Crest Middle School Choral Program is designed to prepare each student for high school level performance as functioning musicians. This includes training in aural, oral, written, visual, and kinesthetic aspects of music which will produce holistic, well-rounded musicians. We encourage our students to continue pursuing their musical training and education through the outstanding programs offered in the Pflugerville ISD, which will provide them with a quality education with a commitment to excellence by facilitating learning in a safe and nurturing learning environment.*

On behalf of the Park Crest Choral Program, I would like to thank you for your support and encouragement in the development of your young musician.

***Tyler Groft***

**PCMS Choral Director**

**PERFORMING ENSEMBLES**

**Performance is REQUIRED in order to be a member of these groups.** Many of their performances are **NOT** during the school day. During the year, these students will be expected to participate in the following types ofperformances: Veteran’s Day Concert, formal evening concerts, field trip concerts, District/Region Auditions, UIL competitions, and possibly other music festivals. Uniforms will be worn at all choir events. See “Uniform” section for details.

**The Park Crest Pumas Beginner Choir** is a performing group comprised of students new to choir.

**The Park Crest Pumas Men’s Choir** is a performing group that is open to 6th, 7th, and 8th grade gentlemen who may be new to choir or returning to choir from the previous year.

**The Park Crest Non-Varsity Choir** is a performing group that is open to 7th and 8th grade ladies who may be new to choir or returning to choir from the previous year.

**The Park Crest Varsity Choir** is a performing group that is open to 7th and 8th grade ladies who may be new to choir or returning to choir from the previous year. This is an audition only ensemble.

**GRADING POLICIES**

**Skill tests:**

Skill tests are brief exercises that focus on specific musical proficiencies. These skills correlate with basic musical development as well as the required skills in the local and state music curriculum (TEKS). Students are required to pass a minimum number of skills tests each nine weeks(the number varies in each nine week grading period). Mastery of these skills is necessary to enable the student to achieve the level of choir literature performed at concerts, contests, and festivals.

**Class Participation:**

Students will receive daily grades based on the following criteria: having their music, folder/binder, pencil; demonstrating correct and consistent posture; exhibiting appropriate classroom behavior; and the demonstration of proper rehearsal technique as discussed in class. This grade is a fluid grade and will be reassessed as each weekly grading period progresses. **Members of ensembles performing in UIL and Region Honors choir auditions are expected to attend 2 out of 4 available weekly rehearsals outside of school hours.**

**Repertoire testing:**

Prior to a concert or other performance, students will be tested on their knowledge and ability to sing the required repertoire for that performance. Even if a student will not be at a concert or performance (either with an excused or unexcused absence) that student is responsible for learning the repertoire with the rest of the choir and will be tested accordingly.

**Concerts and Contests:**

A choir is a *performing*musical organization. It is through performance and preparation for performance that a great deal of learning occurs. With this concept in mind, several concerts and contests are scheduled throughout the year. **Concerts and scheduled extra** **rehearsals are considered co-curricular events that take place outside of the school day. Attendance at every rehearsal and** **concert is required and counts as a major grade.** The only recognized excused absences for missing a performance are a death in the immediate family or severe personal illness with a doctor’s note upon returning to school. An unexcused absence constitutes a zero. **For students with an excused absence, an opportunity will be afforded to replace the missed assessment grade with a make-up assignment. This only applies to excused absences, not unexcused absences.** In any event, the director should be notified immediately. Students who miss a concert due to an excused absence must have their parents/guardian call the choir office or e-mail the Choir Director and must bring a written note from a doctor to the director the day they return to school after the concert. Failure to do so will result in a grade of “0” for the performance section of the concert grade. **Forgetting about the concert, not having a ride, not having a uniform, etc. will not be considered excused concert absences and** **will result in a grade of “0” for the performance portion of the grade.**

**Late Work / Make-Up Work:**

Students should make every effort to be prompt in turning in assignments. All late assignments must be turned in within a calendar week of the originally assigned due date. If an absence results in a missed test, the student is responsible for making up the grade within **three days**, in accordance with the stated policy of Park Crest Middle School guidelines.

**ELIGIBILITY**

Students participating in Solo/Ensemble Competition, All-Region Choir Auditions, UIL Concert and Sight-Reading Contest and any other concerts or performances must follow all of the eligibility requirements under the Texas Education Agency, University Interscholastic League and PISD eligibility rules. For the most updated eligibility requirements, please consult the UIL website which can be found at [www.uil.utexas.edu](http://www.uil.utexas.edu). In addition to passing classes with a 70% or higher, the student:

\*Must not have been sent to ISS for any reason during the six-week period the event occurs in.

\* Must not be sent to O.C. during the semester in which the event occurs.

\* Cannot receive 3 detentions **from the choir director** during the semester in which the event occurs.

\* Cannot receive **3 office referrals from any teacher or administrator** during the semester in which the event occurs.

\*Cannot receive a **referral from a choir director** during the six week period the event occurs in.

\*As per UIL Eligibility Requirements, if a student receives an “I” in any subject, the student has 7 school days to make up for any incomplete work.

**PLEASE NOTE: The choir director reserves the right to determine who is and is not eligible for any choir trip. Eligibility may include, but is not limited to behavior and academic standing. In addition, students who do not follow PISD School Codes may be determined ineligible for any choir trip.**

**CHOIR ROOM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

**-No chewing gum at any time.**

**-No running, “rough-housing”, or inappropriate physical contact with other students at any time.**

**-No grooming in class.**

**-With the exception of bottled water, there will be no food or drink of any kind at any time.**

**-No playing with classroom instruments or equipment, pianos, binders, or music that has not been assigned to that student.**

**-Professional and mature behavior is always expected: any behaviors that deviate from these standards will not be tolerated.**

**Before and after school:**

Choir students, with a pass from the director, are welcome in the choir room before or after school to practice their music or receive small group instruction.

**DISCIPLINE / CONSEQUENCES**

**Personal Discipline:**

One of the most important elements in any worthwhile endeavor is discipline. A successful choir student must possess a certain degree of self-discipline. This element is essential to a fine choir program and is necessary for every student to display. Examples of personal discipline include**:** **Personal practice, high behavior standards, positive attitude, respect towards others, and a sense of loyalty to the ensemble.** Choir members are expected to maintain high standards of behavior while representing the choir and Park Crest Middle School in public whether in a performance, on buses, in and out of uniform, in the choir room, or anywhere on the PCMS campus. Improper conduct by choir students will not be tolerated.

**Behavior Consequences:**

#1. **Student verbal warning**

#2. **Teacher Consequence**

#3. **Parental contact**

#4. **Parent, teacher, and student conference**

#5. **Office referral**

**NOTE: Severe offenses will automatically result in an office referral.**

**DRESS CODE / UNIFORMS**

**Dress code:**

It is understood that distracting hairstyles, makeup, and jewelry might be inappropriate for a choral ensemble or individual performance setting. The choir will always follow the school dress code policy. Uniform shirts will always be worn tucked in. Personal grooming and attire reflect upon the Ensemble.

**UNIFORM ORDER FORMS MUST BE TURNED IN BY 9/6/19. At this point, I will be placing the order with the shirt vendor. If this deadline is missed, it is the responsibility of the student/parent to contact the vendor and have them make an individual shirt. Please note that buying in bulk is cheaper per item than ordering an individual shirt. Due to this, the cost of a single shirt from the vendor may cost more than the price if purchased through PCMS. Payment in this situation will be remitted directly to the vendor, not to the PCMS Choir program. Please contact the choir director for the shirt vendor’s information.**

**Uniforms:**

#1. Informal Uniform for All Women’s Choirs: (6th – 8th Grades)

Choir shirt (purchased by student)

Black dress pants (not jeans)

Black dress shoes

#2. Uniform for Men’s Choir

Choir shirt (purchased by student)

Black dress pants/slacks (not jeans) with black dress belt

Black dress shoes

#3. FormalUniformfor Non-Varsity and Varsity Women’s Choirs: (7th and 8th)

Black dresses (issued by the choral department), black dress shoes

**CHOIR TRIPS / ELIGIBILITY**

**Choir Trips:**

During the year, choir students may have the opportunity to participate in a variety of trips. These trips are designed to be a rewardfor students that participate, demonstrate exemplary behavior, and earn passing grades in all their academic and co-curricular classes. Students and parents should understand that grades below 70 in any academic or co-curricular class would prevent a choir member from participating in these activities. Report card conduct grades below “satisfactory” could also jeopardize participation. The Texas Education Agency “no pass, no play” rule (which can be found at http://www.tea.state.tx.us/field/faqxc.html) will be followed as well as other appropriate local policy. At the discretion of the director, students earning “Needs Improvement” or “Unsatisfactory” grades in choir will be ineligible for choir trips.

**FINANCIAL**

**Payment information:**

There will be times during the school year when payment will need to be sent in. To help with bookkeeping, the following guidelines should be followed each time money is sent to school for choir purposes:

\*Please make all checks payable to **PCMS CHOIR**

\*We are unable to process temporary checks

\*Please include the choir student’s name on each check in the “memo” area

\*Please send all money (cash or checks) to school in a sealed envelope marked with the choir student’s name, class period, and PCMS CHOIR written on the front.

\*Remind your student to **NEVER to** **leave money in a locker or their binders. Bring the money to the choir room BEFORE school** **begins.**

**Statement of Financial Policy:**

No student will be denied participation in the PCMS Choir due to financial hardship. Please speak to the choir director so that arrangements can be made for those in need of consideration.

**CONTACT / COMMUNICATION**

**Communication:**

Communication between parents, students, and the choir director is important to the success of the program and to help each student reach his/her potential. We encourage parents to be actively involved in the PCMS Choir program.

**Website:**

The Puma Choir Website can be found at <http://parkcrestchoirs.weebly.com/> and will have updated announcements as needed, forms for administrative choir business, the choir calendar, the handbook, the class syllabus, pictures, and other information regarding the PCMS choirs. Please visit the web site regularly to answer questions you may have throughout the year.

**E-Mail:**

It is important that all parents provide e-mail addresses to be used specifically and *only* for PCMS Choir purposes. As the Choir Director, I may use e-mail to communicate announcements, reminders, and special information to parents. **Parents and students should update the choir directories when e-mail** **addresses change.** You can reach me at tyler.groft@pfisd.net.

**CHOIR SHIRT ORDER FORM**

**(Informal Uniform)**

**Student name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Parent name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Class Period: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Polo style shirts are made out of a 50/50 blend and will not shrink a great deal. They are embroidered with the Puma Choir’s Logo and are $18.00 each (add $1.00 per shirt for XXL sizes). You may purchase additional shirts if you would like (for family). Please circle the size and indicate how many you would like of each size.

Youth Medium (10-12) \_\_\_\_\_Youth Large (14-16) \_\_\_\_\_ Adult Small \_\_\_\_\_(very small)

Adult Medium\_\_\_\_\_ Adult Large \_\_\_\_\_ Adult XL \_\_\_\_\_ Adult XXL \_\_\_\_\_\_(add $1.00)

Total: $\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Make Checks out to PCMS Choir)

**PLEASE NOTE: These black polo choir shirts will be used by all choir students. If you already have the black polo shirt from last year you do not need to purchase another shirt this year.**