River Bluff High School
Choral Department Handbook
2014-2015

Miki Keisler
Choral Director

http://riverbluffchoir.weebly.com/
Dear Parents/Guardians and Students,

Welcome back from what I hope was a fun and relaxing summer filled with memories and family time. I know you are as ready as I am to see what is in store for the choral department’s second year. Each year, we will start with goals that will last from August to May to measure our success as ensembles, student musicians, professionals, “team mates,” friends, and family. We will always continue to strive for these goals in rehearsals, meetings, performances, workshops, competitions, etc… while also thinking ahead to the future and where we want to be as a program the next year. So, yes, as we go over goals that we have to look forward to learning this year, we will also be talking about our next steps in year three. As adults know, the work is never done and we always have to be life-long learners with ambition and a forward thinking, positive attitude.

As our school and program’s first year, we had a great deal of accomplishments that we want to continue to strengthen. One of the first and most anxiously anticipated endeavors was a choral program’s ability to function and prepare concerts on a flex mod schedule with no previous familiarity from the director or singers. We prepared four school based concerts last season, and we look forward to four again this season. Our singers made great and notable improvements from our October performance to our final performance in May. As a teacher/director, the improvements that ensembles made during and after each performance throughout the year pleased my teacher heart. That is what education is about. Progress and learning are key. Extrinsically, our competitive ensembles performed at Superior and Excellent (competition ratings) levels at state and national competitions with a first place accomplishment at nationals. Our students represented themselves most notably at our state choral competition by demonstrating respectable and budding musicianship in performance and great professionalism hosting choirs during the festival. Finally, I was most proud of the relationships that were built among students that nurtured our choral family.

As we take the lessons learned from the past and move forward into shaping our future, we must build upon this foundation of positives that we set, change what needs to be changed, and use wisdom and patience in our decisions. As we begin in each ensemble this year, we must build our foundational knowledge of musical literacy, vocal technique, family, and mission. We will look at the big picture of developing good, smart musicians and life-long learners that will graduate after four years from our choral program with skills and knowledge for wherever their musical journey may lead, whether personal or professional. To do this, we need students AND parents on board. Parents, WE NEED YOU. We need your help as we solidify our booster club. We need your help with fundraising. We need your help at meetings. We need your help chaperoning. We need your help with operational tasks like T-Shirts, snacks, workshops, uniforms, recruitment, programs, recording, patrons, communication, phone trees, community support, advocacy for what our kids are doing, and so much MORE. We need your involvement for our kids to build our program. It is, without a doubt, a representative factor of quality choral programs when you look at the booster club and parent organization. We know we have the best kids who come from the best parents.

I look forward to our second year together as River Bluff Choir Gators! I can't wait to get started and see what we will accomplish next! Thank you for the opportunity to get to know you and teach your child. I'm looking forward to a great year!

Sincerely,

Miki Keisler
Choral Director

Dr. Luke Clamp
Principal
Choral Department Motto
“The artist is nothing without the gift, but the gift is nothing without work.”
Emile Zola

The River Bluff High School Choral Department

DIRECTOR: Miki Keisler

As a musician and performer, I grew up in Lexington, South Carolina with my parents and large extended family. I am an alumnus of a very large choral program at Lexington High School as well as a small program at Winthrop University. At Winthrop, I received my Bachelors in Music Education with a specialization in Choral Music. I received nine (9) years of expert vocal instruction, placed in the top 10 in South Carolina for Soprano Is each year of eligibility, was a state winner various times at the National Association of Teachers of Singing Competition, was featured in a number of guest soloist positions around the state and in Italy, and continually sing professionally throughout the year. Professionally, I am a member of the SCMEA, ACDA, and NATS organizations. I held the position of State Choral Festival Chairmen for High Schools in South Carolina from 2007-2014 and have given educational presentations for Lexington County School District One and at the South Carolina Music Educators' state convention. My choirs and I have had the honor to work with known composers such as Joseph Martin, Pepper Choplin, and Mark Hayes.

Ensembles:
Chorus
Chorale (made up of the Men's Chorale and Women's Chorale)
Chamber Choir
Southern Charm (Show Choir)

Choral Courses from Lexington District One's Curriculum Guide
First, you will find how the course is listed in the course catalog. Second, you will find the River Bluff course description that individualizes the ensemble to meet our school’s needs. Choral ensembles may take alternate names than what is listed in the district catalog for scheduling purposes.

Chorus Grades 9-12 1 Unit Course Number: 354102CW
This course emphasizes advanced techniques of singing through ear training, sight-singing and theory. Dependability and commitment to the group are expected since this is a performing group. Students must participation in seasonal concerts and various performances and possibly after-school rehearsals.

River Bluff Chorus
This is a non-auditioned choir that any student is able to register for in Guidance. Students are encouraged to have some music background, but it is not required. This course works on vocal technique and musical elements as they pertain to individual voices, as well as choral ensembles. Performance expectations are set appropriately based on ensemble potential. Students are required to perform during concert times for all concerts with the appropriate uniform. Musical repertoire is varied. Students will be assessed on performance-based rubrics, projects, assignments, tests, and daily grades (as an individual, small group member, and/or large ensemble member).

Chorale Honors Grades 9-12 1 Unit Course Number: 459918HW
Prerequisite: Audition
This performance-oriented course is designed for the most advanced choral students. Students experience a higher level of training in breathing techniques, posture, diction, intonation, balance and overall musical aspects of the voice. They must participate in four concerts and the State Choral Festival.

River Bluff Chorale
Chorale is an auditioned HONORS level ensemble where students will receive and be expected to perform daily at the honors level. Chorale will meet as two separate choral ensembles 3 days a week. Sopranos and Altos will be scheduled in the Women's Chorale and Tenors and Basses/Baritones in the Men's Chorale. Both the Men's and Women's Chorales will meet once a week in a large group setting to work on combined music. Students are required to perform at all scheduled concerts as required
with the appropriate uniform. In this ensemble, students' abilities are developing at an appropriate rate progressively over the course of the year. Students will be assessed on performance-based rubrics, projects, assignments, tests, and daily grades (as an individual, small group member, and/or large ensemble member). A select few concert preparation rehearsals may be required when preparing for a concert.

Chamber Choir Honors  
Grades 10-12  
1 Unit  
Course Number: 459903HW

Prerequisite: Audition  
This performance-oriented course is designed for the most advanced choral students. Four concerts and participation in the State Choral Festival are required. After-school rehearsals are required. Students may also be required to be enrolled in Chorus, Concert Choir, Men's Ensemble or Women's Ensemble to participate.

River Bluff Chamber Choir  
Chamber Choir is an auditioned HONORS level ensemble made up of a balanced mixed ensemble in the following voice parts: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass. Subsequent parts added as needed. Chamber Choir is a competitive ensemble which requires extra performances and rehearsals that are mandatory as well as other outside requirements that support competition. Students are held to the most advanced standards. Literature is for Chamber Choir is Grade 5 and 6 on a choral ranking system. It is multi-lingual and sophisticated. Performances are mandatory. Students will be assessed on performance-based rubrics, projects, assignments, tests, and daily grades (as an individual, small group member, and/or large ensemble member). Competitions are mandatory. GRADUATION - Each student in Chamber Choir is required to perform for Graduation. Please, take the Graduation date into consideration when planning family Vacations and Plans. An unexcused absence at the Graduation performance will result in a grade of zero (0). Please, mark this date on your Family Calendar. When graduation dates are tentative, possible dates are given. Keep all possible dates free until the official date is announced and released. See the Choral Department Calendar for this date. GRADUATION is June 6, 2015 at 4:00 PM. Call time is 2:45 PM in place.

Requirement for 2015-2016: Music have previous experience (at least 1 year) in an honors level choir with a grade of B or better demonstrating advanced skills in sight-singing, vocal technique, musicality, and professionalism.

Show Choir Honors  
Grades 10-12  
1 Unit  
Course Number: 459901HW

Prerequisite: Audition  
This performance-oriented course is designed for the most advanced choral students. Four required concerts plus several additional performing opportunities are given. Students must attend after-school practices. They may also be required to enroll in Chorus, Concert Choir, Men’s Ensemble or Women’s Ensemble.

River Bluff Southern Charm  
Southern Charm (Show Choir) is an auditioned HONORS level ensemble made up of a precise balance of males and females who demonstrate outstanding vocal and dance skills based on the director's expertise. Southern Charm is a competitive ensemble which requires extra performances and rehearsals that are mandatory as well as other outside requirements that support competition. The audition consists of a vocal audition and a choreographed audition. Students will be required to rehearse additional common mods during the week, perform on all concerts and community performances, and at competitions (mandatory). In addition to performance requirements, students will be required to fundraise. Students will be assessed on performance-based rubrics, projects, assignments, tests, and daily grades (as an individual, small group member, and/or large ensemble member).

Requirement for 2015-2016: Music have previous experience (at least 1 year) in an honors level choir with a grade of B or better demonstrating advanced skills in sight-singing, vocal technique, musicality, and professionalism. Students must demonstrate independent musical knowledge, literacy, and performance. Musical study will be mostly independent learning and assessment.

Honors Courses  
Students enrolled in HONORS level classes should expect rigorous course work with greater demands on their class and non-class time in order to master objectives. Consistent displays of higher order thinking skills and of mastery of musical elements should be evident on a daily basis in order to receive HONORS level credit towards a student’s GPA, class rank, and graduation. Students will be expected to do HONORS level work like other challenging HONORS level classes in the curriculum, i.e. honors English, Math, Science, and Social Studies courses.
**Honors verses Non-Honors Courses**

Students who pass chorus classes receive one Carnegie unit towards a high school diploma, which is helpful to get better jobs, to attend college, and to lead a successful life. High School students are required to have seven (7) elective units in addition to the core academic courses for graduation. Academically competitive students often struggle with decisions on which elective courses to take because most electives are offered at the College Preparatory level. Chorale, Show Choir, and Chamber Choir, however, are three of the few elective credits offered at the HONORS level. But, HONORS level work is expected of students who wish to earn HONORS level credit. When successful in an HONORS level ensemble class, student Grade Point Average and Class Rank are improved. Therefore, choir is very much an academic, co-curricular course with outside of class requirements (homework, performances, retreats) in a format that best compliments the course. Honors level chorus classes have greater expectations and requirements. Students are given a variety of opportunities to challenge and stretch their minds and musical abilities. Students must work every day. When a concert is completed, it does not mean that the education process ceases. Students learn from concerts and rehearsal tapes through reflective listening which helps to internalize the learning.

College Preparatory choral courses are not to be overlooked due to the type of credit they receive. Students will be equally challenged and stretched according to their musical abilities. Students enrolled at this level will also have outside-of-class responsibilities that complement their curriculum; however, these responsibilities are simpler in form. The pace is more gradual. Prior experience is not essential to this curriculum. Beginning techniques and styles are studied and explored.

**GRADING**

*See the Course Syllabus as provided by River Bluff for each choir your child is a member.*

*See the Lexington County School District One Syllabus for Grading for Learning*

*See the Grading for Learning Fine Arts Addendum*

**Assessments in the Choral Classroom**

All lessons and skill assessments for daily rehearsals and performances are aligned with the National and State Standards for Music Education. For some concerts and special occasions, the Fine Arts Department enjoys collaborating vocally (and possibly instrumentally) to fully expose students to all of the Music Education Standards. Choral assessments are supported by the National Association for Music Educators (NAfME), the SC Music Educators’ Association (SCMEA), and Lexington County School District One. All rubrics and criteria that are endorsed by these organizations are used in successful choral programs across South Carolina. Rubrics are used as a tool to measure students’ mastery of skills and objectives over time and should show a steady pattern of growth and improvement. From these concrete records of student achievement of objectives, summative assessment grades are computed. If students are responsible by keeping up with the calendar, making-up missed work, and performing well on a consistent basis, they will be successful. Once nine weeks grades are calculated from these concrete daily records, they will only be changed when work is turned in on time and make-up work is handled within five (5) school days of the absence. These changes will appear as the last change at the end of a nine week grading period. Due to district grade deadlines for teachers and staff, there will be a final make-up work submission deadline for any final work that has not been turned in. That final nine weeks make up deadline cannot be moved. Once grades are entered and exported, they cannot be changed without an administrator granting Mrs. Keisler permission. Please, make sure you and your student understand this policy.

**Formative Assessments**

Formative Assessments inform students of their progress towards a learning target or “I can” statement. Formative assessments measure a student’s ability to demonstrate what they can do according to the learning objectives. Formative assessments are made on a daily basis either through observation, demonstration, or knowledge based written assessments. Director feedback during rehearsal is the most valuable formative feedback students receive.

**Summative Assessments**

Summative Assessments tell us what students have learned when instruction and study is complete. It is a measurement of final accomplishment. Concerts and performances are an ultimate example of choral summative assessments.

**Daily Rehearsal Assessments**
Daily grades are given each day school is in session. Due to the fact that choral curricula are performance-based courses, students’ skills develop during individual practices (homework or ILT Practice Room usage) and class rehearsals over the course of the school year. Posture, breathing, diction, facial positioning, health, and kinesthetic exercises all affect vocal quality and productivity. Daily assessments are ensemble and individual. In order for rehearsals to produce accurate results in student performance, students must work with the director and follow directions in order for the singer to receive 100% in assessment from start to finish. Daily rehearsal assessments will be grouped for recording purposes in the gradebook. Students are expected to make-up any missed work due to absences within 5 school days of returning to school. It is the STUDENT’S RESPONSIBILITY to know and follow the make-up work policy. If daily work is not made up within the allotted time, no credit will be earned. This especially applies to rehearsals. Zeros can unexpectedly bring Interim and nine weeks grades down, especially using the Grading For Learning protocols. Please, be conscientious and always aware of your grades, absences, and make-up work. Good record keeping is a life skill.

Participation: Much of the success of a choir lies in students’ active participation in the ensemble’s daily rehearsals. Extra rehearsals not listed on the calendar are rarely called. Regularly scheduled class time should be adequate for students to begin mastery of objectives and repertoire, however after “homework time” may be needed for students to internalize and/or review the learning. Therefore, extra rehearsals and/or early call times are for logistical purposes for performance venues and are to satisfy student requests for performance preparation. Most of these additional rehearsals apply to the upper level ensembles.

Assignments
In addition to daily rehearsals and performance assessments, students will be assessed on their knowledge of music theory, history, and literacy skills. These assignments include, but are not limited to, worksheets, reflective performance essays, reviews, articles/informational texts, and research projects in compliance with the required Common Core State Standards. As in other courses required for graduation, students must complete assignments as directed. Assignments can be used as Make-Up work for approved assignments only. See Mrs. Keisler individually for this work. However, all work cannot be substituted with written assignments for make-up work.

Written Tests, Performance Rubrics
As in most high school courses, chorus students will be evaluated on a regular basis within each nine-week period. Tests will include formal assessments on units of musical study, nine weeks tests, repertoire memorization, note accuracy, ensemble skills, content knowledge, and others. Tests can be both written and/or performance-based. Students are usually given prior notice for formal scheduled tests, but they also may be assessed through random pop tests. Students need to review class work on a daily basis during their independent learning time or at home in order to be prepared at all times for these tests. If tests must be administered outside of regular class time, students must sign up for time that works best for them. These times can be scheduled during a common open mod for the student and Mrs. Keisler. Students may also be asked to record their singing into a handheld recording device for a grade during or outside of class time.

Mandatory Concerts are Performance Assessments
A choir functions very much like a band or a sports team. When just one member is missing, the entire ensemble or team is seriously impacted. The ensemble feels the absence of a member in sound production, balance, blend, musicality, and even in confidence and morale. It is essential to the group that all members rehearse AND perform together. Illness cannot be avoided at times and is a legitimate excuse for missing choral responsibilities with a doctor’s excuse; however, each member needs to do everything possible to stay healthy, i.e. eat properly, get adequate sleep and rest, use good hygiene, cover mouths when coughing, dress appropriately for the weather, don’t eat or drink after others, etc. (See excused and unexcused absences.) Every individual member is definitely NEEDED at EVERY PERFORMANCE and REHEARSAL.

With this premise in mind, please, understand that students often perform for community and school related events that are in addition to our regularly scheduled concerts. These events are very important to the success of our choral program and also demonstrate to the community what wonderful work we do. Performance from every member is required at all events. In the event of unfortunate circumstances, such as illness, students who miss a mandatory event or regularly scheduled concert will only be excused (i.e. allowed to make up the grade) if a doctor’s note is provided using the same criteria the school does during the school day. To excuse a non-mandatory event, a parent note with an acceptable excuse is required. If there is a schedule conflict, all parties involved are to be notified by the student with the conflict the day after receiving schedules or calendar dates. It is very important to note all school calendar activities for conflicts. It is the student’s responsibility to notify the Choral Director, club sponsors, band director, athletic coaches, etc. of the conflict so that a solution can be reached. All excused missed events must be made up by an alternative assignment within 5


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days after the event. Notifying the choral director and/or school advisor or coach without IMMEDIATE notice upon receiving schedules and calendar dates will result in consequences for the absence by either or both teams/ensembles. Be responsible with commitments. Conflicts cannot be helped but notice can be. If the lack of performance is due to an unexcused absence, grading will follow the Grading For Learning Syllabus for the course. See the syllabus for your specific course.

Performance Assessments
Since the majority of our curriculum is performance-based, students will be given performance-based assessments. All performances will be assessed. These will be in the form of concerts and other performances that might apply. Concerts will be used as summative assessments such as the course FINAL which is 20% of the overall average for the course. Other performance assessments may consist of individual, small group, or ensemble grades (which comply with the National Standards). Performance assessments can be cumulative. These assessments may be performance based, written, or a combination of both. IMPORTANT: Concerts are GRADED assessments. It’s what we DO and rehearse for!

Homework
Any work that is not completed during class is automatically to be considered homework for students to complete and turn in the next class period. This also includes rehearsal objectives. Formal homework assignments are not given on a daily basis but study outside of class is expected and needed in order for students to be successful (especially in honors level courses). The website is expected be used as a home study guide for homework. Singers should look over their musical scores daily to review and reflect. This grade will be reflected in their vocal assessments concerning pitch, rhythm, and musical literacy. However, remember that only accurate practice will ensure this. (See the home guidelines handout at the back of the Handbook for tips). If one practices music incorrectly, one will perform incorrectly and, therefore, practice will not improve or ensure a good grade. When formal and specific rehearsal assignments are given, it is very important for a student to be diligent in completing these assignments because it will be graded. If this work is not completed and turned in to the teacher, it will be recorded as a zero (0) in the gradebook. If homework is not turned in or is turned in blank, students will receive a zero (0) for the assignment. If the assignment is partially completed, the grade will not be full credit. Zeros can bring down a student’s grade unexpectedly and quickly. Please, keep accurate records of grades and be conscientious in monitoring them. Ultimately, when students do not do their part responsibly learning music, singers are not only harming their personal grades, but the performance of others as well. Every individual is essential to the success of the whole.

CHORAL CURRICULUM

National Standards for Music Education
All GHS choral lessons are formatted based on the following nine National Music Education Standards found on the Music Educators’ National Conference Website: https://www.menc.org/publication/books/standards.htm
1. Singing, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.
2. Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music
3. Improvising melodies, variations, and accompaniments
4. Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines
5. Reading and notating music
6. Listening to, analyzing, and describing music
7. Evaluating music and music performances
8. Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts
9. Understanding music in relation to history and culture.

South Carolina Music Education Standards for grades 9-12
All GHS choral lessons are aligned with the SC Visual and Performing Arts Standards found on the following website: http://ed.sc.gov/agency/offices/cso/standards/vpa/

District Choral Curriculum
As stated in the Lexington County School District One Curriculum Guide, the following courses are listed below with brief descriptions. It is the discretion of each school’s choral director to modify and specify how these expectations are reflected in the choral curriculum. All GHS choral lessons are aligned with the district choral curriculum posted on the district’s website at www.lexington1.net.
SAMPLE Rubric for Performance Assessment (Ensemble, Small Group, and Individual)
This is a sample. It can and will be modified for objectives. For example, if testing for only notes, rhythms, and mechanics, only the top half of the rubric will be used. This is the rubric used by SCMEA and the SC State High School Choral Festival.

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<tr>
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<th>Selection 1</th>
<th>Selection 2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tone Quality - 16 pts</strong>&lt;br&gt;Control of Vocal Lines, Clarity of Sound, Consistency, Projection, Blend of Individuals and Sections, Tone Production, Vocal Technique, etc…</td>
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<td><strong>Intonation – 20 pts</strong>&lt;br&gt;Breath Support, Control, Intervals, Chords/Unisons, etc…</td>
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<td><strong>Diction and Text – 10 pts</strong>&lt;br&gt;Vowel Purity, Clarity of Consonants, Enunciation, Communication of Text, etc…</td>
<td>_____/5</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Note and Rhythm Accuracy – 20 pts</strong>&lt;br&gt;Accuracy of Pitch and Rhythmic Values, Attacks/Releases, Appropriate/Steady Tempo, etc…</td>
<td>_____/10</td>
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<td><strong>Musicality – 20 pts</strong>&lt;br&gt;Phrasing, Breathing, Overall Balance, Expression, Nuance, Musical Effect, Style Appropriateness, Interpretation, Musical Communication, Dynamics, etc…</td>
<td>_____/10</td>
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<td><strong>Performance – 14 pts</strong>&lt;br&gt;Ensemble Professionalism, Appearance, Appropriateness of Repertoire Selections for Voicing and Festival, Lasting Impression, Overall Effect, etc…</td>
<td>_____/7</td>
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<td><strong>TOTALS:</strong></td>
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**MATERIALS**

**Students will need to Provide for Instruction DAILY**

- 2 Pencils – ONLY pencils
- Staff paper (Make this using a computer. Please do NOT purchase this.)
- Loose Leaf Notebook Paper (approximately 20 pages to begin with)
- 1/2 inch BLACK 3 ring binder per ensemble to be KEPT IN THE ROOM
- Music Assigned by the Director to be kept in the Chorus Room (Students must follow the Music Check Out Procedures. Students are financially responsible for his or her music when missing.)
- iPad (provided by the school) with the following Apps downloaded and other required throughout the year
  - Calendar (previously loaded) – Enter all chorus dates here with reminders and alerts set!
  - Reminders (previously loaded) – Use of “To Do” lists with dated reminder alerts
  - Voice Memos (free)
  - Videos (previously loaded)
  - Piano Free
  - Charms Student
Optional Apps:
- Do Re Mi (if free)
- Music Dictionary (if free)
- Singer’s Friend (if free)
- Ear Trainer Lite (free)
- Musicopoulos (if free)
- Metronome (free)
- Fundamentals (if free)
- Socratic Student (free)
- Decks (a Music Flash Card app by MusicNotes.com – if free)
- Free Flashcard app (your choice...be able to do music terminology)
- iBooks (previously loaded)
- Weather App (your choice)
- Scorio (set up a FREE account online and use as Staff Paper)
- Others as assigned in the year...

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT AND EXPECTATIONS

The Chorus Room is similar to other classrooms in certain respects, but very different in many other. It is a studio where musical study and practice take place on a daily basis. It is a place of work. Choir provides great social outlets during activities, fundraisers, and before and after concerts; however, during class and rehearsals including the Choral Commons (see Choral Commons), it is not a social gathering. Students have chosen choir in order to work hard and achieve feats many others never reach. It takes hard work and dedication to achieve our goals and aspirations, which in turn gives our audiences deep enjoyment and satisfaction that in turn pleases us and makes us proud.

The choral rehearsal is a collaborative exercise that takes a group of separate individuals and turns it into an ensemble with one like-minded purpose. The choir is nothing without everyone. Rehearsal builds social bonds, social skills, and the ability to work progressively with others to synthesize an amazing ending product. Each member of the choir brings his or her own strengths and weaknesses with them to the whole ensemble. The students learn through hard work and consistent practice how to take different skills and use them to their advantage in a positive way to create a stronger whole ensemble experience. Many students walk away from the experience standing taller, more centered, because they have been aesthetically fulfilled. Rehearsals are difficult and business-like in nature; however, it is through those lessons that skills are developed into something of which students can be proud. Without rehearsals, students are individuals on a stage instead of a well-honed musical machine comprised of like-minded friends working with one another to create a wholesome experience. Rehearsals are necessary activities where we continually strive to get as close to perfection in musical performance as possible.

CLASSROOM RULES

Choral classroom rules are simple and concise and are to be followed at all times. Most misbehaviors fall under one of these five categories. All District and School Rules apply as well. Protocols are to be followed at all times.

1. Be Prepared
2. Be Punctual
3. Be Learning
4. Be Neat
5. Be Respectful
6. Be Mindful Mrs. Keisler’s in charge.

(Rehearsal Rule of Thumb: You can always wait on your director but your director should NEVER wait on you.)

Classroom Consequences

Rules will be enforced consistently and fairly. The following consequences are appropriate measures that will be taken with each disciplinary incident. For severe offenses, steps in the following consequences may be skipped with immediate referral to the Administration. These steps are general guidelines for disciplinary procedures.

- Step 1: One Stern Warning
- Step 2: Small D Note
Classroom Policies
Policies and Procedures are useful tools for class time to be effective, and it is very important that students and parents know and understand them. If students violate the Classroom Policies, Consequence Step 2 will be implemented. Consider this handbook as the first warning.

1. **No Gum/Food:** No gum or food is allowed in the choir room at all. The only beverage allowed is water in a container with a screw top or pop-top. This is a **HUGE SAFETY ISSUE** in choral singing. Chewing gum also distorts the vocal tone of a student which will negatively affect students' accuracy in daily singing assessments according to the rubric.

2. **Student Piano Usage:** Ask Mrs. Keisler before you play. Creativity is AWESOME. We want to make sure timing is awesome too.

3. **Lost/damaged music:** Music is text. If you do not turn in music that was issued to you, you pay for it. Damaged music will have to be replaced, you will have to pay for it. Current cost, tax, shipping, etc... Make sure to follow inventory policies.

4. **Music Care and Maintenance:** Each student will be assigned school owned copies of music. Students are required to provide a clean 3-ring black binder for use in performances and care of music. Student folders are to be kept each day in the assigned spots. Folders and music may not be taken home unless Mrs. Keisler grants individual permission and the student follows the procedures for signing out and in their folder of music. (See Music Folder Sign Out/In Procedure)

5. **Last minute events:** At least two weeks notice will be given to students for last minute events that occur in the year. Students who work are still required to attend these events. **Work is NOT an excused absence.** Work is UNEXCUSED. All performances/rehearsals are part of students’ grades. Mrs. Keisler will provide a formal letter for employers upon request. If an event is requested by an outside party and less than two weeks is given to students of the event, the event is not mandatory, but encouraged, and is not graded. We will talk about these as they arise.

6. **Missed Concerts:** Students who do not perform on a concert must have an excused absence to make this assessment up. Talk to Mrs. Keisler **BEFORE you miss a concert in an extremely timely manner.** In order to have the opportunity to make-up this grade, per Lexington District One policy, a student must have a doctor’s excuse FOR the CONCERT that occurs after school hours. Grading will follow district protocol. See Grading For Learning Syllabus and Fine Arts Addendum. (CAUTION - Please see Conflicts in Scheduling) These make up concerts must be turned in before the final make-up work collection date. Grades cannot be late.

7. **When unable to Sing in Class due to Illness:** If a student is sick or for health reasons cannot vocalize for a limited number of rehearsals, a **doctor excuse** AND a **parent note** must be provided in addition to what is needed in the Attendance Office at school. Students will be given alternate assignments to complete in order to remain actively engaged in the rehearsal. This will enable students to better re-engage in rehearsals when health has returned and it enables them to stay on task in a non-vocal way while sick. These assignments must be turned in at the end of class to receive a daily grade. Talk to Mrs. Keisler before class about this.

8. **Student Opinion of Music Selections:** Students should never express strong dislike for a piece of music until after it has been performed at least once. Keep an open mind. Everyone is entitled to an opinion; however, it is inappropriate to discuss dislike or like of the music until the piece is performed due to the experience of the entire learning process. Sometimes singers feel dislike of a piece while learning it and then change their mind once parts fit together nicely. Be sure that like or dislike of a piece is actually for the piece and not the process of learning a new piece of music. It is also important to refrain from mimicking or singing songs incorrectly. Vocal strain can develop which could result in the student’s inability to physically perform the piece.

This policy also addresses student opinion in the classroom. Students may express opinions in a respectful, proper manner through the proper channels. Options for students to positively and respectfully express individual points of view are through officers during their regularly scheduled meetings with the director and/or speaking with the director in person. Both of these methods should occur before or after class or before or after school, not during class time. If a student feels
strongly about an issue concerning choir or rehearsals, it is best to talk to the director privately in person about these concerns. Addressing such issues during class time takes away from productivity of others and also could be interpreted as a form of disrespect. The director uses her professional expertise in choosing the musical selections and rehearsal techniques, and it is the director’s job to make the final decisions for the choir. Unfortunately, it is impossible to please every single person. Hopefully, there will be an even balance in choices so that students will find most things satisfactory.

9. Concert/Event Call Times: Each concert will have a call time. Be responsible and be there on time. Students should be fully dressed making no last-minute adjustments in appearance or attire by call time.

10. Rehearsal Conduct:
   - Do NOT TALK when the director or others are speaking.
   - Always have a pencil ready to mark your music.
   - Follow classroom management signals given by the director.
   - Adhere to all student expectations for codes of conduct of the Choral Program, the school and district.
   - When your section is not rehearsing audibly, you should always work ahead by figuring out the solfege syllables, lightly humming your part while other parts are rehearsing, working on assignments in your notebook, or practicing theory drills. YOU ALWAYS HAVE SOMETHING CONSTRUCTIVE TO DO. This is not a time for socializing (or nonverbal communication). Your part and your music skills can always be perfected.
   - Music is to stay in the Chorus Room unless it is signed out and approved by the director. Any music that has been signed out is expected to be returned the following day and must be signed in.
   - Absent work/make-up work must be completed according to the choral program policies, as well as school and district policies. Make-up work is due within 5 school days of the day it was missed.

12. Conflicts in Scheduling: If students have a conflict between a scheduled Choral event and another SCHOOL-RELATED event or activity, it is the student’s SOLE responsibility to inform all respective parties of this conflict as soon as the calendars are posted. The student and activity sponsors WILL, then, work out a compromise. If a student waits until the last minute where compromise is not possible, consequences will occur. All of these situations will be handled on an individual basis. Please, remember that each student will receive 1 (one) Carnegie Unit towards high school graduation and grades that effect students’ GPA when performing. Conflicts can ALWAYS be worked out AHEAD of time between the AUDLTS. If the student demonstrates the proper responsibility and is allowed to miss the concert, the student must STILL make-up the work. An alternative assignment will be given. Assignments can vary. The grade will temporarily be recorded as a 0 (zero) until the make-up work assignment is turned in and graded.

13. Extra Rehearsals: It is my strong belief and philosophy that adequate time is given during class to accomplish lessons, and therefore should be used wisely. Extended call times and extra rehearsals should only be called for logistical purposes that can not be rehearsed during class time such as when the Auditorium cannot be used until a certain time. These extended call times and extra rehearsals become necessary for the success of the performance and are not related to students using time wisely in class while learning their repertoire. Any rehearsal is mandatory for everyone in the ensemble.

14. Voice Part Assignments: It is the job of the choral director (as it is the athletic coach’s job) to arrange the singers in the ensemble in the best combination that is in the best interest of individual students AND the ensemble as a whole. In some cases, student voice parts may change to challenge students or to better blend and/or balance the ensemble. These decisions are up to the discretion of the director and are non negotiable. Students’ interests and vocal health are a priority in these decisions, but again these decisions are made in the best interests of individuals and the ensemble. If you receive private vocal instruction outside of class, you may discuss this with Mrs. Keisler.

15. Solos and Special Music: Students will be selected by the director for special music and solos from within the large ensemble. Students are selected based ability, delivery, preparedness, appropriateness, and seniority. Sometimes the song can make the difference. Some solos and small ensembles are director assignments.

16. Late Work: Late work is NOT encouraged. The ability to turn in assignments is not accepted in the “Real World.” However, in the event that work is turned in late, five (5) percentage points will be deducted each day that the assignment is turned in late. In all cases, talk to Mrs. Keisler. In application circumstances, the Extension Contract (see Grading For Learning, Fine Arts Addendum) may apply.
17. **Recording Submission Ground Rules:**
   1. Present yourself fully dressed with a smile!
   2. This is a school assignment. Be school appropriate in language, décor, and deportment.
   3. Remember: How you practice is how you will perform. Be professional and make it meaningful so that you LEARN.
   4. Always introduce yourself with your first and last name.
   5. Tell me what you will be singing for me, the assignment, and what you will be DEMONSTRATING in your performance. (I want to know that you understand the objective/learning target and WHY you are doing this assignment....educationally. Not: "Because I missed a day.")
   6. You may use accompaniment on a case-by-case basis. Only use rehearsal recordings.
   7. Put your best self forward and record with PRIDE.

**CLASSROOM PROCEDURES**

1. **Make-up Work:** When absent from class for excusable reasons, work must be made-up within 5 school. In order for a student to make-up work that is missed during the school day, he or she must adhere to the following steps:
   1. Check the class log when you return to school and collect information that you missed. OR Email the class secretary for a copy of the notes/log.
   2. Collect all materials, information, and/or notes that were missed during your absence.
   3. If rehearsal time was missed, check with Mrs. Keisler to determine the most appropriate way to make up missed rehearsal. (If recordings are desired, follow the Recording Submission Rules and Procedure.)
   4. Submit work on time to Mrs. Keisler and follow up.

2. **Recording Submission Procedures:**
   
   If audio is required:
   1. Use the Audio Memo App that is free.
   2. Record your assignment.
   3. Edit the title of the assignment to the following format “Last Name-Class-DateofMakeUpAssignment-TitleOfRecording” (For example: Smith-Chorale-9-14-14-Arrow and the Song)
   4. Use the send option in the Audio Memo App to email the recording to Mrs. Keisler at the following email: mkeisler@lexington1.net ALSO riverbluffchoir@outlook.com to make sure the recording is received.
   5. Provide information in the body of the email regarding what you are making up.
   6. Follow up with Mrs. Keisler to verify that your assignment was received.

   If video is required:
   1. Use the Video App that is already installed on your iPad.
   2. Record your assignment. (If for a concert, you should be fully dressed in your uniform and present yourself as you would have on the concert, professionally.)
   3. Edit the title of the assignment to the following format “Last Name-Class-DateofMakeUpAssignment-TitleOfRecording” (For example: Smith-Chorale-9-14-14-Arrow and the Song)
   5. Share the link to your video with Mrs. Keisler at mkeisler@lexington1.net
   6. Provide information in the body of the email link regarding what you are making up.
   7. Follow up with Mrs. Keisler to verify that your assignment was received.

**It is the student’s responsibility to make sure they make-up all missed work. Mrs. Keisler is not responsible for students’ make-up work or the status of completion.**

3. **Daily Rehearsal Procedures:** Each rehearsal day is not exactly the same; however, in order to take care of business in a short amount of time, a general outline can be followed.
   - **DO NOW:** Gather materials and go straight to assigned seats. Don’t forget your PENCILS! Do not leave your seat without permission. **Don’t be LATE!!** (If you aren’t in your seat warming up with the first beginning CHORD and your materials, you are LATE.)
   - Work on assignments that are posted.

Stand and start warming up WHEN the tone rings from the iPad or device/right on time. "Mum" is always first. Don't get marked tardy.

Warm-ups – Mrs. Keisler or Choral Leaders will warm-up students’ voices while taking care of “housekeeping” responsibilities. This “paperwork” is necessary, but is not an instructional activity. Therefore, multi-tasking is our best time management strategy. Students are expected to be respectful to student leaders and rehearse at high levels.

Announcements - Information for students will be delivered by Mrs. Keisler, Choral Leaders, or by posts on the projector screen, or dry-erase board. Pay close attention to written information, as well as verbal. Always ask others for new information when absent. It is the student's responsibility alone to stay informed. Announcements are also posted on the website (https://riverbluffchoir.weebly.com) weekly.

Rehearsal - Whether rehearsing as an entire group or in individual sections, students are required to be actively engaged in rehearsals throughout the class period. Students can rehearse mentally when not singing, as well as verbally. Most of singing is mental. There should not be a moment in a class period when students are not actively engaged. Students should NEVER be sitting and doing nothing or talking without educational purpose.

4. Folder Check Out:
   - Ask Mrs. Keisler for her permission to sign-out your music folder and take it home to practice. It’s school property and needed every day.
   - Bring it back the next day.
   - Folders may NOT be taken out of state or out of town.
   - Students are responsible for ALL missing music.

5. Food:
   - If you need to work in the Choral Commons during a lunch break and it’s unavoidable, talk with Mrs. Keisler first.
   - Do not spill – No crumbs or drips.
   - Discard all food in the hallway trash cans.

6. iPads:
   1. Use your “before class” time and ILT to bring up sight-singing material on your iPads.
   2. Enter any new calendar information on the Calendar App.
   3. Use iPads for INSTRUCTIONAL purposes ONLY.
   4. Non-instructional/educational use of the iPad will result in the iPad being confiscated and/or (depending on the severity of the offense) written-up. In some cases the iPad may be turned into an administrator.
   5. Use the iPad for Good…not Evil.
   6. Please, note the district choral iPad policy.

QUALITY REHEARSAL STRATEGIES - TIPS FOR REHEARSAL AT HOME

1. Use your time wisely.
2. Run through a piece at least once before you begin if needed.
3. Warm-Up before you begin your rehearsal time. Warm-Ups are not counted in time for rehearsal at home.
4. Isolate trouble spots and rehearse them until they are correct.
5. Re-live and re-rehearse what was covered in class.
6. Work on beauty of tone and musical delivery.
7. Work on breathing, reading the score for dynamics, counting, vowels, ending and beginning consonants (diction), memorization, expression, energy, articulations (accents: marcato, staccato, tenuto), everything!
8. Ask someone from class to listen to you and answer: Does this sound like a quality?
9. Intonation (accuracy of pitch… not sharp, not flat)
10. Posture: Always sing with good posture
11. Breathing: Use your solar plexus
12. Don’t waste rehearsal on parts you do best. Work on your worst and everything in the middle.
13. Listen to quality recordings. Try to sing your voice part along. If it is a youtube recording, place the recording and follow the director’s direction.
14. Sing often for family and friends with those recordings. Be prepared for the full ensemble effect.
15. Use the part recordings when the piano is just playing your part to fix pitch and rhythm errors.
Finally, make good QUALITY use of your rehearsal at home. Be ready to progress from day to day to class to home and class again. Always progress. No progression and regression are two states that are not conducive to success.

Do YOUR BEST

Ask for help from your director if you find that you aren’t making progress. I bet that will help!

PERFORMANCES

Concert Procedures
Students are to arrive BEFORE call time and are to be in their assigned place ready to warm-up at call-time. All hair, make-up and uniforms should be in place and ready to go NO LATER than the call-time. Students who are not prepared for warm-ups will be penalized. These procedures relate specifically to nine weeks concerts, but may be utilized for other occasions. Use this as a guide for other mandatory events and concerts.

- Students only are to enter doors outside the choir room BEFORE call time in order to be on time.
- Students who need to change clothes for the concert must change and be ready for call time.
- Audience members need to park and enter the building by the GYM. Adults will not be allowed to come in the student entrance.
- Performers report to the choir room for call time and warm-up. **CHECK IN** with your classmate responsible for attendance for credit.
- When released, performers report to starting positions that will be one of the following: backstage, audience seating, or on stage.
- Concerts will begin with the first note at "downbeat" which is start time.
- Be good and proper audience members.
- Quickly find your spot when your ensemble is to perform.
- Remember performance order and do not make the audience wait because of YOU.
- Remain SILENT and STILL backstage.
- Be professional at all times.
- Return to your seat after your ensemble’s performance.
- At the conclusion, help gather all materials, programs, etc... to take back to the choir room. Help take risers and platforms down and place back in their storage places.

***Mrs. Keisler reserves the right to not allow any student the privilege of performance based on behavior, medical condition, preparedness, or other circumstances that would do harm or that do not hold the best interest of all choir members.***

Concert Etiquette
Choral music performances are formal, high culture events that are typically presented within stricter, more modest rules of etiquette than a rock concert or an athletic event. In preparation for concerts, festivals, performances, and competitions at the community, state, and national level, listed below are the rules of etiquette for performances that performers must follow when our school and Lexington District One:

For the Performer

- Performers refrain from fraternizing with any member of the audience before or during a performance.
- Performers arrive on time, fully dressed in performance attire.
- Performers remain throughout the entire performance.
- Performers support their peers with positive and appropriate behavior.
- Performers dress appropriately for each occasion.
- Performers are humble, polite, and gracious with no egotistical behaviors.
- Performers keep areas as safe and clean as possible.
- Performers always follow the director’s instructions on and off stage.
- Performers educate others through modeling professional audience and performance behavior.
- Performers refrain from gesturing and/or waving to acquaintances, friends, or family members from the stage.
- Performers carry themselves with grace and poise in the eyes of the audience.
• Performers do not wear perfumes, high shoes, or excessive hair spray on stage.
• Performers prepare appropriately before arriving for call time (i.e. fully dressed, practicing good hygiene).
• Performers always watch the director (and do not sing along or follow along with soloists).
• Performers walk with their folder (if applicable) away from the audience.
• Performers carry clean, solid black folders with music neatly secured inside.
• Performers always act together as an ensemble.
• Performers are clean shaven with appropriate hair cuts for performance.
• Performers positively encourage other performing groups with appropriate decorum and etiquette.
• Performers refrain from jumping, screaming or celebrating in a loud, boisterous manner when receiving public notoriety or awards.
• Performers wear all black. Only directors and accompanists may wear alternate uniforms.
• Performers conduct themselves as ladies and gentlemen with proper decorum and etiquette.
• Performers enter the stage in the following order: Choir Members, Director, Accompanist, Page Turner. 
The designated choral assistant prepares the director’s music by order and places it on the respective music stand before the concert.
• Performers bow together, and then visually acknowledge the Accompanist, soloists or special guests of the evening. They refrain from clapping on stage.
• Performers follow the director’s conducting. Everyone is in it together!
• Performers move to places on risers from the floor first, and then up to an individual’s spot.
• Performers exit risers by rows together, watching the director and the middle most designated row leader.
• Performers continue the concert without the director or accompanist in the event something happens during a song (like falling off the stage). Performers look to the other leader who is not affected. “The show must go on!”
• Performers are first and foremost always professionals.

For the Audience

Audience members enter the performance area quietly.
Audience members remain in their seats, refraining from approaching the stage area.
After a concert has begun, audience members enter and exit the Auditorium or performance venue only during the change of group and during applause as an emergency.
Audience members applaud between sets of pieces instead of individual pieces.
Audience members pick up all programs and personal items before leaving.
Audience members refrain from shouting or yelling during a performance. Remember this is a formal cultural activity, not an athletic event.
Audience members listen carefully and quietly during a performance.
Audience members control young children escorting them out of the performance venue if they cry, talk aloud, or prevent others audience members from enjoying their child’s performance.
Audience members refrain from bringing food or drinks into the Auditorium or performance venue.
Audience members sit with proper posture in seats (refrain from putting feet in the seats or standing in seats).
Audience members are patient with and respectful toward performers.

PERFORMANCE UNIFORMS

Choral students always dress in uniforms when performing. Performance attire is up to the director’s discretion for appropriateness and uniformity, and must follow school rules ALWAYS!!! Please, remember that uniforms are not making a statement of fashion, but a statement of unity. Our choirs will be judged on appearance, decorum, and demeanor in festivals, concerts, and competitions. ALL CHORAL STUDENTS are REQUIRED to provide/purchase the following articles of clothing for concerts. There is financial assistance available through the booster club. Ask Mrs. Keisler for details! (See Fundraising.)

Concert Attire per Ensemble:
Chorus

**Males and Females:** “Concert Black”
Find clothing that fits these guidelines.
* Dress Black Long Pants
* Dress Black Long or Short Sleeve Shirt that is loose fitting. (No tight shirts)
* Must fit dress code.
* Black dress shoes (and socks for men). Closed toed.

**Chorale and Chamber Choir**

**Females:** Formal Uniforms
* Black Concert Dress: $85.00 (Ordered through the school)
* Black Flat Dress Shoes, Closed Toe
* Hosiery that matches natural skin tone
* Optional but encouraged: Black camisole to protect against wardrobe malfunctions
* See Hair Policy
* No jewelry

**Males:** Formal Uniforms
(All parts of Tuxedos ordered through the school)
* Tux Jacket $80.25
* Tux Pants $23.54
* Tux Vest $37.45
* Tux Tie $13.00
* Tux Shirt $19.26
* Tux package (jacket, pants, vest, tie AND shirt) $130.00
* Black socks
* Black Dress Shoes
* White Undershirt
* No Jewelry
* See Hair Policy

*Students are required to purchase* their black formal choir uniform that will be ordered. Returning choir members can use the dress or tux from a previous year as long as it still fits, maintains the original black color, and is in good wearing condition.

*Checks are to be made payable to River Bluff High School Chorus* and will be handled through the school.

*It is the responsibility of the student to make sure that dresses are HEMMED to the appropriate length. Dresses need to be an “evening length” which is between the ankle and the floor with FLAT solid black, closed toe and closed heal shoes. Hems should lightly graze the top of the foot without inhibiting walking and climbing risers. An additional inch to two inches will be added to hem length when dresses are ordered to ensure enough length is present when the dress is made.

**Southern Charm**

**Females:** Formal Uniforms
* School owned Dress
  The following will be ordered through the school (students pay): Fill in prices when quoted in class.
  * Character Shoes $__________
  * Tights $__________
  * Bloomers/Briefs $__________
  * Earrings $__________

Student acquired:
* Optional but recommended: Dance Camisole Leotard, Flesh colored
* Liquid Bandaid
* See Hair Policy
* No other jewelry
Males: Formal Uniforms
   *School owned Shirt
   *Black Undershirt
   *Black Socks
   *Black Dress Shoes/Optional Dance Shoes will be Ordered
The following will be ordered through the school (students pay):
   *Black Pants
   *No jewelry
   *See Hair Policy

Informal Uniforms: TBA as needed
There will be performance occasions that will require a different uniform due to style of dance or location of performance. Please have the following items in your personal wardrobe and be flexible as we will do our best to get items visually uniform
   Females: Black ankle length dance leggings, White Long Top, Bright Purple or Dark/Bright Pink Long Top
   Males: Nice Long Pants Khakis, Nice Long Dark Wash Blue Jeans, Black Pants (from formal uniforms)
       White Button-Up Long Sleeve Shirt, Black Button-Up Short Sleeve Shirt

Hair Policy – Should be followed by all but especially required of competitive ensembles.

Male and female students must have hair that is clean, neat, and kempt. For formal performances, males’ hair should be cut where bangs do not fall below eyebrows. Hair must also be cleanly cut around the ears. Females with long and medium length hair must wear their hair half up with a discreet black barrette. Others with shorter hair and bangs must make sure the bangs are above the eyebrows, out of the eyes and secured back neatly so that they entire face is shown. All students are required to have a natural hair color without any permanent/unnatural accessories.

Students will not be able to perform if grooming and attire does not follow policy. If students do not perform, they are unable to be assessed. This is imperative. As stated before, choirs are judged and scored on appearance. Other activities such as Marching Band, ROTC, and athletics have policies regulating attire, hair, and grooming requirements necessary to their performances.

General Guidelines for Formal and Informal Concert Attire – all choirs
   No watches worn during performances.
   No Cell Phones.
   Wear clothes tucked in, straight, IRONED, and neat.

Alterations
All alterations (including hems) are up to the students to take care of themselves. Southern Charm needs to alter school uniforms with temporary solutions approved by Mrs. Keisler

Sizing Policy
Sizes of students are measured by Parent Volunteers or students only if we have to. If you or your child are not comfortable with this or miss the measurement day, please, email Mrs. Keisler to get the measuring instructions to do at home. One student’s measurements can hold up the WHOLE ORDER. Try on uniforms once they are received and report any incorrectly sized uniforms immediately or the uniform will not be replaced.

CHORAL DEPARTMENT STUDENT LEADERSHIP
Meetings will be held twice a month during an open mod or best time scenario with student representatives and Mrs. Keisler to review and reflect on the choral department’s progress and organizational topics. It is important for students to take ownership in the program and will learn valuable life skills in this process. Representative leaders may be appointed and/or elected to this group. More information will be developed as our program takes shape. Have the following information on hand as positions are assigned.
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Dance Captains are required to attend Show Choir Camps of America the summer before the school year begins. Dance Captains are required to fulfill their role as a leader in the “Show Choir” class during the school year. Students who do not fulfill this requirement will be subject to consequences. Students who are interested in this role may notify the director in February. Dance Captains will be determined by the director based on leadership, character, interpersonal skills, dance ability, vocal ability, ensemble needs, and overall performance. Funding for camp may vary from year to year. The student portion of camp may be fundraised beforehand but the balance must be paid out of pocket at the beginning of May. During the school year, dance captains will have extra requirements in their leadership roles. They must attend meetings, prepare for their assigned teaching times, help others with choreography, and other duties as assigned by the director.

Student COMMITMENT

As a member of the Choral Department, you have committed to be an essential element in a working ensemble. You are now a member of a team and organization that relies on your total commitment to our work and goals. Students must be counted on to attend all required AND optional events. Optional events are mandatory unless another school conflict exists prior to the choir event. Each member is direly important to the success of our choirs. The commitment extends to after-school activities, during school activities, and especially rehearsals. It is the responsibility of all choir members to make preparations for fundraisers, concerts, trips, and functions. It is not the director’s responsibility to provide extra opportunities for students outside the daily rehearsal routine. Students must earn these “extras” through hard work and commitment to achieve. A commitment is a pledge and a binding promise to work diligently to achieve common goals. Students are pledging loyalty to the organization for the duration of their membership and are pledging to do their best. Commitments must be honored for the entire school year. This means that students will be trusted to arrive on time to class and call times, to participate to the best of one’s ability during rehearsal and performances, to have the most positive intentions at heart, and to participate appropriately in appearance and actions in Choral Events. A great deal of responsibility is placed on choir members. We are counting on you!

Student CONDUCT

As a participant of the Choral Department, each student is held to a high standard of conduct. The school has entrusted its name to our program, and in turn, the school and choral name is to be treated with honor and pride by all. Therefore, when presenting choral students to the public in various Concerts, Festivals, Competitions, and public works, I expect every behavior to be the best. All activities for chorus are considered extensions of the classroom, and therefore, all school and district policies will be enforced. This expectation extends to students’ behavior in other academic environments, co-curricular activities, extra-curricular activities, and school-related events as well. It is a privilege to be a part of this program, and it is a privilege for me to be blessed with so many willing participants. I want the community to see the wonderful things that we do. Therefore, each student and parent/guardian will be required to sign a statement of agreement to uphold the high standards of conduct “on and off the stage.” If a student violates this obligation to which s/he and a responsible party have agreed, the director and an administrator will meet to consider the students’ current and future membership status in the choral program which includes auditioned and
non-auditioned ensembles. All school and district guidelines will be enforced concerning student conduct. Remember that we all are a unit and all have a part in shaping our program. Every individual has an impact. Let us make every impact positive. Any student who does not adhere to the choir’s code of conduct will not participate in choral activities. Students will not participate with the choir in performances or events on stage or on trips (to include SC Choral Festival, SC All State Chorus, National or Regional Competitions) when Conduct is untrustworthy upon the director’s discretion. Alternative assignments will be given to enable students to continue with the curriculum and earn academic credit, i.e. grades. Future membership may be at stake.

In order for a student to be eligible to compete, students must have a clean discipline record. Students who get a school issued lunch detention, before school detention, after school detention, out of school suspension, in school suspension, are brought up for an expulsion hearing, have legal charges brought against them in a court of law that are unresolved or lead to conviction of a serious crime or inhibits out of state or county travel, or other disciplinary indiscretions will NOT be allowed to compete with the choir. A make-up work assignment will be issued; however, full credit will not be able to be received. The highest grade possible would be an 85.

COMPETITIONS and FIELD TRIPS

SOUTH CAROLINA MUSIC EDUCATORS’ ASSOCIATION (SC Chapter of the National Association for Music Educators)

NAfME: The National Association for Music Educators (NAfME) is a wonderful organization that provides high school students who are serious about singing and/or playing an instrument with opportunities to challenge themselves and test their abilities at levels far above that which is typical in the local classroom experiences. NAfME sponsors the two largest state competitions, All-State Chorus and State Choral Festival. All-State Chorus assesses individuals from school and the State Choral Festival assesses choral ensembles. Students enrolled in 10-12th grades in Chamber Choir and select students from Chorale are eligible to audition for All-State Chorus Weekend. Chamber Choir is eligible to compete at the State Choral Festival competition. All-State Chorus Weekend participation requires an audition process that I am more than happy to help students prepare for in any way I can. In order for students to take advantage of these opportunities, the director must be a member of NAfME and knowledgeable of the rules and procedures governing participation. I am bound to enforce these rules even though they are not Lexington District One and/or River Bluff High School rules. Rules are non-negotiable and enforced to the letter. I cannot bend or change them.

ALL-STATE CHORUS

All-State Chorus Auditions

The All-State Chorus Audition is available to 10th-12th grade students. The audition registration fee is $15.00. If students make All-State Chorus, there is subsequent Weekend Registration Fee of $15.00 with the additional weekend expenses. Checks for audition fees are to be made payable to the River Bluff High School CHORAL Booster Club. The audition requires students to sing in a quintet of five singers, each individual singing a separate part without accompaniment. The second part of the audition is sight-singing. Students who score the minimum number of points on their prepared piece will go on to this portion of the audition. Sight-singing is judged individually on the same day as the prepared selection. Students go into separate rooms with one judge who gives the student a small fragment of music in their voice part to sing from sight without any help. All of Chamber Choir and possibly Chorale will learn the audition piece as part of our Fall repertoire; and students will have daily sight-reading challenges not only in preparation for this audition, but also to meet National and State music education standards. This will both strengthen our ensemble sight-singing ability, as well as individual musical ability. In addition to the quintet piece and sight-singing, there are specific performance standards to which the director must hold all students from his or her school who wish to be an All-State Member that comply with the SCMEA All-State Rules. If any student does not meet the minimal performance level specified by the SCMEA All-State Committee, the student cannot participate in the audition. As the director, I have been charged with the responsibility of determining if individual students meet these minimal standards and proceed on to the audition. Also, it is the RULE that students who Audition and are selected as participants in the All-State Chorus Weekend, ATTEND and FULLY PARTICIPATE IN THE ENTIRE ALL-STATE WEEKEND EVENT. Students must not have conflicts with All-State Weekend. Students must reserve the designated weekend on their calendar before they audition. If selected as a member of the All State Chorus, students HAVE TO ATTEND. Even if a conflict comes about after the results are posted or comes about at the last minute, the STUDENT MUST ATTEND (exceptions only include

written doctor’s excuses, personal hospitalization, or written proof of a death in the family). All-State Audition rehearsals will be determined, hopefully, during common open mods! Come warmed-up and ready to sing. Since the audition process is ensemble based (quintet based), attendance is required. Your ability to sing impacts your quintet’s performance and the performance of your members. Your quintet members need to get used to your voice and vocal tendencies whether you are proficient on your part or not. Be on time!

**Participation in All-State Chorus Auditions and Weekend are out-of-pocket expenses students must pay. If financial assistance is needed, students can arrange fundraising options with Mrs. Keisler.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All-State Chorus Audition Rehearsals: TBA (Weekly beginning no later than October)</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Auditions</strong> Could be any time, any of the following days:</td>
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<td>November 6, 7, 8, 10, 11</td>
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<td><em>Be careful signing up for the SAT on the 8th</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>All-State Weekend:</strong> March 5–7</td>
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<tr>
<td><em><strong>Do NOT sign up for the SAT on March 7th if you make All-State</strong></em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em><strong>Do NOT Audition unless you are SURE you are free this weekend.</strong></em></td>
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<td>Careful with your planning.</td>
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**All-State Chorus Weekend**

All-State Chorus is made up of the most talented singers in the state. On average, 1700 students audition and approximately 800 of those are chosen. Students are now separated into three ensembles (SATB, SSA, and TTB). Three world-renowned clinicians are brought in each year from around the nation to work with these wonderful voices in order to prepare a concert Saturday afternoon at 4:00 PM. Students are required to prepare their ensemble’s music individually before they arrive at All-State Thursday night. Students will be in rehearsals from roughly 9:00 AM to 10:00 PM with breaks for water, lunch, dinner, and a special concert by Winthrop University Choral Department Friday night. Selected All-State Participants are required to pay expenses of All-State Weekend hotel, transportation, music, practice CDs, food, registration fees (All-State Weekend AND All-State Auditions), All-State T-Shirt, and other financial obligations. Those who are chosen will receive an experience they will never forget, make friends they will always know, and sing music they will never forget. Many colleges and universities in South Carolina actively recruit All-State participants each year to attend their schools and sometimes offer scholarship opportunities. In many cases, students do not have to Major in Music in college to be a recipient of a vocal scholarship. Most universities only require Non-Music Major recipients of these scholarships to sing in an ensemble each semester of their four years of undergraduate studies and earn an A for their work in the ensemble. All-State is a fantastic opportunity by itself, but provides other opportunities for college as well.

**All-State Rules – From a previous year.**

Listed below are some of the rules for a previous All-State Chorus for reference. Rules are updated and modified each year. It is unacceptable for a student and/or school to violate any of the rules listed below. Each individual student represents River Bluff High School. Any violation of these rules by even ONE student may result in a warning, probation, suspension, or expulsion of River Bluff High School from participating in All-State Chorus for the current and/or future years. Consequences for violations are decided upon by the SCMEA All-State Committee Members and are non-negotiable. It is very important to take these rules seriously because they not only impact your child, but other choral students as well. Lexington School District One, River Bluff High School Choral Department, and Miki Keisler have no control over the consequences or rules of SCMEA and are not liable for them. Singers, who participate, do so fully adhering to the policies, rules, and consequences of the program, River Bluff High School, and Lexington District One.

**ALL-STATE CHORUS RULES**

2010–2011 (Example) Current rules have not been posted.

The All-State Chorus program was organized to provide an opportunity for superior choral students in South Carolina to sing together and to represent the state in statewide events. Students who participate in All-State have an opportunity to
further utilize the skills obtained and developed in their local school programs. The South Carolina All-State Chorus program provides an intensive and demanding vocal experience, which fosters self-discipline and personal growth as well as musicianship.

A. MEMBERSHIP

1. Membership in the All-State Mixed Chorus, All-State Women’s Chorus and All-State Men’s Chorus is on the basis of total points received in the audition. Students in the 10th, 11th, 12th grades must be enrolled for credit for both semesters in a school choral program directed by a member in good standing of SCMEA and MENC. Home-schooled students who are enrolled in a school choral program must provide documentation which qualifies them as 10th, 11th, or 12th grade student at the time of registration. A copy of the director/member’s current membership card should be sent with the registration form. A director may not sponsor students who are enrolled in a school other than his/her own. Failure to comply with these rules will result in the involved student(s) not being able to participate in the All-State weekend and their school being suspended from participating in auditions for the next academic year.

2. SCMEA and MENC membership checks should be sent to the SCMEA MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN. A list of Choral Division members will be compiled and checked before requests are accepted. If your membership card expires between October and November, and you do not receive your new registration card before your November audition date, please take the time to call MENC and have documentation that MENC is currently processing your membership. This will prevent slowing your audition process down while waiting for verification from MENC National Headquarters.

B. REGISTRATION FOR AUDITIONS

1. Choral directors should limit registration only to students who possess superior musical skills and then notify the All-State Chairman by means of the All-State Chorus Audition Registration Form that is found online at WWW.SCMEACHORALDIV.ORG.

2. Teachers must submit All-State Audition Registration through the process designated by the All-State Chairman. The registration process is completed online, then followed by a hardcopy mailing.

3. Audition Request Forms must be signed by the sponsoring choral director and the principal of each participating school.

4. The audition fee is fifteen dollars ($15.00) per student and must be remitted to the All-State Chairman along with a hard copy of the Audition Request Form. Please send only one school check, personal check, or money order payable to SCMEA Choral Division.

5. Registration forms and appropriate fees must be postmarked by Thursday, September 30, 2010 (LATE REGISTRATIONS WILL BE RETURNED) It is recommended that this application be sent by certified mail. Please send Registration to: Mr. Eric Wilkinson, Wando High School 1000 Warrior Way, Mt. Pleasant, SC 29466

6. Once the audition request form has been submitted to the All-State Chairperson, no refunds will be made, no substitutions of names will be allowed, and no changes can be made.

E. SELECTED PARTICIPANTS

1. The All-State Mixed Chorus will be comprised of SATB voices that have received the highest scores during the auditions. The All-State Women’s Chorus will be comprised of a balanced group of female students who have received the second highest scores in their respective voice parts. The All-State Men’s Chorus will be comprised of a balanced group of male students who have received the second highest scores in their respective voice parts. No alternate All-State Mixed, Women’s, or Men’s Chorus members will be selected nor may any teacher make any substitutions. Failure to comply with the substitution rule will result in the substituted students not being allowed to participate in the All-State weekend.
and their school being suspended for the next academic year.

2. Selected participants will be posted on the website. A package with scoring sheets, cut-off scores, and other information will be mailed to each director after auditions have been completed. **It is the responsibility of the director to double-check the scores and notify students of their acceptance into the All-State Choirs.** If you do not receive a packet or have questions about scores, please contact Eric Wilkinson, Audition Coordinator.

3. Teachers are responsible for the preparation of the music by their students prior to the All-State weekend. In the event an unbalanced group is chosen from any one school, cooperative learning rehearsals may be conducted by combining two or more schools. Teachers should not expect students to learn the music entirely independently. Practice CD’s will be available for purchase to assist in preparing music. Information on ordering CD’s will be posted on the website and distributed at Choral Arts Seminar.

**River Bluff High School All-State Audition Director’s Rules**
Students will be required to follow the Director’s Rules in addition to the SCMEA All-State Audition Rules.

- Students must pay their registration fees on time in order to audition.
- Students must attend **ALL** All-State Audition Practices Scheduled.
- Students will dress in old, traditional church clothes (professional) to the Audition. Men must wear a blazer or jacket and ladies must wear dresses that come past the knee with closed toe shoes. Do not wear anything revealing, tight, or distracting. The director must approve apparel one week before the Audition. Clothing approval is at the professional discretion of Mrs. Keisler. Approval is non-negotiable. All clothing must comply with the District and School Dress Code.
- Students must pass 2 audition cuts in order to audition. It is the director’s responsibility to only bring those that are the most musically advanced and prepared to the audition. Students will not be refunded the registration fee.
- Students and Parents must sign a rules agreement and commitment form or they will not audition.

**F. All-State Chorus Weekend Rules**

TEACHERS AND STUDENTS MUST BE PRESENT AT ALL ALL-LSTATE ACTIVITIES, i.e. general auditions, rehearsals, special auditions, performances, etc. TEACHERS MUST STAY AT THE SAME HOTEL AS THEIR STUDENTS.

In addition to the names of students selected for each choir, the following will be posted on the website: Registration ,Parent Permission/Rules ,Meals ,T-Shirts ,Schedule.

A weekend registration fee of fifteen dollars ($15.00), **in addition to the audition fee fifteen dollars ($15.00), will be required of each student participating in either of the All-State choirs. This registration fee must be remitted prior to All-State Weekend.** Please send only one school check, personal check, or money order payable to SCMEA Choral Division. You may pay for registration and meals (if you choose to eat in the cafeteria) in one check as long as you submit the checks with the appropriate information. **If your school district is submitting a check, please make sure that your school information is indicated and mailed with the check.**

T-shirts will also be available for purchase ahead of time. Please **do not** send your T-shirt check to Suzanne Young with your registration check. **T-shirt information will be mailed to Beverly Laney at the address printed on the t-shirt form.** T-shirts **will not** be available for purchase at All-State Weekend.

The following items will be available for purchase at All-State Weekend;

- Pins ($3.00)
CDs and DVD's of the concert performance

Plaques with individual student names, voice part, and choir.

Rehearsal Guidelines:

Dress for rehearsals will be informal-regular school clothes. (Hats, sunglasses, or any other item that would interfere with rehearsal are prohibited. Only knee-length shorts are permitted.)

No gum, no talking, no tobacco products!

Each student is expected to devote his/her full attention to the director at all times in all rehearsals and performances.

Each student must bring a pencil and his/her music to ALL rehearsals, even if the music is memorized.

Each student will need a black folder for use at the concert.

General Guidelines:

Students will be dismissed from All-State participation on the following grounds:

Vandalism of any kind- the student’s school will be held responsible for damages.
Possession of drugs without a doctor’s prescription.
Possession and/or consumption of alcoholic beverages.
Disciplinary action, not excluding dismissal, will be taken on the following grounds:

Failure to adhere to attendance, housing, and rehearsal regulations.
Violation of curfew.
Any behavior found to be unbecoming by the All-State chairperson or his/her representative.
I-pods, MP3 players, personal tape players, CD players or radios with headphones will be allowed only at the motel at the discretion of the individual teacher. These items are not to be present during rehearsals.
Teachers are responsible for the conduct and behavior of their students throughout the entire All-State Weekend.
Any dismissed student may cause his/her school to be suspended from participation for one year. An explanatory letter will be sent to the student’s parents, choral director, school principal and district administration.

Members of the All-State Chorus, All-State Women’s Chorus, and All-State Men’s Chorus will adhere to the following concert dress. All attire will be checked for compliance prior to the concert. Students not in compliance will be prohibited from singing in the concert and will put the school in jeopardy of suspension from All-State participation for one year.

Men:-dress suit or sport coat with dress pants, dress shirt with a collar, long tie, dress shoes and dress socks. No denim and no tuxedos.

Women :-medium to low-heeled dress shoes. Dressy dresses or dressy skirt with dressy blouse. The skirt or dress in length must fall BELOW THE BOTTOM OF THE KNEECAP, BUT ABOVE THE ANKLE. (No cocktail or formal dresses allowed, no denim, no sequins.) NO PANTSUITS, NO MATCHING PANTS AND JACKETS will be allowed on stage for the performance. No spaghetti straps on blouses or dresses allowed. No bare midriffs, no bare backs, and necklines should be modest and appropriate for a concert. No slits in dresses or skirts above the bottom of the knee cap.
The All-State Choruses will present a public concert at Byrnes Auditorium, Winthrop University on March 19th, 2010 at 4:00 p.m. Only participants will be allowed to attend any activities of the All-State Chorus Weekend. No one other than All-State members, official chaperones, and teachers may be present at hotels, rehearsals or facilities connected with the All-State events. No children, even those whose parents are choral directors, will be allowed at any All-State rehearsal. All chaperones must be at least 21 years of age – preferably older. All SCMEA members are welcome to attend any part of the All-State weekend even if that member does not have students participating in these events.

All incidents or exceptions pertaining to the All-State rules and regulations will be subject to review by the All-State Committee and could result in consequences to the school and/or student(s) involved. Requests for exceptions due to extenuating circumstances must be submitted in writing to the All-State Committee Chairperson two weeks prior to the All-State weekend.

River Bluff All-State Weekend Director’s Rules

Students will be required to adhere to the following additional rules of the director for All-State Weekend.

Students must wear a step up from appropriate school clothing to All-State rehearsals.
2. Students must bring concert suits and dresses to be approved by Mrs. Keisler one week prior to All-State Weekend. If at All-State Weekend a student’s Concert attire does not meet All-State dress code standards, the student and parent are financially responsible for reimbursement of clothing purchased for replacement. Parents will be called and notified. Dress length rule: If I can see your knee when you sit down, it is too short. NO HEELS. FLAT SHOES.
3. In the case that a student is disrespectful, does not follow rules, does not know their music, or Ms. Wright is notified by another director at All-State of any misconduct, the principal and student's parents will be notified, and parents must drive to All-State to pick up their child and return to Gilbert. The following week, the student will receive school and choral department disciplinary action.
4. Bring all materials: Folder, water, pencil, music, clothes.
5. MOST IMPORTANT: STUDENTS MUST ATTEND ALL-STATE WEEKEND ACTIVITIES if selected. THIS IS NON-NEGOTIABLE because failure to participate prevents others from around the state from being able to benefit from this honor and privilege.

STATE CHORAL FESTIVAL

The South Carolina Choral Festival is the state level of competition for choirs provided by SCMEA. Choirs are given the opportunity to perform for two-three (2-3) respected college and/or high school judges from outside of South Carolina for ratings and critiques. The honors level choirs and River Bluff will be given an opportunity to prepare pieces for State Choral Festival. In March/February, students will have a Mock Choral Festival run-through where the River Bluff Choral Booster Club will hire 3 outside judges to listen to the Choirs and give them preliminary ratings and critiques. Based on these scores, choirs will be able to earn and qualify for the opportunity to go to State Choral Festival if their rating is an average (according to SCMEA rules) of 85 or above (an Excellent Rating). Ratings given based on the following scale: 70 and below-Good, 80-89-Excellent, and 90-100-Superior. Numerical scores are given based on the SCMEA Performance Rubric provided in the Grades section of this handbook. Some of the SCMEA Choral Festival Rules are listed below for reference from the school year 2008-09. Students who violate these rules will receive school and choral department disciplinary consequences.

**Participation in the State Choral Festival is pending budget allowance and ensemble qualification.**

CHORAL FESTIVAL

2008-2009 (Example) Current rules are not yet available.

BEHAVIOR

Teachers must accompany their choirs to the festival and remain with them during the festival day. No cell phones, pagers, hats, sunglasses, gum or any item that would interfere with the aural, visual and appreciation of the festival will be allowed.

Students are not to wander in and out of the performance area, especially during the adjudication of another group.
There is to be absolutely no loud talking.
If a student displays unbecoming or illegal behavior or damages property, he/she will be put on probation for the next year.
No food or drink of any kind is allowed in the performing area.
**No smoking** anywhere on the premises.

**PERFORMANCE RULES**

One of the numbers must be a required song from the All-State lists from the past several years or from the SCMEA Festival List (if available) for senior high. Middle school choirs will choose a required song from the clinic list for the past several years. Any exception from this rule must be approved by the festival chairperson.
10. Only the choral director of the participating group may assist students in the sight reading procedures. College students/student teachers or parents may not provide additional assistance to students during the sight reading.

**AWARDS**

1. Ratings will be: Superior, Excellent or Good. Awards will be given for Superior and Excellent ratings.
2. Ratings will be given for sight singing. Superior and excellent ratings will be recognized.
   Choirs are encouraged to observe other choirs.
   Special awards will be presented to the three highest scoring choirs in each classification.*

**Performance Day**

No food, drinks, or gum in the building.
The restroom in the sanctuary is for guests. Students are to use restrooms in the registration building please.
Directors please help monitor the noise in the hallways and dressing rooms. Ask students to use trashcans in the dressing rooms for dry cleaner bags, etc. We encourage students to take their clothes back to the buses instead of leaving them in the dressing rooms. Please ask the students to not disturb any church materials in the classrooms or sanctuary.
**No Smoking** (This has occurred in the restrooms in the past)
**No cell phones!**

**River Bluff State Choral Festival Director's Rules**
Students must follow these rules in addition to the SCMEA rules of conduct in the performance facility. Any student who does not comply with the State Festival rules will have a phone call to their parents at work to pick up their child and take him/her back to River Bluff High School. The principal will also be notified of the incident. Disciplinary procedures will take place once back at River Bluff High School.
1. No singing on the bus.
2. Sit in assigned seats. Students are not to sit boy-girl.
3. Listen and obey chaperones, and stay with them always.
4. Do not talk in the audience or in the facility halls at ALL!
5. Do not patronize or belittle other schools or choirs.
6. Respectfully clap when appropriate as choirs enter/exit (not between songs, even if other choirs do).
7. During awards (if applicable), do not jump and scream and call for good (or bad) news. Respectfully clap and be inwardly very happy!
8. Be gracious, humble, on time, and FOCUSED.
9. Students will have a clean discipline record. (See Conduct)

**NATIONAL COMPETITION/FESTIVAL TRIPS**

Competitive and/or festival trips are important to the choral education experience. Students and the director are given the opportunity to receive educational feedback from professionals actively involved in the choral music world. These high-level performance opportunities provide honors when earned and give River Bluff the chance to be recognized in the state, region, and/or nation. Students are able to listen to and observe other school performances and evaluate themselves comparatively. As these trips are educationally important, they are important to students aesthetically as well. Most choirs
bond as a unit as a result of trips of this nature due to the many additional after school hours spent rehearsing and preparing for the performances. If students prove to be hard working young adults in the classroom, they may earn a chance to participate in this type of activity at the director’s sole discretion. The plan must then be approved by the administration of River Bluff High School and the Lexington District One School Board. These trips are additional educational opportunities that are not funded by River Bluff High School or Lexington School District One. It is up to the individual to provide for the funding of this trip. Chaperones will be needed for field trips and chosen at the discretion of the director. In the event that students and chaperones cannot meet the monetary demands of these trips, the trip will be canceled for purely financial reasons, not as a method of punishment. Please see Fundraisers. Students who are unable to go on the trip due to an excused absence after consult with the director may still be required to pay for this trip if advance notice was not given and a portion of their trip has already been paid for.

Fundraisers are opportunities extended at the discretion of the director to interested students to better enable them to financially provide for the annual needs of the choral program and/or the financial costs of trips to festivals/competitions. Parent involvement in the Choral Booster Club plans and organizes these opportunities for students. Fundraisers enable families the ability for students and parents to be involved without costly out of pocket expenses. All choral expenses can be fundraised in full. In the event that this educational opportunity is granted to students, the goals and purposes of the classroom cannot be neglected or forgotten. Students and parents must understand that trips are methods of rewarding good work. The opportunity to travel and perform is not something that is “owed students,” and it can be terminated at any time at the discretion of the director and/or administration.

If students travel for choral purposes, there will be academic expectations for students other than just performing. Written evaluations of other choir performances will be required. Analyzing other live performances adds perspective to our education experience. Please remember that educational opportunities are priceless. Do not ignore or take them for granted.

Trip Parent Meeting: April 14, 2015 at 6:30 PM in the Choir Room

TRIP DATES (Southern Charm and Chamber Choir): April 16-19, 2015

FIELD TRIPS

In the event that the chorus or members of the chorus take a field trip, certain protocols must be followed. All field trips must have an adequate number of responsible, trustworthy adult chaperones. If parents and chaperones are not available to participate, the field trip is automatically canceled. Students and chaperones are to recognize the following Field Trip Policies:

1. Male and female students cannot share bus seats.
2. Chaperones must sit dispersed throughout the bus.
3. Chaperones must follow all rules and guidelines of the activity, school and district.
4. Chaperones are chosen at the discretion of Mrs. Keisler. Adults not approved by the District, GHS Administration, and/or who do not pass the SLED security check will not be allowed contact with students.
5. Students will be given specific instructions for each occasion, which must be followed.
6. No singing or talking on the bus when a performance is pending.
7. Treat personal, private, and public spaces respectfully.
8. Follow all instructions by director.
9. No student or chaperone will be allowed on the field trip without the punctual submission of appropriate paperwork by deadlines.
10. See field trip permission form. Paperwork must be filled out COMPLETELY and submitted by the deadline. (Don’t assume I know your zip code or anything, at all.)
11. Students may not self-medicate on field trips. School and District policies will be followed at all times.
12. Chaperones must provide written documentation of any health issues and Emergency Contact information.
13. Bring only items that are needed for the field trip (uniform, choral music folder, etc...). Items will not be secure (even at school). Leave possessions of value at home.
14. In the case of overnight trips (such as All-State Chorus Weekend), students are not to leave vehicles on campus overnight. Have a friend, relative, or neighbor provide transportation or determine an alternate solution privately with legal guardians. The director and school will not make arrangements for you.
15. Students who have demonstrated behavior that is not conducive to field trip environments will not be eligible to go on any choir field trip under the discretion of the choral director. For competitive groups such as Chamber Choir and Southern Charm – Students who obtain any disciplinary action that result in consequences that exceed after school detention will be ineligible to travel but will still be held to all other expectations and requirements in and outside of the classroom to be a member of that ensemble.

CHORAL BOOSTER CLUB

The Choral Booster Club is an organization of parents and community members who help support the choral students of River Bluff High School in their choral music education. They provide financial aid through an application process to those students who are in need so that they may receive the same quality education and opportunities as others. The booster club provides fundraising opportunities for students, accompanists, sectional rehearsal directors, snacks, parent information emails, music, needed classroom materials, a small budget to supplement the district allotted choral budget, program printing, chaperones, volunteers, and much much more! Meetings are held in the chorus room as scheduled in the calendar below. All are encouraged to attend and help support your children! See the Booster Club By-laws on their page of the choral department website for annual membership fees and ways to get involved!

CHARMS

Financial Record Keeping will be processed through an online program called CHARMS. Each parent will get a login and will be able to view their financial information (money paid, money owed) and will receive bill notices electronically. Please, provide the parent information on the Booster Club Page at the end of the Handbook so that you can receive this information. You do not have to be a member of the booster club to access information from CHARMS. Information will be sent home regarding CHARMS.

If you would be able to help us establish this fine organization, please, email mkeisler@lexington1.net and send your membership check to school.

Turning in Money to the Booster Club

Make checks payable to the River Bluff CHORAL Booster Club. Put all payments in an envelope. On the front of the envelope include the following:

Student Name: _______________________
Date Turned in: ______________________
Amount: ____________________________
What is this for? ____________________ (All-State AUDITION fee? All-State WEEKEND? National Trip? Fundraiser name? Trip Payment?)

Place all money and envelopes addressed to the River Bluff Choral Booster Club in the lock box (or to Mrs. Keisler until we get one). Booster Club Treasurers will have a key to open this locked box to retrieve funds to receipt and keep records.

Receipts

Receipts are left in the designated area in the choir room for students and/or parents to collect. Please, collect and KEEP receipts. Without a receipt, claims cannot be verified.

Fundraisers

Fundraising is a necessity in order to continue to offer a high level of educational experiences and opportunities to chorus students from year to year. However, fundraising is not a formal business venture that takes precedence over educational responsibilities of the class. With that in mind, fundraisers will be actively managed and “manned” by parents with assistance and supervision of the director for the benefit of students and the choral program. If parents do not actively participate in the management and implementation of fundraisers, students will not have some of the educational opportunities that they deserve. Mrs. Keisler determines fundraiser goals according to the financial needs of the organization and its educational goals.

Fundraisers are not required but are desperately needed from every student. Especially as we are establishing everything from scratch!
Fundraising Procedures

Patronships

1. Copy the Sponsorship letter. Make sure your name is printed at the bottom of each letter you give or leave with a business.
2. Place each Sponsorship letter with payment in an envelope. Use separate envelopes for each Sponsor.
3. Turn in the envelopes with the correct labeling (see Money Turn In) in the LOCK BOX.
4. Patronships Split Rule: All funds collected are profit.
   *The first $50 goes to the CBC.
   *After the first $50, the students and Booster Club split the profit 90% (Student Needs) - 10% (Booster Club)

Cobb

1. Read all instructions before starting your Cobb Fundraiser.
2. Print all information on your fundraiser forms.
3. Have all envelopes labeled correctly.
4. Parents, assist your child with their calculations before turning in their fundraiser envelope.
5. Include all monies in the fundraising envelope.
6. Keep a copy of your order form for product distribution. (Sometimes there aren’t 2nd copies.)
7. Turn in all envelopes with money to the LOCK BOX.
8. Cobb Split Rule: 40% of funds collected are profit.
   *The first $20 of profit goes to the CBC.
   *The rest goes to student needs

Sing-A-Grams (required by Southern Charm and Chamber Choir)

1. Instructions – TBA – See Handouts
2. Profit will go to the CBC for budget. If budget allows, a percentage will be split among qualified students.
3. February 9-12, 2015 delivery during CREW times.

Soda Sales (required of Southern Charm)

1. Instructions – TBA – See Handouts
2. Weekly sales on Thursdays
3. Student work assignments will be made and must be kept for before and after school sales.
4. Always work in pairs or trios.
5. Profit will go to the CBC for budget. If budget allows, a percentage will be split among qualified students.

Middle School Show Choir Camp and Southeastern Invitational (required for Southern Charm and Chamber Choir)

1. Instructions – TBA – See Handouts
2. Student work assignments will be made and must be kept for before and after school sales.
3. Profit will go to the CBC for budget. If budget allows, a percentage will be split among qualified students.
4. MS Camp Dates: November 10-14, 2014
5. Southeastern Invitational Date: January 17, 2015

Flight Deck Night

1. Come eat and bring friends!
2. Profit will go to the CBC for budget.
3. Date: TBA
EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

The opportunity for students to obtain a well-rounded education would not be complete without Music Education courses. Music classes should reflect high expectations and standards for student work and performance equal to that of other core courses. Since music study is cross-curricular, it directly relates to all core academic subject matters such as English, Math, Science, and History. Within music ensemble courses the subject matter is presented using differentiated instruction techniques where students function individually developing their own personal instrument and as an integral part of a group developing overall ensemble skills. Choral music is assessed based on mastery of actual performance objectives and encourages students to continue to strive for their best rather than what is accepted as mediocre work in other subject areas. Music study teaches self-discipline through consistent practice of accuracy in rehearsal and performance, demonstration of individual and ensemble responsibility, and optimal presentation of what is learned. These life skills are needed in any work place and help students lead successful and fulfilling lives.

Music programs enhance the educational experience for students, teachers, administrators, and communities – locally and globally. Instrumental and choral ensembles enhance school and community culture. Because music is such an integral part of life, and not just simple entertainment, our choral curriculum is presented in a serious, educational fashion to enable students to develop lifelong skills for the work place and for future musical involvement.

A well-rounded music education experience is what I insist students actively participate in, if they wish to be part of our choral department. I have seen many choral programs in the state perform only one kind of musical genre and/or perform in festivals with poor intonation and unprofessional performance etiquette. These descriptors are not a part of our choral program, professionalism is. High expectations are set for students’ musical ability, intelligence, and character as an individual and an ensemble. These expectations are based each year on students’ potential. No expectation is set that is impossible to achieve. However, in order to achieve these expectations, students will have to work hard, rehearse diligently, practice consistently, and concentrate constantly which will result in slow and steady achievement throughout the year. I have the greatest confidence in students’ ability to overcome obstacles and to succeed regardless of circumstances. However, I do realize life constantly changes and throws challenges our way. We will need to exhibit flexible attitudes and dispositions with the mutual understanding that students are earning a Carnegie unit towards their diploma. Lessons will be taught in a stepwise process that I try to address and accommodate all learning styles. Students will have every opportunity to succeed that is within my means and that is fair. These expectations are consistent with the curricula of River Bluff High School, Lexington District One, and South Carolina Department of Education. As our motto by Emile Zola states, “The artist is nothing without the gift, but the gift is nothing without work.”

Student Expectations
Students are expected to...

- Demonstrate a high level of commitment and performance to rehearsals and performances
- Only have to be told something one time
- Be responsible choir members bringing all necessary materials to rehearsal and taking notes
- Always have a pencil
- Always follow the rules
- Always participate to the fullest in activities, classes, and performances
- Following director’s instruction without argument or challenge
- Be committed and attend rehearsals on a regular basis
- Always bring a pencil to class and USE it
• Always bring an inquiring mind and aspiring attitude
• Have a positive and professional outlook in the choral rehearsal
• Learn how to read music without a piano and practice his/her craft with focus and determination
• Follow all rules and guidelines of school and legal jurisdictions
• Have a respectful disposition
• Demonstrate leadership qualities and high expectations of self, friends, and peers
• Demonstrate superior levels of conduct in and outside of school at all times
• Encourage rather than discourage
• Be flexible
• Take pride in his/her membership in the Choral Department and expresses it with dignity and class
• Be a leader AND a humble follower when appropriate
• Participate fully without reservation
• Follow Choral Conduct
• Follow through with obligations, signed documents, and honorable promises
• Possess a respectable character
• DO THEIR BEST AT ALL TIMES!
• Be prepared with your iPad for instruction and instruction ONLY

What Goes On While My Student Is In Rehearsal and Why Is It Important?

• Warm-up voices so damage and/or abuse does not occur to the vocal cords and technical skills are developed and polished
• Sight-reading with no piano on solfege syllables to train the musical ear and to enhance symbol interpretation skills
• Musical analysis of rehearsal to self-assess and to set achievement goals
• Break down of repertoire into doable assignments
• Review of goals accomplished and goals yet to be achieved to steadily progress through repertoire
• Musical review of rehearsal to monitor progress
• Warm-down to minimize wear and tear on vocal cords

What are the High Expectations and Standards Mrs. Keisler Requires?

• Students must be leaders in class, in the school, and in the community
• Students must possess respectable character
• Students must be dedicated, hard workers
• Students must be on time and responsible young adults
• Students must be flexible
• Students must follow directions meticulously - No exceptions
• Students must work well with others and respect the director
• Most IMPORTANTLY: Students must strive to do their best at all times
**Note: All events are considered mandatory unless told otherwise. Dates can change and be added.**

**Performance Dates 2014-2015**
All Performing Groups: Chorus, Chorale, Chamber Choir, and Show Choir

**Concerts!**
October 9, 2014 7:30 PM at the LOPAC at River Bluff  
December 11, 2014 7:00 PM at the LOPAC at River Bluff  
March 3, 2015 7:00 PM at the LOPAC at River Bluff  
May 14, 2015 7:00 PM at the LOPAC at River Bluff

**Southern Charm Specific Dates**
Middle School Show Choir Camp November 10-14, 2014  
Southern Charm Workshop November 14-16, 2014  
Southern Charm Workshop January 9-11, 2015  
2015-2016 Southern Charm Auditions January 26-29, 2015

**Chamber Choir Specific Dates**
All-State Chorus Auditions November 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 2014  
Possible Clinician Concert February 25-26  
All-State Chorus Weekend March 5-7, 2015  
Graduation June 6, 2015 4:00 PM, Call Time 2:45 PM

**Dates for Chamber Choir and Southern Charm**
Southeastern Invitational January 17 (Prep on Jan 16), 2015  
National Competition Trip Dates: April 16-19, 2015  
5th Grade Recruitment Concert TBA  
LMS and MGMS Recruitment Concert and Visits TBA

**All information is subject to change upon the director’s discretion. Updates and changes will be placed on the website!**
Choral Contract
SIGN AND RETURN BY The SECOND Day of Class

Name of Student: ___________________________ Folder Choir #: ____________

I have read and understand the information contained in this Choral Department Handbook which concerns the chorus discipline policy, rules, guidelines, and codes of conduct that reflect Mrs. Keisler standards and expectations. I understand that if my child or I violate any rules, policies, or procedures, the stated consequences will follow. I, also, acknowledge and understand that my child will receive academic achievement grades for all chorus activities directly related to the curriculum occurring outside of the regular school day, as well as those occurring within the confines of the normal school day.

__________________________________________________________________________

Parent/Guardian Signature ___________________________ Date ____________

__________________________________________________________________________

Student Signature ___________________________ Date ____________

PRESS RELEASE INFORMATION

_____ I give Mrs. Keisler permission to release my child’s picture and name in press releases pertaining to ONLY River Bluff Choral Department business. I understand that I must have this information reflected on the information given to the school.

_____ I do NOT give Mrs. Keisler permission to release my child’s picture and name in press releases. I understand that my child will not be recognized publicly as a member of the ensembles when achievements of the Choral Department are recognized outside River Bluff High School.

__________________________________________________________________________

Parent/Guardian Signature ___________________________ Date ____________

Conduct and Commitment Statement

I, ___________________________ (student name), state that I am obligated as a member of the River Bluff High School Choral Department to attend and participate in all events and rehearsals to the best of my ability. I state that my conduct will reflect that of a respectable young adult and team member on and off the stage, in and out of the classroom at all times. Since I represent Lexington County District One, River Bluff High School, and the Choral Department, I am charged with the responsibility of respectfully fulfilling the high standards and obligations delineated in this handbook and by district officials, school administrators, and teachers. I promise to fulfill these obligations to the best of my ability.

__________________________________________________________________________

Student Signature ___________________________ Date ____________

_______________________________

Parent Signature ___________________________ Date ____________

Medical Concerns

Are there any medical concerns that your child may have that I should be aware of? Please list and describe the concern and any precaution that should be taken into consideration during choral activities. Our first priority is the safety and wellbeing of every person involved in our program. (Attach documentation as needed.)
PARENT/GUARDIAN PERMISSION FOR FIELD TRIP
LEXINGTON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT ONE

Date(s): Listed in the Choral Department Handbook Time Leaving: TBA Time Returning: TBA

Trip Begins and Ends at (Location): River Bluff High School or otherwise indicated

Destination: See Choral Department Handbook
Facility Street Address City State

Itinerary: All Field Trips will have a parent information sheet to be signed by the parent for trip details. This permission form is for any Field Trip to River Bluff feeder schools and general information.

Objectives/Activities of the Trip: Students will be given opportunities throughout the year to perform and expand the learning objectives of the River Bluff classroom to better provide a well-rounded and real life situations.

Field Trip Supervisor: Miki Keisler (803) 821-0838
Supervisor’s Phone Number

Mode of Transportation: Activity Bus Lodging: N/A

Chaperones: 1 to 10 students

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENT/GUARDIAN

I, ________________________, give permission for my child, ____________________, to participate in the field trip described above. I understand that my child will be under the supervision of the chaperones listed above, that all district/school policies are in effect for the duration of the trip, and that any violations of such policies will result in disciplinary action being taken. While on the trip, the listed chaperones have my permission to act on my behalf in the event of an emergency. I understand that all out-of-pocket expenses associated with emergency medical treatment will be my responsibility. I also understand that my child will be given the opportunity to complete any work missed due to the trip.

Child’s Name: ____________________________ School: River Bluff High School Grade: ______

Parent/Legal Guardian’s Name: ____________________________

Home Address: __________________________________________________________________________

Home Phone #: __________ Work Phone #: __________ Emergency Phone #: __________

Student Allergies, if any: __________ Student’s Current Medications: __________

Name of Medical Insurance Co.: ____________________________ Policy #: __________

Signature of Parent/Guardian: ____________________________ Date: __________________

***Please fill out COMPLETELY and NEATLY each time. Fill in specific area codes, zip codes, etc... Indicate NA for sections that are not applicable.***
Lexington County School District One
High School Choral iPad Use Policy
Document is Subject to Change and Modify at the Director’s Discretion

iPad Etiquette

- When the ensemble is being addressed by the director, it is the expectation that ensemble members close the cover of the iPad and place in a secure location that is out of hands reach.

- Illegal copying/scanning/downloading of music is illegal. All laws are upheld by the Lexington County School District One and will be enforced.

- Recording/videoing of others and rehearsals without consent and knowledge is not allowed. Any personal recordings should remain aligned with the classroom expectations and not shared.

- Appropriate methods of communication outside the classroom with the director include school email, office phone, and written communication.

- All peer technological communications related to course material must remain clean, respectful, encouraging, and on topic.

- It is polite and respectful to be courteous and turn off all sounds of the iPad during instruction.

When the proper iPad and technology etiquette is not followed, consequences will follow school and district guidelines of appropriateness. iPads that are confiscated for minor offenses that do not need to be reported to the administration as evidence will be returned at the end of the class period.

__________________________________________________________  ______________________
Parent Signature                                                Date

__________________________________________________________  ______________________
Student Signature                                               Date
INFORMATION FORM
PRINT ONLY – Fill out ONLINE please
If you do not have online access, print this page.

Student School ID: ________________________________

Student Name (first middle last): ________________________________

Grade: 9  10  11  12  DOB: ________________________________  Gender: M  F

Part 1 Code: ________________________________  Part 2 Code: ________________________________

Address: __________________________________________________

Street          City          State          Zip

Phone: (______)______________________________  Cell: (______)______________________________

Email: ________________________________

Mother's Name: ________________________________

Mother's Mailing Address: __________________________________________________

Street          City          State          Zip

Mother's Work Phone: (______)______________________________  Mother's Home Phone: (______)______________________________

Mother's Cell Phone: (______)______________________________

Mother's Email (print): ________________________________

Mother's Occupation: ________________________________

Father's Name: ________________________________

Father's Mailing Address: __________________________________________________

Street          City          State          Zip

Father's Work Phone: (______)______________________________  Father's Home Phone: (______)______________________________

Father's Cell Phone: (______)______________________________

Father's Email (print): ________________________________

Father's Occupation: ________________________________