

Ms. Emily Wilkins (Mrs. Fredericks)
Director of Choirs
Wilson High School
wilemi@wilsonsd.org (freemi@wilsonsd.org)
(610) 670-0180 x 4915

August 26, 2013

Dear Choir Students and Families,

Welcome back to school! I am looking forward to the 2013-2014 school year with the choirs. I am thrilled to welcome new members this year, as we continue to develop as an ensemble. With over 130 people, we have our biggest choir yet. Repertoire planned for this year includes the A. R. Rahman's Bollywood song *Balleilakka*, Handel's *Hallelujah Chorus* with the Wilson High School Orchestra, and our very first major work: the Vivaldi *Gloria!*

Enclosed is the choir syllabus, containing pertinent information regarding course description, expectations, grading policy, and important dates. Please review the syllabus together, sign and detach the last page, and return it by Tuesday, September 3. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you,

Ms. Emily S. Wilkins

Wilson High School Concert Choir

2013-2014

Ms. Emily Wilkins, director

Course Description

Concert Choir will study and perform accompanied and a cappella literature from around the world, representing numerous cultures and musical styles, in many different languages, spanning over 500 years. We will practice proper vocal technique to promote vocal health. We will interpret and discuss music repertoire with respect to style, musicianship, expression, culture, and communicating textual meaning. We will each take ownership of our music making.

Course Objectives

- Develop healthy vocal technique and proper intonation
- Interpret music with respect to genre, style, and culture
- Expand theoretical knowledge of musical elements
- Decode music aurally and visually
- Critically listen and self-evaluate
- Cultivate a kinesthetic connection to music
- Explore the historical and cultural context of each work

Expectations and Procedures

- **Please arrive in the rehearsal room and be seated by the time the bell rings.** Please always have your *folder* and a *pencil*. Belongings should be beneath your chair. No gum, food, or drink, please. Water is okay.
- **Please contribute to a positive learning environment.** This includes showing respect for yourself, your peers, and your teachers. Please see the director outside of class if you have an issue to discuss.
- **Please give your full attention to the director** and refrain from talking.
- **Cell phones, iPods, and tablets (etc)** are not allowed, unless given permission, when needed for a specific purpose (i.e., entering a rehearsal date in your calendar)
- **Please show respect to the choir room.** Keep it clean and organized. Dispose of all garbage. If you move a chair, please return it to its place before leaving the room. Please do not touch the piano unless given specific permission to do so.
- **If you need to use the restroom, please see me in the first two minutes** of class to sign your book; then sign the sign-out sheet by the door.
- **If you are unable to sing, please notify the director before rehearsal begins.** You are expected to follow along in your music, mark your score, perform movement activities, etc.
- **At the conclusion of rehearsal, please place your folder in its correct slot.** Of course, you may take your folder home and return with it to the following rehearsal. Remember that you are responsible for your folder and its contents.

Grading *

- 70% Summative, including:
 - Concerts/Dress Rehearsals
 - Writing prompts
 - Rehearsal critiques
 - Text Quizzes
- 30% Formative, including:
 - Active participation in rehearsals

*Please read: *Performances and Dress Rehearsals* and *After-school Rehearsals*, for further information.

Performances and Dress Rehearsals

You are expected to participate in ALL dress rehearsals and performances. Please mark your calendars NOW. Please alert families, employers, etc., NOW. Dress rehearsals make up 100 points of your second and fourth marking period grades. Concerts make up 200 points. The dates are as follows:

- **Dress rehearsal: Monday, December 16, 2013, 5:30 to 9:00 p.m.**
- **Winter concert: Tuesday, December 17, 2013, 7:00 p.m., report time TBA**

- **Dress rehearsal: Tuesday, May 20, 2014, 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. (*tentative, awaiting confirmation*)**
- **Spring concert: Thursday, May 22, 2014, 7:00 p.m., report time TBA**

- Attendance is MANDATORY. Students will be excused ONLY for emergencies (ie. illness, death in the family) or extenuating circumstances previously discussed with and excused by the director. Absence due to work is NOT excused.
 - An unexcused absence from a dress rehearsal will result zero credit for the rehearsal, and in loss of privilege to sing in the concert; a makeup assignment may be completed for concert credit. *Please note: the unexcused absence “freebee” for after school/evening rehearsals (see next page) does NOT apply to the dress rehearsals.*
 - An unexcused absence from a concert will result zero credit for the concert.
- If you are absent from a dress rehearsal or concert due to illness/emergency, please immediately follow up with a *written and signed* explanation from your parent/guardian. The director will design a suitable makeup assignment to be completed for credit.

Concert Attire:

- Ladies:
 - All black
 - Dress pants/dresses/skirts
 - Skirts must be fingertip-length or longer and accompanied by opaque black stockings (i.e., “jet black,” *not* “sheer black”)
 - Skirt hems of mid-calf or lower do not require stockings
- Gentlemen:
 - White button-down
 - Black tie
 - Black pants

After-school/Evening Rehearsals

Because we rehearse in different sections during the school day, we need opportunities to rehearse as one unified choir. It is impossible to find an ensemble tone, balance, blend, or style without it. As such, **we will have after-school/evening rehearsals four times per concert season.** Rehearsal dates are as follows:

- **Winter Concert Season:**
 - **Monday, November 4, 3:15-5:15 pm**
 - **Thursday, November 14, 6:00-8:00 pm**
 - **Thursday, November 26, 3:15-5:15 pm**
 - **Monday, December 9, 6:00-8:00 pm**

- **Spring Concert Season: *tentative dates, to be confirmed in January***
 - **Monday, March 31, 3:15-5:15 pm**
 - **Wednesday, April 22, 6:00-8:00 pm**
 - **Tuesday, May 6, 3:15-5:15 pm**
 - **Monday, May 12, 6:00-8:00 pm**

- If you have a conflict with a rehearsal (i.e., sports practice, WTC rehearsal, piano lesson), please request excusal *at least one week prior to the rehearsal date*. Requests should be made *in writing* with a signature, or via email of a coach/adviser/parent. Excused absences will not affect your concert privileges. However, without a note, all absences are *unexcused*.
- If you are absent from an after-school rehearsal due to illness/emergency, please immediately follow up with a written explanation from your parent/guardian. Email is acceptable. Again, excused absences will not affect your concert privileges. However, without a note, all absences are *unexcused*.
- Students with two (2) or more *unexcused* absences from rehearsals will NOT sing in the concert; an extensive makeup assignment may be completed for concert credit.
- You are allowed (1) ONE “FREEBIE” *unexcused* absence from an after-school rehearsal with no penalty. Please note: this policy does NOT apply to dress rehearsals.
- **To sum it up, “in a nutshell”:** You may have as many excused absences (with a written excuse) as you need; you may have only one *unexcused* absence.

*Please sign and detach this sheet. Return no later than Tuesday, Sept 3.
Keep the syllabus for future reference*

Student

I, _____, have read the Concert Choir Syllabus in its entirety and understand the course objectives, expectations, and grading policy. I have marked my calendar with important dates.

Signed,

Date:

Parent/Guardian

I, _____, have read the Concert Choir Syllabus and understand the course objectives, expectations, grading policy, and important dates.

Signed,

Phone:

Date:

Email:
