

## 8<sup>th</sup> GRADE CHOIR

**8<sup>th</sup> Grade Choir** is a full year course that meets three times per week. In choir, music of various periods and styles will be studied and performed including works using texts in world languages. Proper vocal technique, ensemble skills, large group rehearsal and performance etiquette and music theory concepts are emphasized.

Participation in the Winter and Spring evening curricular concerts is expected and integral for successful completion of this class. For Band and Orchestra students who elect to take Choir as a one day/week class, proper vocal technique, ensemble skills, large group rehearsal, performance etiquette and performance of choral repertoire will be emphasized. Band and Orchestra students electing to take Choir will be assessed only on the performance standards.

### Course Overview

All students in the Fairfield Choral Program progress through an Ensemble Sequence and Vocal Skill Levels.

#### Fairfield's Choral Program Ensemble Sequence

<u>Grade/Course</u>	<u>Vocal Skill Level</u>	<u>Ensemble Sequence Marker</u>
5 <sup>th</sup> Grade Choir	I	Novice
6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Choir	II	Novice
7 <sup>th</sup> Grade Choir	III	Intermediate
<b>8<sup>th</sup> Grade Choir</b>	<b>IV</b>	<b>Intermediate</b>
Concert Choir	V	Proficient
Treble Choir	VI	Accomplished
Chamber Choir	VII	Advanced
Bel Canto Singers	VIII	Advanced

#### Course Goals

Students will have the ability to understand and engage with music in a number of different ways, including the **creative, responsive** and **performative** artistic processes. They will have the ability to perform music in a manner that illustrates careful preparation and reflects an understanding and interpretation of the selection. They will be musically literate.

Students will be artistically literate: they will have the knowledge and understanding required to participate authentically in the arts. They will have the ability to transfer arts knowledge, skills, experiences and capacities to other subjects, settings and **connects** to promote and enhance lifelong learning.

#### Artistic Processes

- Create
- Perform
- Respond
- Connect

#### Anchor Standards

- Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation.
- Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.
- Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.
- Perceive and analyze artistic work.
- Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.
- Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.
- Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.

	<p><b>Ensemble Goals:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>I. Learn and demonstrate ensemble performing techniques which will include responding to conductor's cues, ensemble balance and blend, and performance etiquette.</li><li>II. Apply the principles of teamwork and cooperation to achieve a common goal in the ensemble setting.</li><li>III. Successfully participate in authentic concert experiences through public performance in the most professional setting available.</li><li>IV. Adhere to proper performance etiquette, concert dress, response to audience, and behavior when not engaged in active performance.</li></ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.</li></ul>
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## Summary Ensemble Skill Objectives

### Blend and Balance

- Students will demonstrate the ability to adjust volume to balance within the ensemble.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to adjust tone quality in all registers to blend within the ensemble.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to blend in unison, two-part harmony and three-part mixed harmony (with the addition of a baritone line)..

### Rhythmic Accuracy

- Students will accurately enumerate and perform whole, half, dotted half, quarter, dotted quarter and eighth note rhythms and their corresponding rests in simple and compound meter, and grouped sixteenth note rhythms and their corresponding rests in simple meter.
- Students will accurately sing and read repertoire in 2/4, 3/4, 4/4 and 6/8 time signatures.

### Musical Expression

By responding to conductors' cues:

- Students will perform a range of dynamics including piano, forte, crescendo, decrescendo, mezzo piano and mezzo forte, pianissimo, fortissimo and sforzando.
- Students will perform a variety of expressive musical symbols including staccato, legato, accent, fermata, accelerando, and ritardando.
- Students will articulate plosive consonants uniformly and clearly.
- Students will accurately perform clear entrances and cutoffs.
- Students will demonstrate "staggered breathing."

## Assessments

- Ensemble performances (Winter and Spring Concerts)
- Written Concert Evaluation
- Weekly Performance Assessment
- Written End of Year assessment

- Students will sing six to eight measure phrases in one breath.

#### Reading the Choral Score/Ear Training & Solfege

- Students will demonstrate the ability to follow a voice part in a choral octavo containing one, two and/or three voice parts including a baritone line.
- Students assimilate the following terms and symbols into their vocabulary and performances: treble clef, system, bar line, measure, double bar line, repeat sign, piano, forte, crescendo, decrescendo, piano line, breath mark, soprano, alto, unison, bass clef, key signature, mezzo piano, mezzo forte, coda, dal segno, first ending, second ending, second soprano, accent, staccato, tie, slur, pianissimo, fortissimo and diminuendo.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to locate and follow musical markings including: baritone, tenor, bass, sforzando, descant and accidentals (sharps/flats/naturals)
- Students will identify note names on the staff in both treble and bass clefs, and will identify note names on the ledger lines from A3 to a C6.
- Students will identify all major key signatures.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to declare a major key, solfege and perform short musical examples including step wise patterns, and skips of thirds.

#### Vocal Technique

- Posture
  - Students will demonstrate correct singing posture while both sitting and standing.
- Tone Production
  - Students will sing in both head voice and chest voice with accurate pitch.
  - Students will demonstrate proper diaphragmatic breathing.

- Students will sing with a tension free, supported and open sound in both head voice and chest voice, avoiding a breathy sound.
- Students will sing with forward placed sound and a lifted soft palate.
- Intonation
  - Students will match pitch.
  - Students will sing notes “on the bulls eye,” not flat or sharp.
  - Students will shape vowels uniformly.
  - Students will share the harmonic responsibility between sections to develop inner ear by singing soprano, alto and baritone.

## **CREATING**

*Conceiving and developing new artistic ideas and work.*

### **Enduring Understanding**

- Musicians' creative choices are influenced by their expertise, context, and expressive intent.
- Musicians evaluate, and refine their work through openness to new ideas, persistence, and the application of appropriate criteria.

### **Essential Questions**

- How do musicians make creative decisions?
- How do musicians improve the quality of their creative work?

**Process Components: Plan and Make, Evaluate and Refine**

### **Repertoire**

- Student composed rhythms

### **Tasks**

- Students will compose (plan and make) a four measure rhythm in 6/8 time using half, dotted half, quarter, dotted quarter, eighth and grouped sixteenth note rhythms and their corresponding rests.
- Students will evaluate their compositions for proper use of note values, and will refine their compositions as needed.

### **Assessment**

- Composition Rubric
- Peer Assessment

## PERFORMING

*Realizing artistic ideas and work through interpretation and presentation.*

### Enduring Understanding

- To express their musical ideas, musicians analyze, evaluate, and refine their performance over time through openness to new ideas, persistence, and the application of appropriate criteria.
- Musicians judge performance based on criteria that vary across time, place and cultures.

### Essential Questions

- How do musicians improve the quality of their performance?
- When is a performance judged ready to present?

**Process Components: Analyze, Interpret, Rehearse, Evaluate, Refine, Present**

### Repertoire

- Students will perform grade level appropriate choral arrangements representing a variety of genres that include Fairfield's Skill Level IV objectives.
- Students will perform grade level appropriate choral arrangements in SAB and/or SATB, one of which must be contemporary choral repertoire, and one of which must be in a world language.
- Students will perform at least one piece of grade level appropriate choral repertoire in the focus meter of 6/8.
- Students will perform various styles of repertoire including but not limited to the focus genres of:
  - Broadway music
  - Spiritual/Gospel music

### Tasks

Students will:

- Rehearse as a full ensemble and perform choral literature demonstrating appropriate dynamics, balance and blend while interpreting the conductor's non-verbal directions.
  - Analyze & Interpret pitches, rhythms, note values, dynamics, and articulations
  - Evaluate & Refine ensemble balance, blend, intonation and articulation.
- Present choral literature at grade level concerts that includes but is not limited to Broadway, spiritual/gospel, music in a world language, contemporary choral repertoire, and a piece in 6/8 time.

### Assessment

- Formative assessments on dynamics, balance and blend and following the conductor's gestures.
- Summative Winter and Spring concert performances.
- Weekly Performance Assessment

## RESPONDING

*Understanding and evaluating how the arts convey meaning.*

### Enduring Understanding

- The personal evaluation of musical works and performances is informed by analysis, interpretation, and established criteria based on the elements of music. (PROGRESSIVE BY GRADE LEVEL)

### Essential Question

- How do we judge the quality of musical work(s) and performances?

Process Components: Analyze, evaluate

### Repertoire

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  - Spiritual/Gospel music

### Tasks

Students will:

- Analyze and discuss targeted instrumental techniques, ensemble skills and elements of music during rehearsals.
- Evaluate, in writing, the quality of their own performances by describing the uses of elements of music and expressive devices
- Demonstrate knowledge of music vocabulary.
- Demonstrate knowledge of all components of a time signature, understanding bottom number and it's impact on enumeration.
- Demonstrates understanding of the dot as it relates to note values and enumeration.

### Assessment

- Ensemble improvement on targeted instrumental techniques, ensemble skills and elements of music during rehearsals.
- Written evaluation of performances.
- Written End of Year Assessment



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Make informed, critical evaluations of the quality and effectiveness of performances.</li><li>• Apply the evaluation criteria to their personal participation in rehearsals and curricular concerts.</li></ul>	
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## CONNECTING

*Relating artistic ideas and work with personal meaning and external context*

### Enduring Understanding

- Understanding connections to varied contexts and daily life enhances musicians' creating, performing and responding.

### Essential Question

- How do the other arts, other disciplines, contexts, and daily life inform creating, performing and responding to music?

### **Process Components: compare and contrast, analyze**

#### Repertoire

Using choral literature aligned with Fairfield Skill Level IV, students will study and perform a variety of styles of repertoire with in-depth study on focus genres: Broadway Music and Spiritual/Gospel Music.

#### Tasks

- Students will study and analyze key characteristics of performance literature as it relates to the repertoire covered.
- Students will compare and contrast various concert repertoire learned with the repertoire in the required genres.

#### Assessment

- Worksheet answering focus questions for each repertoire genre.

#### Broadway

- Focus Question 1: What are the major characteristics of Broadway music? (Telling a story, part of a musical, singable melody)
- Focus Question 2: How does the Broadway song that you performed fit into the plot of the musical that it is from? Why is that song an important part of the story?

#### Spiritual/Gospel

- Focus Question 1: What is the origin of Gospel music? (19<sup>th</sup> century, African American church, taking traditional African American songs and "gospelizing" them integrating musical ideas and

		<p>expressions from genres such as blues, jazz, rock, soul, classical, and country,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Focus Question 2: What are the major musical characteristics of Gospel music? (repeated text and rhythms, flatted notes, distinct rhythms: syncopation, back beats, and pentatonic scales, call and response, clapping)</li><li>• Focus Question 3: What are the origins of spirituals? (slave songs, sung on plantations, communicating hidden messages)</li><li>• Focus Question 4: What are the major musical characteristics of spirituals? (rich harmonies, singable melody, specific text, distinct rhythms: syncopation)</li></ul>
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