TREBLE CHOIR

Treble Choir is a full year course that meets twice in each four day rotation. Students will read three and four part choral scores, with a focus on fundamental aspects of reading and performing as a blended choral ensemble.

This course is offered to choir students in grades 10-12 who have mastered Fairfield's Vocal Skill Level V and who wish to continue their study of vocal techniques, ensemble rehearsal and performance techniques and music literacy. Participation in all scheduled rehearsals, concerts and outside performing events as listed in the Choir Handbook are required. Adherence to the department policies including the Code of Ethics and performance dress code is also required.

As part of the High School Choral Program, all choral students will progress through a Repertoire Cycle in which they will complete and in-depth study of repertoire from various time periods and genres. All choral will target one block of the Cycle each year, and after four years, all participating choral students will have studied each genre in the Repertoire Cycle regardless of ensemble.

Course Overview

All students in the Fairfield Choral Program progress through an Ensemble Sequence and Vocal Skill Level. In order to address and properly develop male changing voices, ensemble voicings and balance, bass voices will meet skill levels V and VI in concert choir and skill levels VII and VIII in Chamber Choir.

Fairfield's Choral Program Ensemble Sequence

Grade/Course	Vocal Skill Level	Ensemble Sequence Marker
5th Grade Choir	I	Novice
6th Grade Choir	II	Novice
7th Grade Choir	III	Intermediate
8th Grade Choir	IV	Intermediate
Concert Choir	V (treble and bass)/VI (bass)	Proficient
Treble Choir	**VI**	**Accomplished**
Chamber Choir	VII (treble and bass)/VIII (bass)	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.
- Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.

Ensemble Goals:

1. Conveying Ideas: each student effectively and musically demonstrates ensemble performance techniques including responding to conductor's cues and adjusting balance and blend in formal concert settings.
2. Communicating and Collaborating: each student participates in the group, taking individual responsibility for using strategies that effectively fulfill ensemble purpose and goals.
3. Creating and Constructing: student constructs an original composition or phrase, rhythmic or melodic, from the synthesis of existing ideas and information and can explain his/her individual creative process.
4. Exploring and Understanding: Student analyzes key issues and develops a detailed plan sufficient to address the task, independently creates and follows appropriate practice strategies to maximize time and effort.
5. Adhere to proper performance etiquette, concert dress, response to audience, and behavior when not engaged in active performance.

Individual Goals: • Concert Choir students will master Fairfield Skill Level V Individual Vocal Technique objectives. • Concert Choir students with bass voices will master Fairfield Skill Level VI Individual Vocal Technique objectives.	

Summary Ensemble Skill Objectives	**Individual Vocal Technique**

Level VI
 Blend and Balance
 • Students will demonstrate the ability to listen to others while singing by adjusting volume to balance within the ensemble ranging from piano to forte.
 • Students will demonstrate the ability to adjust tone quality in all registers to blend within the ensemble and section.
 • Students will demonstrate the ability to blend in mixed harmony in SSA and/or SSAA repertoire.
 	
 Rhythmic Accuracy
 • Students will accurately enumerate and perform whole, half, dotted half, dotted quarter, quarter, syncopation, eighth and sixteenth notes in any pattern. Students will be able to enumerate and perform quarter note triplets.
 • Students will sing and read repertoire in simple meters: 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, cut time, 6/8 and 9/8 time signatures.
 	
 Musical Expression
 Responding to conductors' cues:
 • Students will accurately perform a range of dynamics including piano, forte, crescendo, decrescendo, mezzo piano and mezzo forte, pianissimo, fortissimo and sforzando.
 • Students will accurately perform a variety of expressive musical symbols
	Level VI
	 • Posture
	     o Students will demonstrate correct singing posture while both sitting and standing without prompting.
	 • Tone Production
	     o Students will sing in both head voice and chest voice with accurate pitch.
	     o Students will begin to connect head and chest voice: creating a semi-consistent sound throughout their passaggio.
	     o Tenors and Basses will be continue to strengthen their falsetto.
	     o Students will sing with a clear and focused tone with the exception of extreme highs and lows (register).
	     o Students will be able to place sound in multiple locations within the facial mask.
	     o Students will demonstrate proper diaphragmatic breathing.

including staccato, legato, accent, fermata, accelerando, ritardando, a tempo and tenuto.
- Students will articulate plosive consonants uniformly and clearly.
- Students will accurately perform clear entrances and cutoffs: big beats in homophonic music as well as "off beats" (8th note) in homophonic music.
- Students will demonstrate "staggered breathing."
- Students will sing four to six measure phrases in one breath.

- Students will be able to identify and perform a phrase of music using dynamics, expressions, articulations and text notated in the score.

Reading the Choral Score/Ear Training & Solfege
- Students will demonstrate the ability to read and navigate a choral octavo arranged for SSA and/or SSAA.
- 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, diminuendo, baritone, tenor, bass, sforzando, descant and accidentals (sharps/flats/naturals), tempo marking, meter, ritardando and legato.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to locate and follow musical markings including: tutti, a tempo, subito, tenuto, marcato and rallentando.
- 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 and from C2 to C4: including sharps, flats and naturals.
- Students will identify all major key signatures.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to declare a major key, and label solfege of any scale degree regardless of the key signature and intervallic leap. Students will be able to label and perform descending Do to Sol. Students will be able to label accidentals with solfege (ie – Fi, Te, Le and Me) In addition, students will be able to perform short musical examples including step wise patterns, thirds and fifths as well as skips within the tonic and dominant triad. Students will also be able to sing patterns Ti to Re, Fa to La.

- o Students will sing with a tension free, supported and open sound in both head voice and chest voice, avoiding a breathy sound.
  - o Students will sing with forward placed sound and a lifted soft palate.
- Intonation
  - o Students will match pitch.
  - o Students will demonstrate consistent intonation in all but the highest and lowest registers.
  - o Students will be able to identify when they are not singing in tune and adjust the pitch as necessary to make it in tune.
  - o Students will sing notes "on the bulls eye," not flat or sharp.
  - o Students will shape vowels uniformly.
  - o Students will appropriately modify vowel shape when necessary.
  - o Students will share the harmonic responsibility between sections to develop inner ear by singing soprano, or alto when appropriate.

Assessment:
- Ensemble performances
- Concert Evaluation
- Choir Ensemble Rehearsal Rubric
- Individual Rehearsal Rubric
- Sectional Rubric
- Mid Year Assessment
- Summative Assessment

CREATING
Conceiving and developing new artistic ideas and work.

Enduring Understandings
- 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:	Tasks	Assessment
• Student composed melodies	• Students will compose (plan and make) a four measure melody with the following criteria: ○ 4/4 time ○ Treble Clef ○ Key of D Major ○ Quarter notes, no rests ○ Measure 1 must start on Do. ○ Measure 4 must end on Do. ○ Measure 1 and 4 leap between Do-Mi-Sol and Do (I chord). ○ Measures 2 and 3 leap between Sol-Ti-Re (V chord).	• 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.
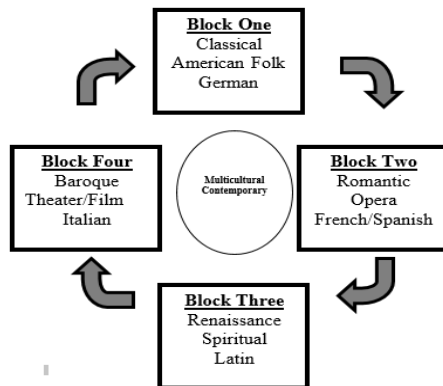- Musicians judge performance based on criteria that vary across time, place and cultures.

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	Tasks	Assessment

• Students will perform skill level appropriate choral arrangements representing a variety of genres that include Fairfield's Skill VI objectives.
• Students will perform skill level appropriate choral arrangements with SSA and/or SSAA voicing.
• Students will perform various styles and genres of repertoire including at least one multicultural piece and one contemporary piece. In addition, students will progress through the 4 year cycle:
 	
Block One
Classical
American Folk
German
 	
Block Four
Baroque
Theater/Film
Italian
 	
Multicultural
Contemporary
 	
Block Two
Romantic
Opera
French/Spanish
 	
Block Three
Renaissance
Spiritual
Latin
	Students will:
	• Rehearse as a full ensemble and perform skill level appropriate choral literature demonstrating appropriate dynamics, balance and blend while interpreting the conductor's non-verbal directions.
	   o Analyze & Interpret pitches, rhythms, note values, dynamics, and articulations
	   o Evaluate & Refine ensemble balance, blend, intonation, phrasing and articulation.
	• Rehearse, refine, evaluate and present Choral literature corresponding to the FPS Repertoire Cycle in both class and formal concert settings.
	• Work collaboratively in a sectional setting to improve on specific musical and technical challenges within the current repertoire.
		• Ensemble improvement on targeted vocal techniques, ensemble skills and elements of music during rehearsals.
		• Ensemble Performance Rubric
		• Individual Rehearsal Rubric
		• Sectional Rubric
		• Individual recorded assessments
		• Participation in concerts

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 LEVEL)
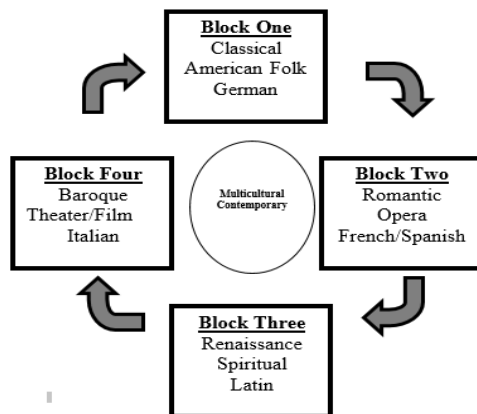
Essential Question

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

Process Components: Analyze, evaluate

Repertoire	Tasks	Assessment
- Students will perform skill level appropriate choral arrangements representing a variety of genres that include Fairfield's Skill Level VI objectives. - Students will perform skill level appropriate choral arrangements with SSA and/or SSAA voicing. - Students will perform various styles and genres of repertoire including at least one multicultural piece and one contemporary piece. In addition, students will progress through the 4 year cycle:	Students will: - Analyze and discuss targeted vocal techniques, ensemble skills and elements of music during rehearsals. - Evaluate, in writing, the quality of their own performances by describing the uses of targeted vocal techniques and elements of music. - Demonstrate knowledge of music vocabulary. - Make informed, critical evaluations of the quality and effectiveness of performances. - Apply the evaluation criteria to their personal participation in rehearsals and curricular concerts.	- Ensemble improvement on targeted instrumental techniques, ensemble skills and elements of music during rehearsals. - Written evaluation of performances. - Summative Written Assessment

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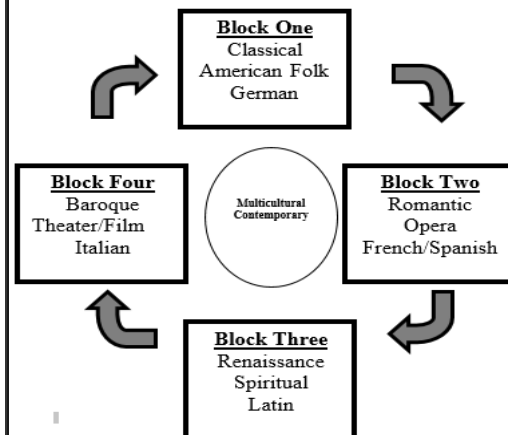
Essential Question
- How do the other arts, other disciplines, contexts, and daily life inform creating, performing and responding to music?

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

Repertoire	Tasks	Assessment
All choirs will cycle through four blocks of study, focusing on one block each year regardless of an individual student's grade or the ensemble they in which they are enrolled. Subsequently, a student who takes high school choir for four consecutive years will receive instruction in each of the four repertoire areas described below.	Students will: • Analyze and interpret key characteristics of performance literature from the Repertoire Cycle as it relates to the elements of music and cultural and historical connections. • Compare and contrast Choral Repertoire performed from the Repertoire Cycle with Choral Repertoire from other genres.	• Answering focus questions for each repertoire genre.

Block One
Classical
American Folk
German

Block Four
Baroque
Theater/Film
Italian

Multicultural
Contemporary

Block Two
Romantic
Opera
French/Spanish

Block Three
Renaissance
Spiritual
Latin

Block 1
Classical

- Focus Question 1: What are some major differences between Baroque music and Classical music?
  - Instrumentation
    - Baroque: recorder, harpsichord, oboe, violin, viola, cello
    - Classical: adding orchestral instruments, timpani, horn, bass
  - Melody and Harmony
    - Baroque music was often polyphonic. Cannons, inventions and other such pieces were commonplace. Music was written in Suites, which were basically collections of dance numbers… gavotte, waltz, minuet, air, gigue, etc. Baroque music is detached, fairly stiff, without vibrato, and with a lot of ornamentation, such as trills.
    - Classical: Monophonic music, single melody and harmony with a counter melody. Dynamics, Tempo changes and rubato appear. Ornamentation is less common. Major works are symphonies with 3-4 movements.

- Focus Question 2: What are the major musical characteristics of Classical music?
  - Homophonic, melody above a chordal accompaniment, light/clear texture, frequent changes of mood/timbre through use of variety in keys, melodies (shorter), rhythms and dynamics, clear cut phrases/cadences

American Folk

- Focus Question 1: What is the origin of American Folk music?
  - Folk music has been community focused music of the working class. Folk music is accessible to all, and is something anyone can understand and in which everyone is welcome to participate. Folk songs range in subject matter from war, work, civil rights and economic hardship to nonsense, satire and love songs.
  - "From the onset of American history, folk music has shown up at times when the people needed it most. The earliest folk songs rose from slave fields as spirituals such as "Down by the Riverside" and "We Shall Overcome." These are songs about struggle and hardship but are also full of hope. They sprang from the need of the worker to go to a place in her brain where she knew there was more to the world than the hardships she was facing at the time."
  -
- Focus Question 2: What are the major musical characteristics of American Folk music?
  - Acoustic instrument accompaniment
  - Simple chord progressions
  - Simple time signatures such as 3/4 or 4/4.
  - "Sharp" or natural keys such as C, D, E, G or A.
  - Singable or "catchy" melody

Romantic
- Focus Question 1: What are the major characteristics of music from the Romantic Era?
    - Song-like melodies (lyrical), as well as many chromatic harmonies and discords.
    - Big orchestras
    - Different "musical structures" like the song cycle, nocturne, concert etude, arabesque and rhapsody
    - A harmonic structure based on movement from I-IV rather than the traditional I-V and use of more elaborate harmonic progressions
    - A greater emphasis on melody to sustain musical interest.
    - Dramatic contrasts in dynamics and pitch
    - Singers require greater range of tone color, dynamics and pitch
    - Expression of human emotion through music
    - Greater emphasis on melody

- Focus Question 2: Who are prominent composers of the Romantic Era:
    - Brahms, Tchaikovsky, Liszt, Schumann, Verdi, Berlioz, Wagner, Schubert
- Focus Question 3: What is an Art Song and what makes it Romantic Music?
    - Lyrical song with musical elements associated carefully with text
    - Goal was turning text into something "tangible that could be emotionalized through music"
    - The accompaniment enhanced the mood/meaning of the text as it created harmonic, rhythmic, and melodic material independent of the voice part, but also supportive of it.
    - Emphasis on melody and expression of human emotion

Opera
- Focus Question 1: What is opera?
    - an extended dramatic composition, in which all parts are sung to instrumental accompaniment, that usually includes arias, choruses, and recitatives, and that sometimes includes ballet.
- Focus Question 2: What is the difference between opera and musical theater?
    - They are both made up of several songs, or musical pieces, connected by lines of dialogue; this is usually spoken in a musical, whereas in an opera it is performed as a recitative in which the dialogue transpires in a melodic or musical pattern.
- Focus Question 3: What are the major voice parts for opera?
    - In the operatic systems there are seven basic voice types and then several sub-types within each type. For women: soprano, mezzo-soprano, and contralto. For men: tenor, countertenor, baritone, and bass. Within choral music there are only four categories for adult singers.
- Focus Question 4: What are some vocal techniques commonly used in opera singing?
    - Vibrato, volume/projection, diction

<u>Block 3</u>
Renaissance Era
- Focus Question 1: What are the major characteristics of Motets?
  - Sacred choral works performed in worship services.
  - Strict style; little accent or emphasis on words, more focus on the melody and harmony.
  - Harmonies are "smooth and predictable" as opposed to dissonant.
  - All singers echo and overlap one another to create more texture. The voices blend clearly even when the parts become more melismatic, or several notes are sung on one syllable.

  - Most are written in Latin.

- Focus Question 2: What are the major musical characteristics of Madrigals?
  - Secular topics (love, humor etc.) presented for entertainment
  - Traditionally, polyphonic madrigals are unaccompanied; the number of voices varies from two to eight, and most frequently from three to six.
  - Rhythm, meter and tempo were often manipulated to more effectively depict the text. Smaller note values were used in 4/4 as opposed to 2/2.
  - Text and word painting was very important and dissonance and less predictable cadences are used to that effect.
  - Polyphonic texture
  - Most are written in the vernacular: French, Italian

Spiritual/Gospel
- Focus Question 1: What is the origin of Gospel music?
  - 19th century, African American church, taking traditional African American songs and "gospelizing" them integrating musical ideas and expressions from genres such as blues, jazz, rock, soul, classical, and country)
- 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
- Focus Question 3: What are the origins of spirituals?
  - slave songs, sung on plantations, communicating hidden messages
- Focus Question 4: What are the major musical characteristics of spirituals?
  - rich harmonies, singable melody, specific text, distinct rhythms: syncopation

<u>**Block 4**</u>
Baroque
- Focus Question 1: What are some of the vocal genres that developed during the Baroque Era?
    - Early operas: chorus/dance/instrumental pieces – the music heightened the story – arias and ritornello
    - Oratorio – a SACRED story told with arias/chorus/recitatives – originally acted out and eventually gave way to music presented only.
    - Cantata – song for soloists/choir often accompanied by organ or orchestra for the church
    - Passion – similar to an oratorio, but specific in context of the Crucifixion of Christ
- Focus Question 2: What are the major musical characteristics of Baroque music?
    - figured bass, major/minor shifts, forms (binary, fugue, counterpoint), energetic rhythms, long melodies, ornamentation, grand contrasts in dynamics/timbres

Theatre/Film
- Focus Question 1: What are the major characteristics of Broadway music?
    - Telling a story, part of a musical, sing-able melody
- Focus Question 2: How does a song from a Broadway show or film further the plot?
    - Often times a song will either carry out the plot or depict an emotion or thought process of a character. A song can be portraying real time or be a frozen moment in time. It is important to know when and how the song fits into the plot so as to understand its importance or role in the story
- Focus Question 3: What types of singing techniques are needed for musical theater?
    - "belt," volume, Forward placement, "brassier/nasal" sound