

Lake Zurich High School  
**CHOIR HANDBOOK**  
2009-2010

*Concert Choir*  
*Women's Chorale*  
*Cadet Choir*  
*Treble Choir*  
*Bare Voices*  
*Blue Notes*



Nick Juknelis  
Ellen Singer  
**DIRECTORS**

This handbook has been written and developed for the members of the Lake Zurich High School choir program and their parents with the intent of communicating the standards, policies and expectations of the choir and of the Fine Arts Department. Being a part of a performing ensemble is a tremendous responsibility. Self discipline, commitment, compassion and musical excellence are expected while providing a rewarding and exciting experience.

This is going to be a fantastic year full of many exciting opportunities for all! There will be several performances (including a performance tour) and many chances for students to grow as musicians. We are committed to constantly improving the high quality of the choral program as well as increasing the membership and excitement surrounding the Lake Zurich High School choirs. Take pride in this program. It is your hard work that will make it another excellent year!

**All choir members and parents/guardians are asked to read this entire handbook and to sign and return the statement of commitment and the statement of financial responsibility to their director.**

## **PHILOSOPHY**

The American Association of School Administrators stated, “We believe in a well-balanced school curriculum in which music, drama, painting, poetry, and the like are included side-by-side with other important subjects, such as mathematics, history and science. It is important that pupils, as a part of general education learn to appreciate, understand, create, and criticize with discrimination those products of the mind, voice, hand and body which give dignity to the person and exalt the spirit of man.”

The Music Educator’s National Conference (MENC), the national organization for music educators and education, references these nine areas as the current national standards of music education in America—

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.

In addition to meeting and exceeding national standards of music education, the directors believe that music is a vital part of every student’s well-rounded education.

## **GOALS**

The goals of the music curricular area of the Lake Zurich High School Fine Arts Department are:

1. To help students develop their musical potential;
2. To foster growth in cooperative learning skills;
3. To encourage self esteem through the pride of accomplishment;
4. To stimulate creativity;
5. To promote self-expression;
6. To broaden aesthetic appreciation, and
7. To help make music a source of enjoyment throughout life.

## **EXPECTATIONS**

1. All school rules in the student handbook apply whether the choir is on or off campus.
2. Students will give 100% effort and participation at all times.
3. Students will show respect to the directors, other students and school property (including the classroom, practice rooms, pianos, music and folders).
4. Students will be in their assigned seats with materials (folder, pencil) when the bell rings.
5. No food, drink (water permitted) or gum is allowed in the choir room or in practice rooms.
6. Students should not be in the choir room without the director’s approval. Students should not store books, coats or any personal items in the choir room during the day or overnight.
7. At the end of rehearsal students are dismissed by the director, not the bell. Folders should be returned to their assigned slots and there should be no trash left in the room. All chairs should be stacked in groups of four on the top riser.

## **COURSE FOCUS**

The primary focus of the choir program is to challenge students to become outstanding vocal musicians. Concerts are viewed as the culmination of preparation as well as the application of all of the concepts taught in class. Students are required to participate in all performances and will receive a grade for their participation. The musical literature selected and studied throughout the course of the year serves as the major tool through which most of the musical concepts are taught. The music selected will represent a wide variety of musical styles, historical time periods and musical/historical functions.

## **STUDENT LEADERSHIP**

The student leadership program is specifically designed to engage students in the choir program. Students are encouraged to accept positions of leadership that develop their skills of responsibility by acting as liaisons between the director and the choir while positively influencing the learning of others. These positions will combine to form the choir board which meets periodically to discuss the status of the choir program or an individual choir. Each choir may or may not have the following positions:

1. **Student Conductor**—The student conductor is a responsible student that demonstrates strong leadership qualities and sets a positive example for others to follow. This student will study selected scores and will assume the duties of the director during his/her absence. This is a director appointed position.
2. **Section Leaders**—The section leaders are responsible students with strong leadership qualities that are capable of running sectional rehearsals. These students must be strong musicians who set a positive example for other choir members. Section leaders will be called upon regularly to teach other section members selected musical passages. Piano skills are highly desirable for section leaders. These are director appointed positions.
3. **President**—The president is a strong leader fully dedicated to the choir program. This student must set a positive example and work with the director on choir communication, event planning and serve as a student figurehead on behalf of the entire group. The president also assists in planning social activities and serves as a liaison between the choir and the director. This is a student elected position.
4. **Vice President**—The vice president assists the president in publicity, fund raising and the planning of social activities and acts on the behalf of the president during his/her absence. The vice president is also responsible for the celebration of choir birthdays. This is a student elected position.
5. **Secretary**—The secretary is responsible for the distribution and collection of informational forms and attendance when necessary. This student may also assist the director in the preparation of programs and handouts as well as collating forms for choir tours. This is a student elected position.
6. **Treasurer**—The treasurer is responsible for managing fund raisers, working with parent helpers and maintaining student accounts. This is a student elected position.
7. **Spirit Leaders**—The spirit leaders are responsible for maintaining positive choir morale. They must arrange for building block activities to be enjoyed once per week. They will also work with the director to ensure there is no negative energy filtering through the choir. This is a student elected position.

8. **Fund Raising Coordinator**—The fund raising coordinator is responsible for the organization and development of new fund raisers. This position is crucial during touring years. They will also assist the director and treasurer in the management of ongoing fund raisers. This is a director appointed position.

9. **Class Representative**—The class representative will serve as a liaison between their class and the choir board. This position is only necessary if a particular class is not represented on the board. This is a student elected position.

10. **Librarian**—The librarian works with his/her staff on the maintenance of the choral library. The librarian aids in the distribution and collection of music, maintains the appearance of the library and will enter music into the computer database. This is a director appointed position.

11. **Historians**—The historians are responsible for maintaining records of the choirs' activities. The historians must arrange for a camera to be present at all events. The historians will also prepare the yearly slide show and senior photo frame. This is a student elected position.

12. **Green Team**—The green team will work with the director and the choirs to develop ways that will keep the choir environmentally responsible. The green team will work with recycling and fundraising. This is a director appointed position.

13. **Robe Custodians**—The robe custodians are in charge of all aspects of uniforms for the choirs. These students will assist in the fitting and storage of all robes, be in charge of distribution and collection during concert events and work with a robe team regarding travel logistics. This is a director appointed position.

#### CONCERT CHOIR

**President**  
Lexi Burkley

**Historian**  
Katrina Lacsam

**Vice President**  
Vinithra Rajagopalan

**Spirit Leaders**  
Austin Davis & Bridget Euker

**Secretary**  
Hannah Buto

**Fund Raising Coordinator**  
to be appointed

**Treasurer**  
Demi Zaino

**Sophomore Representative**  
Sammy Lacsam

**Student Conductor**  
to be appointed

**Section Leaders**  
**Soprano I** Carla Nasui  
**Soprano II** Hannah Buto  
**Alto I** Lexi Burkley  
**Alto II** Christina DiVito  
**Tenor I** Matt Wright  
**Tenor II** Anthony Zarinana  
**Bass I** Danny King  
**Bass II** Kevin Cushman

**Librarian**  
Christina DiVito & Kelly Klausing

**Green Team**  
Joe Browy & Carla Nasui

**Robe Custodians**  
Carla Nasui, Ramisha Saeed &  
Anthony Zarinana

## **Women's Chorale, Cadet Choir, Treble Choir, Bare Voices & Blue Notes**

student leadership positions will be selected and appointed during the first part of the school year at the discretion of the director.

### **DISTRICT 95 CHORAL FESTIVAL**

Each year in October the choirs of LZHS, LZMSN and LZMSS come together for a day long festival. A guest director will come in to work with the students in preparation for an afternoon concert. In addition to combined pieces, each choir will perform a piece on their own for the audience. This is a great opportunity to learn and grow from each other and create beautiful music as we come together as a district. It is an important time for high school recruitment as well; many high school students remember their first festival experience!

### **SPRING MUSICAL**

Students are greatly encouraged to be involved with the musicals that are produced by the Fine Arts Department every year. The musicals are a great opportunity to put into practice the skills that are learned in the classroom. The successful productions are largely dependent on the involvement of talented choir members lending their skills to the cast and ensemble. Check the bulletin board between the choir room and the drama room for more information about this year's theater productions.

### **PRIVATE VOICE LESSONS**

All students are encouraged to take private lessons in order to develop the musical concepts and techniques which can best be explored through individual training. There will be at least five private voice teachers available at school during the day for lessons. The cost per lesson is \$22. Students taking private lessons should take this responsibility seriously. The directors will solicit feedback from voice teachers regarding an individual student's performance in the private studio.

1. Students may come in for lessons once a week during a study hall, lunch or open period. If a student does not have an available period, he or she may arrange to have a private lesson during part of their choir period at the discretion of their director. Honors choir students are not permitted to take lessons during their choir period.
2. The teachers treat these rooms as professional studios; students should treat private lessons professionally as well.
3. Private teachers will explain their own studio expectations.

### **COMMUNICATION**

Communication between home and school is a necessity. Students should join the email distribution list for their individual choir. Students with access to Facebook should join the "Lake Zurich High School Choir-Current Students" fan page (parents are also welcome to join). Should your email address change at any point, please notify your director immediately. Also, please check email regularly.

Parents should join the choir parent email distribution list for information about concerts, fundraisers and news updates. Simply send an email to [Nick.Juknelis@lz95.org](mailto:Nick.Juknelis@lz95.org) to join the distribution list. Parents with access to Facebook should join the "Lake Zurich High School Choir-Alumni, Family & Friends" fan page. Should your email address change at any point, please notify the director immediately.

## **SOLO AND ENSEMBLE CONTEST**

Each year students are given the opportunity to participate in the IHSA Solo and Ensemble Contest. Students prepare selections on their own or with the help of a private instructor.

**This year, LZHS will host the IHSA Solo and Ensemble Contest again.**

1. Students not taking private lessons must have two coaching sessions with a private teacher or a director. These sessions are to ensure the student has an appropriate selection and is well-prepared for their performance.
2. Students are responsible for securing their own accompanist for both rehearsal and performance. Students are expected to rehearse with their accompanist at least twice before the competition. They are also expected to pay their accompanist for their time and talent (a typical fee is \$40-\$50).
3. Students wishing to prepare a vocal solo are responsible for paying the entrance fee (a nominal charge of \$10). The entrance fees for students wishing to perform in ensembles of two or more will be paid by the choir. Ensemble members who register but back out will be required to repay the entrance fee to the choir.
4. Classical or art song repertoire is required for Solo and Ensemble. Musical theater selections are not appropriate for this contest.

## **FUND RAISING**

1. The purpose of fund raising is to raise money for activities we otherwise could not afford such as the awards night, tours and additional concert music. Students are encouraged to take every opportunity to make the most of each fund raiser.
2. Some fund raising money will go into the general fund (which is money that will benefit all choir students equally). Other funds will be put into individual student accounts based on how much that individual student has earned. Every student is offered the opportunity to participate in fund raising projects.
3. It is illegal for the school to give money back to a student if they quit choir or upon graduation. Money left in an individual account can be transferred to a sibling or will be moved to the general fund.
4. It is against school board guidelines to use individual student accounts to pay for any other activities besides travel!

## **TRAVEL**

Students in the LZHS choir program will be given the opportunity to participate in a semi-professional concert tour on a rotating year basis. The cost of these tours will be at the students' expense. It is our intention to provide this opportunity to all students. This year, LZHS choirs will have the opportunity to travel to Walt Disney World from December 28, 2009 through January 2, 2010 to participate in Disney's famous *Candlelight Processional*. Students participating in this tour should expect five to ten additional **REQUIRED** rehearsals in preparation for the performances!

In addition to extensive tours, students may have the opportunity for off campus performances and field trips. During these times all school rules will be strictly enforced and exemplary citizenship will be expected. Remember, these trips are privileges not rights. You are representing Lake Zurich High School during these outings and your conduct will determine whether these trips will continue.

## **AWARDS NIGHT**

An awards night is held every spring to recognize the accomplishments of the students in the choral program. Individual awards are given for participation, leadership and special recognition.

Awards given are as follows:

### **Participation Awards**

Freshmen—Certificate  
Sophomore—Varsity Letter  
Junior—Pin  
Senior—Senior Award

### **National Awards**

National Arion Award  
National School Choir Award  
National Chopin Award

### **Special Recognition Awards**

Director's Award for Chorus  
Tri-M Music Honor Society Membership Certificate  
Tri-M Music Honor Society Senior Recognition Certificate  
Tri-M Music Honor Society Private Lesson Scholarship  
Leadership Award for Choir  
Musicianship Award for Choir

## **GRADING SCALE**

Students will be graded based on the following scale in accordance with the school grading policy:

A+	97 - 100
A	93 - 96
A-	92 - 90
B+	87 - 89
B	83 - 86
B-	80 - 82
C+	77 - 79
C	73 - 76
C-	72 - 70
D+	67 - 69
D	63 - 66
D-	60 - 62
F	59 - 0

## **SEMESTER GRADES AND FINAL EXAMS**

Semester grades are calculated by averaging the two quarter grades at 40% each and the final exam at 20%. A written final exam that will review all the terms and concepts studied during the semester may be given. Students are asked to have paper at all times during class to take note of newly introduced concepts. These notes can then be used to review for the final exam.

## **EVALUATION FOR CONCERT CHOIR & WOMEN'S CHORALE (HONORS LEVEL)**

Please note that Bare Voices and Blue Notes use separate grading policies.

### **Participation**

Regular attendance and class participation are essential to the success of the choir. Concepts taught in class can often only be learned through rehearsal. Therefore, each daily rehearsal is worth four points (there are roughly 200 points per quarter). Students who are on time, prepared and diligent in rehearsal will receive four points per day. Students who are absent, disruptive, ill-prepared or tardy will not receive their daily points. Daily points may be lost without warning. Absences due to voice lessons are handled at the discretion of the director. Students who are unable to sing due to illness will be expected to follow along during rehearsal.

### **Singing Tests and Written Assignments**

An honors level singing course will certainly assess singing! Singing assessments may include pitch and rhythmic accuracy, proper diction, dynamics, expression, memorization or all elements combined. Singing assessment will happen as frequently or as infrequently as necessary. They may occur as individual or group spot checks, with or without digital voice recorders and may be announced or unannounced.

Written assignments are also beneficial tools for choir. This may include but is not limited to historical projects, reports, personal reflections and musical analysis.

### **Sectionals**

Students are required to attend sectionals outside of daily rehearsal; class sectionals do not count. Sectionals will be scheduled in thirty minute blocks before or after school or can be arranged during an open period with a director or your section leader. All sectionals must be completed one full week prior to a concert; sectionals done within one week of a concert will be counted as extra credit only. Any other additional sectionals above the graded amount of 100 points will be awarded extra credit points. These extra sectionals can be used to make up excused class absences.

First sectional	50 points	finished before the second week of the quarter.
Second sectional	15 points	finished before the fourth week of the quarter.
Third sectional	10 points	finished before the sixth week of the quarter.
Fourth sectional	25 points	finished before one week prior to concert date.
Extra Credit sectionals	4 points	given after four sectionals have been completed.

## Performance

Concerts demonstrate the understanding of the concepts taught in rehearsal. Therefore, a concert is equivalent to an exam in other academic courses. Included in this handbook are the performance dates for the upcoming year. *Concert attendance is absolutely mandatory.* Additional performance opportunities in which the students are expected to perform may arise throughout the year. Students will be advised of these concerts in advance.

Absences will only be excused in the case of extreme personal illness, family emergencies and death. All other absences must be documented with student, parent and director signatures **before two weeks prior to the concert.** Documenting an absence does not guarantee the absence will be considered “excused.” Excused absences must be made up with work assigned by the director. Students with an unexcused absence will receive no points for the performance, most likely resulting in an extremely low quarter grade.

Choral performance is based on a large group of individuals working as one cohesive ensemble. Uniform concert attire promotes unity within the group. Therefore, it is important that students adhere to the prescribed dress code. Failure to adhere to concert attire will result in partial loss of concert points. In addition to the robes provided by Lake Zurich High School, students are required to wear the attire listed below. Any items not specifically mentioned should not be visible to the audience.

**MEN** must wear completely **black** shoes, **black** socks and **black** pants.

**WOMEN** must wear **flesh colored** nylons and completely **black** closed-toe shoes; **no** open-toed shoes, boots, sandals and certainly **no** flip-flops.

Reapply deodorant and limit hairspray, cologne and perfume. Jewelry and hair fasteners draw audience attention away from the whole performance. Please leave these at home. Women should apply make-up and should wear their hair away from their face.

Each quarter, each major concert performance is worth 100 points. Students not adhering to concert dress attire will lose ten points per infraction. Proper robe handling, the pre-concert warm-up and the pre-concert rehearsal are worth twenty five additional points per concert. Students not putting their robe away in the proper way will lose these points.

Part of being a good performer is being a good audience member. In addition to being a good audience member at our own concerts, you will be asked to attend one additional concert per quarter. This will account for an additional fifty performance points. You may attend a Lake Zurich High School band, orchestra, jazz or Bare Voices and Blue Notes concert. **You must have a director sign your program at the end of the concert.** If you are unable to attend an LZHS concert, consider going to another local high school choir concert or musical (please, if you attend another school’s performance, it should be a vocal performance). Lastly, professional concerts are also acceptable. Middle school concerts are not acceptable.

To receive full credit for these performances, you must arrive on time and stay for the entire concert. You may not be a performer in the concert; you may not be working on some other aspect of the performance (technical support, Tri-M ushering). Be prepared to answer any questions about the performance.

<b>EVALUATION FOR CONCERT CHOIR &amp; WOMEN'S CHORALE (HONORS LEVEL)</b>		
<b>Category</b>	<b>Value</b>	<b>Division of Points</b>
Participation	4 points/day	Roughly 200 points for attendance at four points per day.
Singing Tests and Written Assignments	varies	May include announced and unannounced group/individual spot checks with or without digital voice recorders. Written assignments and assessments are also included.
Sectionals	100 points	First sectional is 50 points; second sectional is 15 points; third sectional is 10 points; fourth sectional is 25 points; additional sectionals are 4 extra credit points each.
Performance	varies	100 points for each major concert performance.
		25 points for rehearsal, warm-up and robe care.
		50 points for attending another performance.

## **EVALUATION FOR CADET CHOIR & TREBLE CHOIR (COLLEGE PREP LEVEL)**

### **Participation**

Regular attendance and class participation are essential to the success of the choir. Concepts taught in class can often only be learned in rehearsal. Therefore, each daily rehearsal is worth four points (there are roughly 200 points per quarter). Students who are on time, prepared and diligent in rehearsal will receive four points per day. Students who are absent, disruptive, ill-prepared or tardy will not receive their daily points. Daily points may be lost without warning. Absences due to voice lessons are handled at the discretion of the director. Students who are unable to sing due to illness will be expected to follow along during rehearsal.

### **Performance**

Concerts demonstrate the understanding of the concepts taught in rehearsal. Therefore, a concert is equivalent to an exam in other academic courses. Included in this handbook are the performance dates for the upcoming year. *Concert attendance is absolutely mandatory.* Additional performance opportunities in which the students are expected to perform may arise throughout the year. Students will be advised of these concerts in advance.

Absences will only be excused in the case of extreme personal illness, family emergencies and death. All other absences must be documented with student, parent and director signatures **before two weeks prior to the concert.** Documenting an absence does not guarantee the absence will be considered "excused." Excused absences must be made up with work assigned by the director. Students with an unexcused absence will receive no points for the performance, most likely resulting in an extremely low quarter grade.

Choral performance is based on a large group of individuals working as one cohesive ensemble. Uniform concert attire promotes unity within the group. Therefore, it is important that students adhere to the prescribed dress code. Failure to adhere to concert attire will result in partial loss of concert points. In addition to the robes provided by Lake Zurich High School, students are required to wear the attire listed below. Any items not specifically mentioned should not be visible to the audience.

**MEN** must wear completely **black** shoes, **black** socks and **black** pants.

**WOMEN** must wear **flesh colored** nylons and completely **black** closed-toe shoes; **no** open-toed shoes, boots, sandals and certainly no flip-flops.

Reapply deodorant and limit hairspray, cologne and perfume. Jewelry and hair fasteners draw audience attention away from the whole performance. Please leave these at home. Women should apply make-up and should wear their hair away from their face.

Each quarter, each major concert performance is worth 100 points. Students not adhering to concert dress attire will lose ten points per infraction. Proper robe handling, the pre-concert warm-up and the pre-concert rehearsal are worth twenty five additional points per concert. Students not putting their robe away in the proper way will lose these points.

### Singing Tests and Written Assignments

Students enrolled in a singing course will certainly be assessed on singing! Singing assessments may include pitch and rhythmic accuracy, proper diction, dynamics, expression, memorization or all elements combined. Singing assessment will happen as frequently or as infrequently as necessary. They may occur as individual or group spot checks, with or without digital voice recorders and may be announced or unannounced.

Written assignments are also beneficial tools for choir. This may include but is not limited to historical projects, reports, personal reflections and musical analysis.

### Sectionals

Students are required to attend sectionals outside of daily rehearsal; class sectionals do not count. Sectionals will be scheduled in thirty minute blocks before or after school or can be arranged during an open period with a director or your section leader. All sectionals must be completed at least one week prior to a concert; sectionals done within one week of a concert will not count for credit. Additional sectionals above the graded amount will be awarded extra credit points. These extra sectionals can be used to make up excused class absences.

First sectional	50 points	finished before the fourth week of the quarter.
Second sectional	50 points	finished before one week prior to concert date.
Extra Credit sectionals	4 points	given after four sectionals have been completed.

EVALUATION FOR MEN'S CHOIR, CADET CHOIR & TREBLE CHOIR (COLLEGE PREP LEVEL)		
Category	Value	Division of Points
Participation	4 points/day	Roughly 200 points for attendance at four points per day.
Singing Tests and Written Assignments	varies	May include announced and unannounced group/individual spot checks with or without digital voice recorders. Written assignments and assessments are also included.
Sectionals	100 points	50 points for each of two sectionals. 4 points extra credit for each additional sectional.
Performance	varies	100 points for each major concert performance. 25 points for rehearsal, warm-up and robe care.

## STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (Student's Name) have read the choir handbook and understand the rules and policies that apply to my participation in the choir program at Lake Zurich High School. Furthermore, **I acknowledge all the dates on the calendar that apply to my performing group and I plan to participate, giving my best effort.** I realize if I do not meet the expectations stated clearly in this handbook it could be harmful to my own musical experience, as well as others, and could result in the lowering of my grade.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (student)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (parent/guardian)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Choir(s): \_\_\_\_\_

---

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (Student's Name) understand that I am financially responsible for all materials and supplies provided to me by the Lake Zurich High School Fine Arts Department and choir program. Such items include (though are not limited to) choral music, folders, binders, books and sound equipment. Should I damage, destroy or not return any materials provided by Lake Zurich High School, I will pay for the current replacement cost of that item. Furthermore, I will provide appropriate compensation for any shipping or otherwise significant costs incurred with the replacement of those materials.

*The most commonly neglected material is choral music. This year, music ranges from \$1.90 to \$3.50. Shipping costs will be minimally \$3.25 per piece of music. Your music folder costs approximately \$12.00 excluding the price of shipping and engraving.*

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (student)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (parent/guardian)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Choir(s): \_\_\_\_\_