



Water Spring Middle School
Performing Arts Department
2025-2026 Chorus Handbook



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Facebook: Water Spring Middle School Chorus and
Theater

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Welcome/Introduction

Congratulations on making the decision to join the Water Spring Middle School Chorus. For those of you who this is your first year in WSMS Chorus, welcome! To those of you who were in the WSMS Chorus last year, welcome back! I am excited to be working WITH you this year!

I am so excited to be starting my 11th year of teaching as a Wildcat. For the first 7 years I was an elementary music teacher for four and then three years of elementary dance at Water Spring Elementary School before being invited to join the Wildcat family three years ago. I was also involved in chorus during my middle and high school years. It was in high school that I discovered my passion for choral music and pursued a degree in Music Education with a secondary choral emphasis. I then finished my education interning at Northwest Kidder Middle School in Michigan.

My goal for this year will be to challenge and inspire each and every one of you to grow in your love and respect for choral music. We will be doing this through music exploration, rehearsal and performance. Every voice in the choir is important so it is up to each individual to bring their personal best to each and every class period. It is expected that each student will sing each and every day while trying your best, showing effort, and having a positive attitude. When we all work together as a team and show professionalism, we are successful as an ensemble.

This handbook will have everything you need to be a successful member in your ensemble this year. **Please look this over and sign the last page acknowledging you read the entirety of the handbook by September 4. We will also be having a short quiz over it that date as well in class.**

I look forward to working with each and every one of you this year as we create choral music together in our beautiful singing space!

Welcome to the Water Spring Middle Chorus Family!

Mr. Beck

Scott.Beck@ocps.net

Required Materials

1. Positive attitude! Be ready to sing and participate each day.
2. Water bottle with your name written on it.
3. Spiral Notebook. Wide or college ruled is fine. Needs to have at least 100 sheets.
4. MULTIPLE PENCILS. We write in pencil ONLY on music.

Additional donated materials that we will always need as a class throughout the year:

Additional Pencils, Whiteboard Markers, Clorox Wipes, Reams of Lined Paper, Hand Sanitizer, Kleenex, Mr. Clean Erasers, Amazon Wish List Items

Amazon Wishlist -

https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/1YFMBEQCW7LA?ref=wl_share

If you would like to continually help the Water Spring Middle School Choral/Musical Theater department, please consider purchasing items from the amazon wish list which will be edited and added to during the year. Make sure to check back often. Any small donation is GREATLY appreciated!

YMCA After School Care

Students in chorus are strongly encouraged to be registered for FREE YMCA care after school ONLY for any and all after school rehearsals that take place during the year. This program is FREE to sign up and will be utilized for concert dates after school, any rehearsals after school, etc. Please sign up at

<https://ymcafc.org/programs/school/middle/registration/>

Chorus Fee - \$50

Performance class essentials include, but are not limited to sheet music, books, recordings, performance expenses, accompanists, props, transportation, equipment, guest clinicians, Florida Music Educators Association convention and travel expenses, printed programs, etc. Fees help us defray a small amount of these expenses and reduce the need for excessive fundraising. Additionally, students will receive their concert polo. *Those of you who have your chorus polo from last year and it fits, your fee is only \$30* Payments can be made through SchoolCash Online.

Students are never excluded from the program activities based on their family's financial needs. Please contact Mr. Beck if you need to make special arrangements.

Performance Uniform

Uniforms are essential and necessary for performing ensembles. A uniform identifies the group at every event in which we perform, and projects a polished image. All students will be provided with concert black pants that you will be able to have out ON LOAN for the year and return at the end of the school year. Students will be responsible for providing black socks and ALL black shoes. Each student will receive a chorus polo which will be used for formal performances.

Performance Attire

1. Chorus polo provided by Mr. Beck from your chorus fee.
2. Concert black pants provided by the WSMS Chorus Department.
3. Hair is neat and pulled back away from your face. Your audience wants to see your facial expression while you sing and so do I!
4. If wearing earrings, only studs are allowed.
5. Concert black bottoms should be neat, washed, and freshly pressed before EACH CONCERT.
6. Black dress shoes, **NO SNEAKERS!** If wearing a heel, make it very short. Walking up and down the risers is hard enough in flat shoes!
7. Black socks that cover at least at the ankle or black opaque tights.

Concert Attendance Policy

Performing is the major focus of our class rehearsals and preparation. It is also a fun and unique part of being in this class! Since music classes are co-curricular, some of the required grading falls outside of the usual school day. **All students are expected to attend all performances.** Performances, concerts, and required rehearsals are mandatory and constitute a large portion of each child's grade. **If you know your child will not be in attendance, a valid, written excuse must be sent electronically from the parent via email at least three weeks in advance.** Students with excused absences will be given a make-up performance assignment.

All performance and rehearsal dates are listed in the performance calendar. This calendar contains only dates/times which we know at present and is subject to change due to circumstances beyond our control. When changes and additions occur, students and parents will be notified well in advance.

Classroom Policies/Procedures

1. Students are to come into class, put their backpacks on the back wall, grab their choir materials, and sit in their assigned seat at the start of the bell.
2. No food or drink is allowed in the classroom except for bottled water.
3. Students may **NEVER CHEW GUM** while in class.
4. Phones are not to be used in class **AT ALL**. Students using their phones during class will have their phones taken away.
5. Students should participate to the best of their ability during each and every class period. This means giving 100% effort, having a positive attitude, and giving full attention. Giving anything less will result in loss of daily rehearsal points.

Consequences

Failure to follow classroom rules will result in a consequence which can include the following:

1. Loss of daily rehearsal points.
2. Behavior think sheet (loss of your daily 5 rehearsal points)
3. Parent email or phone call home.
4. Loss of privileges (field trips, MPA, etc.)
5. Referral.
6. Removal from performance or ensemble.

Grading

Ensemble Rehearsal Skills (30%)

Everyone starts out with daily rehearsal points (5 per day). Students will keep all 5 points by being prepared, fully participating and demonstrating your understanding of rehearsal and ensemble standards. Any behavior or technique that is less than 100% effort will lose up to that day's total points. This includes, but is not limited to; talking out of turn, not having required materials, not following directions, not participating, chewing gum, non-focus, not singing in proper posture, or displaying less than best effort and attitude **after a warning is given**. Students who are not in rehearsal are excused from the points so that way they don't harm or help your grade.

Performances (40%)

Chorus is a performance based class. Performances and rehearsals held beyond school hours are a required part of the curriculum and a large part of the student's grade. Performances are graded on a rubric and include using correct technique, being in proper uniform, following directions, memorizing music, quietly listening as other groups perform, etc. Our performances serve as our semester finals. In addition to these performances, we also have the music equivalent of the FAST - the MPA (Music Performance Assessment) which will also be counted towards each student's grade. Students in music classes will also have an End of Course exam.

Tests/Quizzes (20%)

Although chorus is a performance based class, there will be multiple quizzes and a few tests throughout the year. Some quizzes will be announced and some will not. Students will learn everything they need to know for the quizzes and tests with plenty of preparation and practice.

Exit Slips/Journal Prompts (10%)

Students will either have an exit slip or journal prompt daily that will be graded biweekly. If a student misses a day, they will find the journal prompts/exit slips in a make-up location in the room.

Other Opportunities

All-State Chorus

Students in 7th and 8th grade are able to audition for the All State Honor Choirs, which are held in Tampa for 2 days January 15 & 16. If selected, students combine with other top singers from all over the state and culminate in a professional-quality performance. Students in choir will go through the intensive training sessions needed to prepare for this competitive audition. This is designed for students who enjoy a challenge and can work independently. The teacher will give more information including costs, dates and commitments when school begins.

If you are interested in auditioning for the FL All State Chorus - please start preparing for your audition at www.floridaallstateprep.com

All-County Chorus

These honors choirs include some of the finest singers in OCPS. This event includes rehearsals and a performance outside of the school day at multiple locations in Orange County. All grade levels are able to audition and selected students will be chosen by the teacher. Some of the necessary skills include technique, tone, focus and musicianship. Only those with who have shown outstanding musicianship and behavior may be considered. Students will be required to rehearse on their own outside of class if they are considered. A packet will be given in the fall with further details on cost, rehearsal dates in January 2026, and commitment.

Fundraising

Nearly all of the choir operating budget is provided through fundraising and donations. Our first fundraiser will be with Virtual Raise. We will be starting this during the month of September. There may be other smaller fundraisers throughout the year to help with individual field trip costs. Keep your eyes open. Remember, the better we do with fundraising, the lower the costs to later expenses throughout the year, such as field trips. Thank you for your help in supporting our students!

Volunteering

If you are interested in helping out, please sign up to volunteer through the ADDitions website - www.volunteer.ocps.net

Field Trips

I am also looking into a combined Disney Workshop field trip towards the end of the year, singing at an Orlando Magic game in December, and hopefully singing the national anthem at an Orlando City Soccer game. There may be other mini field trips that pop up during the year. Keep watching for details! Also, remember, the better you fundraise, the less the cost of these field trips will be!

Important Dates

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Participants</u>
Thursday, August 28, 6-7pm	Choir Parent Meeting	Chorus Room	OPTIONAL chorus parents
Wednesday, September 10 after school	All-State Test #1	Boone HS	Interested 7th & 8th graders
Wednesday, October 8, after school	All-State Test #2	Freedom HS	Those that pass test #1
Thursday, October 9, 7pm	Horizon Fall Concert Invitation	Horizon HS	6th Period Students ONLY
Thursday, October 16, 6pm	Fall Concert	WSMS Cafeteria	<u>ALL CHORUS STUDENTS</u>
Tuesday, December 16, 6pm	Winter Concert	WSMS Cafeteria	<u>ALL CHORUS STUDENTS</u>
Tuesday, March 3, 6pm	Pre-MPA Concert	WSMS Cafeteria	<u>ALL CHORUS STUDENTS</u>
Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday March 9-11 school day or before/after school	MPA	TBD	<u>ALL CHORUS STUDENTS</u>
Monday. May 11 6:30pm	Spring Concert	Horizon HS	<u>ALL CHORUS STUDENTS</u>

***PLEASE NOTE THE 5 ALL CHORUS STUDENTS DATES ABOVE THAT ARE MANDATORY!** Other dates may be added to the calendar but they will not be mandatory. Dates are subject to change and Mr. Beck will give plenty of notice. The May date will be in the first or second week.

Please also note the Choir Parent Info night on Thursday, August 28 at 6pm in the chorus room. This is an optional informational meeting for parents that want to get questions answered, learn more about the choir program, and sign up to volunteer for our concerts and field trips.

Handbook Acknowledgement and Contact Information

Student Name: _____ Period: _____

Shirt Size (indicate youth or adult): _____ Pant (waist) Size: _____ Grade: _____

Parent/Guardian Contact #1:

Name: _____

Relationship to Student: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

Parent/Guardian Contact #2:

Name: _____

Relationship to Student: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

Handbook Acknowledgement

- I have read through the entirety of the handbook.
- I understand that there will be fundraisers that are optional but encouraged.
- I understand the concert performance attendance policy and have placed all the MANDATORY performance dates on the calendar and know that if I am not able to attend a MANDATORY performance, I will have a parent email Mr. Beck no less than 3 weeks before the concert date.
- I understand that I am REQUIRED to pay the chorus activity fee of \$50 (\$30 if my polo still fits from last year) due on Friday, October 3, 2025.
- I understand that I am responsible for performance pants ON LOAN from the chorus department for the year to give back at the end of the school year. I will provide black socks and SOLID BLACK shoes for concert performance attire.
- I have read and understand Mr. Beck's grading policy and classroom rules.

Student Signature

Parent Signature