

2025-2026 Chorus Handbook

2025-2026 PGM Chorus Handbook and Syllabus

Communication

Communication from Pine Grove Middle will happen through the Rooms application. Once classes are published, you will be added to your child's class, where you can receive and send messages to and from me. I am also available through email at issayoung@lowndes.k12.ga.us

I pride myself on getting back to parents and students promptly, so please don't hesitate to contact me regarding any comments or questions regarding our program.

2025-2026 Chorus Syllabus

Concerts

We will have TWO evening concerts this school year, including other possible after-school performances, and students will need to be prompt.

All concerts are a required part of your child's experience and participation in choir at Pine Grove, and concert dates will be given well in advance. If dates or times change, you will know weeks or months ahead of the performance date. It is also important that your child has reliable transportation to and from concerts. Please make arrangements for transportation before concert day. Thank you!

Students are also expected to stay for the entire concert to support their fellow choral peers and participate in the final song that brings together the whole choral program. If students must leave, please make sure they check in with a peer or their class leader to avoid being marked absent by Mr. Young.

Here are our proposed concert dates and locations. If dates or times change, you will know weeks ahead of the performance date through your child's Rooms:

Fall Concert

Friday, 5 December | 6:30 PM | LHS Performing Arts Center

Spring Concert

Tuesday, 21 April | 6:30 PM | LHS Performing Arts Center*

*[Lowndes High School Performing Arts Center](#) 1606 Norman Drive, Valdosta, GA

Students who miss concerts must provide a signed note from their parent/guardian that reflects the nature of the absence. If students do not plan on participating in concerts, choir may not be the class for them this semester.

Call Time

Students must be present for pre-concert warm-ups and placement before showtime (5:30 PM).



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Director of Chorus
Pine Grove Middle School

Concert Attire

For each choir performance/concert at PGM, students are required to be in uniform. The shirt designs can be viewed on our webpage here: [PGM Chorus Shirt Designs](#).

Chorus Uniform Requirements

All chorus students' uniforms should reflect the following:

- **Footwear:** All footwear should be flat and encompass the **ENTIRE** foot (not just the front, like Crocs, slippers, etc.) No heels, please. Students will be standing on risers, and their heels can become hazardous
- **Scents:** No strong cologne or perfume (deodorant is welcome!)
- **Jewelry:** Jewelry should be conservative and should not draw too much attention to the student
- **Headwear:** No headwear will be worn during concerts (small bows and hair clips are fine, but no caps, bonnets, etc.)

6th Grade Uniform Specifics

Shirt: Maroon PGM T-Shirt

Bottoms: Blue Jeans (no holes please) or Blue Jean Skirt

Footwear: Closed-Foot Shoes (any color)

7th Grade Uniform Specifics

Shirt: Black PGM Chorus Polo

Bottoms: Blue Jeans (no holes please) or Blue Jean Skirt

Footwear: Closed-foot Shoes

8th Grade Uniform Specifics

Shirt: Black PGM Chorus Polo

Bottoms: **BLACK** JEANS or slacks (no leggings/jeggings, sweatpants, etc., please)

Footwear: Closed-Toe Shoes

All clothing beyond the t-shirt/polo must follow PGM's dress code policy. Shirts can be purchased through our RevTrak online store here: [PGM Chorus Shirt RevTrak](#). To ensure that all shirts are delivered on time, please purchase them **by or before Friday, the 10th of October**. Students will not perform out of uniform!

Non-Concert Performances/Events

Occasionally, the chorus will be asked to perform at events that are not considered 'official concerts,' such as the annual Veterans Day Program, Wild Adventures, Festivals, etc.

These events may not always be graded, but are to be treated like a formal concert. Students are expected to be on their best behavior, respectful of the space and attendees, and perform with concert quality.

These events are also not always required, but will be communicated through Rooms well in advance.



Out-of-County Performance Opportunities

Certain events are presented throughout the school year that allow students to participate in events outside of the county that represent not only the PGM Choral Program, but also the students' musicianship and progress throughout the year. These events **are not required** but present an excellent opportunity for students to meet other choral students their age and improve their skills outside of class.

LGPE - Large Group Performance Evaluation

The Georgia Music Educators Association (GMEA)'s Large Group Performance Evaluation (LGPE) is a choral adjudication festival. Students will have the opportunity to perform and be evaluated by a panel of three GMEA-approved judges and earn a stage experience that contrasts with their concerts at home.

Students will participate in two separate evaluations: A group sight-reading and a group performance of two pre-selected songs. Students will have the opportunity to earn a rating of Superior, Excellent, Good, Fair, or Poor, based on their choral etiquette, tone, pitch, and overall performance. **LGPE is a required event for students enrolled in 7th and 8th-grade choruses.**

Date: Thursday, 12 March | Time: 8 AM-About 230/3 PM | Location: Coffee County HS

Honor Chorus

District 8 Honor Chorus invites students from across the Southeastern area to participate in a day of choral work and peer-to-peer connections. Students will be provided with their Honor Chorus materials weeks in advance and will be tasked with learning and practicing them well before the event. The clinicians will spend the day fine-tuning the songs and working with students on various vocal techniques. This event is only open to **7th and 8th-grade chorus students.**

Date: Thursday, 9 October | Time: 8:00 AM-About 5:00 PM | Location: Ware County HS

All State Chorus

All State Chorus is a statewide choral event, hosted by the Georgia Music Educators Association, or GMEA, at the Classic Center in Athens, Georgia. The top **7th-12th-grade** students in the state are selected through an audition process that takes place locally. If a student passes both rounds of the audition, they will have the opportunity to travel to Athens, Georgia, for a weekend of singing and performing with other choral students from schools across Georgia. Participation in All-State Chorus is an honor for choral students.

1st Round of Auditions

Date: Saturday, 8 November | Time: TBA | Location: Perry Middle School, 495 Perry Pkwy, Perry, GA 31069

Requirements

- Students must sing: a Major, Minor, and Chromatic Scale, 3 Sight-reading examples, and a memorized solo.

2nd Round of Auditions

Date: Friday, 23 January | Time: TBA | Location: TBA

Requirements

- Students must pass the 1st round of auditions
- Students must sing excerpts of their All State Chorus music with just a piano track (from memory)



All State Chorus Event

Dates: Tuesday-Saturday, 19-21 February | Location: Athens, GA

Requirements:

- If students pass the first and second auditions, they will be invited to attend the All-State Chorus event. More information will be provided later for students who reach this stage.

Important Dates

Below, you will find important chorus-specific dates for the 2025-2026 school year. Some are local and run by the PGM Choral Department, and others are regional or state events outside of Lowndes County. If any of these dates/times need to be altered, this will be communicated through Rooms as soon as possible:

September

- **16 Tuesday:** All-State Chorus Registration & Payment (\$25) Deadline | Select 7th & 8th

October

- **9 Thursday:** District 8 Honor Chorus | Select 7th & 8th | Ware County HS - 700 Victory Dr., Waycross, GA 31503 | 7:00 AM - ~7:00 PM (These are not the official times, but are typical of this event)
- **24 Friday:** "Harmon-Eats" Chorus Dinner Show | Komorebi (8th Advanced) ONLY | PGM Commons/Cafeteria | 6:00 PM

November

- **8 Saturday:** All State Chorus Audition I | Select 7th & 8th | Perry Middle School, Perry, GA
- **11 Tuesday:** Veteran's Day Program | 8th Grade ONLY | PGM Commons/Cafeteria | Time TBA

December

- **5 Friday:** Chorus Holiday Concert | 6-8th Grades | LHS PAC | 6:30 PM
- **16 Tuesday:** All State Chorus Acceptance and Payment (\$25) Deadline | 7th &/or 8th students who pass the first All State Audition in November will move on to the second audition
- **18 Thursday:** Chorus Holiday Potluck | 6-8th Grades | In-Class Potluck

January

- **23 Friday:** All State Chorus Audition 2 | Select 7th & 8th who pass All State Audition I | Ware County HS

February

- **19-21 Thursday-Saturday:** Georgia All State Event | Select 7th & 8th who pass All State Audition 2 | Classic Center, Athens, GA

March

- **12 Thursday:** Large Group Performance Evaluation (LGPE) | 7 & 8th Grades ONLY | Coffee HS - 159 Trojan Way, Douglas, GA 31533 | Time TBA

April

- **16-18 Thursday-Saturday:** Chorus Spring Trip | 7-8th Grades ONLY | Location: TBA
- **21 Tuesday:** Chorus Spring Concert | 6-8 Grades | LHS PAC | 6:30 PM

May

- **15 Friday:** Chorus Spring/End-of-the-Year Potluck | 6-8th Grades | In-Class Potluck



Chorus Expectations, Rules, Non-Negotiables, and Grading Policy

Students are expected to make mistakes, but with a growth mindset in play. Chorus is a participation-heavy class, and students are expected to give an acceptable effort daily while maintaining a safe and inclusive learning environment with their peers. Failure to do so will result in a lower grade for the student.

Below are the Chorus Rules, Non-Negotiables, and Grading Policy. Please review them with your child:

Chorus Rules

- There is no talking while Mr. Young is teaching or a fellow peer is leading.
- Respect your peers and Mr. Young, both verbally and physically.
- Follow directions the first time they are given.
- No food, drink (water is permitted), or gum in the chorus classroom.
- Chorus is for chorus-related materials.

Non-Negotiables

- No negativity
- EVERYONE participates
- Musical voices only (no yelling, screaming, etc.)
- Class supplies will be respected
- Raise your hand for comments/questions
- Stay in your seat

Negative Consequences

- 1st Consequence: Student-Teacher Conference
- 2nd Consequence: Seat Change and Parent Contact
- 3rd Consequence: Completion of Discipline Sheet (in another class)
- 4th Consequence: [5-Step Discipline Plan](#)*

*Students may earn steps regardless of the issue. The first three consequences above are a courtesy.

Chorus Grading



<h1><u>Test</u> <u>Grades</u> <u>(50%)</u></h1> <p>In-Class Singing Tests</p> <p>Concert Week Rewards</p> <p>Large Group Performance Evaluation (LGPE)</p>	<p>In-Class Singing Tests Tests may not always be written. Students will be tested on topics covered in the mid-term and 9-week period by displaying the skills learned through singing, rhythmic expression, or both.</p> <p>Singing tests are either completed in a solo or group setting, but rarely (if ever) in front of the entire class.</p> <p>Pre-Concert Week Rehearsals Students are graded on their final in-class preparations before their performance in a formal concert. Pre-Concert week includes lots of fine-tuning for songs, placements, and instructions for the concert, and multiple double/full concert rehearsals during either the 1st or 2nd Connection Classes.</p> <p>Students are required to attend double Chorus rehearsals and will not be excused to go to their other Connection class on this day. The rubric for 'Daily Musicianship' in the 'Quiz Grades' section below applies to the concert-week rehearsals. However, the grade will be entered as a 'Test Grade.'</p> <p>LGPE (Large Group Performance Evaluation) (7th & 8th ONLY): All students enrolled in 7th and 8th-grade choirs at PGM must participate in the LGPE Evaluation. This event invites choirs from this region of Georgia to be evaluated on 1) 2 prepared choral songs and 2) A group sight-reading example. Students earn ratings of either Superior, Excellent, Good, Fair, or Poor for their performances. Students will earn a test grade based on their overall rating (ex., Superior = 90-100, Excellent = 80-89, etc.)</p>
<h1><u>Quiz</u> <u>Grades</u> <u>(30%)</u></h1> <p>Concerts</p> <p>Daily Musicianship/ Participation</p> <p>In-Class Projects</p> <p>Substitute Work</p>	<p>Concerts All concerts are graded events, and participation in performances as members of the PGM Chorus is required for all students. Grading will reflect concert etiquette, attendance, and effort. Students are expected to arrive at least one hour before the concert begins and stay until the end, unless they have a valid excuse from a parent. We appreciate your commitment to excellence!</p> <p>Not all performances are graded concerts; however, students are expected to act accordingly and represent themselves and the PGM Choral program as if they are at a formal concert, regardless of the performance setting.</p> <p>Concert make-ups will only be given for students who produce a <u>signed</u> parent note or doctor's excuse.</p> <p>If students do not plan to attend concerts, chorus may not be the right class for them, and alternate class options may be suggested.</p>



	<p>Daily Musicianship/Participation Chorus is a participation-heavy class, and participation in all class activities, behavior, etiquette, and effort will be part of the participation grade. This grade is entered weekly. Students can earn up to 5 points daily, or 25 per week (25 = 100%):</p> <p>5 points: student is consistently participating, focused, a leader in class, and a model for their peers during instruction</p> <p>4 Points: Student participates sometimes, is almost always focused, and makes a reasonable effort during instruction</p> <p>3 Points: Student has difficulty with consistent participation, occasionally loses focus, is distracted, and/or is a distraction during instruction, and/or requires at least two prompts to participate.</p> <p>2 Points: Student requires more than three prompts to participate and/or rarely participates and is often distracted or a distraction during instruction, and/or earns a red discipline sheet</p> <p>1 Point: Student does not participate, is frequently distracted, and/or is a frequent distraction during instruction, and/or earns a red discipline sheet/discipline step</p> <p>In-Class Projects Projects conducted in class are designed to reinforce class topics by allowing students to work with their peers. Students will be graded on their project product and overall participation.</p> <p>Substitute Work All work provided during Mr. Young's absence (and in the presence of a substitute) will be graded as a Quiz Grade. There will be no make-ups for substitute work. Students absent on these days will need to provide a signed note from a parent or a doctor's excuse.</p>
<p><u>Daily Grades (20%)</u></p> <p>Classwork</p>	<p>Classwork Classwork in chorus includes daily assignments, written warm-ups, theory or listening activities, worksheets, and other exercises that build upon the students' weekly progression and daily topics.</p> <p>An example of in-class work is sight-reading exercises. Students would be graded as a class based on their preparation, practice, and performance of the example. Students would receive a rating of Superior, Good, etc. Translated as a grade, a Superior = 90-100, Excellent = 80-89, etc.</p> <p>These assignments may not always be written and may include student application through singing alone or with one or more students.</p>

Videos and Movies in Class

From time to time, we view choir-related videos and movies in class that may have some mild, mature content and/or a PG-13 rating. All media displayed in class must first obtain approval from our administration before being shown in class.

Parents, please indicate your permission for your student to watch school-appropriate movie/video content up to PG-13 rating on the Google form.



Respect for Choir Sheet Music and Materials

Throughout the year, students will receive printed music for sight-reading or concert preparation. We obtain music from various online sources, such as J.W. Pepper.com or Hal Leonard.com, and each score is purchased using our choir's budget.

ALL music scores will be respected, meaning that no score shall be ripped, torn, turned into paper airplanes, rolled up, or physically disrespected in any way. Please make sure that your child understands that sheet music is equivalent to an academic textbook and should not be intentionally destroyed or misused.

All students will read from their scores, so students who do not have their music will lose points toward their participation quiz grade.

Students are also expected to respect ALL class resources. If they choose to destroy or misuse class resources, they will no longer be allowed to use class resources.

Anti-Bullying Statement

As we know, some kids can be very cruel to each other, but it's not always targeted. Sometimes kids are just bored, dealing with external issues outside of the choir room or school, or forget to turn on their 'empathy switches'. The only person at Pine Grove Middle qualified to judge and evaluate a student's ability to sing is Mr. Young. However, Peers are welcome to apply constructive criticism when applicable to various situations.

We only use our voices to uplift songs, not to bring down others. Respect and support for all choir members, including those under or above your grade level, is one of the (if not the most important) qualities of our PGM Choral Department. **Humanity first, singing second.**

Choir is INCLUSIVE, not EXCLUSIVE. We support each other, regardless of the person's creed, grade, experiences, disabilities, gender, identity, orientation, race, culture, size, religion, or any other individual differences that make us unique, for the health of our program and the wealth of our musical experiences.

For students who choose to bully others for the way they sound, look, act, etc., their options are the following:

- (a) an in-person conference with Mr. Young and any other involved parties
- (b) a conference with their parent(s), an administrator, and Mr. Young, or
- (c) immediate dismissal from choir.

Christmas/Sacred Music Statement

To maintain a well-rounded and complete choral experience, students may be asked to sing sacred music or music with religious text, meaning, or background. Our intention is not to coerce or inhibit a student's religious beliefs. Still, there is a wealth of music that includes a religious context that we may include in our curriculum to adhere to the National and Georgia Standards for Music Education.

Still, we understand that many of our students and their families have personal preferences that may affect the decision to perform this genre of music in concerts and in class. As a reminder, participation in all concerts is a grade, and students who do not perform earn a 0; however, Mr.



Young will make exceptions for students where necessary to maintain a well-rounded choral education and inclusive environment for all students.

Please indicate your family's preference on the Google form regarding sacred music and your child.

Chorus Trips

Every year, the chorus takes a trip to an out-of-county location to participate in a music festival for trophies and plaques, but also for an end-of-the-year treat to give the kids a great send-off before summer.

Trips that require payments are never required for students enrolled in chorus; however, these festivals allow students to perform in front of judges outside of our county and receive unbiased ratings based on their preparation and performance.

The only required trip for PGM Chorus students is the **Large Group Performance Evaluation (LGPE)** in March (7th and 8th ONLY). This trip is free to students, but it acts as our "standardized choral exam" for the year.

Trip Eligibility

To be eligible for Chorus trips, students will need to earn their participation based on their in-class activity and other factors detailed below:

- Attend and remain at concerts as a performer and audience member from start to finish
- Consistent participation in Chorus during students' class time and concerts/events
- No constant behavioral issues in Chorus or throughout PGM
- Cannot have received **more than THREE write-ups/Steps from Mr. Young*** (This **does not include** Steps from other teachers or administration)
- Cannot have served **more than 3 days in ISS***
- Cannot have served **any days in OSS (Out-of-school suspension)***

***These three requirements reset after the Spring semester. This means that a student could serve OSS during the Fall semester, but still be eligible for the Spring trip (as long as they follow the rules set above)**

Students **will be removed** from the trip roster if any of the above guidelines are not followed. Since we must pay for hotels and packages in advance, once paid, the money **will not be refunded** under any circumstances.

Trip Chaperones

We are happy to welcome parents of chorus students to volunteer as chaperones for our trips, especially overnight trips! Chaperones help divide the responsibilities and supervision of students on trips and help keep things organized and less stressful. Chaperones are also only responsible for **half** the total student cost of our trips.

If you would like to help out with our trips this year, please complete and return the following form to PGM. Once completed and verified, you will be allowed to chaperone any PGM trip for the entire school year: [LCSS Volunteer Packet](#) | [LCSS Overnight Volunteer Packet](#)



Fundraisers

We will occasionally have fundraisers that encourage the students to sell products to support our choral program. **Participation in fundraisers is not a requirement of chorus.**

Money raised during fundraisers is applied to the chorus account. It is used to purchase music, supplies, and other chorus-related materials (speakers, sound equipment, etc.) that support and supply our program.

During the **Spring** semester, 7th and 8th graders who participate in the annual Spring trip will be allowed to apply a portion of their fundraiser funds to their overall trip cost.

Fundraiser Participants

Only **CURRENT PGM CHORUS MEMBERS** may sell products. This means that the students' friends, sister(s), brother(s), dog named Jim, etc, will not be allowed to sell chorus fundraiser products. Parents are welcome to sell products for their child at their places of work, churches, etc.. However, both student and parent are responsible for the fundraiser product (especially if it's edible). Please try to be aware of due dates regarding the product and the fundraiser.

Fundraiser Pricing

If the fundraiser materials have a set price (ex., Chocolate bars for \$1 a bar), students are only allowed to sell them **at that price** - not higher or lower. Please don't give discounts to friends or family and attempt to turn in a lesser amount than expected.

Student/Parent Responsibility

Once a permission form is signed, turned in, and students begin selling fundraiser products, the student and parent assume responsibility for the funds collected and the quality of the product. This means that if students, for example, are selling a box of chocolates, they are responsible for selling the **entire** box. They may not return a half-sold box with a combination of money and chocolates. Once the box is opened, it becomes the responsibility of the student and the parent.

Lost/Stolen/Missing Products

If products become lost, are stolen, go missing, or lose quality and cannot be sold, students will still be held responsible for turning in the full amount of the fundraiser. Students should have all fundraiser products **AND** money in sight at all times. They are **strongly encouraged not** to leave their fundraiser products and/or money out in the open, in locker rooms outside the locker, or places with high traffic or out of their direct sight.

Loss of Representation

If a student is no longer part of chorus during a fundraiser (they drop chorus, they are in the process of moving, etc.), they are still responsible for bringing in the **full cost of the product**, not the remaining product.

Refunds

There will be **no refunds** given for fundraiser products.

