

Mount Si High School Choirs
Student Handbook
2025-2026

www.mountsichoires.org



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CHOIR DESCRIPTIONS

Mount Si currently has five auditioned vocal ensembles (Jazz Choir I [mixed choir], Jazz Choir II [treble choir], Camerata [mixed choir], Bel Canto [treble chamber choir], and Bella Voce [treble choir]), and three non-auditioned ensembles: Intermezzo [mixed choir], Concert Choir [Freshmen only mixed choir], and Vocal Jazz Workshop [mixed, open to any student in the school]

Jazz Choir I 0 Period

- This is a credited 0 period class that meets 6:40-7:35am M-F. Students in this ensemble will be highly involved in performances outside of the regular school concerts and should be committed to working on their part on their own often outside of class. Participation at additional rehearsals outside the school day are also required for students in this ensemble. Students will receive an additional full year credit of fine arts for this course.

Jazz Choir II 0 Period

- This is a credited 0 period class that meets 6:40am-7:35am four days each week [MWThF]. Students in this ensemble will participate in the jazz concerts and a couple of select festivals and will focus on building their skills in the genre of jazz. Participation at additional rehearsals outside the school day are also required for students in this ensemble. Students will receive an additional full year credit of fine arts for this course.

Vocal Jazz Workshop 0 Period

- This is a credited 0 period class that meets 6:40am-7:35am two days each week [M/W]. Students in this ensemble will focus on listening and basic vocal jazz singing. They will primarily work on standards and learning about the genre of jazz. This ensemble is open to ANY student in the school. They do not need to be in another music ensemble. They may also take it for one semester instead of the whole year (as is required with Jazz Choir I and II). Students will receive a half credit of fine arts (equal to one semester) for participation throughout the year.

Camerata Choir 1st Period

- This is the most advanced auditioned ensemble at Mount Si. It is a balanced mixed choir with basses, tenors, altos, and sopranos. Students must audition for this ensemble in the Spring of the previous year or in the Fall before the first day of school. This ensemble will do the most traveling, performances, and festivals outside of the standard three school concerts each year. A focus on intermediate to advanced theory, developing advanced choral concepts and sound, and performing a varied repertoire of music including choral “classics” will be emphasized in this class. Students in this choir will be singing in four+ parts (SATB).

Bel Canto Choir 2nd Period

- This is an advanced auditioned ensemble for treble voices only. Students must audition for this ensemble in the Spring of the previous year or in the Fall before the first day of school. This ensemble will do more traveling, performances, and festivals outside of the standard three school concerts each year. A focus on intermediate to advanced theory, developing more advanced choral concepts and sound, and performing a varied repertoire of music including treble choir “standards” will be emphasized in this class. Students in this choir will be singing primarily in 4+ parts (SSAA).

Bella Voce Choir 2nd Period

- This is an advanced auditioned ensemble for treble voices only. Students must audition for this ensemble in the Spring of the previous year or in the Fall before the first day of school. This ensemble will do more traveling, performances, and festivals outside of the standard three school concerts each year. A focus on intermediate theory, developing more advanced choral concepts and sound, and performing a varied repertoire of music including treble choir “standards” will be emphasized in this class. Students in this choir will be singing in three and four parts (SSA and SSAA).

Intermezzo 4th Period

- This is a non-auditioned ensemble for sophomore, junior, and senior students interested in participating in choir. A focus on basic theory, developing solid sight singing skills, developing a good choral sound, and singing a variety of repertoire will be emphasized in this class. Students in this choir will be largely singing in three and four parts (SAB/SSAB).

Concert Choir 6th Period

- This is a non-auditioned ensemble for Freshmen students interested in participating in choir. This is the primary ensemble Freshmen may select in their Freshmen year. A focus on theory, developing a good choral sound, and singing a variety of repertoire will be emphasized in this class. Students in this choir will be largely singing in three parts (SAB).

Performance Dress Codes

ALL students must follow performance dress codes. If you fail to do so, YOU WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO PERFORM.

Informal Uniform - Required MSHS Choir T-Shirt:

ALL students in choir (Concert Choir, Camerata, Intermezzo, Bel Canto, and Bella Voce) will be required to have a Mount Si High School choir T-shirt. A T-shirt will be ordered for each student at the beginning of the year. The cost of the shirt is \$15 and will be paid through the finance office. Scholarships are available for students who need help with payment.

Formal Uniform - Concert Choir:

Option A: Black dress OR black skirt/pants & black shirt

Black tights OR socks (covering all of legs/feet)

Black Dress Shoes

(NO platforms or excessively high heels. NO tennis shoes or boots.)

Small gold or silver earrings are okay, but NO other jewelry is to be worn. Hair should be pulled away from the face (not hanging in eyes). NO hats.

Option B: Black dress pants

Black button up, long sleeved, collared shirt

Black socks

Black Dress Shoes

(NO platforms or excessively high heels. NO tennis shoes or boots.)

Small gold or silver earrings are okay, but NO other jewelry is to be worn. Hair should be pulled away from the face (not hanging in eyes). NO hats.

Formal Uniform - Bella Voce Choir: (\$25 uniform fee to be paid to ASB)

Option A: Black advanced choir dress

Red performance sash (with rhinestone belt buckle)

Black tights or nylons (covering all of legs/feet)

Black Dress Shoes

(NO platforms or excessively high heels. NO tennis shoes or boots.)

Small gold or silver earrings are okay, but NO other jewelry is to be worn. Hair should be pulled away from the face (not hanging in eyes). NO hats.

Option B: Four piece tux (pants, shirt, vest, tie)

Black socks

Black Dress Shoes

(NO platforms or excessively high heels. NO tennis shoes or boots.)

Small gold or silver earrings are okay, but NO other jewelry is to be worn. Hair should be pulled away from the face (not hanging in eyes). NO hats.

Formal Uniform - Bel Canto Choir: (\$25 uniform fee to be paid to ASB)

Option A: Black advanced choir dress

Black performance sash (with rhinestone belt buckle)

Black tights or nylons (covering all of legs/feet)

Black Dress Shoes

(NO platforms or excessively high heels. NO tennis shoes or boots.)

Small gold or silver earrings are okay, but NO other jewelry is to be worn. Hair should be pulled away from the face (not hanging in eyes). NO hats.

Option B: Four piece tux (pants, shirt, vest, tie)

Black socks

Black Dress Shoes

(NO platforms or excessively high heels. NO tennis shoes or boots.)

Small gold or silver earrings are okay, but NO other jewelry is to be worn. Hair should be pulled away from the face (not hanging in eyes). NO hats.

Formal Uniform - Camerata Choir: (\$25 uniform fee to be paid to ASB)

Option A: Black advanced choir dress

White performance sash (with rhinestone belt buckle)

Black tights or nylons (covering all of legs/feet)

Black Dress Shoes

(NO platforms or excessively high heels. NO tennis shoes or boots.)

Small gold or silver earrings are okay, but NO other jewelry is to be worn. Hair should be pulled away from the face (not hanging in eyes). NO hats.

Option B: Four piece tux (pants, shirt, vest, tie)

Black socks

Black Dress Shoes

(NO platforms or excessively high heels. NO tennis shoes or boots.)

Small gold or silver earrings are okay, but NO other jewelry is to be worn. Hair should be pulled away from the face (not hanging in eyes). NO hats.

Formal Uniform - Intermezzo:

Option A: Black dress OR black skirt/pants & black shirt

Black tights OR socks (covering all of legs/feet)

Black Dress Shoes

(NO platforms or excessively high heels. NO tennis shoes or boots.)

Small gold or silver earrings are okay, but NO other jewelry is to be worn. Hair should be pulled away from the face (not hanging in eyes). NO hats.

Option B: Black dress pants

Black button up, long sleeved, collared shirt

Black socks

Black Dress Shoes

(NO platforms or excessively high heels. NO tennis shoes or boots.)

Small gold or silver earrings are okay, but NO other jewelry is to be worn. Hair should be pulled away from the face (not hanging in eyes). NO hats.

Music and Folders

- All concert music will be distributed to students in class.
- Music is expensive and students are expected to take care of it.
- Music is to be kept in their choir folder at all times.
- If music or the folder is lost or damaged, the student must pay a replacement fee for the music (\$2.00-\$5.00 per piece of music on average) and the folder (\$7-\$12 dependent upon the style of folder).

Concert Attendance

Attendance at every concert, performance, & festival listed on the Choir Calendar is a requirement for this course.

Concert attendance is required of all members of all choruses at Mount Si High School. Concerts are the culmination of weeks of preparation, musical development and ensemble building. In choir, you have a unique opportunity to share your hard work and talent with peers, parents, and the community. It is a high honor to perform. Your fellow chorus members count on you for vocal, physical, and moral support. Important musical factors such as balance and blend are affected by the absence of even a single performer. You accept the responsibility to be at required concerts, festivals, and rehearsals when you join a musical group. Your grade will reflect how well you meet this responsibility.

Keeping in mind that communication between parent, student, and teacher is a necessity for any musical ensemble, please be sure to do the following NOW (while it's still early):

- ♪ Together with a parent/guardian, look carefully over the calendar
- ♪ Consider which optional activities you might like to be involved in
- ♪ Write appropriate dates on your family activity calendar now.
- ♪ Note that it is your responsibility to inform parents of changes in the calendar

Performance Absence Procedure

When you must miss a required performance:

- A parent or guardian must make every effort to notify us by email or telephone as far in advance of the concert or performance as possible. Students are responsible for filling out the absence request form (linked on Schoology) ASAP as well.
- At least two weeks' notice is required for you to be granted the ability to make up 100% of the performance grade. If less than two weeks' notice is provided, students will only be able to earn up to 75% of the concert grade. **Extenuating circumstances** will be considered on a case by case basis, according to the director's discretion.
- If you must miss a concert because of an unexpected illness or family emergency, you must let us know as soon as you are able. Communication is key so our ensembles can make adjustments accordingly.

Absences from required performances can be **excused**. However, actual make-up for a concert is impossible because the performance experience cannot be recreated. However, completion of the following requirement, along with prior notification from a parent, can earn you an "excused" grade (of up to 100% depending on quality of work submitted):

- Perform your individual part for each of the songs being performed for the teacher with pre-recorded accompaniment. This can be done in person with the directors OR recorded at home and submitted electronically.
- Complete the YouTube Reflection Assignment (linked on Schoology) for the songs you would have heard the other choirs perform (your directors will share the program information with you).

Only one performance absence can be excused at full credit per year for every ensemble except Camerata & Bel Canto; One performance absence per SEMESTER can be excused at full credit for Camerata & Bel Canto.

Make-up work cannot be done to earn full credit for additional absences in the semester, with the exception of extenuating circumstances per directors' discretion. Absences past the first performance absence will only be eligible for up to 75% credit, depending on the quality of work submitted.

Concert make-up assignments MUST be completed within two weeks of the missed performance (or before the missed performance) in order to have the opportunity to earn full credit as a makeup grade. Students can earn up to 75% credit if the assignment is turned in more than two weeks after the performance. Failure to complete a concert make-up WILL result in a score of 0 or "F" grade for the missed performance.

* Extreme emergencies and illness that occur within two weeks of the concert will be dealt with on a case by case basis. The resulting score or excusal will be up to the discretion of the director.

Job Expectations

If a student has a job and is in choir, here are a few things to keep in mind:

- Having to work is NOT considered an excused absence from any required, graded choir event.
- Students should notify employers well in advance (at least one month or as required by employer) of all required choral events and activities.
- Students should refer to the choir calendar on the website often, and may request a letter from their directors to give to their employer regarding required choir events that may interfere with work.

Restroom Use

To use the restroom, students must use the sign-out sheet on the piano, and sign back in once they return from the restroom.

Only one student may be in the bathroom at any given time. Students may not bring their personal devices to the restroom with them.

Please note: the restroom is not a social room. If you are in need of a private place for a conversation or a quiet environment for mental health reasons, please talk to your directors to make an arrangement.

Cell Phone Policy

Students should put their cell phones in their assigned cell phone pocket by the door, or inside their backpacks. Students should not use their devices during class time unless specifically instructed to do so for an academic purpose. If we are doing an activity in class that requires a personal device, we will allow time for students to retrieve their device from their bag or their pocket..

If a cell phone becomes an issue in class, we will refer to the school policies found in the MSHS Student Handbook.

If there is an extenuating family circumstance that requires students to have their cell phone on them on a particular day, that student should communicate with their directors before the start of class.

Choir Council

Each choir will have a choir board and section leaders that meet as a leadership team throughout the school year. The Choir Council is elected by the students and selected by Mrs. Isaacs and Mr. Sauer. Each choir will have a President, Vice President, Secretary, Community Rep, and Historian Rep. We also have program wide positions for Community Chair, Historian Chair, and Treasurer.

The choir leadership team will work together to promote unity between the choirs, organize fundraisers, and achieve musical excellence throughout the year.. Additionally, the choir leadership team will help Mrs. Isaacs and Mr. Sauer with various tasks outside of the regular class time and will serve as choral leaders and role models to each choir.

Choir board members for Camerata, Bella Voce, Bel Canto, and Intermezzo will be voted on for the following year in the month of June. Concert Choir board representatives will be voted on for the current year in the month of October. Applications and instructions will be distributed to choirs two weeks in advance of voting.

Section Leaders will be appointed by Mrs. Isaacs and Mr. Sauer for Camerata, Bel Canto, Bella Voce, and Intermezzo. Section leaders will lead sectional rehearsals, facilitate community building and musical excellence in their section, and work alongside choir board to plan and execute events throughout the year. Section leaders will be chosen in June for the following year.

Absence Policy for Advanced Ensembles (Camerata, Bel Canto, & Bella Voce)

Attendance during class time and at after school rehearsals is an extremely critical component of individual and ensemble growth and improvement in our advanced music ensembles at Mount Si High School. There are many important musical components (tuning, blend, balance, etc) that cannot be addressed just with individual practice at home, and require the student to be present during class or rehearsal time.

We acknowledge and understand that unexpected circumstances can affect a student's ability to attend class. As a music team, we have the following plan in place to respond to a high frequency of absences or tardies in one of our advanced ensembles.

Note: Tardies will be classified as more than 10 min late to any class period

8 Absences or Tardies: Teacher will reach out to student and parent for a meeting to discuss the absence/tardy trend and put plans in place to help support better attendance from the student.

12 Absences or Tardies: Teacher will reach out to the student and request that they supply a recording or in-person performance of the learned material from music being studied for the concert. Dependent on their understanding and performance of their music, the teacher will put a plan in

place for what will need to be achieved in order to have the privilege of participating in a concert,
OR the student will be provided an alternate assignment in place of the concert performance.
Parents will also be notified of the plan and/or result of the music “check-in.” An additional meeting
may also be requested at this time by the student, parent, or teacher.

16 Absences or Tardies: Teacher may request that the student not perform in the concert, and the student will be provided with an alternate assignment in place of the concert performance. Teacher will also request a meeting with the student, a parent, and an administrator to determine a plan to help support the student’s attendance in class and performance in future concerts.

20 Absences or Tardies: Teacher may request that the student be removed from the advanced ensemble at the semester mark, or the student may be asked to re-audition to return to the ensemble the following year. The student would still be allowed to participate in a non-auditioned ensemble if their schedule can be adapted. Teacher will also request a meeting with the student, a parent, and an administrator to determine how to best proceed with the decision of which choir is the best fit for a student.

Payments and Choir Accounts

When depositing money for uniform fees, fundraisers, tours, travel, or other choir fees, please keep the following things in mind:

- T-shirt and uniform fees will be billed to students’ accounts and can be paid online or at the finance window.
- Checks for booster related fees and fundraisers should be made out to: VOICE Choir Boosters. All VOICE booster payments should be made directly through Paypal via the choir website or by check deposited into the booster payment box by the classroom door.

Financial Assistance

VOICE Boosters has some scholarship funds available to support students in need. If you are in need of scholarship assistance in order to pay for choir fees and/or trip/retreat fees, we ask that you do the following:

1. Participate fully in *at least* **two fundraisers**. This year’s fundraisers include:
 - Mattress Fundraiser Event
 - Wildcat Idol
 - Sees Candy
 - Mod Pizza
 - Securing sponsorships or donations

2. Fill out the scholarship request form, linked on Schoology. Boosters fulfill scholarship requests based on the honor system. We trust that you will only ask for assistance if it's truly needed.

Audition Process

Auditions for placement into Camerata, Bel Canto, and Bella Voce take place in early March each year. Audition materials will be posted at www.mountsichoires.org and will be practiced in every choir in preparation for auditions. Auditions are open to any Mount Si High School student in grades 9 - 11.

If a student has successfully completed a year in an auditioned ensemble, they typically do not need to re-audition for that same ensemble. They WOULD need to audition to move into a different auditioned ensemble. The directors may ask for students to re-audition for their current ensemble should the student have failed to demonstrate success in that ensemble over the course of the school year (excessive absences, an F grade in the course, etc).