

Chorus Handbook

2018-2019



Congratulations on your decision to become a member of the Raymond B. Stewart Middle School choral program. As a member, you will learn to sing, meet new friends, participate in fun activities and develop a greater appreciation of the performing arts.

To be a successful choral member you must make the commitment to always strive to do your best. It is important to conduct yourself with good character, and to have pride and respect for others and their property. As a choral member, you not only represent yourself, you represent the choral program and the entire school. The pleasure of performing good music for an appreciative audience is matched only by the personal satisfaction of playing for one's own enjoyment.

It has been our experience that much of the information given to students rarely makes it home. It is with this in mind that we have created a band & chorus website. You can access the website by going to <http://www.rbsmsband.com>. You may also follow us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or YouTube. If you ever have a question or concern, you may call the Music Suite at (813) 794-6696 or leave a message at the Main Office (813) 794-6500. Usually the best time to reach me is before or after school. You can also e-mail me at bschmidt@pasco.k12.fl.us.

Why Take Chorus?

1. Our students find the social interaction provided by chorus membership as rewarding as the quality and entertaining musical training they receive.
2. The music suite is definitely a "home away from home" for many of our students.
3. The study of music has been long documented as a major contributor to the success of students in academics.
4. Music students typically represent the top of the academic scale at our school

Communication

Please understand that our communication to you – the parents – is a very high priority for us. We want to take care of concerns and make every situation the best for each student. Please contact Mr. Schmidt for clarification on any concerns before they become major issues.

Mr. Schmidt will be sending home many updates and communications via e-mail and text message throughout the year. Due to the nature of e-mail and messaging, all major concerns will need to be addressed through conferences or phone communication. This is to avoid any misunderstandings or unclear intentions through electronic communication. Parents are encouraged to use e-mail to get more information or clarification regarding events, or to schedule a conference with Mr. Schmidt.

Email: bschmidt@pasco.k12.fl.us

Phone: (813) 794-6696

Our students and parents are able to stay informed a number of different ways. We encourage all of our parents to follow our program through our Website (<http://www.rbsmsband.com>), Charms Office (<http://www.charmsoffice.com>), Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/rbsmsbandprogram/>), Twitter (@rbsmsmusic), and Instagram (@rbsmsmusic).

Charms Login - rbsmsmusic

Password - Student ID#

Rehearsal & Performance Attendance

(during, before and/or after school)

To have a truly successful program it is imperative that every chorus member attends and participates in **ALL** the scheduled rehearsals and performances for their class. The District School Board of Pasco County lists Chorus as a co-curricular course, which means attendance, before, during, or after school, is an essential and required component of the course.

To help facilitate scheduling concerns, all students and parents will have access to our calendar on Charms (<http://www.charmsoffice.com>). **Performances and rehearsals are considered grades and cannot be made up. An absence from any performance or rehearsal will directly affect a student's grade.** Please contact Mr. Schmidt if there is an extreme circumstance that needs to be considered. It is also important to know that if you are absent from school due to illness, Pasco County guidelines state that you may NOT participate in any after school activity.

We live in Florida and as you know it can get extremely hot outside so proper hydration is important. We will always provided water during outside rehearsals or performances where heat can become an issue. It is important that students take time to hydrate.

Uniform/Dress Code

Concerts (Boys) - Students must wear their school-issued tuxedo (coat, pants, cummerbund and bow-tie). Students must wear their chorus t-shirts under their tuxedo. Students must also wear black dress shoes.

Concerts (Girls) - Students must wear their school-issued dress. Students must wear black flat shoes.

Policies and Expectations:

- Students will show respect at all times toward the directors, parents, chaperones, school officials and other students. They will also be respectful of school property and the property of others.
- Gum, candy, food, or drinks are NOT allowed in the music suite, on busses, or during rehearsals or performances without director permission.
- Smoking, tobacco products, and alcohol are prohibited by anyone entering the RBSMS campus. This policy also applies to anyone representing RBSMS Band and Chorus during off campus activities.
- Students and Chaperones are required to ride the bus when it is provided for scheduled events. Prior arrangements need to be made IN WRITING if a parent plans to transport a student to or from an activity where bus transportation is provided. This policy assures the safety and accountability of all students.
- Always be on time! Every effort will be made to start and end rehearsals or performances on time. If a rehearsal is scheduled to end at 5:00 p.m. you should plan to pick up your child at that time. You are always welcome at any rehearsal or performance. The ending times for some performances are more difficult to estimate. Your flexibility on this issue is greatly appreciated.
- For sanitary, safety, and liability reasons, students should not touch any equipment in the music suite.
- Demonstrate positive behavior at all times. Disruptive, irresponsible, or inappropriate behavior cannot be tolerated while representing the Raymond B. Stewart Middle School Chorus.
- Students are responsible for issued items. This may include, but is not limited to uniforms, books, music, music folders etc. Replacement or repair fees may be assessed if items become lost or damaged.

Practice

Practice is an integral part of learning how to sing. Students should plan to practice a minimum of 20 minutes a day, 5 days a week (100 minutes total per week) outside of class. Students excel quickly when they establish a practice routine and when they practice more than the bare minimum. You may have to start with 10 minutes a day and gradually work up to 20 or more minutes. Practicing daily develops tone, technique and endurance. You will progress much slower if you skip days then try to make up time by practicing longer.

In order to have an efficient practice session, students should break down their music into small sections to focus on before attempting to play an entire piece. Sometimes, this means working on one measure at a time. This process of "musical chunking" will set up your child for success. Music takes patience and hard work!

Grades:

Grades are based on many factors, that include:

- Class Participation
- Performance Objectives (playing and written)
- Music Preparation
- Special Projects
- Rehearsals and Performances
- Following Classroom Policies and Procedures

Students will receive a list of Performance Objectives, which lists specific performance requirements. Students are required to bring their instrument, music, and a pencil to class everyday. All students enrolled in Chorus are expected to participate and perform in all the required activities of their class. Again, Chorus is a “co-curricular” course which means attendance at any required activity before, during, or after school is part of a students grade.

Discipline Policy

(for class, rehearsals and performances)

1. Verbal reminder
2. Student will be removed from the activity with a deduction in participation points.
3. Parent contact: conference, note home, phone call, etc.
4. Exclusion from a rehearsal, performance or activity
5. Detention, discipline referral, and removal from activity/class.

Severe discipline issues will result in an immediate discipline referral.

Chorus Handbook Form

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We encourage all parents to get involved in their child's musical experience. Many of you probably played an instrument or sang in a choir while you were in school. If so, you know that the time spent in music was one of the most rewarding experiences of your life. It can be equally rewarding for your child. All it takes is commitment and a love for music.

I have read and understand the information included in the Chorus Handbook.

Date: _____

Class: _____

Student Name: _____

Student Signature: _____

Parent Name: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Please, fill in out your contact information below. It will be used to send home weekly emails and reminders about class. In addition, parents and students are encouraged to follow us on our website (rbsmsband.com), Facebook (@rbsmsbandprogram), Twitter, (@rbsmsmusic) or Instagram (@rbsmsmusic).

Parent Name(s): _____

Parent Phone #: _____ Alternate Parent Phone #: _____

Parent Email: _____ Student Email: _____