

# WEST SPRINGFIELD CHORAL ARTS



{hand}book 2017-2018

Mr. Dustin Brandt, director  
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www.spartanchoir.com

## Welcome

### **Dear Students and Parents:**

I am so excited to welcome you to the West Springfield Choral Arts Department. My goal for each student in the choral department is to have a positive experience making music and to develop a strong sense of self by providing engaging, creative, and challenging opportunities through an atmosphere that demands self-respect, a positive community, and hard work.

I have provided a handbook for you and your student to read over. It is devised as a reference for the director, parents, and students. The information contained in the book will answer many of your questions and help to alleviate any misunderstandings later in the year. Please read over the information with your student and sign the back page of the booklet.

I encourage students and parents to contact me at any point during the year should you have questions or concerns. E-mail is usually the easiest way to reach me, as I am not usually near the phone during the school day. I am looking forward to making beautiful music together.

Please return the last page of the handbook by

**Friday, September 29th, 2017.**

If you should have any questions please feel free to contact me via email at [dtbrandt@fcps.edu](mailto:dtbrandt@fcps.edu).

Sincerely,

Mr. Dustin Brandt  
Choral Arts Director  
West Springfield High School

## Policies and Procedures

All students are expected to have read and comply with the following expectations:

1. Respect others. Respect yourself. Respect property. Respect performances.
2. Students will be assigned a black binder and pencil for chorus. In this binder, students are to keep all course materials distributed by the director and a sharpened pencil. Students must always use a pencil when marking music or when working on written assignments. This may be taken home, but you are responsible to bring it back to class the next day!
3. Gum chewing nor food or drink should be consumed in the choral classroom without Mr. Brandt's direct permission. **Only water is permitted.** Students are encouraged to have a water bottle with them every day.
5. Students are expected to arrive for class on time and prepared. When the bell rings, students need to be ready for the warm-up activity. Students who abuse the school attendance policy will be referred to their administrator for disciplinary action.
6. Unnecessary talking and disruptions will not be tolerated in the rehearsal setting. Student grades will reflect rehearsal technique and class performance assessments.
7. **Cell Phones** - Students are not allowed to have cell phones or gaming devices during class time, performances, or rehearsals. All phone volumes must be OFF during all rehearsals. Your phone will be confiscated and placed in the phone jail if it is seen out. Students who wish to do so may freely charge their phones in the phone jail, but they may not have access to their phone until the end of class. Students must place their phones in the phone jail before class starts. In addition parents who have cell phones out or on during performances may be subjected to the evil eye, uncomfortably long stares, aggravated whispering or awkward silences while we wait for your phone to stop ringing, or other forms of passive-aggressive forms of public humiliation.
8. **Choral students are required to attend all choral concerts in which their ensemble is performing.** Call times are published on the choral arts calendar, attached in this handbook and online at [www.spartanchoir.com](http://www.spartanchoir.com) Students will only be excused from a concert with a valid medical excuse. **Birthdays, family functions, lack of transportation, vacations, etc. are not valid excuses for missing a concert.** Please plan ahead. Please read the handbook sections regarding performance and rehearsal requirements.
9. All policies outlined for students of West Springfield High School are to be upheld, both on and off campus, as a member of the Choral Department.

## Rehearsal Requirements

Afterschool rehearsals are a required part of the music department at West Springfield. In order for students in various choral classes to practice together, afterschool rehearsals are necessary. Dates will be announced at least two weeks in advance of any afterschool rehearsals not already scheduled on the annual calendar. There will always be at least one required afterschool rehearsal before a concert. Please check the attached calendar, **as well as the postings in the classroom** to confirm these rehearsals and times. Missing an after school rehearsal can be very costly to one's grade!

Students who do not pre-arrange an absence or conflict at least 2 weeks in advance will not be excused from rehearsals.

## Performance Requirements

Performances are an extremely important part of music education. **Thus, students are required to perform in each of the main choral department performances this year.** Plan ahead! **As previously stated, students will only be excused from a concert with valid medical excuse.** Birthdays, family functions, lack of transportation, vacations, etc. are not valid excuses for missing a concert. **Unexcused absences from performance or rehearsal assessments cannot be made up. Retake performance assessments for students with valid excuses, made in advance, will be determined by the director if necessary.**

Students are expected to be fully dressed for every concert in order to participate. Students who are not dressed correctly will not perform and will receive no points towards their performance grade. **Students are to wear no jewelry except what is assigned to them. Hair should be pinned back away from the face and be off the shoulders.**

The official choral calendar is available both in the classroom and at [www.spartanchoir.com](http://www.spartanchoir.com). Please take a moment to note all performances that are required and plan accordingly. The calendar is not set in stone, and any changes will be announced as soon as possible. As performance dates are added throughout the year, students will be notified within a reasonable amount of time to make necessary arrangements. Unique cases will be dealt with on an individual basis.

## Grading Policies

Students will be graded using a Total Points Grading System. Every quarter will be worth a set number of total points.

For example, a grading quarter could be divided as follows:

Sight Singing Homework #1= 20 points

Written Test #1= 20 points

In class performance assessment #1 = 20

Daily Grade = 20

Weekly Class Grade = 40-60 points, depending on the unit of study being assessed

Students who miss any assessments will have two weeks from the date of the assessment to make up their grade. Individual performance assessments can be retaken as many times as a student would like within a quarter.

The *grading scale* for each term is set according to the FCPS/WSHS Grading Scale; the *number of points* will vary upon the numbers of tests, performances, etc. Students are expected to participate fully in daily rehearsals in the classroom for 20 points per day. Should a student be unable to sing due to illness, he or she is expected to observe the rehearsal and take notes in his/her music. Students who are sick will not be allowed to just sit and listen. If you are truly that ill, you will be excused to the clinic. Students will not receive full class work points if they do not have their music, do not have their pencil, or are not prepared for class in any way.

### 2017-2018 West Springfield Spartan Choir Fees:

FCPS and the West Springfield Choir will not charge students a fee for any mandatory aspect of the West Springfield Choir program except for course material fees of which are permitted by the Virginia Department of Education regulations. Schools cannot require a student to pay fees for course materials in excess of the amount approved by the FCPS School Board in Notice 5922.

The following is a description of the West Springfield High School Choir course material fees and FCPS-sponsored optional activity fees for participation in the music program for the upcoming season.

FCPS Required Fees	Amount	Who pays this fee?	This pays for...
<b>Uniform Fee</b> Due September 29, 2017	\$110 – Check #1 (Do not combine checks)	Anyone who <b>does not currently</b> have a uniform in Bella Voce, Bel Canto, SparTones, or Madrigals	<b>Boys:</b> 5 piece suit package – Suit pants, suit jacket, white laydown collar shirt, black vest, and black tie. <b>Girls:</b> Black concert dress – unhemmed, and necklace. Dress insurance is included in this fee.
<b>Choral Arts Fee</b> Due September 29, 2016	\$50 – Check #2 (Do not combine checks)	Anyone enrolled in a choral arts ensemble.	This fee covers <u>consumable</u> items/expenses for Bella Voce, Bel Canto, Madrigals, The SparTones. Examples of these items include choir t shirts, choir binder, uniform replacement and repair, uniform accessories, music, and instruments.

FCPS Sponsored Optional Activity Fee		
This is a fee that students are expected to pay if they choose to participate in any activities/trips associated with the West Springfield Choir. This fee is determined and assessed based on the estimated cost of the trip/activity – including such costs as transportation, accommodation, registration, food, and other miscellaneous expenses.  Examples of trips/activities would include the Spring Choir Trip and competitions not already fully funded by FCPS.  Students who do not pay the fees associated with a trip/activity will be ineligible to perform/participate in the trip/activity.		
Optional Activity	Amount	Due Date
Spring Trip Chicago (March 12-16)	To Be Determined (~\$750)	Initial deposit of \$100.00 is due by September 29 <sup>th</sup> , 2017 - with subsequent payments to follow

**Individual Performance Events:** There are opportunities throughout the school year for individual students to choose to audition and/or participate in other choirs. Examples include the All-District or All-State choir and Honors Choir. Audition or participation fees are often assessed for these opportunities by the sponsoring organization. The West Springfield Choir does not establish such fees, but the West Springfield Choir often assists in the collection of these fees from individuals who elect to participate and

the submission of one group payment to the respective sponsoring organization. These fees are communicated at the time other information about these opportunities is communicated.

Payment Policies

**Check**

- Payments can be made out to **WSHS**. Please include the student’s name and fee being paid in the memo line of the check.
- **Do not combine** the uniform fee and the choir fee in to one check. Please write TWO separate checks.
- Payments made by check should be placed in the lockbox in the choir room (in the cage next to the costumes)

**Cash**

- Please put the money in a sealed envelope and write the first and last name of the student and the name of the fee being paid (ex. Jane Doe, Uniform fee) and take the envelope to the front office of the school. The West Springfield High School staff responsible for collecting such cash payments will give you a receipt to acknowledge the cash payment. **NO CASH PAYMENTS SHOULD BE DEPOSITED INTO THE LOCKBOX IN THE CHOIR ROOM.**

Refunds: Typically fees paid are non-refundable once commitments and purchases have been made. These refund policies will be communicated separately as they relate to individual activities.

Financial Assistance is available for those in need of such assistance. Requests for financial assistance should be made directly to the Choir Director prior to the due date for the related fee.

**Uniforms**

	<b>Uniform covered by fees</b>	<b>You provide:</b>
<b>SparTones</b>	Tuxedo jacket, black vest, black tie, white shirt, black pants	Black Socks and Black Shoes
<b>Madrigals Boys</b>	-Tuxedo jacket, black vest, black tie, white shirt, black pants -Madrigals polo	-Black Socks and Black Shoes -Dark blue jeans, brown belt, brown shoes.
<b>Bel Canto</b>	Black dress and pearl necklace	Black flats
<b>Personality</b>	Red Dress	Tan t-Strap character shoes, black spanx, flesh colored tights, false eyelashes, halter bra
<b>Madrigal Girls</b>	-Black dress and pearl necklace -Madrigals polo	-Black flats -Dark blue jeans, brown belt, brown shoes.

**Concert Uniform Accessories:** Certain uniform accessory items have to be purchased separately by the students as needed. While certain concert uniform components are included (jacket/vest, bow tie and cummerbund), students are responsible for purchasing and maintaining their black dress shoes and hemming their garments when necessary.

## 2017-2018 Calendar

<b>9/29</b>	\$\$\$ Due	Spring Trip Deposit \$100 and <b>All FORMS DUE</b>	<b>All Choirs</b>
10/14	ALL DAY	Honors Choir Auditions – Longwood University	Seniors Only
<b>10/23</b>	<b>3:30-5:30 PM</b>	<b>Choir Rehearsal Messiah Methodist Church</b>	<b>All Choirs</b>
<b>10/24</b>	<b>6:00-9:00 PM</b>	<b>Fall Concert at Messiah Methodist Church</b>	<b>All Choirs</b>
10/27	\$\$\$ Due	Spring Trip Payment Due - \$200	
11/11	9:00 AM - 3:00 PM	District Choir Auditions - Centreville	
11/14	7:00-7:45 PM	Madrigals VMEA Preview Performance	Madrigals <sup>^</sup>
11/16	1:00 PM	Madrigals VMEA Performance	Homestead
12/02	\$\$\$ Due	Spring Trip Payment Due - \$150	
12/06	6:00 PM – 8:00 PM	Madrigal Men and SparTones Perform at Irving	Mads and ST
12/08	5:30 PM - 7:30 PM	Breakfast with Santa Setup	All Choirs
12/09	8:00 AM - 1:30 PM	Breakfast with Santa	All Choirs
<b>12/11</b>	<b>3:30-5:30 PM</b>	<b>Choir Rehearsal Messiah Methodist Church</b>	<b>All Choirs</b>
<b>12/12</b>	<b>6:00 - 9:00 PM*</b>	<b>Winter Concert Messiah Methodist Church</b>	<b>All Choirs</b>
1/27	\$\$\$ Due	Spring Trip Payment Due - \$200	
1/31-2/2	3:30-5:00PM	All That Jazz Auditions	
2/08	5-9 PM	All VA Choir Auditions - Fairfax High School	
2/09-2/10	5-9 Th, 10-5 Fri, 9-2 Sat	District Choir - Fairfax High School	
2/02	\$\$\$ Due	Spring Trip Final Payment \$150+/- Balance	
<b>3/06</b>	<b>6-8 PM*</b>	<b>Choir Pre-Assessment Concert- WSHS</b>	<b>All Choirs</b>
<b>3/16-17</b>	<b>4-9 Fri, 9-9 Sat</b>	<b>Choir Assessment - Woodson</b>	<b>All Choirs</b>
4/5-4/7		All-VA Choir – Richmond VA	
4/12-4/16		Spring Trip to Chicago	
5/14-5/17	3:30-6:00 PM	All That Jazz Rehearsals	
5/18-5/19	6:00 PM – 9:00 PM	All That Jazz Performances	
<b>6/5</b>	<b>3:15 - 4:30 PM</b>	<b>Choir Rehearsal WSHS Auditorium</b>	<b>All Choirs</b>
<b>6/6</b>	<b>6-9:30 PM*</b>	<b>Choir Concert WSHS Auditorium</b>	<b>All Choirs</b>
6/12	6-9 PM	Choir Banquet	

**Events in bold are part of the student’s grade. In order to be excused from the events in bold, the director must receive an excuse in writing at least two weeks in advance.**

<sup>^</sup>The Madrigals are expected to participate in every home game and playoff game as well as any caroling events that take place in December. Please give as much advance notice as possible if there is a conflict.

\*All Concerts start at 7:00 PM with doors opening around 6:40 PM. 6:00 PM is the call time for all students. All concerts are held in the WSHS Auditorium unless otherwise noted and are open to the general public. Required concerts (events in bold) are free.

**Please visit [www.spartanchoir.com/calendar](http://www.spartanchoir.com/calendar) calendar updates and  
to download this calendar to your ical or google calendar**

**SIGNATURE FORM (TURN IN) DUE SEPTEMBER 29<sup>th</sup>**

**Please sign the statement below and return this and ALL OTHER FORMS to the chorus office by Friday, September 30<sup>th</sup> 2016.**

We the Parents/Guardians of ♦ \_\_\_\_\_ have read the West Springfield High School Choral Arts handbook with our student and understand the policies of the WSHS Choral Arts department. We understand that the handbook outlines the basic curriculum and expectations for our student during their participation in the WSHS Choral Arts department.

**PLEASE READ CAREFULLY AND CHECK ALL THAT APPLY:**

- My emergency care information is attached!
- I WILL participate in the Spring Competition in Chicago **and my spring trip commitment form is attached!**
- I WILL NOT participate in the Spring Competition in Chicago
- I WILL purchase an optional Choir Hoodie and/or T-Shirt **and my order form is attached!**
- I WILL NOT Purchase an optional Choir Hoodie and/or T-Shirt
- PARENTS - I WILL volunteer to help the Choral Patrons Association **I have gone to [www.spartanchoir.com/cpa](http://www.spartanchoir.com/cpa) to sign up to volunteer.**
- PARENTS – I HAVE read the financial obligation form and **I have submitted the appropriate checks for the necessary fees along with this form.**
- PARENTS – I WILL donate to the Choral Patrons Association for an optional tax write-off **and my donation slip and check are attached!**
- PARENTS – I cannot help the Choral Patrons Association at this time, but I will attend every concert I can and cheer loudly for my child!

♦ \_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/guardian signature \_\_\_\_\_  
Date

♦ \_\_\_\_\_  
Student signature \_\_\_\_\_  
Date