

Milton High School

Choral Department



2024-2025 Handbook

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Letter from the Directors

Welcome to the Milton High School Choral Department! Our goal here is to enable your student not only to be a knowledgeable singer and a lifetime musician, but also a more responsible, disciplined, focused and well-rounded individual. Superior musicianship is the result of superior work, and we are glad that you have made the commitment to support your child in their musical pursuits.

In order to facilitate the best possible learning experience for your child, the MHS Choral Department is divided into four (4) different academic choirs:

- Bella Voce *SA ensemble, intermediate choir*
- Concert Choir *SATB ensemble, intermediate mixed choir*
- Select Treble Choir *SSAA ensemble, advanced choir*
- Chorale *SATB ensemble, mastery mixed choir*

Know from the outset that the MHS Choral Program has a proud tradition of excellence. With your help we can continue to achieve a high degree of success throughout this coming year. The information enclosed in this handbook will help you understand our expectations for your student and how you can assist in meeting them. Take some time to look over it and do not hesitate to reach out with any questions or concerns.

A successful choral program is the result of a unified partnership between the parents, the students and the directors. **On Tuesday, August 22nd we will have our Parent Kick-Off meeting beginning at 6:30pm.** While we recognize that your time is valuable, it is vitally important that every family be in attendance. We will discuss important information about concerts, uniform procedures and fundraisers, as well as enjoy some snacks and hand out department SWAG.

We look forward to working with your children this year. With your support we can make this another fantastic year for Milton High School Chorus.

Thank you,



Drew Bowers, Director
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Susan Wallace, Assistant Director
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Mission Statement

The Milton Choral Department is dedicated to creating knowledgeable singers and lifetime musicians by training students to be responsible, disciplined, focused and accomplished.

Vocal Expectations

“Psychophysically, artful singing is the dynamic (ever changing) act of coordinating instantaneously the physical sense of respiration (the will to breathe), phonation (the will to utter sound), resonance (the will to form a particular vowel position), and articulation (the will to communicate by joining both vowel and consonant) into a disciplined utterance.”

Ralph Appleman, *The Science of Vocal Pedagogy*

Singing, like any skill, is learned and developed over time. Our goal is to offer all students the opportunity to explore their innate potential as musicians, and to increase their natural capacities through formal music instruction.

Classroom Objectives

- PR.2.a: Demonstrate and justify a method for producing a clear and free tone, with the body and breath working together, using accurate intonation.
- PR.2.b: Demonstrate and justify a method for singing with purity of vowels and clarity of consonants, and adjust independently to enhance ensemble performance.
- PR.2.c: Exhibit vocal continuity through passaggio across vocal registers.
- PR.2.d: Apply listening skills to achieve accurate intonation, blend, and balance in solo/and or ensemble singing throughout the vocal range.
- PR.2.e: Describe and justify elements of vocal health, including the vocal mechanism, proper use, and physiological needs.
- PR.2.f: Assess and justify applied rehearsal and performance strategies which address technical and expressive challenges.

** Objectives pulled from the Georgia Performance Standards for Chorus*

Anyone can learn to sing given the proper instruction, application and dedication, however it is up to you to determine how successful you will be. “The final forming of a person’s character (and their musical success!) lies in their own hands.” Anne Frank

Voice Lessons

We encourage any student who would like to enhance their music education to consider private lessons. Private lessons are available with our recommended voice teacher, Riley Schreer. Mrs. Schreer is a talented musician and performer with a degree in Vocal Music Education from Belmont University. She teaches Chorus at Haynes Bridge Middle School and is the Assistant Director of Music at Alpharetta Presbyterian Church. This opportunity is available to all students in the choral program. Cost for the lessons are the responsibility of the student/family. Our benefit is that you are working with a qualified teacher for less than you might pay at other studios.

Students interested in taking private lessons should contact Mrs. Schreer directly via cell (770) 990-5830 or contact via email at: rileyschreer@gmail.com.

Behavioral Expectations

To achieve our goals together each singer must give of their voice and energy for the good of the group, for we will accomplish more as a group than we ever can individually. There are very high expectations of the members of the Milton Choral Program in how you handle yourself in both rehearsal and extracurricular activities. Students will be held to these high standards. You will be expected to work hard, be prepared, and be respectful. To those who give the most; they will receive the most and will embark upon a journey they will never forget!

Code of Conduct

1. **Be respectful.** Good people doing good things, always!
2. **Be prepared for class.** This includes music, pencil, folder, and any other item(s) as noted by the director.
3. **No food, drink, or gum in class.** Water bottles are the only exception.
4. **No cell phones during rehearsal.** Cell phones should remain in your bag at the side of the room, unless approved by the director. Any use of a phone at an inappropriate time could result in that phone being confiscated for the remainder of that class period.

Bathroom Privileges

It is expected that all students will be in rehearsal for the allotted time each day, however emergencies do arise. If someone needs to use the restroom, choose the proper time to leave (note this should never be while singing). Consequences will arise if the bathroom privileges are abused by an individual or class.

Sickness

If a student is unable to sing because of a sore throat, cough, etc., please notify the director at the **BEGINNING** of class. During the class period the student should **write down** their observations of the rehearsal and **turn them in** at the end of the class. This will count as the student's participation grade for the rehearsal. If the observations are not turned in, a grade of zero "0" will be earned for that day. The student will be expected to mark their music and take any other notes given and to participate with the class in any discussions or non-singing activities. **The above procedure must be followed for each day the student is sick.**

Discipline Issues

As detailed above, a student's attentiveness can adversely affect their grade. If the behavior escalates to higher levels, the director will assign detention or refer to an administrator as necessary. Note: For any behavior severe enough, the director reserves the right to seek removal from the Milton Choral Department.

Grading Policy

These policies are subject to changes based on Fulton County guidelines.

Practice Assignments (10%)

Practice assignments are daily assignments, observations and/or engagement activities given in class or for homework to build and/or remediate skills. Our practice assignments will be **weekly rehearsal grades**, which will be earned based on rehearsal performance and preparedness—having all necessary materials, maintaining a positive and respectful attitude and remaining focused and committed throughout the duration of the class. Students can earn 20 points per day toward your grade of 100

for the week. Half of the grade each day will be having your music/folder and a pencil. The other 10 points will be directly related to your physical and mental performance.

Because students receive a rehearsal grade each day, all students who miss rehearsal will be required to complete a **Rehearsal Absence Form** in order to receive credit for that day. This form will be available electronically, and asks for information such as which musical excerpts were worked on during the previous rehearsal and what was the focus of our time. **This assignment is due one week from the date of absence.**

Minor Assessments (35%)

Minor Assessments are assignments or assessments that measure an individual standard or subset of standards/skills within a unit and/or when there is a small amount of dedicated instructional time devoted to the content being assessed. Our minor assessments are **Singing Checks**. This year we will have seven Singing Checks for our concerts. The dates for the checks are listed below.

- Fall Concert: Week of Sep 11 & Sep 25
- Winter Concert: Week of Nov 6 & Nov 27
- LGPE: Week of Jan 29
- Spring Concert: Week of Apr 15 and April 29

Major Assessments: Concerts/Midterm (55%)

Major Assessments are assignments or assessments that are cumulative in nature, measuring multiple standards/skills, and/or when there is a significant amount of dedicated instructional time devoted to the content being assessed. We have two types of major assessments: our **annual concerts and a class midterm**.

For a student to receive full credit for a dress rehearsal or concert, the student must arrive on time, remain at the rehearsal/concert **for the entire time**, be in proper attire, and perform to the best of their ability. Each singer's attendance at performances is vital to the group. Dates will be given in a timely manner and students are expected to be in attendance.

Our midterm is a singing test on music for LGPE. This is an independent assignment where students are expected to show what they have learned over the course of the Fall semester.

Recovery Policy

Note: Per the Fulton County Board of Education policy all students will have one (1) opportunity each nine weeks to retake one (1) major assessment. Students must have received a 79 or below to be eligible and can earn a replacement grade no higher than a 79. Student retakes must be completed before the next major assessment is given or 5 school days before the end of a marking period if there is not another major assessment given.

Concert Participation

Performances are the culminating summative assessments of our work. If you miss a performance or required rehearsal, it is like missing a test in an academic class. To be allowed the opportunity to make up your grade, you must first see if your absence meets the eligibility to be excused (see Excused vs. Unexcused Absences below) THEN, you must make up your grade (see Make-Up Assignments section below).

Excused vs. Unexcused Absences

All students are expected to be at every performance. Excused absences from a concert or rehearsal include (1) death in the immediate family (2) illness of student verified by a doctor's note (please turn in a copy of note to chorus teacher) or (3) a family emergency. **All excused absences are approved at the discretion of the director.** Any other absences are considered unexcused, including work conflicts and transportation issues.

All concerts and events are on the calendar now, giving ample time to avoid these scheduling conflicts. Any new required events will be given with at least two-week's notice.

Make-Up Assignments

For EXCUSED absences complete EITHER a written assignment OR set up a time with the directors to sing through all of your music. For UNEXCUSED absences a large written assignment will be required. **Contact Mr. Bowers or Ms. Wallace for specific information regarding make-up assignments.**

Concert Attire

We have two uniforms that are required. The casual uniform is the red Under Armour Milton Chorus shirt. Red T-Shirts are provided at a cost of \$30. Casual uniform pants/shorts will be determined based upon the event at the discretion of the director. The formal uniforms are black tuxes and dresses ordered from Cousins Concert Attire. The attire fee includes a garment bag.

Female: The female singers will wear a black dress, pearl jewelry, and black closed-toed shoes. The dress/jewelry / garment bag purchased new is \$90.00. We do have a limited number of dresses available via consignment.

Male: The men will wear a black tuxedo, black shirt, black bow-tie, and black dress shoes. The cost of the tuxedo and garment bag is \$120.00.

All singers must be aware of other concert attire guidelines. One ring per hand as needed, NO bracelets, ONLY the pearl necklaces and pearl earrings on for the ladies. NO other necklaces at all. If a student is NOT dressed appropriately, their grade will be affected. All uniforms will be checked before the concert and anything that is deemed incorrect will result in the grade being lowered a full letter grade (10 points).

Required Materials

Music and Music Folders

All music is provided and belongs to Fulton County Schools. Any student that does not return music will be assessed a fee for replacement. Each student will be provided a binder for chorus. This binder is incredibly sturdy and should last all four years, however you are welcome to purchase a personalized version of the MyDeluxe Folder through <https://www.mymusicfolders.com/>.

The binder should always contain ALL music, a pencil and be kept in a neat manner to be used for performances. If the binder is damaged or lost, the student will need to replace it for concert purposes.

Extra-Curricular Choirs

The Milton Chorus Department features four extra-curricular ensembles that meet before and after school. These ensembles are entirely student-led and sponsored by the directors. Auditions for these ensembles are generally held the second week of school. If you are interested in becoming a member, please contact one of the ensemble leaders.

Name	Rehearses	Type	Leader(s)
Unaccompanied Minors	Twice a week	SATB	Ivy Farnsworth/Svayem Patil
Milton Misses	Twice a week	SSAA	Tucker Bowers/Maeva Moorman
Testosterones/Quartet	Twice a week	TTBB	Jamie Chiu
Shirley Tempus	Once a week	SSAA	Cassidy Gordon/Kyra Ross

Honor Choirs

The Milton Choral Program is a very active program, and there are a number of Honor Choir opportunities during the course of the school year that students can participate in. Below you'll find a list of the events we participate in as well as important dates related to that event. We explain these events in depth and students will be able to register during class.

District Honors Chorus

Event Dates: Mon, Nov 11 – Tues, Nov 12, 2024

Location: Chattahoochee HS

Cost: \$30.00 Participation Fee

Coordinating Director: Wallace

Participation by Director recommendation

Solo and Ensemble

Event Date: Sat, April 26, 2025

Location: TBD

Cost: \$12.00 Participation Fee

Coordinating Director: Wallace

Participation by Director recommendation

All-State Reading Chorus

Event Dates: Thu, Jan 30-Feb 1, 2025

Location: Athens, GA

Cost: \$25.00 Application Fee

Coordinating Director: Bowers

Audition: Thu, Oct 26, 2023 at Riverwood HS

ACDA Honors Chorus

Event Dates: Wed, Mar 18 – Sat, Mar 22, 2025

Location: Dallas, TX

Cost: \$30.00 Application + \$150 Participation Fee

Coordinating Director: Bowers

Audition: Due virtually by Wed, Oct 1

All-State Chorus

Event Dates: February 13-15, 2025

Location: Athens, GA

Cost: \$25.00 Application Fee

Coordinating Director: Bowers

1st Audition: Sat, Nov 2, 2024 at Luella HS

2nd Audition: Thu, Jan 23, 2024 at Centennial HS

Governor Honors Program

Event Dates: mid-June to mid-July, 2025

Location: Georgia Southern, Statesboro, GA

Cost: None

Coordinating Director: Bowers

1st Audition: Nov 4 @ North Springs HS, TBD

Online Application: Deadline in early January

2nd Audition: Late Feb at Georgia Southern

Travel Policies and Procedures

Students and parents must understand that discipline problems and violation of the school system's behavior policies will not be tolerated. Any issues will be referred to Mr. Bowers, Ms. Wallace or the administrator traveling with us. For any significant issues, students will be given a warning. With any further issues the student will be instructed to phone home and explain their behavior, and any further issues may mean the student will be sent home at parental expense. For severe problems the directors or administrators may decide to send the student home immediately at parents' expense.

It is the sincere intent of the choral staff that everyone enjoy traveling with the choirs and have a good time, both students and chaperones. All rules are to ensure the safety of everyone and allow us to have an enjoyable time together. Parents should make sure the emergency contact information is up to date and someone can be reached should an emergency occur. Chaperones are always limited and parents may be asked to assist with any emergency needs for their student when applicable.

Rules and Guidelines

- All regular school rules regarding behavior will be enforced throughout all trips.
- No student will leave the choir and go off on their own at any time. Students must remain with the group in designated areas at all times.
- There will be no males in female housing areas and no females in male housing areas at any time.
- There will be no smoking or possession of smoking or related items such as electronic cigarettes or vaping devices at any time during any choir function.
- There will be no alcoholic beverages or drugs of any kind at any choir function. If for any reason a student is taking prescription medication, notification must be given in advance and in most cases, the prescriptions will be handled and dispensed by the choir nurse. All prescription and non-prescription medication should be in original containers and clearly marked. Any violation of this rule will result in notification of local law enforcement officials. The parents will be contacted to make arrangements for the student's immediate transportation home at their own expense. No refunds will be given to a student that is sent home due to disciplinary action. The student may be removed from the performing ensemble and other school rules will be enforced.
- No weapons (as listed in Fulton County policy) will be allowed at any time, including "toys."
- Students are expected to show proper respect for all chaperones at all times. Parents should discuss with their student the need to follow the instructions of the chaperones. We hope the students will realize that the chaperones are accepting the responsibility for the students and are giving freely of their time and energy so that our choir may have the privilege of taking the trip.
- Students must be appropriately dressed at all times (see Milton High School Dress Code).
- Students must behave in an appropriate and quiet manner during travel time - no yelling, profanity, inappropriate language, or horseplay. This includes any time at airports, on planes, during bus trips, and especially as an audience.
- Curfews are to be strictly followed. During overnight trips, students will be in their assigned room for room check and remain in that room until breakfast, except in case of emergency.
- Personal displays of affection between choir members are not appropriate while a part of a choir function.
- Audio Devices and iPods must be used with headphones at all times, even in hotel rooms.
- Always conduct yourself with class and professionalism. Treat other choirs with the same respect shown to us by others.

Communication

Successful communication between parents, students and the directors is a fundamental part of our chorus program. The primary means of communication between parents and directors will be through email. Newsletters will often be sent out through the Milton Chorus Association with valuable information concerning events, deadlines, and other logistical information.

Besides announcements in class, a primary method for communicating with students is GroupMe. This is a valuable tool that allows both the directors and other students to answer questions and relay important details to the group, and it is extremely important that all students register either through the app or via text message.

Note that as high school students, we expect the members of our program to be responsible for relaying information from our classroom to you, the parents. All information is relayed multiple times, well ahead of schedule, however if you have any questions do not hesitate to contact us personally.

Social Media

We use a variety of social media to make announcements, share photos and videos of our events and to share important and helpful links. Make sure to follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Social Media usernames are listed on the title page.

Milton Choral Association

Our chorus program is supported by the Milton Choral Association (MCA). The Milton Choral Association is a 501(3)(c) non-profit, volunteer led organization that works to facilitate and promote all choral activities in the school among faculty, staff, and students in the community. The Milton Choral Association is the way for family and friends of the singer to support the Milton Choral Program.

Financial Support

Funding provided by the Fulton Board of Education covers only the basic requirements of the choral program. The Milton Choral Association leads a number of fundraising efforts, in concert with the students and the directors, which allow us to maintain the highest caliber of choral education. These funds are used directly and entirely for student and choral program activities. Examples of activities that Milton Choral Association fundraising has previously supported include: Large Group Performance Evaluation registration fees, transportation, music and other instructional materials, supplies for fall retreat, banquet costs (we pay for all students to attend), judging fees, concert accompanists and orchestral collaboration.

Anyone may join the Milton Choral Association, including family, friends, neighbors and community members. This year there are different levels to give to the Choral Association as you see fit. Parents are strongly encouraged to join the Milton Choral Association (MCA) and be a part of your student's musical experience. More information about contacting and joining the MCA can be found at www.miltonchorus.com/mca.

2024-2025 Calendar of Events

Bold items have not been confirmed as of revision date. Last revision 5/24/2024.

Required Events for All Groups

Aug	20	MCA Kick Off Parent Meeting, 6:30-9:00 PM
Aug	16	Chorale sing National Anthem at Football Game
Aug	22-23	Banner Day during class
Aug	30	Fundraiser Kickoff (Breakfast meeting at 7:30 AM)
Aug	30	Select sing National Anthem at Football Game
Sept	7	Choir Retreat at Camp Blue Ridge
Sep	13	Fall Fundraiser Ends – All cards and money due!
Sep	13	Fundraiser Celebration – Milton HS Front Lawn, 4-5pm
Sep	20	8 th Grade Night at Milton – ALL MHS Choirs sing National Anthem
Oct	1	Fall Concert, Crabapple Market Green, 6:00 PM
Oct	25	Homecoming: All Choirs sing National Anthem at Football Game
Nov	1	Senior Night at Milton - ALL Seniors sing National Anthem
Dec	10	Winter Concert, Milton Community Church, 7 PM
Jan	???	Hall of Fame Game, All MHS Choirs sing National Anthem
Feb	26-28	Large Group Performance Evaluation, Bunche MS (one day only)
May	13	Spring Concert, Milton Community Church, 7 PM
May	16	End of the Year Choral Banquet, Marriott on Windward, 7-11 PM

NOTE: All Honor Choir Opportunities will be listed in the Milton Chorus Handbook. These opportunities are available to all Milton Chorus Singers. If you are interested in an activity, please let Mr. Bowers and Ms. Wallace know of your intent.

Extra-Curricular Events – see Mr. Bowers or Ms. Wallace if interested

Sep	6	MusiCon for Northwestern Chorus
Sep	13	All Honor Chorus Events Registration Deadline
Sep	20	Fall Showcase Auditions
Oct	24	All State Reading Chorus Auditions, Milton HS
Nov	2	All State Chorus First Round Auditions, Luella HS, Locust Grove, GA
Nov	4	GHP Auditions - Fulton County Schools, North Springs HS
Nov	11-12	District Honor Chorus - Chattahoochee HS
Nov	18	Fall Showcase Dress Rehearsal, MHS Auditorium, 4-7pm

Nov	19	Fall Vocal Showcase, 7 PM Performance
Dec	3	Casa Nuova Night – Portion of evenings profits are donated to the MCA
Jan	???	Hall of Fame Ceremony - Sing National Anthem
Jan	23	All State Chorus Second Round Auditions, Centennial HS
Jan	30-2/1	All-State Reading Chorus, Athens, GA
Feb	13-15	All-State Chorus, Athens Classic Center - Athens, GA
Jan	31	Spring Showcase Auditions
Feb	??	Governor's Honor Program Music Interviews, Berry College
Feb/ Mar	27-1	Spring Musical First Weekend
Mar	6-8	Spring Musical Second Weekend
Mar	18-22	ACDA National Convention Honor Choir; Dallas, TX
Apr	2-6	Carnegie Hall Spring Trip
Mar	27	Spring Showcase Dress Rehearsal, MHS Auditorium, 4-7pm
Mar	28	Spring Vocal Showcase, 7 PM Performance
Apr	26	Solo and Ensemble

Other Milton Chorus Events – (Check for the appropriate group)

Aug	12-16	A Cappella group auditions – different groups each day
Oct	12	Fundraiser Reward Trip - Fiddler on the Roof at City Springs
Dec	7	Christmas in Crabapple, 2-6 PM
Dec	18	Chorale sings for PTO Faculty Christmas Luncheon, 12:45 PM Atrium
Jan	11	Milton Chorus Winter Party at Behrmann Home
Mar	24-27	2025-26 Milton Chorus Auditions
May	7	Fine Arts Signing Day - Media Center - 7:00am
May	14-17, 20	Seniors and Chorale Graduation Practice during 3rd period
May	22	Chorale and Seniors sing for Graduation - TBA (Exact date released in FEB)

Notes:

1. Dates may be added to the calendar. Any date added with a two-week notice to parents and students will be graded as any other choral performance. Please refer to the handbook for consequences for missing a choral performance.
2. Dates that are not yet confirmed are in Bold.

Lettering in Chorus

Scoring System

Students of the Choral Program at Milton are able to letter in Chorus by participating in extra activities that can earn points. This list may be edited each year. The possible opportunities are listed with the points they are worth. A total of 50 points will be needed to letter. After earning a letter, 100 points will earn a service bar, 150 points will earn a medal for graduation, and 250 points will earn a service Plaque.

1	Attended and Participated in the Fall Concert	Participated in Fall Musical as a lead	5
1	Attended and Participated in the Winter Concert	Participated in Fall Musical ensemble	3
1	Attended and Participated in LGPE	Auditioned for Fall Musical	1
1	Attended and Participated in the Spring Concert	Participated in Cabaret	3
1	Sang the National Anthem at a Sporting Event	Auditioned for Cabaret	1
1	Performed or Helped at the Cluster Concert	Helped with Cabaret	1
2	Soloist in a Milton Choir	Participated in Christmas in Crabapple	2
1	Auditioned for a solo in a Milton Choir	Participated in Christmas Tree Lighting	2
1	Accompanied a choir on an instrument	Participated in Casa Nuova Night	2
1	Member of an Advanced Choir	Helped at 8 th Grade Night	1
1	Auditioned for an Advanced Choir	Singing for Faculty	1
1	Member of multiple Milton Choirs	Attended the Chorus Trip	4
4	Choral Officer or Section Leader	Attended Fall Retreat	3
5	Member of Unaccompanied Minors	Attended Banner Day	1
5	Member of Milton Misses	Attended Escape Room Day	1
5	Member of Barbershop Quartet	Helped with Retreat	3
1	Auditioned for an Acapella Group	Attended Retreat	2
5	Participated in All-State Chorus	Top Seller for Fundraiser	2
2	Auditioned for All-State Chorus	Participated in Fundraiser	1
5	Participated in All-State Reading Chorus	Attended Blitz Day	1
2	Auditioned for All-State Reading Chorus	Taking Private Voice Lessons / semester	1
5	Participated in District Honors Chorus	Taking lessons for an instrument	1
2	Participated in Choral Workshop Day (KSU/GSU Day)	Worked in the Choral Music Library / hour	1
5	Participated in ACDA Honors Chorus	Participated in a non-MHS Choir	2
2	Auditioned for ACDA Honors Chorus	Participated in a non-MHS Musical	2
5	Participated in Governor's Honors Program	Participated in a non-MHS Vocal Competition (NATS)	2
3	Semifinalist in Governor's Honors Program		
2	Auditioned for Governor's Honors Program		
5	Member of Tri-M Music Honors Society		
1	Win a Directors choice award at the Spring Banquet		