

Mount Vernon High School Choral Activities

Kevin Lackie, M.M. Choral Conducting, B.M.E. Choral Music Education – K-12

Director of Choirs, Mount Vernon Secondary Schools

President, Fairfax County Choral Directors Association

Choir Committee Chair, Fairfax Arts Coalition for Education

Chorus Classes

- Madrigal Singers
 - Advanced Treble Chorus – Period 5
- Majors Chorus
 - Advanced Basso Chorus – Period 7
 - Basso Chorus – Period 7
- Mount Vernon Voices
 - Treble Chorus – Period 8

Mr. Lackie's Choral Philosophy

The foundation of my beliefs as a choral conductor is to create a program that is centered around students' intrinsic reward for their hard work. Some think that chorus should just be "fun," and as much as it is, students make meaningful connections with each other and their artistic abilities through their accomplishments. In short, the goal of the class is to make the best quality performances they can and feel proud of themselves for the hard work they've made. That rewarding sensation from their hard work will mean more to each student and last with them for their lifetime. It is my responsibility to guide each choir and singer through their growth as a person and support them in making the best-quality performances they can.

It is my honor to have your student in the Mount Vernon Choirs. Know that they will grow a lot this year and develop a sense of working hard for their achievements.

What do you need to know?

- The chorus syllabus can be found on Schoology. This is a document with all pertinent information about class.
 - Chorus contracts went out on September 8 and 9. They must be signed and returned to Mr. Lackie within a week.
- Included in the syllabus is a chorus calendar with dates from now to June. Events in bold are mandatory and are a large part of the grade. **Please make sure this is on your family calendar.**
- Additionally, there are fees associated with chorus. It is important to know that one fee is billed to your MySchoolBucks account, and one is not. Both are required.
 - Chorus Class Fee (\$50) is billed to your account.
 - Chorus Uniform (\$40 or \$65) is NOT billed to your account. Search in MySchoolBucks school store.
- We use the Remind App for chorus class because we have many events.
 - Students are required to sign up for the notifications.
 - Parents are HIGHLY encouraged to sign up, as well.

Grading / Homework

- Rehearsal Etiquette (40%) – Each day in class, students earn credit for being the 5 P's: prompt, prepared, productive, professional, and polite.
- Formative Assessments (30%) – Frequent, short assessments of student knowledge. Such as sight reading assignments, reflections, quizzes, daily classwork, and folder checks.
- Summative Assessments (30%) – Large assessments of student knowledge. Such as concerts, dress rehearsals, and singing assessments.

Concerts / Performances/ Rehearsals

All choral ensembles have a co-curricular component which requires student participation in activities outside the school day, as required in FCPS Regulation 3866. Participation in these activities is required as part of the course grade. Please check the calendar thoroughly to try to avoid schedule conflicts as much as possible. Performances are a chance for students to perform as an ensemble and are an experience that cannot be reproduced if missed. Dates for rehearsals and concerts are given as far in advance as possible. All events marked in bold on the chorus calendar are mandatory.

If a conflict is suspected, Mr. Lackie must be contacted to **receive permission** for an absence. Help me, help you and contact me early and frequently. I will always do my best for those that do their best.

Get in Touch

- Best way to contact me is via email at kclackie@fcps.edu.
- I have an office phone, but I am at two schools, so this is less optimal. (703-619-3139)
- The Remind App lets students and parents send quick messages to me. This is best for “FYI” type messages.

How will I contact you?

- I send out regular emails and letters to families via email. I treat these as newsletters with information for our community.
- Additionally, I may send out parent emails to a selection of parents, specifically for events like Virginia Choral Assessment or trips.
- Most frequently, you will receive Remind App notifications from me. If you want to remain “in the know,” sign up for the notifications.

Be Involved with Chorus Parents

Each student who sings at the high school level is interested in having chorus as a part of their life. As a parent, I hope you encourage that ambition in all the ways you can. The best way to do that is to be involved with our Choral Boosters parent organization. This group supports our choral activities and ensures that students have the utmost opportunities to make incredible memories.

Meetings are monthly on Tuesday nights at 6:00pm on Zoom. You don't need to take office; you can be an attendee and lend your voice to making our choir programs strong and fulfilling.

Contact Melissa Schmechel, President, to support your student: mvhschoirsbooster@gmail.com