

2024-2025

North



Forsyth

# Raider Chorus Handbook

Mr Gene Seese

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Director

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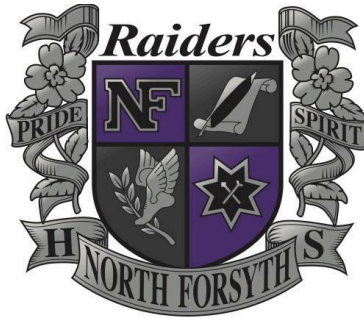


Facebook - [NFHS Raider Chorus](https://www.facebook.com/NFHS Raider Chorus)



YouTube - [North Forsyth Raider Chorus](https://www.youtube.com/North Forsyth Raider Chorus)

Raider Chorus Web - [www.raiderchorus.com](http://www.raiderchorus.com)



# Why music education?

## MUSIC IS A SCIENCE

It is exact, specific, and demands exact acoustics. Printed music is a chart, a graph, which indicates frequencies, intensities, volume changes, melody, and harmony all at once and with the most exact control of time.

## MUSIC IS MATHEMATICAL

It is rhythmically based on the subdivisions of time into fractions which must be done instantaneously, not worked out on paper.

## MUSIC IS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Most of the terms are in Italian, German, or French and the notations are certainly not English – but a highly developed kind of shorthand that uses symbols to represent ideas, not unlike the symbols found in computer language. The semaphore of music is the most complete and universal language.

## MUSIC IS HISTORY

Music usually reflects the environment and times of its creation, often even the national or ethnic mood. Civilization is often defined by the arts.

## MUSIC IS PHYSICAL EDUCATION

It requires fantastic coordination of fingers, hands, arms, lips, cheek, and other facial muscles, in addition to extraordinary control of the diaphragmatic, back, stomach, and chest muscles, which respond instantly to the sound the ear hears and the mind interprets.

## MUSIC IS ALL THESE THINGS, BUT MOST OF ALL, MUSIC IS ART

It allows a human being to take all these difficult techniques and use them to create emotion. That is one thing science cannot duplicate: humanism, feeling, and emotion.



## COURSE DETAILS

### Course Descriptions

NFHS offers 2 curricular choirs: [Intermediate Mixed Choir](#) (a combination class with Intermediate Musical Theatre) and the [Chamber Singers](#) (Advanced Mixed). We hope to offer some extracurricular choirs during Raider Time/Wellness as our schedule allows. Each student is placed in an ensemble based on his or her grade level & experience. Intermediate Mixed is for men & women in all grades and ability levels with no audition requirement. The Chamber Singers have audition requirements. Raider Time/Wellness choirs are open to everyone. The following skills and concepts will be introduced and/or developed by means of choral literature appropriate to the needs and abilities of the students and each choir:

- Correct posture
- Tone production
- Rhythm
- Pitch perception
- Scales
- Balance and Blend
- Solfege & Kodaly training
- Dynamic, tempo and articulation markings
- Blend, balance and rhythmic precision in an ensemble
- Musical expression and interpretation
- Basic concepts of music theory & history as they relate to the voice and to vocal selections
- Public performances on & off campus

### Performances/Dress Rehearsals

All students are required to participate in performances and dress rehearsals. Chorus is a team effort, and even missing one voice can drastically change the sound of the group. These are summative evaluations, which are required in co-curricular classes such as chorus, drama and band. Choral concerts and rehearsals take place at [Cumming First United Methodist Church](#) (unless noted otherwise). Select choirs will have additional performance responsibilities that all members will be expected to attend. All calendar events will be posted on the [Raider Chorus Webpage](#). This calendar will also be posted in the classroom, online and you may print a calendar. It is your responsibility to know these dates, keep up to date on any changes and/or additions and make appropriate plans to attend.

### Class Materials

A black music folder and a pencil will be supplied to all members. You will need paper for notes and in class assignments & assessments. iPads will also be utilized this year as we transition to digital music. Personal cell phones and electronics are not needed during class (unless otherwise stated) and will be put away at the start of class. Disciplinary action will be taken if a student chooses to not comply with this expectation. All students will receive MusicFirst accounts for theory and sight reading assessments (details in class).

### Concert Attire

Students will wear concert attire provided by the choir department.

### Performance Package

Please click the link above for information about our Performance Package costs.

- There are various fees charged by GMEA (listed on the next page). These fees are for extracurricular events and must be paid by the individual for participation. They are NOT included in the Performance Package.

### Festival Disney 2025 – March 26-30, 2025

- Registration open through Aug 31st, please click the link above for details and the registration link!



## Georgia Music Educators Association (GMEA) Events

### GMEA All State Chorus: Feb 13 – Feb 15, Athens Classic Center

Open to all members, these choruses include the top high school students in the state of Georgia. Entrance is by audition only. Selected students travel to Athens in February to perform under the direction of a master choral director. This audition is open to all students currently enrolled in chorus. Students who wish to earn a choir letter MUST audition for All State!

- Audition fee is \$30 due no later than Wednesday, August 28th. Students who have not paid their fee by this date will not audition, NO EXCEPTIONS! Please pay by check (made out to NFHS) or via School Pay.
- Audition #1 will be Saturday, November 2nd at Lanier High School.
- Students who pass the first audition will complete a second audition on January 23rd at (location TBD) before they will qualify for participation in Athens.
- Selected Raider Time sections will be dedicated to All State preparation.
  - Visit [www.gmea.org](http://www.gmea.org) or Canvas for practice examples of the audition procedures.

### GMEA All State Sight Reading Chorus: Jan 30 – Feb 1, 2025 - Athens Classic Center

Open to all members, this chorus is for the top sight-reading students in the state. Only those with excellent sight-reading skills should audition. If selected, students will travel to Athens in January to read through over 60 pieces and present an informal concert.

- Audition fee is \$30, due no later than Wednesday, Aug 28<sup>th</sup>. Students who have not paid their fee by this date will not audition, NO EXCEPTIONS! Please pay by check (made out to NFHS).
- Audition Date: Thursday, Oct 24<sup>th</sup>, Sequoyah High School (time TBD)
  - PLEASE NOTE: Any student accepted into the Reading Chorus will need to have a parent provide chaperone responsibilities, transportation and accommodations in Athens.

### District 9 Honor Chorus

This chorus consists of high school students from local counties. This event takes place on November 21-22 at CFUMC. Selections will be made by director recommendation/audition but limited slots are available. This event is open to both choirs.

- Cost for this event is \$65 for those selected. This includes the cost of music, t-shirt & lunch. *Transportation is your responsibility.* Fees can be paid via check (made out to NFHS) or SchoolPay.

### GMEA Large Group Performance Evaluation (LGPE)

Advanced choirs will participate in GMEA LGPE, being held at CFUMC March 4-6, 2025 (specific date TBD). There is no cost to students for these events and transportation will be provided as needed.

### Other Performance Opportunities

Other opportunities will be announced as they become available.



### TRI-M MUSIC HONOR SOCIETY

Please see Mr. Womack (Assistant Director of Bands) for information about membership & dues. Open to any member of a select choir.



## GRADING POLICY

Grading will be based on the directors' evaluation of each student's work done in class and during performances, with emphasis on daily participation, preparation for performances, and general improvement as a vocalist. This policy is for all students enrolled in Chorus at NFHS. Points can be earned as follows:

### Formative Assessments - 25% (minimum of 12 per semester)

- In Class Assessments

Students will earn 100 points every 3 weeks for their in class rehearsal work. This includes being on time, on task and prepared for class each day. Students must actively participate in every rehearsal. Please refer to the guidelines portion of this handbook for classroom discipline guidelines. The NFHS tardy policy will also be enforced.

- Homework/Handouts/Singing Tests

Students will earn points for class assignments, homework, music reports, singing tests, etc. Students will be notified in advance of these assignments. Students may earn additional credit for attending a music performance outside the school setting (i.e., a musical production, ballet, concert, etc.). Assignments will also be given through Canvas. You can take a reassessment at any time for up to full credit **BEFORE** the summative for the unit.

- Your missing formative assignment will be marked with a M in Infinite Campus.
- Focused formative assessments and feedback will be aligned with the current Summative goal
  - This can be performance or project-based. Participation as it directly relates to the Summative goal is often a Formative grade in a choral or theatre course.

### Summative Assessments - 75% (minimum of 6 per semester)

- Concert Performances

All performing arts classes such as Chorus, Drama & Band are classified as a co-curricular course. This is to mean that a portion of the student's grade will be fulfilled by the attendance and participation in activities that take place outside of the regular school day. In other words, it is required to participate in concerts and musical activities. A student does not have the option to be in a performing arts class and elect not to participate in the required out-of-school activities associated with the class. Students will be required to complete a written assignment if they do not attend these required performances IF the absence is excused. Further information will be sent home before each performance. At least one extra rehearsal will be required before each major concert. All rehearsals will be held **AFTER** school and advance notice will be sent home in writing & via email.

- Test Points

Students will take aural, vocal and written tests in chorus. These will be given at various times throughout the semester in class, on Canvas and through Sight Reading Factory.

### Summative Make Up Guidelines

- Your missing summative will be marked with an M in Infinite Campus
- Students will be scheduled to a Raider Time session to take the Summative within 48 hours of their return to class.
- An email will be sent home and documented in IC if the summative is not attempted within 48 hours of returning to class. If after 10 days the Summative is not attempted it will be referred to administration for additional support.
- Performance Absences that are **EXCUSED** may be reassessed for full credit. Performance Absences that are unexcused will be reassessed up to 90%. Performance absences make-up work can be written or performance based.



## GUIDELINES & EXPECTATIONS

These guidelines are for all students enrolled in Chorus at NFHS.

- On time, on task and prepared at all times. This means having a pencil every day ready to mark your music and listening to the director at all times. Failure to do so will result in a reduction of the in class rehearsal grade.
- Bathroom visits are one at a time with a pass. Do NOT ask to restroom while we are singing. Sign out on the bathroom pass clipboard and leave your phone in the classroom. Emergencies do come up but please do your best to take care of personal matters between classes and enter the chorus room ready to perform.
- No gum, outside food or drink at any time! Water in a sealable container is the only acceptable beverage in the classroom and is highly encouraged. Food and drink brought in will be thrown away upon entering the classroom.
  - *Water is available for purchase at \$.50, see your class ambassador to purchase.*
- Cell Phones are to be put away during rehearsal unless specifically given permission. Place your phones in the cell phone holder in class for storage and/or charging.
- Sickness (in class): If a student is unable to sing because of a sore throat, cough, etc., please notify the director at the BEGINNING of class. 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. *Please stay home whenever possible to avoid spreading the sickness to other choir members.*
- Sickness (home): Students will be provided make-up assignments but must reach out to the director to arrange. A grade of missing (M) will be placed into the gradebook until the make-up work is completed.
- Come to each rehearsal with a positive attitude about working. You are expected to arrive wanting to sing and eager to tackle the task at hand....MAKING MUSIC.
- Do not attempt to play the piano or touch any equipment in the classroom or practice rooms unless given express permission to do so by the director.
- Keep yourself informed of all dates, concerts, trips, and events (please refer to the online calendar). When you know in advance of an upcoming problem/conflict, communicate with the director AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. Learn when to communicate; immediately before a rehearsal is NOT a good time. A good time is before school or after school. I am always happy to talk to you/get to know you, but our focus before a rehearsal is.....THE REHEARSAL.
- Do not brush hair, spray perfume or hairspray, apply scented lotions, or put on make-up in the chorus room. Use the restroom for personal grooming (but not during class!!). Backpacks and purses are to be placed on the storage racks in the choir room, not on the risers, practice rooms, theory room or the floor!
- Your folder and/or iPad is your textbook in choir. The replacement cost for music will vary from class to class, but you will be required to compensate the choral department for any lost music and/or damaged folder/electronic equipment.

Represent North Forsyth High School in a positive, mature manner and you will further develop pride in your choral department. You are the biggest advocate for choral music by your attitude about music, your director, and your performances. Your attitude is a DIRECT REFLECTION ON YOU, THE DIRECTOR, AND THE PROGRAM. Both you as students and director have a responsibility to fulfill if we are to be successful.

## LETTERING REQUIREMENTS

To receive a NFHS Chorus Letter, Chevron or Honor Pin, you must have successfully completed all of the following requirements:

- You must attend all 4 major performances (AND after school rehearsals for each of them), which includes LGPE. There will be no exceptions to this rule. I do understand that there will be sickness and family emergencies, but anyone who doesn't attend all concerts and rehearsals will not be eligible for a letter or pin.
- You must participate in 2 of the fundraisers offered, with a minimum of 1 item sold for each. To be a dedicated member of the choral program you must show that you are willing to do what it takes to ensure the success of the choral program.
- You must audition for All State Chorus (acceptance is not a requirement).
- You must have an exemplary discipline record throughout the entire school year. Only good citizens deserve to wear the NFHS Chorus Letter.
- Minimum of 25 hours outside choral/music work for letter, 35 hours for a Chevron, 50 hours for an Honor Pin.

Remember, earning a letter is an honor and should not be an easy process. Please turn in all hours to your class ambassador throughout the year (NOT all at once in April!!).

## PARENTS, YOU CAN HELP!

### At Home

- Show an interest in the music study of your child.
- Check the Raider Chorus Web ([www.raiderchorus.com](http://www.raiderchorus.com)) and Canvas on a regular basis.
- Follow us on social media for updates in real time.
- Teach your child to be prepared and on time for each rehearsal and concert.
- Make faithful attendance at all activities important to you.
- Encourage your child to sing for others when the opportunity arises, in the home, at school, church and in the community.
- Do not schedule routine doctor visits on concert rehearsal or concert dates.

### At School

- Keep a record of the student's various musical activities.
- Notify the teacher in advance if the student is to be absent or tardy to a concert rehearsal and please have a verified excuse (when applicable).
- Teach them to be punctual to all rehearsals and concerts.
- See that the student keeps up with classroom studies and makes up work he or she misses.
- Feel free to discuss with me anything that will help me to understand your child.
- Attend concerts and other performances whenever possible.

LOOKING FORWARD TO ANOTHER AMAZING YEAR, THANKS FOR ALL YOUR SUPPORT!!!