



Bernards High School  
Choral Music Department

# Chorus

Mr. Matthew J. LaPine, director

Welcome to Chorus, and congratulations on choosing to be a member of the Choral Music Department at Bernards High School. You should be proud to be a member of Chorus, as BHS has a strong tradition of choral excellence. Chorus is the entry-level choral ensemble at Bernards, and its membership is open to all students with treble voices without an audition. I am excited that you have decided to join Chorus, and I look forward to making music with you.

## Daily Expectations

In each class, you are expected to enter the classroom quickly, getting your music folder from the appropriate slot, and you should be in your seat and ready to make music *before the bell rings*. If you are having trouble making it to class and in your seat on time, try to come via a less crowded route. If you need to use the bathroom before the start of class, be sure to come to class and get settled-in first; then, ask Mr. LaPine to go use the bathroom. You should be sure to ask to use the bathroom *before* the bell rings. You will not be permitted to leave the classroom between the time the bell rings for the start of the period and the end of daily warm-ups. If you need to leave the classroom after warm-ups for any reason (bathroom, called to the office, nurse, etc.), you are required to sign-out on the classroom log. This will help me keep track of students out of the classroom during fire, evacuation, and lock-down drills. When you return, please sign-in on the same log. At the end of the class period, you are expected to either return your music folder to the appropriate slot or bring it home to practice.

Electronic devices are not permitted in the classroom without specific permission. If your cell phone or another electronic device is seen or heard during the class period, you will lose credit for the day and the school policy regarding electronic devices will be implemented.

## Materials

- Pencils – You will be provided with one “Choral Music Department” pencil, and you must have it, or a pencil that you have provided, in class daily.
- Folder – Folders are provided by the school. Your folder is property of Bernards High School and must be kept in excellent condition; if it is damaged, you will be responsible for replacing it at your own expense.
- Music – Your music must be kept in your choir folder. Music is property of Bernards High School and must be kept in excellent condition; if any piece is lost or damaged, you will be responsible for replacing it at your own expense.

## Website

You are required to check the Chorus class website regularly: [chorus.shsd.bhs.schoolfusion.us](http://chorus.shsd.bhs.schoolfusion.us)

The page will be updated throughout the year with practice files, articles, recordings, links, and other important content. You are responsible for all material posted to the class website.

## **Social Media**

The Bernards Choirs are active on social media. Students, parents, friends, and family are all encouraged to “Like,” follow, or subscribe to the choir’s pages. Facebook and Twitter will be used periodically throughout the year to give updates, tips, and advice pertaining to the Bernards Choirs. YouTube will be used to post BHS choral performances. To find the pages, please search:

Facebook – [facebook.com/BernardsChoir](https://facebook.com/BernardsChoir)

Twitter – [@BernardsChoir](https://twitter.com/BernardsChoir)

YouTube – [YouTube.com/BernardsHSChoir](https://YouTube.com/BernardsHSChoir)

Periodically, pictures and video from Bernards Choir events will be posted on the above pages. Your child’s name will not accompany any photograph or video used. Please complete the school’s media release form so that your child can be included in these group pictures.

## **Fund Raising**

Throughout the year, students will be asked to participate in fund raising events. A portion of each student’s fund raising efforts will go directly into their own Bernards Choir account. From this account, students will have the opportunity to apply their funds toward the cost of concert attire ordered through the school, field trips, and other Bernards Choir related expenses. These funds will carry-over from one school year to the next, but they cannot be transferred to another student or used for non-Bernards Choir expenses (including band or orchestra, sports, or other school expenses). If you have any creative, new ideas for fund raising opportunities, please contact Mr. LaPine at [mlapine@shsd.org](mailto:mlapine@shsd.org).

## **Charms Office**

Bernards Choir uses the student management system called Charms Office. Charms Office is used to calculate, organize, and track student fund-raising and payments, assist with parent and student communication, help students to practice their music at home, and provides several other powerful tools. In the beginning of the year, each student will receive a personal account log-in and password and will be able to login through the parent/student portal. Please visit [CharmsOffice.com](https://CharmsOffice.com) to further explore this student management system.

## **Parent Volunteers**

There are times when it is necessary to have parent volunteers assist with events. These duties will range from chaperoning trips, to baking for a concert reception, to assisting with social choral events. Before an event, an e-mail will be sent to all families requesting volunteers. If you are available to volunteer, please reply to the e-mail with the information that is requested. It is important to have many parents volunteer so that we are not relying on the same parents to assist with every event. Parents should plan to assist in some capacity for at least one event each year.

## **Student Leadership Roles**

Students will have the opportunity to fill various leadership positions during the school year. Positions may include, but are not limited to, Section Leaders, Social Event Coordinators, and Fundraising Assistants. Students involved in these positions will meet as necessary in the planning and implementation of their duties. Some positions will be open to students in any ensemble while others will be restricted to members of specific ensembles.

## **Home Practice**

Just as you are expected to complete homework assignments in other classes, you are expected to practice your music regularly at home. As a member of Chorus, you will be guided by Mr. LaPine in learning your music; however, you will be expected to complete all assigned work. As the year progresses, you will begin to learn music on your own. Practice files will often be posted on the class webpage, and you are expected to use them to your advantage. You may take your music and folder home on any night; however, you are required to have your folder and your music during every class period. Any assignment that you are given must be completed on time for full credit. **Make-up assignments or bonus points are never given.**

## Hearings

Being part of a high school choral ensemble requires you to learn your music quickly and efficiently. Any section of music that was learned in class can be tested at any time. A “Hearing” is an opportunity for Mr. LaPine to “hear” you in performance of the selected repertoire. Typically, you will receive plenty of notice before a Hearing will take place; however, a Hearing can happen at any time. Hearings may take several forms – memorized and un-memorized; accompanied and unaccompanied; as a solo, duet, trio, quartet, etc.; or any other configuration that is appropriate to best assess your knowledge of the given repertoire. It is your responsibility to prepare for whichever type of hearing you have been assigned.

## Dress Rehearsals and Performances

You are **required** to attend and be a **positive participant** in every dress rehearsal and performance. As a positive participant **you will be on time, focused on the task at hand, work to the best of your ability, be fully prepared, and do everything that is asked of you.** You should never detract from the rehearsal or performance. Your participation should have a positive impact on the musicians around you and the rehearsal or performance as a whole. All dress rehearsals and performances are mandatory, graded events (see section on Grading), and you are expected to make them a top priority in your personal schedule. There are no excuses for missing a dress rehearsal or performance. If you miss one for any reason, except in the event of a true emergency, you will receive a “0” grade – no exceptions.

## Evening Rehearsals

There will be occasional evening rehearsals in preparation for concerts. This is our chance to work as an entire ensemble with an accompanist for a dedicated amount of time. Plenty of notice will be given for each rehearsal, and you will be notified as soon as any rehearsals are scheduled. This will typically occur during the first full week of school. *You are expected to attend all additional evening rehearsals.* If there is an extenuating circumstance (as determined by Mr. LaPine) for which you cannot attend an evening rehearsal, a written note from your parent or guardian is required *well in advance*, typically immediately when you are notified of the rehearsal but at least one month before the rehearsal. Students will not be excused from an evening rehearsal without sufficient notice except in the event of a true emergency. If there is a sudden emergency, it is your responsibility to bring a written note from your parent or guardian to Mr. LaPine the *first day that you are back in school*. If this is not done, you will receive a “0” grade for the rehearsal – no exceptions.

## Performance Attire

You are required to wear the appropriate Chorus performance attire at every performance, unless otherwise noted. If there is no mention of attire for a performance, you can assume that you will be wearing your Chorus performance attire. If you need to purchase the appropriate Chorus attire, you will have an opportunity to do so in the beginning of the school year. If you are not in the correct attire for a performance you will not perform, and your grade will reflect this as a missed performance.

When performing as a member of Chorus, it is expected that all long hair will be up and/or back and away from your face. There should be no visible jewelry, including, but not limited to, necklaces, large earrings (small, tasteful earrings may be worn), bracelets, and rings.

## Grading

All grades are weighted using the following percentages:

| Grading Category  | Weight |
|---|--------|
| Class Participation<br><i>Based on a weekly grading system (one point per day)</i>      | 40%    |
| Dress Rehearsals and Performances*<br><i>Based on a 7-point rubric</i>                  | 25%    |
| Hearings<br><i>Based on 20-point rubric</i>   | 20%    |
| Homework, Quizzes, Tests, Sight-Singing<br><i>Based on rubric or actual given grade</i> | 15%    |

*\*If there are no performances in a given marking period, the 25% weight of that category will be distributed the following way: 10% to Class Participation, 10% to Hearings, and 5% to Homework, Quizzes, and Tests.*

### **Performances and Events**

Mr. LaPine will give you a list of all performances and events in the beginning of the school year. At times, other performing opportunities may be afforded our ensemble. Since you are in Chorus, performances typically only include, but are not limited to, the annual Winter Concert, PopsNight, Spring Concert, and the Choral Department field trip; however, there may be other performances for your ensemble. You will be notified *immediately* when any performing engagement or rehearsal is added or modified. All additions or modifications to the performance and rehearsal schedule will be posted on the class website and announced in class. It is your responsibility to take note of any changes to the schedule.

### **Communication**

Besides in-person communication, the primary means for communication will be via e-mail. If you need to contact Mr. LaPine for any reason, you may e-mail him at [mlapine@shsd.org](mailto:mlapine@shsd.org). If you would like to talk via phone, it is best to send an e-mail with the best phone number where you can be reached. Similarly, Mr. LaPine will send regular correspondences to families via the e-mail address provided on the Student Information Sheet (attached). Students and parents should provide a **regularly-checked e-mail address and phone number** to be sure that you receive regular updates.

# Hearings Grading Rubric

|          | <b>Accuracy</b>  | <b>Intonation</b>   | <b>Tone Quality</b>   | <b>Musicianship</b>  |
|----------|--|---|---|--|
| <b>5</b> | Student performed the selection with excellent pitch and rhythmic accuracy: no pitch or rhythmic mistakes were made. Demonstrates mastery of the material.                               | Student performed the selection with excellent intonation: all notes were in tune. Demonstrates mastery of the intonation.  | Student performed the selection with excellent tone quality using superior vocal technique. Demonstrates mastery of vocal technique.  | Student performed the selection with excellent musicianship: all musical elements were evident (dynamics, phrasing, etc.). Demonstrates mastery of musicianship.                                     |
| <b>4</b> | Student performed the selection with good pitch and rhythmic accuracy: 1-2 pitch or rhythmic mistakes were made. Demonstrates emerging mastery of the material.                          | Student performed the selection with good intonation: 1-2 notes were not in tune. Demonstrates emerging mastery of intonation.  | Student performed the selection with good tone quality using good vocal technique. Demonstrates emerging mastery of vocal technique.  | Student performed the selection with good musicianship: most musical elements were evident (dynamics, phrasing, etc.). Demonstrates emerging mastery of musicianship.                                |
| <b>3</b> | Student performed the selection with average pitch and rhythmic accuracy: 3-5 pitch or rhythmic mistakes were made. Demonstrates average understanding of the material.                  | Student performed the selection with average intonation: 3-5 notes were not in tune. Demonstrates average understanding of intonation.                                  | Student performed the selection with average tone quality using average vocal technique. Demonstrates average understanding of vocal technique.                               | Student performed the selection with average musicianship: some musical elements were evident (dynamics, phrasing, etc.). Demonstrates average understanding of musicianship.                        |
| <b>2</b> | Student performed the selection with poor pitch and rhythmic accuracy: 6-8 pitch or rhythmic mistakes. Demonstrates a lack of preparation and understanding.                             | Students performed the selection with poor intonation: 6-8 notes were not in tune. Demonstrates a lack of preparation and understanding of intonation.                  | Student performed the selection with poor tone quality using poor vocal technique. Demonstrates a lack of preparation and understanding of vocal technique.                   | Student performed the selection with poor musicianship: few musical elements were evident (dynamics, phrasing, etc.). Demonstrates a lack of preparation and understanding of musicianship.          |
| <b>1</b> | Student performed the selection with unacceptable pitch and rhythmic accuracy: more than 8 pitch or rhythmic mistakes were made. Demonstrates little to no preparation or understanding. | Student performed the selection with unacceptable intonation: more than 8 notes were not in tune. Demonstrates little to no preparation or understanding of intonation. | Student performed the selection with unacceptable tone quality using unacceptable vocal technique. Demonstrates little to no preparation or understanding of vocal technique. | Student performed the selection with unacceptable musicianship: no musical elements were evident (dynamics, phrasing, etc.). Demonstrates little to no preparation or understanding of musicianship. |

Bernards High School Choral Music

# Dress Rehearsal and Performance Grading Rubric

*Grading is based on the following 7-point rubric:*

| <b>Dress Rehearsal</b>   |  |
|--|--|
| Present at Dress/Evening Rehearsal for duration of rehearsal<br><i>(1 point)</i> | Positive Participant in Dress/Evening Rehearsal<br><i>(2 points)</i> |
| <i>(3-points total)</i>  |  |

| <b>Performance</b>                         |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| Present at Performance<br><i>(1 point)</i> | Wearing Proper Concert Attire<br><i>(1 point)</i> | Positive Participant in Performance<br><i>(2 points)</i> |
| <i>(4-points total)</i>                    |   |  |

