

Vocal Music Syllabus & Performance Schedule

2025-2026

Mr. Ian Heetland – Director of Choral Activities

ian.Heetland@kcsd.k12.ia.us

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Concert Choir

Concert Choir is the name for the non-auditioned Choral Ensemble at KHS. Students grades 9-12 may be a part of this ensemble; no prior singing or choral experience is required and no audition is required. Students will be focusing on the fundamentals of choral music making and singing; This will range from basic music reading, vocal production, and basic music literacy. Music Literacy will include sight reading, rhythmic practice, and basic aural skills utilizing Solfége as the learning methodology. This ensemble performs at all home KHS Concerts, and travels to perform for the Iowa High School Music Association State Large Group Contest. Literature will range from Sacred to Secular, as well as Pop and Modern. They will perform at said contest with the Chamber Singers. Concert Choir has daily rehearsals during skinny block 1B, and spots are unlimited. Concert Choir will perform one “Shared” Selection with the Chamber Singers every concert, minus the Spring Concert, where all music will be shared. After at least one year of Concert Choir participation is required before a student may audition for the Chamber Singers ensemble (see below). Rehearsal with the Chamber Singers will occur during Panther Time when the performance date becomes closer (these times will be scheduled and they will vary).

Chamber Singers

Chamber Singers is the new name for the top Choral Ensemble at KHS. Auditions for this ensemble will take place at the end of every year and are open to any incoming 10-12th grade choir student under the stipulation that they have completed **at least one year** of Concert Choir instruction (This rule is subject to change and is at the discretion of the director) Audition results will be determined by the director. Chamber Singers will perform a “shared” piece of music with the Concert Choir at every concert minus the end of year show (this performance will have all Concert Choir literature shared in accordance with the Large Group Contest Performance). This ensemble provides students with more opportunities to perform at a wider variety of venues as well as exposes students to more styles of music, ranging from renaissance polyphonic works to vocal jazz as well as others. Fundamental Musicianship is an essential for all Chamber Singers, and techniques such as advanced Sight Reading, Vocal Technique and Intermediate Aural Skills will be utilized in rehearsals. Chamber Singers, has daily rehearsals during skinny block 2A, and spots are limited up to 6 students per section. Once a student becomes a Chamber Singer, that student does not need to re-audition; A re-audition will only need to take place should the student leave the ensemble. Students involved in Chamber Singers will **not** rehearse daily with Concert Choir, but will rehearse with Concert Choir during Panther Time(s) as performances become closer on the schedule. Private voice lessons outside of KHS are **highly** encouraged for all Chamber Singers. If you are interested in private lessons, contact Mr. Heetland for details about additional instructors.

Attendance

Students are expected to be at rehearsal **on time** and actively participating every day. This means you are in the room when the bell rings and in your spot when rehearsal begins. This may seem to be a strict expectation, but we must utilize all of the rehearsal time that we have together. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each rehearsal period. Students will receive a tardy if they are not present, and the tardy will transition to an “absent” if the student does not arrive before 30 minutes have passed in said rehearsal.

Lessons

As the Vocal Music Department has transitioned to Traditional based Grading, Lessons will be entered into the grade book in 2 different ways: Lessons and Vocal Checks. Lessons will occur on a weekly basis, with the purpose of both introducing new material with sight-reading while reinforcing pitch knowledge in the literature that we are learning. Every 3 weeks we will have a “Vocal Check”. This check will simply evaluate the progress that you have made in the 3-week time period. Those “Vocal Checks” will be going into the grade book as tests, while the other lessons will be entered in as Lessons. This means that the Vocal Checks will be your primary grade for the year. **Different to years past, Lessons will be graded as well as Vocal Checks.** Lesson Rubrics will be shown to students at their first vocal lesson of the semester, and then at every Vocal Check to ensure the student knows what they are being assessed on.

Vocal development and progress in musicianship will be greatly benefited by small group work with the instructor. Most, if not all, voice lessons will occur in small groups. This is partially due to the size of the department and the amount of students in both Concert Choir and Chamber Singers. Lessons will be 15 minutes long. If a student shows up to his/her lesson more than 7 minutes late, the lesson will need to be rescheduled as more than 50% of the lesson time has passed. Please be to your lesson on time! If you miss a regular voice lesson, contact me when you’d like to make it up. If you miss a “Vocal Check Lesson” rescheduling will be a top priority.

I realize all of this information might be a lot to digest. Please feel free to contact me with any questions regarding this lesson policy. Choir is a very unique class in which proper development of the voice can only occur with consistent practice and lesson attendance, which explains the above mentioned policies and procedures. Lessons may seem daunting, but the emphasis is simply on students making music and making progress as a singer and performer. As long as a student shows up to their voice lessons, and makes progress from lesson to lesson, then they will excel in choir.

Grading

Focus for both ensembles is still on making progress in the music making process, but more information will be given out on the first week of class. Rubrics will be utilized during each of the voice lessons, and progress checks will occur throughout the semester. Those check-for-understandings will go over the music that we are learning in class, as well as individual music progress. Concepts such as basic musicianship, musical reading, and vocal technique will also be evaluated. With a transition to Traditional Based Grading, all voice lessons, vocal assessments (“checks”), and concert evaluations will be graded. Make-Up lessons and make up assessments will fall in line with the KHS policy on assignment late submissions as well as assessment retakes.

All performances are currently scheduled, but outside factors could cause some re-schedules/cancelations. The required performances for Concert Choir members are the following:

- Fall Concert
- Winter Concert
- Annual “Pops” Show
- State Large Group Contest
- Spring Concert

Other performance opportunities:

- Iowa All State Chorus Auditions
- Solo/Small Ensemble Contest
- Honor Choirs

The Required performances for Chamber Singers are the following:

- Conference Choral Festival
- Fall Concert
- Living Windows
- Knoxville Community Chorus Holiday Collaboration Concert
- Winter Concert
- Annual “Pops” Show
- IHSMA Solo/Small Ensemble Contest
- Day Tour
- Spring Concert
- KHS Graduation

Other performance opportunities:

- Solo/Small Ensemble Contest, Individual/Small Group Performances
- Iowa All State Chorus Auditions
- Honor Choirs
- National Anthem Performances at KHS Athletic Events

Classroom Expectations

As a choir, we are a community. We must all be active in pursuing our goals. There can be no coat-tail riders. In rehearsals, active and engaged participation is key. Students should follow along with the rehearsal and be ready to jump in if asked. (Even though your section might not be singing, there is still plenty of learning to be done by listening to what your classmates are working on.) We are here to make beautiful music!

To be successful as a group, a choir needs to be a place of trust and safety. Singers should come to class knowing they have the support of the other students surrounding them and without the fear of being ridiculed. As a choir, we will work together to achieve our very best. There will be moments in choir where you will be put outside of your comfort zone. Whether that be performing in front of your peers, or providing said peers with feedback, it is my goal to teach you more than music in choir. These experiences will not only make you better musicians but will also give you added senses of responsibility, respect and collaboration.

No food and drink is allowed in the choir room outside of water. Reusable water bottles are always acceptable. Cell phones are not allowed at any portion of the rehearsals in accordance with school policy; this includes earbuds or headphones of any kind and smart-watches. If these expectation cannot be met consistently, actions will be taken.

Concert Attire

Each high school student will be assigned a Choir Robe prior to the first concert. Students are expected to take good care of their robes! Please, as a member of the Knoxville choir(s), take pride not only in the way you sound, but also in your professional, uniform appearance as a choir.

Beneath robes, students are expected to cover all skin with black dress clothing. All students must wear black closed toe dress shoes or closed toe heels/flats. Please, no collared shirts under robes unless needed for a later part of the concert, as the collars can interfere with uniformity in the neckline of the robes. Please be sure hair is pulled away from the eyes.

In the instance where “informal” performances are being held, this attire might be subject to change at the director’s discretion. If you anticipate having difficulty finding appropriate concert clothing, please speak with the director beforehand so he can help find and secure you the necessary items.

Folders and Music

While Knoxville has a 1-1 program with iPads, students will still be using paper copies of all of the music that we are performing, as to be in accordance with Copyright Laws for Contest performances. Each Concert Choir student will be assigned a folder at the beginning of the year; Chamber Singers must supply their own 3-ring binder. It will be the student responsibility to take care of the folders. Should any damage happen to the folder/music that makes them unusable, the student will be responsible for replacing said items. Some music may be borrowed from other Schools/Institutions; if damage occurs to said music/it is lost, further fees may apply. Students may not keep any music for personal use.

Extra-curricular Activities

Students will have the opportunity to participate in extra-curricular activities outside of the normally scheduled choir concerts/performances. While details surrounding these activities are still TBD pending outside factors, some of those opportunities could be in house (such as national anthems at sporting events) while others may be festivals away from school (Honor choirs, Performances in Des Moines, etc) Mr. Heetland will follow up with you after he learns more about these opportunities, and how they best fit in with the current performing schedule.

When performance opportunities arise, it is the expectation of the student to communicate with Mr. Heetland about scheduling. Because these opportunities can arise shortly, communication is key in whether or not the performance/practice is required.

Important Dates

As we have all learned from years past, things surrounding the school year and performances can change drastically, so all of the currently scheduled performances can and will be subject to change. The Performance schedule is always flexible when opportunities arise. In the instance a performance comes up in the future that is not on the current schedule, Mr. Heetland will be send out that information. The required performances for both the Concert Choir and the Chamber Singers are listed on the calendar in **bold lettering**. Any absences from required dates must be cleared with Mr. Heetland well in advance. Excused absences will be offered a make-up assignment to evaluate the appropriate standards from the performance. With the exception of illness from school, school conflict, or emergency, a pre-planned vacation or other conflict must be communicated with Mr. Heetland at least one month before the performance in question to be considered excused. Less than one month's notice will result in an unexcused absence. In the case of an unexcused absence for performances without any prior communication, there will be NO opportunity for a make-up assignment.

Knoxville High School
Concert Choir/Chamber Singers
Performance Schedule

SCICDA All State Chorus Clinic	September 10th	All-State Auditioners	DCG High School	All Day
Simpson College Honor Choir	October 2nd	All-State Auditioners	Simpson - Indianola	All Day
Central College 8-9th Grade Singfest	October 7th	Accepted Singers	Central - Pella	All Day
SCC Conference Vocal Festival	October 9th	Chamber Singers	Cardinal High School	All Day
VB Senior Night National Anthem	October 14th	Chamber Singers	KHS Gym	7:00 PM
Iowa All-State Chorus Auditions	October 25th	All-State Auditioners	Indianola HS	All Day
9-12 Fall Concert	October 27th	Both Choirs	KPAC	7:00 PM
Living Windows Comm. Performance	November 21st	Chamber Singers	Town Square	Evening
Iowa OPUS & All State Festival	November 21-23rd	Accepted Singers	Iowa State – Ames	All Day
Knoxville Community Choir Winter Concert	December 5th & 7th	Chamber Singers	UMC	5th-7PM 7th-2PM
9-12 Winter Concert	December 8th	Both Choirs	KPAC	7:00 PM
Hall of Fame Game National Anthem	December 10th	Chamber Singers	KHS Gym	7:00 PM
Dorian Vocal Festival	January 11-12th, 2026	Individuals	Luther - Decorah	All Day
Panthers Vs Cancer National Anthem	January 16th	Chamber Singers	KHS Gym	7:00 PM
ICDA 9-10 Honor Choir	January 19th	Accepted Singers	Perry High School	All Day
Meistersinger Vocal Festival	January 25-26th	Individuals	Wartburg - Waverly	All Day
“Pops” Show	February 17th	Both Choirs	KPAC	7:00 PM

Central College 10-12th Singfest	February 24th	Individuals	Central - Pella	All Day
KHS Musical	March 6th - 8th	Individuals	KPAC	TBD
IHSMA Solo/Small Ensemble Contest	March 28th	Individuals/ Chamber Singers	TBD	All Day
Chamber Singers Spring Mini-Tour	TBD	Chamber Singers	State-Wide	All Day
Large Group Contest	May 8th	All Singers	TBD	TBD
9-12 Spring Concert	May 12th	Both Choirs	7:00 PM	KPAC
Graduation Services	May 17th	Chamber Singers/ Concert Choir Seniors	KHS Gym	2:00 PM