STAFFORD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Curriculum Overview
High School Chorus – Level III

Course Description:
High School Chorus connects the study of music composition, vocal technique, rehearsal processes, and music history. The course is divided into 3 levels. The courses examine vocal techniques, music theory, ear training and sight-singing, ensemble skills and performance, music literature, musical analysis, interdisciplinary activity, technology, and music careers and applications. Performance and evaluation are an integral part of the course especially as they relate to the Standards of Learning. Since performances are a natural and vital extension of this course, participation is strongly recommended.

Essential Skills/Processes: Students will—

Vocal Technique:
● Proper posture
● Breath control – longer phrases, better tone
● Diction – use of diphthongs
● Continually using vocal flexibility
● Controlled singing using sudden or gradual changes in tempo

Music Theory/Pitch/Rhythm:
● More complex combinations of rhythms - 2/2, and multi-meter combinations
● Pentatonic and whole-tone scale patterns
● Circle of fifths
● Recitative, aria, oratorio, etc.

Ear Training and Sight-Singing:
● Recognizing and singing a whole-tone scale, singing variations on the intervals, i.e. major, minor, augmented, diminished
● Meter changes, more complex subdivision of the beat, including simple syncopation, diminution, augmentation, and alla breve, meter signatures
● Include 2/2 and compound and complex meters i.e., 3/8, 5/8, 7/8, 5/4, etc.

Ensemble Skills/Performance:
● 4 or more parts
● Sing in small ensembles with one student on a part
● Experiment with students conducting basic patterns

Music Literature:
● Sing and perform music from all major periods, with and without accompaniment
● Develop the ability to make informed choices concerning music from varied
Musical Analysis:
- Demonstrate knowledge of form and structure of selected choral works through score study and aural analysis
- Recognize compositional devices used in vocal music, i.e., sequence, initiation, diminution, augmentation, and text painting

Interdisciplinary Activity:
- More emphasis on foreign texts
- Extensive choral literature with foreign texts

Technology:
- Experience more exploration and musical construction/creativity
- Provide more hands-on training on MIDI instruments, concentrating on performance, composition, and vocal arranging

Essential Knowledge:
The goals are to provide a stronger study of music in our society; to appreciate different cultures and customs; acquire stage presence and decorum; experience enrichment through participation; encourage creative experimentation; share the talents of others; foster a spirit of cooperation, and expand career awareness.

Resources:

Curriculum Connections:
Stafford County Public Schools: https://www.staffordschools.net/

VA Standards of Learning: http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/sol/standards_docs/fine_arts/index.shtml