**Highlands Belles (Women’s Choir)**

Grades 9-12

Full year activity | One two-hour full group rehearsal and one sectional rehearsal (for each individual section) per week

**Prerequisites**

Blind audition

**Objectives**

* Students will get experience singing a variety of challenging art and popular music, both accompanied and a cappella
* Students will have opportunity to take music learning and group management into their own hands, assisting with choreography, costumes, and musical arrangements

**Course Description**

The Highlands Belles women’s choir was started by my coworker (a few years before I began teaching there) as one of two extracurricular honors choirs. The top honors choir was SATB but, as is common in a school choir program, substantially more girls than boys auditioned – so much more that he was able to start a women’s choir just with all of the exceptional female singers that didn’t make the SATB group.

I took over the choir in my second year of teaching (after accompanying and helping out with sectional rehearsals my first year) and transitioned the group from being mainly an art music choir to being a choir that performed both art music and a cappella pop music.

The integration of the pop a cappella style opened up whole new avenues for direct student involvement in the group. Individual students now had opportunities to choreograph the dances to each song, design group costumes, and even arrange music, all with instructor supervision, of course.

Beginning in my third year directing the group, we began participating in the national Intercollegiate High School a Cappella competition which, to this day, is still a tradition for the group. In my fourth year with the group, we made it to the semifinals.

See CD for both recordings and videos of the group.

**Technology Integration**

* Finale (for student arrangers)
* ProTools (to record rehearsals and to record, mix, and master performances)