

The Wortham Jr. High & High School Choir Program



“A Tradition of Excellence”

***Supplemental Handbook to Accompany the Wortham All-Honors
Choirs Handbook 2018-2019***

Welcome

Dear Parents,

Congratulations and welcome to the award-winning Wortham All-Honors Choral Department! Your student is about to embark on an educational and musical journey that we hope will last a lifetime.

Please know from the onset that we have set very high standards and expectations for our choirs. We have a proud tradition to uphold and will hopefully work together to achieve a continued high degree of success.

It goes without saying that we are striving for a unified partnership between parents, students, and directors. We want your child to succeed in high school and be able to choose choir or vocal education perhaps after high school.

It took a tremendous amount of collective effort to accomplish every thing in the calendar last year Your board members, in conjunction with the students and director, and Boosters Club not only met those challenges but allowed opportunity for all members to experience a vocal ensemble experience rarely seen in small public school today!

By becoming involved through family memberships, attending brief monthly meetings, supporting your student's fund- raising efforts, and attending some of these great performances, the students will continue to benefit from your talents and time.

The 2018 - 2019 school year will bring these opportunities and events for your choir student:

- TMEA Region, Pre-Area MS & HS Region Choir Auditions, Clinic and Concerts
- TMEA All-State Choir Auditions
- Christmas Choral Presentation/Trip
- UIL High School Concert and Sightreading
- UIL Solo & Ensemble
- Pop Concert and/or Theatrical Musical
- Opportunities for Extracurricular Involvement
 - Private Lessons
 - Summer Camps
 - Field Trip Performances

THINGS THAT WILL MOVE YOU UP THE LADDER OF SUCCESS

1. Raising your level of sight-reading skills
2. Taking private lessons
3. Attending a choir summer camp
4. Passing all classes all six weeks
5. Participating in department fundraisers
6. Participating in solo and ensemble
7. Being dependable and active
8. Positive Mental Attitude – ALWAYS!
9. Having active Booster Club parent
10. Being a team player
11. Auditioning for district/region choir

ATTENTION ALL CHOIR MEMBERS

The facts and expectations outlined in this handbook should be discussed so that each member begins the year with the same understanding.

Congratulations on being a member of the Wortham Junior High & High School Choir! Many school review the pros and cons of beginning a school choir, and realize that sacrifices, over-the-top energy, and commitment is hard to realize.

Here are some of the reasons to fail:

- Unwillingness to work and support the group
- Tardiness and conflict schedule is not addressed prior to events
- Materials are missing and work not taken seriously
- Students, parents, boosters organization, and director lack communication
- School Board, administrators, and community are left “out-of-the loop”
- Fees and fundraising fail
- Student’s behavior centers around himself and not around the choir.
- Role modeling is negative
- When director does all the work
- When students do not take advantage of opportunities of advancement (Private lesson sessions, solo & ensemble event, etc.)
- Other school clubs take priority
- Student grades are affecting attendance and continuity

The Wortham Choir Boosters Association

- This group is only four years old and formed as a need for extra support for all the choirs. The membership includes parents, community, friends, family and choir members and meets once a month.
- Issues on field trips, hotel stays, uniform costs and purchase, fees for travel, are just some of the points addressed.
- **A family membership of \$15 will jumpstart support at the beginning of the year**, uniform fees and music fees following with at least one month's communication. If there is a problem, please notify us. We can arrange a payment schedule that meets your needs.
- Please return the handbook acknowledgment and choir forms as soon as possible.
- You'll notice that besides the District form for technology and newspaper acknowledgment, the choirs have a "Blanket Permission to Publish" form to need filed. This form is the family and student's consent for video recording the choir, filming, etc. Return the attached forms as soon as possible if you and your child can commit to the rules and guidelines set forth by this organization.

Please do not rely on the parents reading everything in the choir handbook and syllabus. They are relying on you to act as young adults.

A calendar of events is included with this letter and each individual will need to study the schedule and decide if it is possible for the obligations to be fulfilled by each member.

An updated calendar will be handed out each month as needed. We may have additions and deletions throughout the year.

Keep up with you other groups membership and we will work out as many conflicts as possible and come to me as soon as there might be a problem.

A choir is greatly affected (especially in a new smaller school choir) to lose members because of grades. The TMEA and UIL regulations reflect those of the districts and state that a failing grade will keep a student from participating for the grading period.

Materials, Binders, Pencils, and Paper

1. 1 pencil binder pouch, pencils, erasers
2. 1 1” Black Choir Binder Issued by the Choir Program
3. 1 personal binder for classwork needed 1 Colored Binder with Dividing Tabs (preferred for organization) for Choir Class in any color choice

CELL PHONES WILL NOT BE ALLOWED IN USE IN THIS CLASS AND WILL BE TAKEN UP at the beginning of teach period.

GRADING

All of the Below will be graded:

- Performances
- Concert etiquette
- Tests (singing, written, and sight-reading)
- Daily classroom engagement and effort
- Rehearsals outside the school day
- Quizzes (written or skill)
- Concert attire and punctuality
- Supplemental rehearsals
(attendance/engagement) outside of school
- Preparation- materials, music, pencil, etc...
- Theory worksheets/homework
- Skill practice
- Take-Home assignments, practice and
Sight-reading assignments.

****Concerts and extra rehearsals are worth 2 test grades, and absolutely mandatory!!***

FUND-RAISING

Fund-raising projects are necessary throughout the year for such an active program. We, as a group, are responsible for the operating expenses not provided by Wortham ISD.

Throughout the year, there will be certain fund-raisers that all students must participate in or take the option to buy out! Each student will be expected to participate in the department fund-raisers.

We do not and cannot require any student to do fund-raisers, however, the participation is highly recommended for any and all active students that plan to advance in the program. These fundraisers help to defray the department costs as well as lower the student fees for the spring trip and various other choir fees.

Money from fundraising can pay for spring trip, uniform, choir shirt and audition fees for various solo competitions.

UIL SOLO AND ENSEMBLE CONTEST

All choir members are encouraged to participate in the UIL Solo and Ensemble Contest in February. Music will be selected in late fall so the students will have ample time to prepare.

All students earning a 1st Division on a Class 1 Solo or Small Ensembles qualify to compete in late May in the State competition held at the University of Texas in Austin.

Exceptions do occur but they are very rare. Students participating in the Solo and Ensemble Contest can Earn points toward a jacket/sweater.

ALL-STATE COMPETITION

All Wortham choir students will practice in class to be able to participate in the Texas All-State audition process for Middle School and High School Auditions in the fall. Music is selected on the state level in late spring, brought to you by attending choir camps in the summer, and auditioning takes place in early October.

Candidates advancing to Pre-Area (High School) will participate in a Pre-Area Audition, this time including sightreading grading in November.

All-Area for finalists and designated alternates in the Small School All-state Choir event is in early January, resulting in All-State designation for winners.

Audition fees and music purchase is required.

Other Options for Advancement:

Texas Federation of Music Clubs Solo & Ensemble
Scheduled the first weekend in March, groups or individuals may audition for state qualification in the areas of Art Song, Musical Theater, Patriotic/Folk, etc.

(ACDA) AMERICAN CHORAL DIRECTORS' ASSOCIATIONS' NATIONAL HONOR CHOIR

Any student who would like to audition for the American Choral Directors' Associations' Regional Honor Choir (ACDA) should contact Mrs. Ferris. Please note, the ACDA National Honor Choir will perform at a conference and clinic out of state, and expenses for this trip are paid by the attending student, with assistance by the Choir Boosters Organization, if possible.

2019 – Students finishing 7-9th Grade may Audition for the Texas Choral Director's Association Honor Choir which performs at a Clinic/Convention in San Antonio. This is privately funded, as well.

PRIVATE LESSONS

A choir program is only as successful as the sum of the parts. Private lessons are available from a number of professionals in this area. Please see Mrs. Ferris for available teachers, etc.

Students who take private voice lessons tend to achieve more and advance at a faster pace. The voice teachers help the students gain confidence in singing and solidify the teaching in the classroom.

There are strict district guidelines for private lessons as well as guidelines set by the private lesson teacher and directors that go above and beyond the district policies.

UNIFORM RULES

1. In order to participate in a concert, you must have your complete and presentable uniform in place. **NO MISSING PIECES!** You will be checked by chaperones before each performance.

2. There will be an elected uniform assistant in the high school group. If your uniform is not complete, it is your responsibility to notify the directors of uniform problems **well in advance.**

3. Men must wear black socks and black dress shoes. Women must wear black dress shoes (closed toe) with no more than a 1-inch to 1-1/2 inch heel and flesh colored hose.

4. Women and men's hair will be pulled back from the face.

5. No jewelry will be allowed that is not part of the uniform. This means no dangle earrings or necklaces. A small watch and small rings are acceptable.

6. Dresses and tuxedos should be transported on hangers in the choir travel bags to prevent wrinkles and damage to the uniform.

7. All uniforms should be pressed and presentable for performance.

8. Choir Polo shirts are required for each student along with jeans and/or khakis and black belt for informal concerts and activities.

STAGE RULES

(Note: Any violations of these rules will constitute removal from the concert.)

STAGE PRESENTATION AND PERFORMANCES

1. Do not talk when walking on or off the stage, including while sitting in the audience.
2. Do not talk to the person next to you, behind you, or in front of you while on stage.
3. Keep your hands straight down at your sides during the entire performance, whether you are singing or not.
4. Do not straighten your hair, dress, jacket, or tie while performing.
4. Keep your eyes on your director at all times.
5. NO GUM Ever ALLOWED!

CLASS RULES

1. Follow directions.
2. Be in your assigned position with proper materials (folder, pencil & music) when the bell rings (unless instructed otherwise).
3. No food or candies are allowed in the classroom. This includes gum and soft drinks. Bottled water is encouraged and permissible.
4. Keep your hands, feet, and objects to yourself.
5. Students must participate in class.
6. No other class work is allowed during class time.
7. Sick students will be expected to follow along and participate in class activities, or they may go to the nurse.
8. All Cell phones should be left in the hallway in backpacks or turned into the director before. Under no circumstances will text messaging be done in class, before, or after. The phone will be taken up and taken to the office under district handbook rules.
9. Use the restroom before and after class.

Student Letter Jacket Points

AWARDS JACKET POINT SHEET (Choir)

Honor Organization Participation: Points Earned/Year

(Points will add on a positions are earned.)

Region TMEA Choir

HS TMEA District 9th and 10th Choir _____/_____

HS TMEA Region Treble Choir 2 _____/_____

HS TMEA Region Mixed Choir 3 _____/_____

HS TMEA Area Candidates (top 5) 4 _____/_____

(Must audition at next level.)

HS TMEA All-State Choir 6 _____/_____

Individual Music Competitions:

UIL Regional Solo and Ensemble

Division I: Class I Solo 4 _____/_____

Class II Solo 3 _____/_____

Class III Solo 2 _____/_____

Division I: Class I Small Ensemble 3 _____/_____

Class II Small Ensemble 2 _____/_____

Class III Small Ensemble 1 _____/_____

Division I: Medium Ensemble 1 _____/_____

UIL State Solo and Ensemble

Division I: Solo 5 _____/_____

Small Ensemble 3 _____/_____

Division II: Solo 3 _____/_____

TFMC Solo/Ensemble 3 _____/_____

ACDA

Audition Attempt 1 _____/_____

TCDA 9th Grade Honor Choir 5 _____/_____

ACDA National Convention 5 _____/_____

Annual Concert:

Veteran's Assembly 1 _____/_____

Christmas Choirs Concert 1 _____/_____

Spring Choirs Concert 1 _____/_____

Spring Trip Performance 5 _____/_____

Annual Theory Exam Packet: (2 points)

Freshman _____ Sophomore _____ Junior _____ Senior _____

(Packet must be turned in by the end of the 5th Six Weeks period.)

Participation:

To receive participation points, students must have successfully completed one year, must have enrolled in the choir program for the next year, and must have fulfilled all responsibilities as defined by the campus choir director and printed in the campus choir handbook.

Ninth (9th) grade year 2 _____/_____

Tenth (10th) grade year 2 _____/_____

Eleventh (11th) grade year 2 _____/_____

Twelfth (12th) grade year 2 _____/_____

12th grade (with 3 previous yrs. Successful completion) 9
_____/_____

Total points earned: _____

(A total of 15 points is required to qualify for an Awards Jacket.)

My signature verifies that all the above information is true and accurate.

Classification/year _____/_____

(Signature of student)

(Printed name of student)

(Signature of Choir Director)