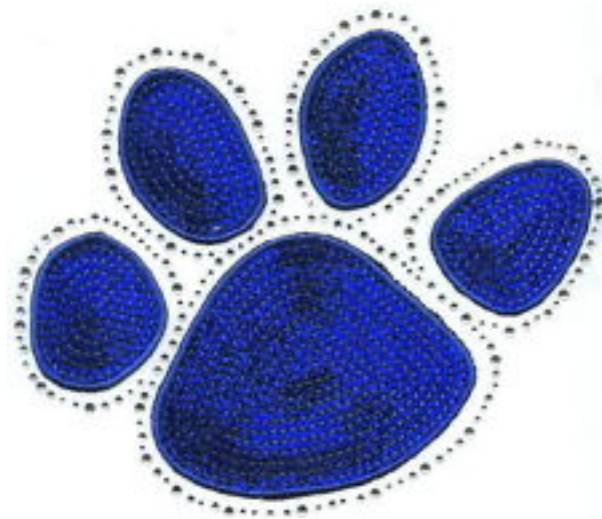


# The Wortham High School and Middle School Choir Program



**“A Tradition of Excellence”**

***Supplemental Handbook to Accompany  
The Wortham All-Honors Choirs Handbook  
2015-2016***

## 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 2015-2016 school year will bring these opportunities and events for your choir student:

- Veteran's Day Choir Presentation
- All-Region Select Choir Auditions, Clinic and Concert
- TMEA All-State Choir Auditions
- Christmas Choral Presentation
- UIL High School Concert and Sightreading
- UIL Solo & Ensemble
- Pop Concert and/or Theatrical Musical
- TFMC Musical Theater Solos
- Spring Concert and Awards Presentation

# **THINGS THAT WILL MOVE YOUR CHILD UP THE LADDER OF SUCCESS**

- \_ Raising their level of sight-reading skills**
- \_ Taking private lessons**
- \_ Attending a choir summer camp**
- \_ Passing all classes every six weeks**
- \_ Participating in department fundraisers**
- \_ Participating in solo and ensemble**
- \_ Being dependable and active**
- \_ Positive Mental Attitude - ALWAYS!**
- \_ Having active Booster Club parents**
- \_ Being a team player**
- \_ 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 school year with the same understanding.

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 regularly on the second Monday of each month in the Choir Room at 6:30pm.

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 is required at the beginning of the year, uniform fees and music fees will follow 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 all of the choir handbook and syllabus.**

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 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.

## **GRADING**

All of the Below will be graded:

- Performances
- Concert etiquette
- Tests (sightsinging, vocal technique, written and oral)
- 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 sightreading assignments.
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*\*Concerts and extra rehearsals are worth 2 test grades and will be mandatory. Semester Exams will be included in grading, as well.*

## **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.

Freshmen are not entered in the Class 1 events. Exceptions do occur but they are very rare. Students participating in the Solo and Ensemble Contest can earn points toward their letter jacket.

## **TMEA ALL-STATE and Region COMPETITION**

All Wortham High School choir students will participate in the Texas All-State audition process and/or 9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> Region Choir Auditions in the fall.



And Middle School choir students in the winter. 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.

For freshmen and sophomores: At the Region level a student may opt to audition only for the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade choir without advancing or auditioning for the All-State Level. This music will be taught during class sessions and supplemented at after school sessions.

Middle school TMEA Region Auditions will take place in the winter, and music will be first introduced in the choir class time. However, to allow the band students opportunity to participate, a scheduled sectional will take place after school.

Audition fees and music purchase is required.

### **Other Options for Advancement:**

### **(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.

## **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/T 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. Do not straighten your hair, dress, jacket, or tie.

4. Keep your eyes on your director at all times.

5. **NO GUM 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.

## **CONSEQUENCES OF MISBEHAVIOR**

### **Disciplinary Steps:**

1. One (1) verbal notice should fix a problem.
2. Conduct grades will be deducted.
3. Student is written up and a parent is contacted.
4. Removal from program.

**Note: Steps one and two may be skipped at any time!**

**CHOIR FEES FOR THE SCHOOL YEAR  
(Will Depend on What You Participate In)  
Month Due Description Fees**

**August** Uniform Fees\* \$40.00  
Choir Shirt (new members only)\* 20.00  
Black Character Shoes (Women only) TBA  
Uniform Bag 25.00  
District Music for Auditions  
& Rehearsals CD(s) 20.00  
District Audition 15.00  
Region Audition Music Packet (\$25)

**September**  
Photograph Composite Sitting Fee/Buy Out 5.00  
ACDA Honor Choir (applicant only fee) 35.00

**October**  
**First Installment of Trip Contract – TBA**

**November**  
All Region Choir Trip 15.00\*  
Christmas Musical Costumes TBA

**December**  
UIL Solo & Ensemble Material and  
Accompanist for Solo TBA\*  
And/Or Fees for TFMC, if applicable

**January**  
**Second Installment of Trip Contract – TBA**

**February**  
Solo & Ensemble Fees and Meals

**April**  
Choir Banquet & Dance 25.00

**May**  
State Solo & Ensemble (deposit) 50.00  
Accompanist for Solo TBA  
*Please Note: A \$15.00 fee will be charged on each  
returned check for insufficient funds.*  
*\*Mandatory for all choir students.*  
**NOTE: ALL CHOIR FEES CAN BE PAID  
THROUGH FUND-RAISING!**

## Student Letter Sweater 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 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> 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 9<sup>th</sup> 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 5<sup>th</sup> 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.

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Classification/year \_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_

(Signature of student)

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(Printed name of student)

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(Signature of Choir Director)