



Katy High School Choir Student/Parent Handbook, 2018-2019

Dear Choir Students and Parents,

We are looking forward to a wonderful and musical year! This handbook includes a great deal of information for you, so please read it carefully before you sign the required acknowledgement form.

Parents, please go over all the material in this handbook with your child and make sure they understand their commitments to the Choir. The most important thing you can do to support your child in the Choir is to attend their performances! We need volunteers and chaperones, but the thing that encourages our student more than anything else, is to see you in the audience when they sing. Please check the Choir calendar and try to attend all of the Choir concerts this year. You will enjoy the music, and your child will benefit from knowing that you are there listening.

There are forms, both required and optional, in each student's choir folder, and also on charms and the new web page: www.katyhighschoolchoir.com. Please complete these forms and send them to school as soon as possible. The Consent to Treat, Extra-Curricular Travel, and Consent to Random drug test forms are required by the school district.

Again, welcome back to the Katy High School Choir!

Mr. Brian Miller, Director of Choirs
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Choir Student Information

Choir Classes

1st period – AP Music Theory/Academic Theory

2nd period – Men's Chorus

3rd period – Women's Chorus

4th period – Conference

5th Period – Women's Chorale

6th Period – Varsity Chorale

7th Period – Vocal Ensemble

Men's and Women's Choruses – These groups focus on building choral skills. Singers work on fundamental music literacy and vocal technique issues, while performing at multiple concerts and events. These choirs are open to all students regardless of prior experience. These groups will compete at UIL Concert and Sight-Reading Contest.

Women's Chorale – This group consists of female singers with advancing skills and vocal technique. Entrance to this ensemble is by audition and these ladies will compete at UIL as the Non-Varsity Treble Choir. Students in this choir are strongly encouraged to participate in extra-curricular competitions such as the TMEA All-State Choir Auditions and UIL Solo and Ensemble.

Chorale – Chorale is made up both male and female singers with advanced skills in sight-reading and vocal technique. Singers must possess the skills to learn and sing music of a highly advanced nature. A formal audition is a requirement for membership and the choir will compete at UIL as the Varsity Mixed Choir. In addition, these singers will also compete as the Varsity Tenor-Bass Choir and the Varsity Treble Choir. Students in this choir are strongly encouraged to participate in extra-curricular competitions such as the TMEA All-State Choir Auditions and UIL Solo and Ensemble. In addition to during school rehearsals, Chorale will rehearse Monday evenings from 5:30 – 7pm.

Vocal Ensemble – This group serves as a multi-function ensemble of advanced singers that performs at various community and recruitment functions. The musical focus of the ensemble spans a wide selection of choral music such as jazz, musical theater, pop, as well advanced chamber repertoire. A special audition is required for this ensemble and members must be enrolled in 6th period Chorale as well as Vocal Ensemble.

Class Expectations

1. Be on time to class. Singers should have backpacks away and be on the risers, ready to work, when the tardy bell rings. If you are late to class your tardy infraction will be dealt with according to the KHS Tardy Policy.
2. Have your materials: Choir binder and music, a pencil, and water with a lid.
3. Stay focused and involved in rehearsal, even when you are not singing. During rehearsal you will not be allowed to use electronic devices: cell phones and other devices are to be silenced and off the risers with your other belongings.
4. Strive to learn your music quickly and push yourself to grow every day as a musician.
5. Be courteous to the Directors and your fellow Choir members: you are a team, and your respect and support go a long way towards developing a successful Choir.
6. Please keep all food, drinks, gum, candy, etc., out of the Choir room.
7. Clean up after yourself: do not leave trash in the Choir room, put your folder away, and help leave the space clean and neat after your rehearsal.
8. Communication is vital.

Grading

Grades earned by High School Choir students will fall under the following three categories:

- Major – 50% of the six weeks average
- Minor – 35% of the six weeks average
- Other – 15% of the six weeks average

Student assessment will follow the guidelines outlined below.

Major Grades

The following activities are examples of criteria which may be assessed as major grades by choir directors:

- Performances
- Tests (performing large sections of music, All-Region/State music, sight singing melodies, OR written tests)
- Daily classroom engagement in skill development
- After school engagement/attendance/participation

Minor Grades

The following activities are examples of criteria which may be assessed as minor grades by choir directors:

- Quizzes
- Concert/Performance Attire and Punctuality
- Sectionals/Rehearsals

Some ensemble and individual required activities may be governed by TEA/UIIL eligibility rules. Instructors assessing these activities must provide a TEKS-based alternative for ineligible or non-participating students. Please note that different ensembles have different course expectations and responsibilities. Failure to fulfill course responsibilities/expectations may result in loss of position in ensemble.

***Tests are understood to be assessments of an extended length and for which students have received notice well in advance of the assessment. Quizzes are understood to be assessments of shorter length for which 0 – 24 hours notice has been given.*

Other Grades

The following activities are examples of criteria which may be assessed in a category other than major or minor grades:

- Daily skills
- Preparation – materials, music, etc.
- Written homework

Additional Grading Information

1. Your grade is based largely on what the Directors observe each day in class: this comprises your weekly class grade, and reflects our appraisal of your musical progress, and your effort and discipline.
2. Unexcused tardies or absences will affect your grade.
3. Students will also be subject to periodic, unannounced materials checks.
4. Finally, there will be sight-reading/music theory observations and quizzes as well as “part tests.”

Absence from any choir activity is unexcused except for the following rare circumstances:

1. Personal illness or accident (written notification from a parent is required.)
2. Funeral or death in the family (written notification from a parent is required.)
3. Special school activities with PRIOR written permission from the director.

Each member shall be required to participate in every concert, competition, and any other activity scheduled by the directors unless the student is ineligible or has been placed on probation.

- Doctor’s appointments, student jobs, babysitting, and other non-school related activities cannot be considered excused absences from either rehearsals or performances.
- Any member with an unexcused absence from any rehearsal may be cut from the performance.
- When a member is absent from rehearsal during the school day, it is his/her responsibility to contact the section leader to find out what has been missed and what needs to be done upon return.
- Any unexcused absence from performance may result in dismissal from the group and most often will result in a failing grade for the 6-weeks grading period.
- Any choir member who is too ill to sing is still required to observe the rehearsal and to make individual score markings. Prolonged health problems will require written assignments and/or individual tutoring and testing by the director at an agreed time to make up rehearsal work. A doctor’s note will be required for chronic absence from rehearsal or sitting out during class.

*Choir members are expected to call the choir room (281-237-1800) if they must miss a performance.

*Required dates will be posted well in advance.

Please keep in mind that all choir directors in Texas are required to evaluate students based on participation in group and individual performance in a variety of settings. The experience of performing for a live audience cannot be “made up.” Choir members who are not reliable with attendance will put their membership in choir in jeopardy, and will not be able to move on to varsity level participation.

KHS Music Department Major Grade Retest Policy – 2018-2019: “If a student fails a major grade assignment, he/she may schedule a retest over the same or similar material with the Band/Orchestra/Choir Director.”

Activity Costs

There is one activity cost assessed annually, which is \$75.00 for 2018-2019. This covers the cleaning and maintenance of your Choir uniform, your Choir t-shirt and binder, the accompanist for each of our concerts, your family’s membership in the Katy High School Choir Association, and many other elements. Formal uniforms will not be assigned to you until your activity costs are paid or a payment plan is set in place.

Choir members have options to buy spirit items as well. Additional t-shirts are \$15, hooded sweatshirts are \$25 (\$28 for XXL, etc), and Car/Window decals are \$5 each. Orders and payments are due Friday, September 7th.

Parents/Guardians may contact Mr. Miller about setting up a payment plan for the required activity costs. Please do not let the activity costs keep you from participation in Choir! The KHSCA Board and the Directors will work with your family to make arrangements for activity costs payment plans to fit your needs. Parents, if you are willing to help other students with financial need, please let Mr. Miller know and we will contact you as needs arise. This will be handled privately.

Uniforms

Formal Uniform

1. Women – long black dress, pearl necklaces (provided by KHS Choir). Ladies must provide their own closed toe/heal black dress shoes. Flats or low heels are preferred. Ladies must also take care to wear appropriate undergarments that will not be visible in the open neckline of the dress.
2. Men – tuxedo (the Choir provides the coat, pants, and tie). Gentlemen must provide a white collared dress shirt, and black dress shoes and socks.
3. All singers – garment bag and hangers for traveling. Do not store your uniform in the bag at home, but rather let it “air out.” You are responsible for keeping the garment bag and the hangers in good condition and returning them when your uniform is returned.

Informal Uniform

This consists of the 2018-2019 Choir t-shirt and long blue jeans (no holes, clean, and not very faded). Wear casual shoes with this uniform.

Hats

No hats will be allowed in rehearsals. This includes baseball hats, beanies, or hoodies.

Grooming Issues for Performances

1. Hair: Women must have hair pulled back into a pony tail (informal) or a bun (formal) and must be completely off the face. Men must have neatly groomed hair that is completely off the face as well.
1. Jewelry, other than what is provided, that is visible from stage is prohibited.
2. Clean bodies and personal hygiene are a must. Please use deodorant, but omit all cologne, perfume, and scented sprays because many people are allergic to these items.
3. At the discretion of the directors, a student may be dismissed from a performance if he/she does not adhere to uniform and grooming guidelines.

Choir Council

The Choir Council consists of both elected and appointed student leaders. The Choir Council will meet at least once a month to discuss plans, concerns, and suggestions. All members of the Choir Council are expected to participate in Choir activities such as planning meetings, social events, and fundraisers.

Council Positions

President – Must be a dedicated upperclassmen who has a stellar reputation as a choir member. The president will lead the council in all of their activities. (Chorale/Upperclassmen)

Vice-President – Assists the president in leadership of council. Fills the role of any other council member should they be unable to fulfill their duties. (Chorale/Upperclassmen)

Secretary – The secretary must keep detailed records of council meetings and will assist the directors with logistical tasks such as filing, taking roll, etc. (Chorale)

Historians – The historians are responsible for documenting choir events through photo/video. They will also be responsible for putting together an “end-of-the-year” presentation.

Librarians – The librarians will help organize the handing out and turning in of music. They must also help with the upkeep and update of our large choral library.

Uniform Manager – The uniform manager will assist the directors and parent volunteers in the uniform assignment/check-in process as well as any upkeep required during the school year.

Foreman – The foreman will oversee set-up/take-down duties before and after concerts as well as general choir room set-up. The foreman will also be responsible for learning basic tech functions in the PAC such as fly-rail, clouds, and curtains.

Hospitality Chair – They will also assist in organizing any charitable activities of the choir.

Spirit Chairs – These choir members are in charge of any choir social events and other choir morale boosting events!

Monday Night Chorale Rehearsals

Chorale will meet for mandatory rehearsals on Monday nights from 5:30-7:00pm. Singers will be allowed 2 absences per semester. Notification of each absence must be given in writing to the director **prior** to the rehearsal. These rehearsals are crucial to our success as an ensemble. We will utilize these rehearsals to prepare music for Masterworks and varsity men's/women's music.

Communication

- Communication is vital. You are required to register on our Katy High School Choir Charms website. (www.charmsoffice.com) Everyone will receive important information via email and/or text messages, and forms and calendars will be regularly updated there, therefore, please keep all information up to date.
- Social Media! Please follow us on Twitter @KatyHSChoir, Instagram @KHSChoir, and “like” our Facebook Page: Katy High School Choir Association.

Choir Activities and No Pass/No Play

Any member who fails any course in a six-weeks grading period will be placed on probation in accordance with Texas “no pass/no play” laws. Any member who is repeatedly ineligible may be dismissed from the performing group.

While Choir Concerts are not affected by No Pass/No Play, it is still vital that members of the Katy High School Choir hold the strictest standards in all areas. Those students who cannot participate in Contest events due to ineligibility, will be given an alternate assignment to cover the grade.

Choir Spring Trip

Every fourth year, the Choir students participate in a large Spring Trip. This year is a medium trip to New Orleans, LA in April 2019. The trip is optional, but strongly encouraged and we are making every effort to keep the cost as low as possible to encourage participation.

Letter Jackets

You may earn a KHS letter jacket in Choir. Points are earned by yearly participation in Choir, as well as success in the All-State Choir audition process and UIL Solo and Ensemble Contest. Points carry over from year to year. The form listing the letter jacket requirements is in the appendix of this handbook.

Texas Music Scholars

This is a prestigious award and should be a goal for any serious singer! Information about this can be found at <https://www.tmea.org/programs/tms>

Fundraising

The Choir and KHSCA participate in several fundraising projects during each school year. It is important that all students and parents get involved in the fund-raising efforts of the Choir. Katy ISD is very supportive of the Fine Arts, but there are necessary limits on what the district can spend on the Choir.

Some fundraisers earn money for general items like senior scholarships, piano tuning, accompanist fees, and student social events. And, some fundraisers allow individual students to earn “trip points.” Trip points can never be redeemed for cash.

All money from fundraisers needs to be turned in promptly. All checks, for fundraisers, activity costs, or donations, need to be payable to Katy High School Choir Association. We have a secure drop safe in the Choir room. Money and any paperwork should be put in one of the envelopes on top of the safe, and the student’s name and what the money is for written on the envelope. The Directors, or one of the KHSCA board members, will regularly empty out the safe and make bank deposits. There will be a \$15.00 fee assessed for any returned checks, and the funds will need to be replaced by cash or money order.

Katy High School Choir Association (KHSCA)

KHSCA is the Choir booster organization at Katy High School. We are a 501(c)3 non-profit organization registered with the Internal Revenue Service. As such, we are tax-exempt and donations made to KHSCA are tax deductible as far as the law allows. A copy of the By-Laws of the Association is available upon request.

KHSCA is governed by a Board of Directors elected each spring to one-year terms. The Board then elect officers and conduct the business of the Association during the school year. Membership to KHSCA is included in the Choir Activity Costs: this entitles you to vote in the officer election in the spring. The regular monthly meetings of the Board are open to any member, but actual business items are voted on by the Board. If you have a concern, idea, or suggestion that you think needs to go to the Board, please call or email a Board member and the item can be put on the agenda.

The members of the 2018-2019 KHSCA Board of Directors are:

President – Jocelyn Richardson	Pro-Tem – Kelly Goerig
Vice President – Wanda Bawden	Fundraising – Rosanne Legon
Treasurer – Mary Matthews	Communications – Amie Walters
Secretary – Monica Gracia	Uniforms – Cyndi Elliott, Shari Lopez
Spirit Night Coordinator – Kim Tristan	Volunteers – Kristin Sarlls
Members at large – Connie Flores, Leticia James, Patricia Newell, Sulema Reyes	

Volunteers

KHSCA relies heavily on parent volunteers. Your participation will greatly enhance your child's music education experience. Our expectation as Choir Directors is that all Choir parents will be involved in some way, as much as they are able. Some volunteer opportunities require a good amount of time, some are one-time events, and some are behind the scenes jobs that can be done at home on your own schedule. Below are some of the ways you can volunteer and contribute to the success of the Choir and the KHSCA:

1. Chaperone a concert or contest
2. Help with the Choir uniforms
3. Help update the Choir Charms web page
4. Assist in communication among Choir parents
5. Help with the Faculty Appreciation event in December
6. Take pictures at Choir events
7. Help with the Choir Banquet in May
8. Enlist financial support from Sponsoring Partners

Sponsoring Partners

Each year we enlist the support of the Katy community by encouraging individuals and businesses to make a tax deductible financial contribution to the KHSCA. There are various levels of support available to Sponsoring Partners, and the names of all partners are listed in the printed program of each Choir concert. The Sponsoring Partner Donor Form is in the appendix to this handbook.

Awards Banquet

All Choir students will receive one complimentary ticket to the Choir Awards Banquet in May. Additional tickets may be purchased for family and friends. Be sure that you consult your Choir calendar and set aside the time for this fun and memorable event.

Texas Music Educators Association: (T.M.E.A.)

Participation in the auditions for the Region and All-State Choirs is highly recommended for all singers. Students find that they progress in their vocal ability and musicianship exponentially each year, so choir members who would like the high honor of membership in the Region 23 Choir should take this process seriously. Auditions dates are in the fall. Please see your director for more information about the audition process.

Voice Lessons

Private voice lessons are available to interested students at Katy High School. We will have a limited number of voice teachers who teach at the school through this program, and information is available upon request. There are also a number of highly qualified voice teachers who teach in their homes. Please see your director for information. Every attempt will be made to place students with a quality teacher.