



Katy High School Choir Student/Parent Handbook, 2020-2021

Dear Choir Students and Parents,

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. This year will look different than years past, but we are striving to maintain the longstanding success and student orientent growth found in the Katy Choir program. The most important thing you can do as a parent to support your choir student is to encourage your child to sing. Sometimes that may look like giving them privacy to experiment with the voice!

You can find the most up-to-date information for the choir utilizing your student's Canvas portal as well as monitoring the choir website: www.katyhighschoolchoir.org.

Information from the district as well as the most uptodate research in our field is changing daily and we will work to inform you about how that affects the choir program as quickly as possible. Please know that our number one goal is to protect your child, their families, and ourselves.

Welcome back to the Katy High School Choir!

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2020-2021 Considerations/KISD Guidelines

- General procedures for Face to Face Instruction
 - Anyone who enters the choir room must wear a surgical style face mask. Face shields can be worn in addition to, but not in place of face masks.
 - Face masks must always be worn while singing. Face masks should have no gaps on the sides, cover the nose, and be tight around all of the edges.
 - The teacher should always take all measures to maintain a safe social distance. 10 feet recommended when singing.
 - Students will be seated in chairs or standing on the floor. No form of riser may be used. Chairs should be in straight lines.
 - Each student must have their own supplies (binder, music, sight-reading materials, water, pencils) and students should not share these items. Students must take their supplies to and from class each day, no supplies can be stored in the choir room.
 - Indoor rehearsals should last for a maximum of 30 minutes.
- KVA and Face to Face students will receive the same instruction.
- There will be no Monday Night Chorale rehearsals for the fall semester.
- There will be no Face to Face private lessons in the choir room. We can recommend excellent teachers who are available for virtual lessons.
- Practice rooms will be off limits.

Choir Student Information

Choir Classes

1st period – AP Music Theory/Academic Theory

2nd period – Tenor-Bass Choir

3rd period – Women's Chorale

4th period – Conference

5th Period – Treble Choir

6th Period – Varsity Chorale

7th Period – Vocal Ensemble

Tenor-Bass and Treble Choirs – 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 of 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 their main choir ensemble as well as Vocal Ensemble.

Class Expectations

1. Be on time to class. Singers should keep backpacks and other items with them. Be 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 own materials: Choir binder and music, a pencil, and water with a lid. No students should be sharing materials.
3. Stay focused and involved in rehearsal, even when you are not singing.
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, take your binder with you, 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, sight singing melodies, OR written tests)
- Daily classroom engagement in skill development

Minor Grades

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

- Quizzes/Theory Worksheets
- 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 after speaking with BOTH the director and the conflicting sponsor.
4. Concerts are a requirement from the state of Texas and are part of our state curriculum. They cannot be missed.

Each member shall be required to participate in every concert, competition, and any other activities 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.

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 choir membership in jeopardy and will not be able to move on to varsity level participation.

Activity Costs

There will be one course fee AND one activity cost assessed this year. The course fee of \$10 will be paid to Katy ISD. Course fee waivers are available. Even though we are splitting the payments into two - the choir fee has been overall reduced this year due to anticipated lower costs of virtual instruction. This may not be the case in subsequent years.

The course fee will cover things required to be paid through Katy ISD such as transportation needs, printing, design work, music, and warehouse supply orders.

The choir activity cost will be \$40 paid to KHSCA via www.CharmsOffice.com This covers materials that are consumable such as your choir t-shirt, a choir decal, and a choir face mask, the accompanist for any concerts we may be allowed to have, and many other elements.

Formal uniforms will not be assigned until we are sure that we will be able to perform formal concerts safely.

Choir members have options to buy spirit items as well. Additional t-shirts, masks, jackets will be available as well. See the Charms Store for availability and pricing.

Vocal Ensemble members will be charged an additional \$20 for uniform needs. Their total annual choir activity cost is \$60 on top of the \$10 course fee.

For the year 2020 only, **Seniors** will be allowed to apply trip points to their activity costs and spirit wear. Please email your request to KatyChoirTreasurer@gmail.com

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 needs, please let Mr. Miller know and we will contact you as needs arise. This will be handled privately.

Uniforms

Informal Uniform

This consists of the 2020-2021 Choir t-shirt and long blue jeans (no holes, clean, and not faded). Wear closed toe 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 completely off the face for informal concerts and must be placed in a bun for formal concerts. 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 upperclassman who has a stellar reputation as a choir member. The president will lead the council in all of their activities.

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.

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

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.

Uniforms and Hospitality – 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 and manage all spirit item inventory. These chairs will also assist in organizing any charitable activities of the choir.

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.

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

Monday Night Chorale Rehearsals

For the Fall of 2020, there will not be any Monday night rehearsals. Assuming we are able to sing as a large ensemble in the spring, we will then add these rehearsals back to the calendar. Varsity 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. We will utilize these rehearsals to prepare music for Masterwork and varsity men's/women's music. Missing Monday night rehearsals is grounds for dismissal from varsity choir and possibly the program.

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

Due to the issues this year, we will not plan a big trip. If we are able, we will plan small optional trips for the spring. Our plans are to allow social events while keeping our students safe, and not risking financial loss. Trips are always optional, but strongly encouraged and we try to keep the cost low to encourage participation. Regardless of the size of the trip, all students and parents must adhere to the trip contract and payment schedule. Travellers can be removed from the trip at the director's discretion.

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 can be found in the forms section of our website www.katyhighschoolchoir.com.

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

All money from fundraisers needs to be turned in promptly. For the Fall 2020 Semester, all payments will be made via Charms. All checks (with prior approval) for fundraisers, activity costs, or donations need to be payable to the Katy High School Choir Association. Money and any paperwork should be put in an envelope with the student's name and purpose of the money written on the front and then placed in the secure safe in the choir room. There will be a fee 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 2020-2021 KHSCA Board of Directors are:

President – Kelly Goerig
Vice President – Michelle Owens
Treasurer – Mary Matthews
Secretary – Wanda Bawden
Fundraising – Rosanne Legon

Communications/Volunteers – Leticia James
Uniforms – Lily Olivo
Member at Large - Marissa Adams
Member at Large - Heather Wellman
Member at Large - Dawn Woytek

Volunteers

KHSCA relies heavily on parent volunteers. Your participation will greatly enhance your child's music education experience. The expectation of the choir directors is that all choir parents will be involved in some way. 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 with the Faculty Appreciation event in December
4. Take pictures at choir events
5. Volunteer for the Fine Arts Fun-Food Friday event
6. Help sell Singing Valentines
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 can be found on the choir website: katyhightschoolchoir.com.

Awards Banquet

All Senior choir students will receive one complimentary ticket to the Choir Awards Banquet in May. Additional tickets may be purchased for underclassmen, family, and friends.

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. This fall we will not be offering any on-campus voice lessons. We strongly encourage those students interested in private lessons to contact teachers that are available to teach safely via Zoom. The Choir directors can provide a list of excellent teachers. Please see your director for information. Every attempt will be made to place students with a quality teacher.