

WORLEY MIDDLE SCHOOL CHORAL DEPARTMENT



CHOIR HANDBOOK

2008 - 2009

Worley M.S. Choir Parents and Students,

It is a pleasure to welcome you to the 2008-2009 Worley M.S. Choir program. I look forward to the opportunity to work with each of you. With the help of all choir students and parents, we will have a very productive year.

Students in the choir department participate in numerous activities. Enclosed, you will find WMS Choir rules and policies, a calendar, and information about uniforms, officer elections, grading. Please note in the section on grading that choir concerts and after school rehearsals are *required and graded activities*. *It is the responsibility of each child to find transportation to and from these events*. It is your responsibility to inform me now if you see any conflicts with the choir schedule.

The sheets at the back of this handbook is each student's permission slip for the year, and an agreement by each student and parent to abide by the choir department's rules and pay for proper concert attire for their student (see the **UNIFORM** section of the handbook for more information.) The permission slip and agreement slip is due back to me by Friday, September 5. Choir fees are due by Friday, September 12. Also included is a volunteer page for those of you who wish to help with choir activities this year by chaperoning, helping with fund-raising, etc.

If your child needs extra help during the school year, choir tutorials are available upon request. At times, I am in rehearsals with students before school from 8:15-8:45 am and after school until 5:00 pm. Prior notice to me is necessary to have time to work with any tutorial.

This year is going to be full of excitement and success. I look forward to working with each of you this year. **Communication is a must**. If you have any questions, please contact me by email or phone. E-mail : frenpa@mansfieldisd.org Phone: 817.473.5668. Remember I cannot fix a problem if I do not know about it. You will often find information about upcoming events and reminders on our school choir website:

<http://www.mansfieldisd.org/schools/rworley/extracurricular/choir/choir.htm>.

Please refer to this often for any questions you may have.

Thank you for your support, and particularly for encouraging your child to continue the study of choral music. This investment of time, effort and energy will produce lifelong dividends.

Sincerely,
Patti French
Director of Choirs

CLASSROOM RULES

Choir is different from any other class at WMS. In order to be successful, we must work as a team in class everyday - not just when you are in a good mood. The following rules are for your benefit. ***YOUR SUCCESS IN THIS CLASS DEPENDS ON YOUR COOPERATION WITH THESE RULES.***

1. FOLLOW DIRECTIONS THE FIRST TIME – NO ARGUING. STUDENTS MAY NOT SPEAK DURING A REHEARSAL WITHOUT PERMISSION.
2. STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO BE RESPECTFUL AND COURTEOUS TO EACH OTHER AND TO THE DIRECTOR AT ALL TIMES. WHICH MEANS KEEP HANDS, FEET, AND ALL OBJECTS TO YOURSELF. (“WE WERE JUST PLAYING” DOES NOT EXCUSE YOU FROM THIS RULE.)
3. NO GUM, FOOD, DRINK, OR CANDY MAY BE BROUGHT INTO THE CHOIR ROOM WITHOUT MRS. FRENCHS' PERMISSION. WATER IS THE EXCEPTION IF IT IS IN A CLEAR, CLOSED CONTAINER.
4. ALL CLASSROOM EQUIPMENT IS OFF LIMITS TO STUDENTS, INCLUDING PIANOS, ENSEMBLE ROOM EQUIPMENT, COMPUTERS, STEREOS, CHALK, CHALKBOARDS, AND BULLETIN BOARDS.
5. STUDENTS ARE REQUIRED TO BE ON THE RISERS IN THEIR ASSIGNED PLACE WITH CHOIR FOLDERS, MUSIC, AND PENCILS WHEN THE BELL RINGS.

CONSEQUENCES FOR BREAKING RULES

First offense:	Verbal warning
Second offense:	Teacher or Lunch Detention
Third offense:	Before school detention (8:00 a.m.-8:30 a.m.)
Fourth offense:	After School Detention or Office referral

- **Failure to attend a Teacher/Lunch detention will result in a 30 minute detention.**
- **Failure to attend a Before School detention will result in an office referral.**

ANY SERIOUS OFFENSE, SUCH AS DEFIANCE OR FIGHTING, WILL RESULT IN AN IMMEDIATE OFFICE REFERRAL. TARDIES WILL RESULT IN THE NORMAL WMS PENALTIES THAT YOU RECEIVED IN YOUR STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT BOOK ON THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL.

GENERAL CLASSROOM POLICIES

1. FAILURE TO BE ON THE RISERS IN APPROPRIATE PLACES, WITH CHOIR FOLDER, MUSIC, AND A PENCIL WHEN THE BELL RINGS, WILL RESULT IN A TARDY. (YOU ARE TARDY IF YOU ARE IN THE DOOR, BUT NOT IN YOUR SEAT WHEN THE BELL RINGS.)
2. I AM ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN TEACHING DURING THE ENTIRE CLASS PERIOD. EACH OF YOU WILL GET FIVE RESTROOM/WATER PASSES PER SEMESTER - BE SURE TO USE THEM WISELY. IF YOU HAVE A MEDICAL PROBLEM THAT WARRANTS FREQUENT TRIPS TO THE NURSE OR RESTROOM, PLEASE PROVIDE ME WITH A NOTE FROM THE SCHOOL NURSE, AND I WILL ALLOW YOU TO USE THOSE FACILITIES WHEN NECESSARY.
3. ALL BOOKS, BINDERS, AND PURSES GO ON THE TOP ROW OF THE RISERS. THE ONLY MATERIALS YOU BRING TO YOUR SEAT ON THE RISERS ARE PENCILS, FOLDERS, AND MUSIC.
4. IF YOU BRING OTHER ITEMS TO THE RISERS, THEY WILL BE TAKEN UP AND YOUR PARENTS CAN COME TO SCHOOL TO RETRIEVE THEM. PLEASE NEVER USE HAIRSPRAY, LOTION OR PERFUME IN THE CHOIR ROOM - THE SMELL LASTS FOR DAYS AND CAN BE HARMFUL TO THOSE WHO ARE ALLERGIC.
5. MARKING ON MUSIC IN PEN WILL RESULT IN A FINE EQUAL TO THE COST OF REPLACING THE MUSIC - MARK IN PENCIL ONLY. MARK IN YOUR MUSIC OFTEN AND APPROPRIATELY WITH A PENCIL.
6. MARKING ON, DRAWING ON, OR TEARING YOUR CHOIR FOLDER WILL RESULT IN A \$4.00 FINE FOR THE REPLACEMENT OF THE FOLDER. THE CHOIR FOLDERS ARE FOR CHORAL USE, THEY ARE NOT TO BE USED FOR OTHER THINGS.
7. ALL SCHOOL RULES AND POLICIES ARE IN EFFECT WHEN WE GO ON TRIPS. IF YOU BREAK THE RULES ON A TRIP, YOU WILL NOT GO ON THE NEXT TRIP. IF YOU MISBEHAVE WHEN A SUBSTITUTE TEACHER IS IN CLASS, YOU WILL NOT ATTEND THE NEXT FIELD TRIP.
8. **THE EASIEST WAY TO REMEMBER ALL OF THE ABOVE IS TO THINK OF THE FOLLOWING: "WILL MRS. FRENCH BE MAD AT ME IF I DO THIS?" IF THE ANSWER IS "YES", DON'T DO IT!!!**

Choir is a privilege, not a right; therefore, no student has the right to interfere with the learning process in the classroom. The director and administration reserve the right to remove any student from the program due to a serious infraction or consistent infractions of the rules.

Supplies

Choir members should have the following for every rehearsal:

- ***FOLDER-** ½ “ 3-ring binder, provided by the school.
- ***DIVIDERS-** 5 dividers to be placed in choir folder.
- ***SHARPENED PENCIL(S)-** this should be sharpened before rehearsal begins.
- ***HIGHLIGHTERS-** preferably green or yellow.
- ***POSITIVE ATTITUDE**

CONCERTS AND REHEARSALS

Concerts and rehearsals are a necessary part of any performing organization's activities. Attendance at concerts and occasional after-school rehearsals is **graded and required** of all choir students. Concert attendance will be weighted as two major test grades (one for attendance/punctuality and the other for concert performance.) After school rehearsals will be weighted as two test grades (one for rehearsal attendance/punctuality and the other for rehearsal performance.)

Students will lose 2 points from their concert or rehearsal attendance/punctuality grade for every minute that they are late. Skipping a required rehearsal before a concert will result in the student being removed from the concert to do an alternate written assignment until the conclusion of the concert. Emergencies **do happen** and are excusable with a written parental note - phone calls do not excuse a student from a concert or rehearsal. If I need to follow up on the note, I will contact the student's parent or guardian. ***BECAUSE YOU ARE GIVEN A CALENDAR AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SCHOOL YEAR AND YOU SIGN AND AGREE TO THE DATES ON THE CALENDAR, THE FOLLOWING EVENTS CAN BE SCHEDULED AROUND CHOIR ACTIVITIES AND DO NOT CONSTITUTE EMERGENCIES: NO TRANSPORTATION, BABYSITTING A SIBLING, DOCTOR'S APPOINTMENTS, FAMILY VACATIONS, AND ATTENDANCE AT GYMNASTIC, DANCE, OR ATHLETIC EVENTS OUTSIDE OF WMS. PLEASE LET ME KNOW NOW IF YOU ALREADY HAVE A CONFLICT WITH THE CHOIR CALENDAR.*** Occasionally, there will be a conflict with an event at Worley. In that case, I will resolve the conflict with the teacher or teachers who are involved. You will not be penalized for whatever solution those teachers and I decide.

Inappropriate participation, on and off stage, will result in a lowered concert grade and severe consequences. **Inappropriate uniform will result in no performance.**

Remember: EARLY IS ON TIME, ON TIME IS LATE.

- Do not be late to a performance or rehearsal and all will be well. ☺

Students must be picked up from choir events (Concerts, Fieldtrips...) within 20 minutes of the scheduled end of the event. Failure to do so, will result in the student not participating on the next fieldtrip without a parent chaperone.

Some events are considered extra-curricular and are provided to enhance the curriculum.

Extra-curricular events are: a contest (individual or group), an event with an admission charge, or an activity requiring school transportation. Participation will be governed by UIL rules regarding the student's eligibility status (no pass/no play). If eligible, students are **required** to attend UIL events and rehearsals. The director retains the right to determine which eligible students will represent Worley at UIL contest. All other extra-curricular events have optional attendance, but students must be eligible to participate. Please feel free to call or email if you have questions regarding eligibility.

GRADING

Many people think that they get an "A" in choir just for showing up. Sorry, folks, it's not quite that easy, and it does require your effort and cooperation. Your grade will be figured as follows:

30 % for daily average. A minimum of 100 points per week can be earned by students. The amount and quality of participation shown in a rehearsal will determine the number of points earned. Outstanding participation is the key to success in choir. It is the student's responsibility to convince the director that an effort is being made to fully and actively participate at a high level for the good of the choir. Participation includes warm-ups, sight-reading, good posture, having music folder and materials at every rehearsal, holding music correctly, and being a good example for the choir. Other daily grades come from oral and written work.

40% for test average. Vocal part tests and sight-reading tests are administered periodically to evaluate the singing accuracy of the students on their voice part in a particular piece of music being rehearsed by the choir. Part tests and sight-reading tests can be administered ranging from individual to small groups and will occur with adequate notice to students. Concert grades are actually test grades. Students who attend a concert, meet promptly to warm-up at the specified time, actively participate by singing and listening during the concert, and pass a uniform inspection will earn 100 points. Points will be deducted if students do not meet the above requirements. Inappropriate participation (on and off stage) during the concert will automatically result in a lowered concert grade and an office referral. Other test grades come from oral and written tests. and occasional before or after school rehearsals.

30% for Quizzes These are usually given for areas of music we are working on each six weeks. Symbols, terms, etc.

If you wish, you may get one extra credit grade of 100 *per 6 weeks* by attending a choir concert or voice recital outside of WMS (your elementary/high school would be a great place to go!). THE PROGRAM MUST BE A CHOIR OR VOCAL BROADWAY, CLASSICAL, OR SCHOOL PROGRAM. (JONAS BROTHERS CONCERTS DON'T COUNT!!!) You must bring me a program from the event signed by the concert's director and your name before the end of the 6 weeks in order to get extra points. This is the only method by which you may receive extra credit points in choir.

OFFICERS

Officers will be elected in each class. Each 7th and 8th grade class will elect a president, vice president, and 2 librarians. Officer nominations will be taken in each class from the students. Officers will then be elected by class vote on secret ballots. In case of a tie, runoff elections will be held. Officers may perform duties before and after school as well as during class.

Officer duties include:

- Being a good role model for all students.
- Answering the phone.
- Taking roll call in class.
- Taking roll call at concerts.
- Writing out seating charts.
- Filing music.
- Filing paperwork.
- Handing out music.
- Handing out paperwork.
- Taking up materials.
- Peer tutoring to other students before/after school.

UNIFORMS

Male Choir : Boys will need to provide black dress pants (NO jeans), Black shoes (No tennis shoes) and Black socks. Each boy will buy a Polo shirt at a cost of \$25.00 These shirts will be tucked in for performances and boys will need a belt for the pants. Hair must be groomed out of face. This fee is due on Friday, September 12. This charge also includes a choir folder. Cash or checks accepted. Checks are payable to *WMS CHOIR*. (Students name in memo.)

Concert Choir : Girls will need to provide black dress pants (NO jeans), Black shoes (No tennis shoes) and Black socks. Each girl will buy a Polo shirt at a cost of \$25.00 These shirts will be tucked in for performances and girls will need a belt for the pants if necessary. Hair must be pulled back (half up/half down) out of the face and eyes. Girls may wear makeup and stud earrings, no other jewelry allowed. This fee is due on Friday, September 12. This charge also includes a choir folder. Cash or checks accepted. Checks are payable to *WMS CHOIR*. (Students name in memo.)

Honor Choir: Girls will need to provide Black dress shoes (NO tennis shoes) and Black hose. Each girl will be provided a choir dress that will be sized as close as possible.* Hair must be pulled back (half up/half down) out of the face and eyes. Girls may wear makeup and stud earrings, no other jewelry allowed. Each girl will buy a Polo shirt at a cost of \$25.00. This fee is due on Friday, September 12 This charge also includes a choir folder. Cash or checks accepted. Checks are payable to *WMS CHOIR*. (Students name in memo.)

*At the end of the year when dresses are to be turned in, all dresses must be dry cleaned and returned with the plastic wrapping and a receipt attached before being cleared.

IF FULL PAYMENT ALL AT ONCE IS A PROBLEM, PLEASE CALL ME AT 817-473-5668 IN ORDER TO WORK OUT A PAYMENT SCHEDULE BY FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 12. I MUST RECEIVE YOUR CALL BY SEPTEMBER 12 DUE TO BUDGETARY CONCERNS. UNLESS I AM CONTACTED BY SEPTEMBER 12, PAYMENT IN FULL IS DUE ON OR BEFORE FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 12.

Concert Etiquette

Since performance is a major objective of any choir, concert etiquette must be learned and practiced.

*Everyone should remain seated during the performance of each selection.

*There should be no talking during another group's performance. Every effort must be made to avoid distractions. This means no cell phones should be turned on.

*If you are entering the auditorium after the concert has already started, always wait until the end of the current musical piece before finding your seat. The people already in the audience do not want you crossing in front of them while they are enjoying the concert.

*At the end of each selection, the audience should applaud. Shouting or whistling is not acceptable. "This is not a Pep Rally or Game!!"

***When a piece is over, always wait until the conductor lowers his/her arms before applauding. Sometimes a piece may have several movements with silence in between. In such cases, it is proper to applaud at the end of the entire piece, NOT the end of each movement. The conductor will not usually lower his/her arms until the end of the entire piece, so this is usually a good indicator of when to applaud.**

CHOIR ACKNOWLEDGEMENT SLIP 2008-2009

My son or daughter, _____, has my permission to participate in Worley Middle School choir activities for the 2008-2009 school year. I have read the rules and policies of the Worley M.S. Choir Department for the 2008-2009 school year. I understand that I must pay a choir fee for a shirt and folder. I understand and agree to abide by all rules and policies in the WMS Choir handbook. I understand that students may be removed from participation in a concert and be given an alternate written assignment if they skip a required rehearsal before a concert. I further agree that the aforementioned student will be on time to every required rehearsal and concert or will be subject to grading penalties.

Parent Signature

Student Signature

Male Guardian's Name _____

Female Guardian's Name _____

Home Phone #(s) _____ Emergency Phone #(s) _____

Guardians' cell phone #s MALE- _____

FEMALE- _____

Guardians' work phone #s MALE- _____

FEMALE- _____

E-mail addresses for parents MALE _____

FEMALE _____

YES, I WANT TO HELP!

Throughout the year, we will need extra volunteer help. If you would like to volunteer to help, please return this sheet by Friday, September 5. Please check any areas in which you might be able to help. Thank you for participating in the management of the WMS Choir Department!

STUDENT NAME _____

PARENT NAME _____

PARENT'S DAYTIME PHONE
NUMBERS _____

- collecting money OR helping organize fund-raising products when they arrive
- chaperoning at choir concerts
- chaperoning field trips during the school day
- chaperoning field trips in the evening or on weekends
- other (please elaborate) _____

Please return this sheet to Mrs. French in
the choir room by Friday, September 5.
Thanks for your help!!!