

Grand Oaks High School Choir Information Handbook

2018 – 2019



J.R. Smith, Director

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"If you're going to be a bear, be a grizzly." – Mahatma Gandhi

Grand Oaks Choir Parents and Students,

Welcome to the 2018 – 2019 Inaugural school year at Grand Oaks High School! I am excited to begin this journey with all of you as we embark on learning, connecting, and creating wonderful music. Please go through the handbook to familiarize yourself with the choir program and all that this year has to offer. To stay connected, please sign up for Remind101, follow our website and booster club website, and sign up in charms.

The choir website: www.grandoakschoir.com

The booster club website: www.gohschoirbc.com

Charms: information on the choir charms account to come at a later date

Remind101:

Chorale: @gochorale2

Concert: @goconcert3

Cantus: @gocantus4

The world of choir is vast and through this art your student will be immersed in abundant forms of music but will also learn responsibility, commitment, dedication, teamwork, empathy, hard work, communication, and selflessness. I look forward to working with you as we educate them together through these high school days.

After reading the handbook, sign & return the Acknowledgement Page by Friday, Aug. 31, 2018.

Other forms due by Friday, August 31, 2018:

- **Permit to Travel**
- **Technology Release**
- **Choir Booster Membership**

I am dedicated to making the Grand Oaks High School Choir a successful program in Conroe ISD, and with your help, I know it is possible!

Sincerely,

J.R. Smith, Choir Director

Choir Room Expectations

1. Food and Drinks will not be allowed in the room. (Closed lid water bottles only)
2. Be in your assigned seat with folder, music, and pencil when the bell rings
3. Students need to have a pencil at all rehearsals (and use it)
4. Phones will not be allowed on the risers and appropriate discipline will be followed
5. Folders should go in the appropriate slot after each rehearsal
6. Ask permission to use the restroom and get water
7. Equipment is off limits: pianos, sound equipment, computers, white boards, etc.
8. Practice rooms are used for singing only and you must sign up to use a room
9. Respect the room, other students, the director, and yourself
10. Be in compliance with the campus rules as they will be enforced



GROWTH – RESPONSIBILITY – OWNERSHIP - WORK ETHIC – LEADERSHIP

Student Responsibilities and Expectations

Materials: Students are responsible for having supplies each day and caring for school owned materials. Lost, stolen, and damaged items will be replaced by the student.

Informal Uniform: Choir shirt, sneakers, and blue jeans (no holes, rips, designs, etc.)

Formal Uniforms: Students will receive a choir dress or tuxedo. Uniforms must be maintained in the best manner possible. Uniforms should always be on a hanger or protected when not being worn. Lost or damaged uniforms will be replaced by the student. Guys will need black socks and black dress shoes. Girls will need black closed toed dress shoes. *NO HIGH HEELS*

Communication: Students are expected to balance their activities and organize their calendars accordingly. Students must make sure parents, employers, coaches, sponsors, and other teachers are informed when a choir event is taking place. Students are given a choir calendar and will be given ample notice about scheduled rehearsals, performances, and activities. This information is always available on the choir website. Please take advantage of Remind101. Planning ahead is a necessity and most conflicts can be avoided.

Participation: As a member of this organization, you are expected to perform in class on a daily basis and sing in all scheduled concerts and programs. Some events will be eligibility based, so passing all classes are required. It is your responsibility to attend tutoring, study, and maintain your grades in order to participate throughout the year. (Passing is required for all-state, solo and ensemble, UIL, trips, and pop show)

Deadlines: Students are expected to meet scheduled deadlines involving money, music, forms, uniforms, etc. If there is ever a problem with meeting a deadline, financial or otherwise, please consult with the director in a timely manner. *I will always work with you the best I can.*

Grading Policy

As per school policy, daily grades will be 40% and major grades will be 60%. Students who miss required performances/tests will be allowed to make up the grade within 5 school days for the maximum grade of an 85. Only excused absences will be allowed full grade value. *Students must schedule a time to meet with the director to re-test/make-up exams or performances.*

Daily Grades: participation in rehearsals (posture, hand signs, singing, listening), completed written assignments/quizzes, sight reading/rhythm assessments

Major Grades: attending required concerts, behavior at concerts, auditions for all-state, solo & ensemble, UIL, Theory Exams, Sight Reading/Rhythm Formal Assessments

****Being late to call times drops the major grade 10 pts, for every 10 minutes late****

Attendance Policy

It is assumed that choir members will attend all scheduled after-school rehearsals and performances. Absences are considered unexcused unless the director has been notified in the appropriate time frame and excuses the absence.

Excused absences will be assigned in the following situations:

1. ALL DAY ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL – please notify the director in the event that your student is absent all day or leaves from school due to illness
2. PRE-APPROVED CONFLICTS – please e-mail or send a note to the director one week or more in advance of the rehearsal/performance. Less than one week notice will be determined on a case by case basis.
3. EMERGENCY – Life happens and emergencies arise. Please contact Mr. Smith if such an event occurs. Documentation will be needed for grading purposes.

Students who have excessive absences or excuses may be subject to removal from upcoming performances, events, or extra-curricular activities.

Tutoring is excused in other subject areas until 3:30pm or as determined by the director. A pass written by the teacher tutoring the student must be given to the director AND the director must be made aware of this excuse prior to the rehearsal, etc. well in advance. (see #2 above)

Unexcused absences:

1. Work conflicts
2. Doctors' appointments (unless related to absence that day/notification not given)
3. Out of town trips/events (family vacations/Rodeo Houston do not excuse you)
4. Any other situations not specifically addressed under excused/unexcused absences not cleared by the director in advance.

An unexcused absence from an extra-curricular rehearsal will result in removal. Absence from a curricular rehearsal/performance will result in a zero. *Alternative assignments are not offered.*

Skipping rehearsals or failing to attend class will result in failing grades, removal from events, and removal from the choir program. It is your responsibility as a member of the choir program to communicate effectively and in a timely manner with the director.

Eligibility Policy

The Conroe Independent School District, by state law, must follow the “No Pass, No Play” policy of the Texas Education Agency. Any student with a failing grade at the end of any nine-week reporting period is ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities, performances, and games for three weeks following a one week period. The one exception to this rule is that students must be passing all classes at the end of the first six weeks or lose eligibility. If a student is passing all classes by the following grading period, his/her eligibility is restored after a one week period following the end of the three weeks. Otherwise, the student remains ineligible for three more weeks. Pre-AP and AP classes do have small exceptions with waivers, but you are allowed one waiver per semester and the grade in question must be a 60 or above.

This law only affects participation in choir activities only in certain instances:

Curricular – concerts, etc. with no admission charge are designated as “curricular” by the state. *This is means anyone can participate* and is also required to participate to receive a grade.

Extra-Curricular – auditions, contests, performances where admission is charged are not available to ineligible students. Ineligible students cannot audition for All-State, compete at Solo & Ensemble, UIL, or perform in pop show.

“Incomplete” grades also render a student ineligible until it is changed to a passing grade.

The choir program requires all choir members to maintain eligibility. In the event that a student becomes ineligible during rehearsals for extra-curricular events, they will be removed from the choir and complete written work to receive a grade in the class.

Students in varsity level ensembles and on leadership team will be removed for a second time of ineligibility. Eligibility is one of the criteria considered at auditions for choir placements.

Letter Jacket Policy

Students are awarded points towards letter jackets for participation in the following activities:

1. TMEA Choir auditions: 1 point per audition (district, region, pre-area, area, all-state)
2. Solo & Ensemble: 1 point
3. UIL Concert & Sight Reading: 1 point
4. Fundraising: 1 point
5. Audition for pop show: 1 point
6. Participation in voice lessons: 1 point
7. Participation in the school musical: 1 point
8. Student Leadership Team: 1 point

Jackets are awarded for 2 consecutive years of choir with 5 points earned each year.

A student who places in the All-State Choir will automatically earn a jacket

You must be in choir to receive a jacket. No exceptions will be made regarding the above policy.

Choir Fee

The choir fee is essential for running and maintaining a functioning choir program. The fee helps to consolidate purchases required of each student as well as expenditures made on behalf of the choir as a whole for funds not provided by CISD.

As each student pays the class fee, the following items are included:

Uniform requirements for all performances:

- Choir Shirt

- Choir Polo

- Tuxedo/Dress

- Pop Show Shirt

- Uniform cleaning

- Copy Machine Usage

- Off-Campus Transportation for Contests, Performances, and Extra-Curricular Activities

- UIL Solo and Ensemble Accompanist Fees

- Social Activities

- Miscellaneous student expenses

The following items are NOT included in the fee:

- Spring Trip

- Choir Banquet Ticket

- Private Voice Lessons

- Tickets for extra events

The choir fee (\$100) is payable by cash or check to the financial secretary in the main office. Checks should be made out to GOHS Choir. Please add your child's name and ID in the memo line. You will also need your DOB and DL# at the top of the check. Checks will not be accepted without this information. Choir fee can also be paid online through the school web store. This is not an item to purchase, but a debt that is attached to your student's account.

Refund Policy

Due to advanced payments for services or items from suppliers, there will be no refunds to students in any case where a student has paid for an activity or supply but is no longer able to participate. *This policy applies no matter the reason.* This includes activity withdrawal, illness, ineligibility, unexpected family travel, or withdrawal from Grand Oaks HS/Choir.

Auditions and Competitions

TMEA All State

Texas Music Educators Association begins the all state process the beginning of each school year. Students prepare several pieces of literature to audition on to receive placement to the next levels of competition. All-State musicians will compete through four rounds of auditions and sing at convention in San Antonio in February. Students can practice at home, in lessons, or after school with the director in preparation for auditions. Those choosing to audition must pass a sing-off for the directors before being allowed to attend the first round of auditions.

District: Round 1 – September 15, 2018 – Conroe HS

-Students who place high enough at this audition will move onto round 2

Region: Round 2 – October 20, 2018 – Klein Forest HS

-Students 1-20 move onto round 3 and make the Region Mixed Choir

-Trebles 21-40 do not move on but place into the Region Treble Choir

Pre-Area: Round 3 – November 27, 2018 – The Woodlands HS

-Students audition on the most advanced literature and sight read

-Students 1-5 advance to round 4

Area: Round 4 – January 12, 2019 – The Woodlands HS

-Students audition on the most advanced literature and sight read

-Competition is from four different regions, five students from each

-Students 1-5 make All State Mixed Choir

-Treble 6-12 make All State Treble Choir

-Tenor-Bass 6-9 make All State Tenor-Bass Choir

TMEA Clinic and Convention: February 13-16, 2019 – San Antonio

Solo and Ensemble Contest

Students are encouraged to participate in learning a solo from the directors. After learning this piece, students can compete for a rating by a judge. Students who earn a “Superior” receive a medal. This is a great experience for all students. It encourages individual performance and a growing opportunity in your personal music education. *Eligibility is required.*

UIL Concert & Sight Reading

Choirs prepare three selections for judges and work on sight reading skills. Students will be tested on music, sight reading, blend, and balance as an ensemble. *Eligibility is required.*

Festivals

Competitions of this nature will vary from year to year according to activities of the choir. (Renaissance Festival, Spring Trips, Madrigal Festival, etc.) *Eligibility is required.*

Choir Leadership Team

The choir leadership team will consist of 2-3 students from each choir class. These students will be elected from their peers to help the director with all choir events and in rehearsals. Students on leadership team must have a positive attitude, strong work ethic, and excellent grades. Being on the leadership team means being an example for all choir students.

Tasks required of leadership team (not limited to the following):

- Taking attendance in rehearsal
- Taking attendance before concerts
- Keeping the choir room clean at all times
- Helping set up/take down the stage for concerts
- Cleaning the auditorium/dressing rooms after performances
- *Helping create a safe and fun learning environment for the choir program*

Expectations of Leadership Team:

- *Be a positive role model for all students*
- Participate during rehearsals and set the example for others
- Be prompt to all rehearsals and activities
- Participate in the All-State Process, Solo & Ensemble, and UIL
- Attend regular meetings with the director
- Help plan socials and events
- Be academically eligible at all times throughout the year
- Help the director as needed

Parent Expectations:

- Support your student when they are needed to attend meetings and events
- *Must be a participating member of the Booster Club and attend a majority of meetings*
- Be able to provide transportation to and from rehearsals and activities
(it is difficult to have students on leadership team with unreliable transportation)

There will be a Student Leadership Meeting for interested members on Monday, August 27th at 3pm in the choir room. You must be in attendance to be considered for the leadership team.