

*Sharyland High School
Choral Music Department*

Sharyland Choirs
2023-2024
Block 1 and 2

Conductor: Timothy Watkins

Office: Music Building (Choir)

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Goals and Objectives

- *To provide students with a high-quality performance choir.
- *To perform choral literature.
- *To provide an environment for vocal development, both as an individual and as an ensemble.
- *To provide opportunities to learn about music, its development, construction and expression.
- *To create awareness about different styles of music, with emphasis on the various historical and cultural styles within Western traditions.
- *To increase awareness of how music is unique in its expressive and communicative nature, particularly non-verbal aspects.
- *To provide a place of belonging, a sense of unity, and a source of fellowship for students.
- *To engage artistic culture at the highest levels of complexity and competence.

Attendance Policy

- * Attendance at all rehearsals is HUGE!
- *Rehearsal begins when the bell rings. You should be standing in your spot, ready for warm-ups. If you are not in your spot when the bell rings, you are tardy.
- *There are very few illnesses that prohibit you from singing. We need every voice. If you are unable to sing, please have your music out, listen and follow along. It's not a time to catch up on homework for another class.
- *Attendance at ALL performances is MANDATORY! Mark important dates on your calendar **NOW!**

Folders and Music

- *Folders are assigned at the beginning of the semester. Replacement costs will be assessed at the end of the semester for lost or misplaced music or folders.
- *There must be a pencil located in EVERY folder provided by each student.
- *Folders must be returned to the assigned folder slots immediately at the end of the period. You are welcome to take your folder home, but you are responsible for your folder!
- *IPADS, LAPTOPS AND PHONES ARE NOT TO BE USED DURING CLASS WITHOUT PERMISSION.

iPad/Phone Classroom Guidelines

Cell phones, as well as our iPads, offer some exciting learning opportunities, and will be used in the choir rehearsal at different times. But it is very important that students are on task and use their devices in a responsible manner.

Students may use electronic devices in rehearsal ONLY when they receive specific instructions to do so. Once the bell rings, all devices should be stored away in their backpacks. If students have difficulty with this policy, then their device will be confiscated for the duration of class and their parents will be contacted

Lessons

*Each student will be required to attend lessons each quarter (the number will vary per 9 weeks).

*Lessons can be scheduled by signing up on the lesson schedule on Google Sheets. Often, teachers will allow you to miss part of a class to attend a lesson, but **you** are responsible for speaking with them **in advance** and getting permission from your choir teacher.

*You will also have specific dates when lessons are due.

*Lessons will be used to assess students on different aspects of vocal technique, skills and concepts (not just helping you to “learn your part”).

Concert Attire

Every student will be issued a school-owned choir uniform. Great care should be used in the handling and care of the uniforms. “Uniforms” will be issued to each student prior to the first concert. This specific uniform will be your uniform for the entire year and will be stored PROPERLY at school, in your home (not your car!) after each concert. Please return your uniform at the final concert with the hanger & hanger number that was given to you.

If we use robes, please make sure the clothes underneath your robe are white collared shirt/blouse, black dress slacks/pants (no jeans), black socks, and black dress shoes.

Dress shoes should be plain black, no buckles or decoration on top, closed toe/back. Heel should be 1” to 1 1/2 “. Heels over 2” cause the body to fall out of alignment and inhibit proper singing support. Don’t spend a lot...Walmart/Payless/Target carry shoes that will work great.

Expectations and Grading

Students in a choral ensemble are required to always put forth their best effort.

A. Students are expected, at this level of distinction, to excel in dedication. Members will strive for and be evaluated on:

1. Mastery of performance literature including:

- a. Pitches and rhythms
- b. Texts and translations

- c. Diction
 - d. Phrasings and dynamics
 - e. Memorization when required
 - f. Expressive elements of the choral art
2. Punctual attendance at all rehearsals and performances.
 3. Fulfillment of policy expectations for rehearsal and performance (see Choir Handbook).
 4. Attendance at sectional and small group rehearsals.
 5. Completion of all assignments, exams, and job tasks.
- B. These will be assessed and graded by:
1. Attendance records (rehearsal and performance)
 2. Group exams
 3. Individual exams
 4. Instructor observations- Including evaluation on rehearsal and performance
- C. Attendance at all rehearsals is of the utmost importance. Schedule appointments, projects, and homework (including study groups) for other classes, etc. at times other than rehearsal. All must attend- critical work is done in rehearsal.
- D. Missing a concert results in a failing grade. Exceptional circumstances may be negotiated with the director.
- E. Extra rehearsals are needed only if students are not putting forth their best effort in regularly scheduled rehearsals. An exception may be if instruments are participating (i.e., when we perform with an instrumental ensemble) or a performance with multiple ensembles.
- *Critical situations may demand extra rehearsals, but efficient work in normal structure by all members should preclude this necessity.
- F. Although not required, all members are expected to study vocal technique outside of choir, either by private instruction or class voice.
- G. Grades are based on the following:
1. Major Assignments – 60%
 2. Minor Assignments – 40%
- H. **PLEASE NOTE:** It is not difficult to get a good grade in this class- show up on time, practice and learn your music.
- All members are expected to earn an "A" or "B" at this level of selectivity.
 - If you receive something other than an "A", you must correct the situation. A student receiving a "C" must re-audition and be re-admitted into one of the upper ensembles. A student receiving a failing grade will only be re-admitted into the ensemble after a meeting with the director, administrator, and parents.

Performance Policies

Professional performances are essential. Focus is always expected. To accomplish this, a few simple principles must be followed:

- A. Attendance is required.
- B. Punctuality is required. Be prepared at the right time and place.
 - Fulfill jobs promptly and lend a hand when assistance is needed (set-up, tear-down, etc.)

- C. All cell phones, pagers, beepers, watches, etc. must be inactivated.
- D. Every member must have his/her OWN music in hand at all performances.
 - You cannot "share" or "look over shoulders" in performance.
 - On entrance/exit, carry music away from audience.
- E. Line-up and perform in assigned formations. No exceptions except by director.
- F. No noise or talking "back-stage" or "on-stage."
 - Listen carefully for any last moment instructions.
- G. Behaviors "on-stage" are to be professional.
 - No conversations, gum-chewing, scratching or other distracting behaviors are acceptable.
 - Be disciplined but SMILE and COMMUNICATE! Be an artist!
- H. Concert Dress required for all performances unless specified by director.
- I. Personal appearance is to be professional.
 - Hair to be neat, clean and out of your face.
 - Men are to be clean-shaven.
 - Concert dress is to be neat and clean.
 - No perfume or cologne!
 - Women should wear make-up to ease harshness of lighting, but remain tasteful and appropriate.
 - Avoid anything that draws attention to an individual (jewelry, incomplete concert dress, etc.).
- J. Professionalism is expected at all times
 - Respect and honor other performing groups in joint performances.
 - Be an example of excellence anytime we are in contact with others (before, during and after a performance).

Recruiting

*We are always looking for more singers, so talk up the ensembles!

Vision

*To build the overall program. Performance oriented, but educationally sound.

*State and community exposure for ensembles...both curricular and extra-curricular.

*An atmosphere of family.

Standards and Benchmarks

Our department feels strongly that the concepts we teach are **learned skills**. We have developed the following set of Department Standards and Benchmarks as a way of identifying and communicating the skills and concepts that we feel are important to be successful choral musicians. Students will be assessed on these Standards, through a variety of ways, over the course of the year.

I. Music Literacy

- A. Rhythm**
- B. Sight Reading**
 - 1. Solfege
 - 2. hand signs

II. Theory

- A. Key Signatures**
- B. Music Terminology**
 - i.e. Chord Analysis/Structure

III. Vocal Production

- A. Singing Technique**
 - 1. Tone/resonance
 - 2. vibrato
 - 3. Breath use and intake
 - 4. posture

IV. Performance

- A. Singing alone and with others a varied selection of repertoire**
- B. Performance practice and etiquette**
- C. Musicality**
 - 1. Dynamics
 - 2. Articulation
 - 3. Diction (vowels/consonants)
- D. Intonation**
- E. Blend**
 - i.e. Vowel formation
- F. Balance**
- G. Listening Critically**

V. Critical Thinking

- A. Self evaluation**
- B. Analyzing choral recordings**
- C. Problem-solving**
- D. Relate emotionally to the music**
 - 1. Composer background and text meaning
 - 2. Musicality
- E. Understanding music in a greater context**

VI. Choral Lit/Music History

- A. Understanding musical style from a variety of time periods**
 - 1. Application of knowledge of various time periods of music
- B. Music composers in context of era**

Choir Calendar

District Choir Auditions	Rowe HS	September 23
District Treble Choir Auditions	PSJA SW HS	October 14
SHS Fall Folk Concert	SHS Lecture Hall	October 19
Region/Pre-Area Auditions	Rowe HS	November 11
SHS Musical	SHS Auditorium	November
District/Pre-Area Clinic/Concert	McHi	November 17-18
SHS Christmas Concert	SHS Auditorium	December 18
Area Choir Auditions	Harlingen South HS	January 6
UIL Solo & Ensemble	La Joya HS	January 20
UIL Concert and Sight Reading	La Joya HS PAC	March 28-30
SHS End-of-Year Concert	SHS Auditorium	May 1
Choir Banquet	TBA	TBA
UIL Texas State S&E	TBA	TBA