

**Christa McAuliffe
Middle School**



**CHOIR HANDBOOK
&
Syllabus
2016-2017**

Dear Choir Students and Parents,

Welcome to the McAuliffe Middle School Choral program. Extraordinary things will happen in choir this school year. There are seven different choral class periods this year. If you're reading this handbook, chances are, you (student) or your student (parent) is in one of these classes. If not, there is a place in choir for you!!!

Choir is designed, in part, to prepare students to perform at and away from our campus, and to increase a heightened awareness of music, sound production, voice blending, and overall musicianship in the area of voice. Get geared up to be exposed to many different genres, styles, and forms of music. From patriotic to folk, sacred to classical, even spiritual and pop, we have it all. Students will not only learn music fundamentals, but will also develop their ability to read the language of music.

♪♪♪ We make it happen, we are agents of change ♪♪♪

Please refer to this handbook and our school's website under fine arts for updates and other course information. <http://www.fortbendis.com/domain/6301>.

Also, be sure to fill out and sign all the forms included at the end of this handbook and turn it in by October 6, 2016. Your signature indicates acceptance and understanding of choir expectations.

Let's work hard together to make chorus a great success. We are excited to have you and look forward to your involvement.

Your Choral Directors,
Mrs. James and Mr. Gibson

Jessie.James@fortbendis.com

Office# (281) 327-0379

School# (281) 634-3360

Conference period: 11:55 a.m.-12:40 p.m.

Cory.Gibson@fortbendis.com

Office # (281)634-2489

School # (281) 634-3360

Conference period: 11:02 a.m.-11:59 a.m.

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

There are four rules that everyone will need to follow in order for us to be successful each time we meet. The first letter of each of the rules spells out the word S.I.N.G.

S-sing and perform your best at all times. 100%, NO EXCUSES!

Be in place, seated, with music folder, and pencil when the bell rings.

Rehearse and perform to the best of your ability in sectionals, small ensembles, rehearsals, and performances.

Work to improve! Mark your music with a pencil as the director specifies.

I-influence and encourage fellow choristers by taking care of them by using constructive criticism.

Show support to one another in thought, word, and deed.

Work to improve!

N-notice your actions be make sure you are prepared with and taking care of required materials.

Class ALWAYS starts with a posted “Do Now”. Begin working on it as soon as you are seated with your materials. (You must already be working when the tardy bell rings).

Take care of your grades so you can always remain eligible to compete in contests and perform in other events.

G-get along with everyone and your director by being respectful in your verbal and non-verbal language.

When the choir or section is singing, or the director is speaking, listen!

Conduct yourself in an appropriate manner. Have courteous behavior to everyone. This includes the director, visitors, chaperones, and one another.

Follow directions the first time they are given. This will allow us to spend more quality time on our music and will produce a polished concert.

CONSEQUENCES

“Choir Do’s and Don’ts

Positive Consequences	Negative Consequences
Gift tickets Leadership Opportunities Positive feedback and verbal praise Awards and Rewards galore!	Warning Reflection time Parent phone call Office referral-will result in not performing

NOTE: IF A STUDENT SEVERELY/CONSTANTLY DISRUPTS CLASS, HE OR SHE WILL BE REFERRED OUT FOR SEVERE DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS.

Inappropriate behavior will be reflected on your conduct grade!!!!

Conduct Marks

E=Excellent

S= Satisfactory

N= Needs Improvement

U= Unsatisfactory

GRADING

50% Daily: Students are expected to **POSITIVELY PARTICIPATE** in classroom activities and to have the required materials. Failure to have required materials, not participating in class activities and off task behavior will lower classwork grades.

50% Major Grade/Concert Performance: Concert performances dates are provided at the beginning of the year in order to avoid scheduling conflicts.

Students will have an opportunity to make up work due to an absence.

SUPPLIES

The students should have the following items in class everyday:

- 1 -one inch BLACK binder
- 2 or more -Pencils

REHEARSALS

Remember all rehearsals should be attended by all students involved. After school rehearsal may be warranted occasionally. I will inform you ahead of time. Advanced notice will be given if a rehearsal is cancelled.

CONCERT DRESS

The way a choir looks affects the way a choir performs. The following dress is required for all performances unless a change is made for special concerts.

***Beau Voce/Varsity* (7th and 8th grade Males):** Young men must wear black pants, black shoes, black socks, black belt, and black long sleeve dress shirts w/tie (the tie, shirt, and pants must be purchased through the choral department). Sneakers, brown shoes, jeans, and t-shirts are not appropriate.

***Bella Voce and Bellatina Voce/ Non-Varsity and Varsity* (7th and 8th grade Females that are in second or third year choir):** Young ladies will wear a formal dress (the dress must be purchased or rented through the choral department). Ladies must wear black closed end dress shoes with dark or natural color nylons. Sandals, open-toed shoes, oversized heels, jeans, and t-shirts are not appropriate.

***Beginner Choir* (1st year males and females):** Students will wear choir t-shirts along with black slacks/bottoms. Black closed end shoes, socks, and belts must also be worn.

Accessories: Males are not to have body jewelry visible. Earrings should be taken out during performances. Females can wear pearl necklaces and pearl earrings. Otherwise, no jewelry or hair ornaments can be worn during performances.

NOTE: Certain concerts may require a more relaxed dress. The above listed is the standard dress attire. For informal concerts, we will wear our choir t-shirt with plain blue jeans or another specified uniform.

***Uniform/Expenses Fee Schedule (subject to change).**

(Non-Varsity and Varsity) 7th and 8th grade males	\$75.00 (rental is \$50.00)
(Non-Varsity and Varsity) 7th and 8th grade females	\$85.00 (rental is \$50.00)
Beginner males and females 1st Year Choir Student	\$35.00 (this is for non-competitors)

CONCERT POLICY

Concerts are a public sharing of our accomplishments, and a communication of the language and emotion of music. Further, since concerts are an extension of our classroom activities, all students are expected to attend each performance, and this will be used as one of the factors for determining which students get selected to perform away from campus. CONCERTS MUST BE A TOTAL GROUP EFFORT! Parents and students are expected to note dates on their calendars immediately, and make every effort to avoid conflicts as they make other plans.

I do realize that there may be absences due to certain circumstances. The following procedures are strongly encouraged:

1. ABSENCES

- a. Illness/family emergency: Parents/guardians should contact the director as soon as possible in the event of illness or family emergency.
- b. Other commitment: Concert conflicts must be cleared through parent/guardian contact with the director at least one week prior to the concert. This may be done by phone, email, or written note. If the conflict is with another organization on campus, usually we can work out the kinks so that the student can participate in both activities.

Note: It is important to realize that music performance depends heavily on the participation of everybody, and I want students to recognize the importance of their contribution to the group and the importance of making commitments. If habitual absences persist, students will be removed from the choir.

LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Several leadership opportunities are available in the choral department. Please apply for these opportunities if you have time to be dedicated. Duty descriptions are below.

Concert Manager: supervise set-up of specialty items for concert rehearsals and concerts, find people to hand out programs at the concerts), help with tour duties, attend choir council meetings as scheduled, send out thank you notes to those that help with events and obtain appropriate signatures, update calendar boards, lead other leaders and make sure their duties are complete, and plan choir social events.

Assistant Concert Manager: take over duties of the manager if he/she is absent, attend choir council meetings as scheduled, set up and take down flyers/bulletins for choral events, post and maintain suggestion box, update choir board with announcements and special recognition.

Class Secretary: main job is ATTENDANCE!!!; decorate bulletin boards, file daily tardy records (last period only); maintain work records turned in, copy CD's, attend choir council meetings as scheduled, take choir photos, perform other duties as needed, designated by the director.

Section Leaders: Lead sectionals; collect and distribute materials to section (sight-singing books, music, etc.); attend choir council meetings as scheduled; BE A MOTIVATOR and RECRUITER FOR THEIR SECTION!

Class Librarian: Help with filing, distributing, and collecting music; preparing music to file, and attend council meetings. Times to do this will have to be pre-approved by Mrs. James.

Wardrobe Manager: There is a male and a female wardrobe manager. These leaders ensure everyone has what is needed for each performance, distributes and collects school related items and inventories these pieces and attend council meetings.

NOTE: ALL LEADERS WILL BE RECOGNIZED IN THE YEARBOOK AS WELL AS AT THE FINAL CONCERT OF THE YEAR/BANQUET. Substitute positions are available for each of these positions. Applicants must have application and teacher recommendations turned in by deadline.

FUNDRAISING

My favorite fundraiser is World's Finest Chocolates. However, I am thinking about trying something different this school year. I am open to suggestions. Keep in mind that fundraisers should last no longer than three weeks. Make sure that we can reach our goal in that time span.

Also, choir fees are reduced according to how much you sell!!!!!!!

TRIPS/GRADES AND BEHAVIOR

According to state regulations, students must pass all classes with a minimum of 70% on their report cards to participate in UIL events. Students must have passing grades to go on school sponsored trips (off campus performances, etc.) as well. If a student is

failing one or more subjects in a grading period, he or she may regain eligibility after progress reports indicate a passing grade.

I will check UIL eligibility periodically during the school year.

Please note the grade check dates below:

September 30, 2016	January 23, 2017
October 14, 2016	February 10, 2017
November 4, 2016	March 10, 2017
December 16, 2016	March 22, 2017
	April 07, 2017
	April 28, 2017

Inappropriate behavior also warrants dismissal from trips and the choir. Inappropriate behavior includes issues in choir as well as other places in the school. The choral director exercises discretion over this matter.

THEFT & LOST/FOUND

1. Items found in the music area will be taken to the front office.
 - a. If a student believes a possession has been lost or stolen, he should check with the director and the front office first.
 - b. The choir director is not responsible for the safety of lost items.
2. Students are responsible for their possessions.
 - a. Non class related items should be left in backpacks (including but not limited to cell phones, mp3 players, video games).

PARENT VOLUNTEER INFORMATION

Parents, your volunteer involvement is vital to the success of our organization. Please take a moment and complete the parent participation survey included with this packet. When deciding to commit to volunteering, complete the FBISD background clearances necessary. Below is the link to use.

VIPS

<http://www.fortbendisd.com/site/Default.aspx?PageID=659>

Call 281-634- 1109 for more information.

McAuliffe Middle School Choir

2016-2017 Tentative Calendar

August

22 First day of school

September

08 Open House 6:00pm
29 Signed Handbook Forms due
30 Partial fees due!

October

4 ~~Fall Fundraiser begins~~ Date has changed, update coming soon!!
8 Deadline to enter region auditions
22 Region auditions; all day-Reading Jr. High School
27 Joint Fall Concert with Willowridge, 6:00pm-WHS
28 Partial fees due!
29 CMMS School Celebration (students will be chosen to sing)
More info to come.....

November

2 Renaissance Festival Trip (students will be chosen to perform)
5 Region Choir Concert, 4:00pm- Lamar Consolidated High School
11 PJ Party (Girls only) 6:00-10:00pm @CMMS
Feeder Pattern Holiday Preparation

December

6 Joint Holiday Concert with Willowridge 6:00pm-WHS
9 Holiday Caroling and feeder schools' tour!
16 Partial fees due!

January

Rockets Game (Boys only)-TBD
UIL Concert @ Sight Reading Contest Preparation!!!

February

Black History Month Program-TBD
27-28 Pre-UIL Contest-all day (Lamar Consolidated High School)
Begin Spring Fundraiser

March

22-23 UIL Contest-all day (Christ Church Sugar Land)

April

5 Joint Spring Concert with Willowridge 6:00pm (WHS)
19 UIL MS Choir Solo/Ensemble-all day Bowie MS

May

5 Cinco de Mayo Program-TBD
12 Sixth Grade Choral Festival-all day Ridge Point High School
23 End of the Year Pop Show and Choir Banquet-6:00 pm

Forms to be Returned

All these documents are mandatory unless otherwise stated.

☐ Medical Information Certificate

☐ Permission for Media Release Form

☐ Choir Fees & Shirt Order Form

☐ Choir Handbook Acknowledgement Form

☐ VIPS (optional)



These are on the same form

Choir Acknowledgement Handbook Form

After reading the choir handbook, please complete this form and return it to Mrs. James by Thursday, October 6, 2016.

Student's Name _____ Grade Level _____

Parent's Printed Name _____

Relationship to Student _____

Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

Email _____

Preferred method of being contacted (phone or email) _____

I, _____, and my parents/guardians,

_____, have read the contents of Christa McAuliffe's Choir Handbook. We understand the expectations and the responsibilities and agree to follow them.

Student's Signature _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian's Signature _____ Date _____

Parent Chaperone (please check one) _____ yes _____ no

Be sure to complete the background check with FBISD

*****Send choir fees payment with this form or call me for payment plans*****
(Parents may also purchase a choir shirt for themselves @\$15.00)

Shirt Size

_____ Youth Large (14-16) _____ Youth Extra Large (18-20) _____ Adult Small

_____ Adult Medium _____ Adult Large _____ Adult Extra Large

Choir Participation Fee (fees will be reduced with fund-raising)

6th grade Girls and Boys \$35.00

7th and 8th Grade Boys \$75.00 (\$50.00 rental)

7th and 8th Grade Girls \$85.00 (\$50.00 rental)

Payments should be made in cash or with a money order. A receipt will be provided each time a payment is made.