

James E. Taylor High School

Choral
Department

Handbook
2011 – 2012

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♪=Must be signed and returned by Thursday, September 2nd with payment of usage fee.

**=Notary Public required

INTRODUCTION

...in a world of political, economic and personal disintegration, music is not a luxury but a necessity—not simply because it is “therapeutic,” but because it is the persistent focus of man’s intelligence, aspirations and good will.

*Robert Shaw, **This Is Why***

A performing group is a microcosm of society. In addition to well documented skills related to music reading, self-expression, self-discipline and concentration, performers become independent. There is no more important skill required in a democratic society than that of sharing common goals with others and working together to achieve them.

*Sally Schott, past TMEA President, **Texas Music Educator, 1984***

Music has the power of producing a certain effect on the moral character of the soul, and if it has the power to do this, it is clear that the young must be directed to music and must be educated in it.

*Aristotle, **Politics***

Welcome to the James E. Taylor High School Choral Department!

You have chosen to join a quality program filled with opportunities for personal growth. Membership in this organization carries many privileges; with these privileges come responsibilities and rewards. This handbook is designed to foster the success of the THS Choral Department, inform students and their parents, and address questions and concerns that may arise throughout the school year. We are proud of our program and the respect it has earned through the diligent efforts of students, directors, parents and administrators. Choir students are accepting membership into an organization built upon pride and commitment to excellence. Please take time to read the handbook thoroughly and return the necessary forms by the due date. If you should have any further questions, please feel free to contact us between 8:30 – 9:30am, or after 2:35pm. We also encourage all students and parents to access our website at least once a week at:

www.TaylorChoir.org

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PHILOSOPHY & MISSION STATEMENTS

TAYLOR CHOIR PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

The purpose of choral education at James E. Taylor High School is to develop productive citizens in a nurturing atmosphere by emphasizing the value and unique individual creativity present in each student while cultivating the possibilities of group excellence. A rigorous curriculum will combine vocal enhancement with literature of the highest level while also increasing each student's awareness and appreciation of all the fine arts. Taylor Choir directors recognize that these goals may only be achieved through combined parental, community and administrative support.

KATY ISD FINE ARTS MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Katy Independent School District Fine Arts Department is to prepare students to be successful in a diverse and ever-changing society through experiences in the fine arts, by designing and supporting the delivery of an aligned, articulate, assessed and progressive performance-based curriculum that encourages all students to reach their academic, creative and expressive potential by fostering a life-long involvement in the arts.

KATY ISD FINE ARTS BELIEFS

We believe education and participation in the fine arts prepares each student for success developing opportunities to:

1. Communicate, both individually and collectively, key issues, concepts and ideas embodied in the human experience by examining local, societal and cultural environments and interpreting their meaning through performance and product.
2. Communicate globally through the multi-sensory expression of the arts.
3. Explore and appreciate the influence of the arts throughout the course of history.
4. Utilize effective decision-making, problem solving and higher level thinking skills as they are engaged in creating unique individual and group products.
5. Strengthen individual learning across the curriculum by providing practical applications of reading, writing, science and mathematics.
6. Benefit others through leadership by effectively and efficiently communicating with those around them through encouragement and enhancement of leadership qualities evidenced in the classroom, performances and exhibits.
7. Develop a strong, positive work ethic with a broad knowledge base utilized in a diverse array of applications.
8. Maximize learning through performance and exhibition to promote a greater sense of individual responsibility and pride, as well as a greater awareness of varied cultural contributions to the global community.
9. Participate effectively in today's society by fostering self-discipline and respect for others.
10. Engage both the individual and community in an experience, which produces creative and disciplined thinking, practices goal setting to enhance productivity and continually evaluates individual and group progress.

CHORAL OPPORTUNITIES

The Taylor Choral Department offers a variety of performing organizations to meet the needs of all students interested in singing. Placement is based on sight-reading ability, tonal memory, tone quality, attitude and academic eligibility. All groups are designed to teach self-discipline and commitment while working together toward a common goal of excellence and fostering an appreciation of choral music.

Requirements for all THS Choir members include participation and attendance at ALL choir concerts, extra rehearsals and functions or events which promote the choral department.

MEN'S CHOIR

First time male choir members and/or beginning level sight-readers; non-varsity music; some extra rehearsals.

CAMERATA

"A group of individuals who share a strong passion for a particular art form"

First time female choir members and/or beginning to mid-level sight-readers; non-varsity music; some extra rehearsals.

CONCERT MEN

Audition required; tenor/bass choir of intermediate sight-readers; advanced non-varsity music; some extra rehearsals

CONCERT WOMEN

Audition required; female choir of intermediate sight-readers; advanced non-varsity music; some extra rehearsals

CANTILENA

"A lyrical vocal melody"

Audition required; female chorus of intermediate to advanced sight-readers; non-varsity and varsity music; some extra rehearsals required; District Choir audition strongly encouraged.

CHORALE

Audition required; mixed choir of advanced sight-readers; varsity-level music; required Spring Semester Monday afternoon rehearsals 3 – 5 pm; District Choir audition required.

EXPRESSIONS

Audition required; mixed show choir and chamber group; advanced sight-reading and solo skills; must be in Chorale; numerous extra rehearsals and performances required; students responsible for cost of required costumes.

HAND BELLS

An advanced group of ringers; must possess excellent music reading skills. Keyboard, instrumental, or choral experience preferred. Required performance at U.I.L Solo & Ensemble Contest.

CHOIR DAILY SCHEDULE

Period	Bell Schedule	Classes	Room
1	7:30-8:21	Men's Choir (R) AP Music Theory (L)	172 192
2	8:27-9:18	Concert Women	172
3	9:24-10:15	Cantilena	172
4	10:21-11:12	Chorale	172
5	11:18-12:09	Camerata (L) Hand Bells (R)	172 174
C Lunch	12:09-12:42		
6	12:48-1:39	Concert Men	172
7	1:45-2:35	Expressions	172

CONCERT ETIQUETTE

Concerts play a vital role in each student's success. In today's world, students participate in many types of activities, and each has specific behavior expectations. In a friendly spirit, here are some guidelines of "appropriate" etiquette for music concert audience members. Please accept these suggestions in the spirit which they are given.

A good audience member . . .

- ✓ Arrives on time for the performance.
- ✓ Remains quiet, attentive and seated during the entire performance. Gesturing or talking disturbs fellow audience members.
- ✓ Remains silent between movements of a major work.
 - Listens to all of the groups performing at the concert.
 - Waits until applause begins before entering the performance (if arriving late).
 - Turns off cellular telephones or any other audible electronic devices.
- ✓ Uses a flash camera at appropriate times: before or after a performance, never during.
- ✓ Shows appreciation by courteously applauding at the end of the performance or song.
 - Applause is the respectful sign of appreciation for a musical performance.
 - Genuine, courteous and extended clapping is appreciated, if warranted.
 - Standing ovations are only given for extraordinary performances.
 - Applause should occur after the conductor's hands lower.
- ✓ Finds a baby-sitter for young children who are not old enough to understand or enjoy the performance. If need be, parents should sit near the door for an easy, unnoticed exit if the youngster becomes a distraction for others' enjoyment.
- ✓ Let performers know after the concert what he or she did well and expresses appreciation for their effort.

GRADING SYSTEM

The following system will be used to calculate students' grades. Not all categories will necessarily be utilized in every six weeks grading period.

MAJOR GRADES 50%

- ✓ Daily classroom participation and engagement in skill development. One Major Participation grade per week.
- ✓ Sight-reading exams, dictation exams, theory tests and other class work.
 - Sight-Reading Exams: Unrehearsed melodies are sung at sight after an appropriate amount of study time. The director determines what an appropriate amount of time is. Melodies are sung into a tape recorder and are due by 3pm Friday the week they are assigned. *No late exams will be accepted unless prior director approval has been granted.*
 - Dictation Exams: Melodies are played on the piano; students then write down the appropriate Solfege or rhythm. *Dictation exams will not be made-up. If a student is absent, the missed exam will not be averaged into their grade.*
- ✓ Performance is an important objective for choir students. Concerts and rehearsals are co-curricular and participation is mandatory. Students who participate appropriately in concerts receive a grade of 100.
 - Anyone receiving an excused absence from a concert will complete an alternate assignment to be determined by the director(s). An excused absence consists of personal illness or unforeseen family emergency.
 - Any absence must be approved prior to the performance.
 - Jobs will never constitute an excused absence. Please make arrangements with your workplace well in advance.
 - An unexcused absence will result in an automatic zero. Make-up assignments will be based only on the THS make-up policy. Removal from the THS choral program will be considered.
 - When scheduling our yearly calendar, every effort is made to avoid conflicts with other athletic and extra-curricular departments. *It is the responsibility of the student and parent to determine any possible scheduling conflicts, such as sporting events and other school activities, and notify Mr. Riehle or Mrs. Likos several weeks in advance.* Informing Choir Directors at the last minute about conflicts with rehearsals and performances is not acceptable and will negatively affect their grade.

MINOR GRADES 35%

- ✓ Attendance/engagement at all required supplemental rehearsals outside of the school day
- ✓ This includes quizzes (written or skill)
- ✓ Appropriate concert attire, etiquette, and punctuality

Other Grades 15%

- ✓ Punctuality to class & being prepared to work with a positive attitude
- ✓ Having all necessary supplies (pencil, music) and using rehearsal time appropriately.

EXTRA CREDIT

- ✓ Extra credit will be awarded to students who attend cultural events such as the Houston Symphony Orchestra, Houston Grand Opera, Houston Ballet, or a fine arts museum. Bring a program or ticket stub and a brief description (written) of the event for an extra 100 on your "other grades" average. All extra credit is subject to director approval. Broadway shows do not count for extra credit.

ELIGIBILITY

Senate Bill 1 mandates that students who participate in extracurricular activities, such as contest and field trips, must receive a grade of no less than 70 in each of their classes. Grades will be checked at the end of each six weeks. At that time, any student who fails a class will not participate in any field trip or contest for the next three school week period. Grades for these students will be checked after 3 school weeks from the last day of the previous six weeks. If the students are passing ALL classes at that time, they will become eligible at 3 P.M. 7 days after the grades are checked.

There is a 7-day grace period at the beginning of each six weeks. Therefore, 7 days are added at the end of the 3 school week period. The 3 school week period does not necessarily coincide with the KISD Progress Report.

Choir concerts fall under the category of co-curricular (part of the course requirement). The following are examples of extracurricular activities where eligibility becomes an issue: Expressions Fall Show, Madrigal Dinner, Talent Show, All-State Choir Process, U.I.L. Solo & Ensemble, U.I.L. Concert & Sight-Reading, Spring Trip, recruiting trips, etc.

Repeated ineligibility may be grounds for removal from an auditioned ensemble, or from the entire Choir Program, based on director discretion.

GRADE POINT CALCULATION

All choir credits are calculated on a 4.0 scale. No GT or AP credit will be awarded. However, if a student remains in Choir for all four years in high school, their third and fourth years may be taken as pass/fail credit in regards to GPA calculation.

PASS/FAIL INFORMATION

ELIGIBILITY

This option is available to highly motivated juniors and seniors who wish to take one or two courses that are beyond the requirements for graduation. They must have already taken the first two years of choir. *Students may only take two (2) courses on a pass/fail basis.*

HOW ARE GRADES HANDLED?

- ✓ Students will receive a numerical grade all year on the report card.
- ✓ Students will receive a P for pass or F for fail on the transcript.
- ✓ Students will have these course excluded from the computation of GPA and class rank.

ENROLLMENT

Students interested in taking choir pass/fail must discuss this option with Mr. Riehle or Mrs. Likos by the 10th day of class. If the student meets all necessary criteria, he/she must complete the appropriate form, have it signed by the parent and teacher, and return it to the counselor's office no later than the end of the 3rd week of the semester. For more information discuss this option with your counselor and choir director.

CONDUCT AND TARDIES

Taylor Choir students have a high profile on-campus and in the community. It is imperative that the conduct and appearance of all choir members remain above reproach. As representatives of KISD and Taylor High School, our students must reflect an image of positive leadership, character, responsibility and competitive spirit.

CLASSROOM CONDUCT:

Self-discipline is critical to the success of the THS Choral Department.

Choir students are expected to follow these rules:

1. Be on time. Students should be on the risers, with their folder and pencil, when the tardy bell rings.
2. Water is allowed in a topped container.
3. No use of vocal inhibitors during rehearsal. **NO GUM!** No food or drink in the Choir Room without permission.
4. Wait for permission to speak.
5. Follow instructions the first time.
6. Use appropriate language and demonstrate good manners at all times. (no expletives, fighting, inappropriate gestures)
7. Per school policy, cell phones must be turned off during the instructional day. Any violations of this policy will result in disciplinary action.
8. Treat students, directors and adults with respect at all times.

PENALTIES:

With the exception of tardies, penalties shall be assigned as follows:

1. Warning; student/teacher conference; loss of participation points
2. Contact parents; loss of participation points; possible alternative assignment
3. Parent/teacher conference; loss of participation points
4. Refer to administrator; possible exclusion from THS Choir events and performances; loss of participation (and performance) points; possible removal from the THS choral program
5. Severe issues: Automatic referral to school administrator

ISS & SUSPENSIONS:

Students assigned to DAEP the day before or the day of choir activities may not be allowed to participate. Students are expected to reschedule DAEP around concerts. In accordance with KISD policy, any student suspended from school for any reason will not be permitted to participate in any choir activities during the period of suspension. A student who is sent to ISS more than three times and/or is suspended is subject to removal from their performing ensemble or from the choral department.

TARDIES:

Choir students are considered tardy if they are not on the risers, with folder and pencil, when the bell rings. Students will sign-in in the tardy notebook hanging by the door. If the student has a permit to class, the permit may be placed in the tardy binder as well. Tardy Detention is assigned for all tardies, and is every Monday through Thursday, 2:45 – 3:10.

THEFT, VANDALISM, DRUGS, & WEAPONS

The following rules reiterate KISD policies and apply to all choir students at all times during his/her high school career. The directors and appropriate administrators will discipline violators. Violations may result in expulsion from all choir activities for up to one calendar year from the date of the violation.

THEFT:

Taking things from other choir members, students or the school will not be tolerated. Personal use of dress uniforms shall be considered thievery. Punishment will be handled according to the THS and KISD Discipline Code.

VANDALISM:

Each student is financially responsible for all music checked out to him or her. Students must purchase a 3-ring black binder; this folder must be kept performance-ready all year! Students are not to write on furniture, wall, stands, or other equipment in the choir room. Discipline will be treated according to the guidelines in the THS and KISD Discipline code.

USE OF ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES:

- ✓ No use of tobacco of any kind.
- ✓ No drinking of alcoholic beverages.
- ✓ No use of over-the-counter products containing alcohol.
- ✓ No possession of alcohol or tobacco.
- ✓ No possession or use of illegal drugs (marijuana, narcotics, inhalants, etc...)

WEAPONS:

It is a federal law and a violation of KISD policy to possess a weapon of any kind on-campus. This includes guns, knives, chains, etc. Violators of this policy are subject to immediate referral to the administration and/or police, expulsion from THS choir and possible arrest.

OFFICER COUNCIL 2011 – 2012

The following students were elected by their peers to serve as the head officers for Taylor Choir. Other officers, representing each class, will be elected during the fall semester. Students are encouraged to bring their ideas to the officers. This program is built for the student.

PRESIDENT: Melanie Piché
VICE-PRESIDENT: Jasmine Johnson
SECRETARY: Erin Connors
HISTORIAN: Emily Walt
SPIRIT LEADER: Bethany McDougal
PARLIAMENTARIAN: Zachary Burch

OFFICER COUNCIL ELECTIONS

Officers play a critical role in the academic and social livelihood of our program. Students wishing to be considered for an office should be supportive of the ideals set forth by the choral department. Each choir will elect officers from candidates who express a desire to run. Nominations may come from the candidates themselves or another student.

REQUIREMENTS OF ALL OFFICERS:

- ✓ Maintain a “C” overall average and must be eligible each grading period
- ✓ Attend all choir officer meetings
- ✓ Be able to work diligently and pleasantly with all other members of choir
- ✓ Participate in all choir activities, including extra-curricular activities
- ✓ Actively seek out new members for choir

CHORALE OFFICERS:

- ✓ **President:** Acts as liaison between choir members and the directors; in charge of calling and planning officer meetings; plans social functions with directors and officers; oversees all choir council activities, including committees and personnel; must maintain a positive attitude toward all choir members; assists directors in miscellaneous projects.
- ✓ **Vice-President:** Reports directly to President; steps-in for President when he/she is not available; assists directors with gathering and counting of money; helps directors in uniform check-out and check-in; helps plan social events; aids directors in miscellaneous projects.
- ✓ **Secretary:** Maintains choir calendar; handles all correspondence for the choir, including student e-mail reminders and thank you notes after concerts; assists Vice-President with uniform assignment and money collection.
- ✓ **Historian:** Decorates bulletin boards in 170 hall; compiles a scrapbook of the year’s activities; creates slide show for end-of-year banquet; accumulates pictures and memorabilia with the assistance of each class’s historian.
- ✓ **Spirit Leader:** Maintains morale for the entire choir program; organizes choir student birthday wishes; organizes THS faculty birthday wishes; aids the council with special projects.
- ✓ **Librarian:** Appointed by the directors after the other offices are filled. Responsibilities include filing music, keeping all files current and distributing and collecting music.
- ✓ **Parliamentarian:** Appointed by directors and other officers after the other offices are filled. Responsibilities include assisting the officers with anything they may need help with.

ALL CHOIRS WILL ELECT:

- ✓ **Vice-President:** Conveys information from officer meetings to class; plans social activities with other officers and directors; checks roll each day in class and at concerts; distributes music in class; assists with assignment and collection of uniforms.
- ✓ **Historian:** Documents all activities of the class through photography; assists Chorale historian with picture submission and banquet slide show; collects pictures for the class webpage; must attend officer meetings if Vice-President cannot attend.

ELECTION PROCEDURES:

- ✓ **All Offices:** a 2 poster limit will be strictly enforced; posters are limited to normal poster board size; all signs must be approved and signed by Directors before posting; they can only be posted inside the choir room.
- ✓ **Speeches:** (filmed prior to voting day and viewed in each class)
 - **President:** Prepare a 3 minute speech
 - **Vice-President, Secretary, Historian, Spirit Leader:** Prepare a 2 minute speech
 - **Voting:** secret written ballot voting will be used, unless otherwise specified by Directors.

PRIVATE VOICE LESSONS

Katy Independent School District offers private voice lessons at Taylor High School. These sessions are vital to vocal growth—they offer attention to individual student needs. While THS directors teach good vocal technique during choir, our classes are generally too large to offer much one-on-one vocal concentration. Students who take private voice lessons generally experience vast improvements in their sound quality and confidence. Our voice faculty is among the best in Houston.

VOICE FACULTY & CONTACT INFORMATION

- ✓ Dennis Arrowsmith: 832-814-4436, dennis@arrowsmiths.com
- ✓ Ashley Brooks: 713-448-9210, ashleyrosebrooks@gmail.com
- ✓ Janna Ellsworth: 713-505-8835, janaellsworth@hotmail.com
- ✓ Samuel Schultz: 713-855-2871, samuelschultz@mac.com

PAYMENT PROCEDURES

- ✓ \$17 per half hour lesson; lessons are paid one month in advance (\$68).
- ✓ \$68 deposit is required at the first lesson.
- ✓ Payments are made directly to the voice teacher.
- ✓ Any student who falls behind on payments is temporarily suspended from lessons until fees are received.
- ✓ A form must be filled out and turned in by the first lesson. That form is included in this handbook.

LESSON CANCELLATION

- ✓ If you need to cancel a lesson for any reason, *contact your voice teacher at least 24 hours in advance*. Failure to follow this procedure will lead to an unexcused absence and a charge for the missed lesson. *Do not contact directors about missed lessons—only speak to the voice instructor.*

CHOIR CONFLICTS

- ✓ Students are required to notify their voice teachers of choir scheduling conflicts. Failure to notify will result in a charge for the missed lesson. Please note all choir concerts and extra rehearsals, and then talk to your voice teacher about scheduling make-up lessons.

PERFORMANCE APPAREL

Choir uniforms create a professional look for concerts. We are fortunate that KISD provides uniforms for all high school choir programs. Each student will be issued a performance uniform; students are responsible for returning the complete uniform, intact, at the end of the year.

PROGRAM FEE

All students will pay a \$60 Student Program Fee at the beginning of the year when uniforms are assigned. Uniforms will only be assigned after receipt of this fee.

UNIFORM MAINTENANCE

During the year, students are expected to maintain their own uniform and will be provided a high quality hanger. After each performance, uniforms must be hung up properly using the provided hanger.

CLEANING OF UNIFORM

All uniforms must be dry cleaned, and the only cleaner you may use is RITZ CLEANERS, located at 1010 S. Mason Road. They have cleaned our uniforms for years and know exactly how we want them pressed. Other establishments have ruined our uniforms.

UNIFORM LOSS OR DAMAGE

Students who lose or damage the uniform will pay the replacement cost of the uniform. Uniforms are property of KISD; they are considered equipment and are only to be worn in performances. Inappropriate use of THS Choir uniforms may result in disciplinary action and removal from the program.

PERFORMANCE DRESS CODE

Uniformity is crucial to the success of the ensemble. Failure to comply with the following standards will result in exclusion from performance, lowered grades, and/or expulsion. Dress for all choirs is as follows:

1. **Students must supply:**
 - a. Ladies:
 - i. Black Hose
 - ii. Closed-toed shoes with heels no higher than 1". No "mules" or "clunky" shoes.
 - b. Gentlemen:
 - i. Wing-tipped tuxedo shirt (may be purchased at Hobby Lobby, Garden Ridge, K&G, Suit Mart, or any men's clothier.)
 - ii. Black dress shoes and black socks
2. **THS Choir provides:**
 - a. Ladies: Black Choral Dress, pearls
 - b. Gentlemen: Black tuxedo, vest, and bow tie
3. **Jewelry:** NO jewelry may be worn in performance besides provided pearls.
4. **Hair:** Hair shall be clean, well groomed and away from the face. Students may not wear bows or ornaments in performance.
5. **Perfume/Cologne:** Students may not wear cologne or perfume of any kind. Hair spray should not be applied around other people. This is a courtesy to people who suffer allergies.
6. **Accessories:** The directors have final say on acceptable accessories.

VIOLATIONS OF THE ABOVE STANDARDS OF GROOMING MAY PREVENT A STUDENT FROM PARTICIPATING, RESULTING IN LOWERED GRADES AND POSSIBLE EXPULSION FROM CHOIR.

MADRIGAL DINNER

Madrigal Dinner is a unique, exciting opportunity for student performance. A tradition at Taylor High School, this December's performance will mark its 27th consecutive year. The community and parents look forward to this much anticipated event, and this page should help answer some of your questions.

WHAT IS MADRIGAL DINNER?

A wonderful evening of holiday entertainment which includes a concert performance by every THS choir. A four-course catered dinner, served by choir students acting as wenches and beggars, is interwoven with a Renaissance period skit, choir and hand bell performances, a professional juggler and audience participation. The THS Commons is transformed into a castle dining hall, complete with drawbridge, fireplace and castle walls. A silent auction fundraiser is held concurrently in another room of the castle.

PARTICIPANTS:

All choir students participate by singing with their choir both evenings. Each student also serves dinner one evening. Friday servers help with set-up, starting at 2:35pm; Saturday servers strike the set afterwards. Many students choose to help with both set-up and strike. Because this is a concert, it is co-curricular and therefore required. If a student cannot participate due to ineligibility, the director will give an alternative graded assignment.

COSTUMES:

Women: Dress as wenches/female peasants. Basic costume consists of a blouse or under-dress, a long skirt, a vest or laced belt/bodice, an apron (optional), a headpiece, and sandals/ballet shoes/slippers. Colors should be dark, cottony or burlap-like, nothing fancy, and no gold or silver. Cream blouses are OK.

Men: Dress as beggars/male peasants. Basic costume is a long tunic or vest, a shirt for underneath (turtleneck OK), tights, a belt, and sandals or dark slippers. *Patterns and idea sheets for wenches and beggars are available from Mr. Riehle.* Some students also borrow costumes from former students or purchase them from students who no longer need them. Help may be available for those who need or want a costume made.

REHEARSALS:

All students must attend a rehearsal on the Thursday before opening night, which usually lasts from 3 – 7pm.

STUDENT MEALS:

Students need to eat a meal before they arrive on the night they are working. A student may sit and eat with their family (if a ticket was purchased) on the night they do not serve. Some students do this, but many choose to arrive for their choir's performance at the time the director's set.

STUDENT ARRIVAL:

Friday servers must stay immediately after school to help with setup, then report to the commons at 5:00pm for final instructions. Saturday servers should report to the commons at the given call time and then stay until all tear-down is complete. Failure to follow through on all of these responsibilities will significantly affect their grades. If they are only singing, students may arrive at the given call time, and then leave when their choir is finished performing.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT:

Most parents attend one evening's performance and volunteer their time on the other evening. Many parents are needed to build sets and hang curtains on the designated work night from 6-10 p.m (usually the week before Thanksgiving break), and also to set up on the Friday of Madrigal, at 1:00 p.m. We also need servers both evenings, food prep help both afternoons, table setters both afternoons, as well as ticket takers and smaller jobs. On Saturday, parents who can stay afterwards and help strike the set are greatly appreciated.

TICKETS:

Invitations are mailed to every choir family in October. Reservations and payment need to be mailed in ASAP, as this is a very popular holiday event and tickets sell quickly. There is a reservation deadline noted on the invitation. Contact the directors if you do not receive an invitation.

SPRING TRIP

April 12 – 15, 2012, Taylor Choir will be traveling to New Orleans, Louisiana for our annual spring festival trip. We will participate in a clinic at Tulane University. As a condition of their memberships, Chorale and Cantilena are expected to attend this trip. Attendance will be open to other choir members based on behavior and performance in class. Directors reserve the right to choose who is eligible to attend this trip.

FUND-RAISING OPPORTUNITIES

Taylor Choir will provide several fund-raising opportunities for students and chaperones. Participation in these programs is optional, but encouraged.

PAYMENT SCHEDULE

Below is the payment schedule for the trip. Please make payments on time. Prompt disbursement is required by all attending students and their families because we have bills due year-round for the trip.

DUE DATE	AMOUNT DUE
Friday, September 16, 2011	\$150 <i>non-refundable deposit</i>
November 1, 2011	\$125
December 5, 2011	\$125
January 20, 2012	\$125 (or remaining balance)

Make all trip checks payable to Taylor High School

Here are several important notes:

- The “No-Pass No-Play” Rule applies for the Spring Trip. Students who are ineligible due to failing incomplete grades will not be able to attend. Students who are unable to attend due to ineligibility will not receive any refunds.
- The total cost of the trip is \$525/student and \$475/chaperone. An increase in fuel cost could potentially push this figure up a bit.
- Fund raising opportunities for both students and parents will be available through the Taylor Choir and Taylor Choir Booster Club.
- All students traveling are required to pay a **non-refundable** trip deposit of \$150 by September 16. Chaperone deposits (\$125) are also due at this time. Amounts larger than \$150 will be gladly accepted.
- Parents interested in chaperoning should check the appropriate box on the student commitment form. Chaperone commitments must also be made by September 16.
- Every person (students and chaperones) must complete a separate commitment form. There are unique commitment forms for students and for chaperones. All checks should be made payable to “Taylor High School”. One check may cover multiple deposits.

ANTICIPATED EXPENSES

The following is a list of anticipated choir expenditures that will occur throughout the year. They are listed to help you plan your budget. Please note that in some cases, fees are approximate and additional expenses may occur. Required expenditures are so indicated.

REQUIRED EXPENSES FOR ALL CHOIRS		
	AMOUNT	DUE DATE
Student Program Fee	\$60	9/2/11
Boys tux shirt	\$15	10/11/11
Madrigal costume	\$40-100	11/28/11
OPTIONAL EXPENSES		
District Choir Music & CDs	\$25	9/2/11
District Choir Audition Fee	\$20	9/2/11
Expressions Revue tickets	\$5-\$8	See calendar
Madrigal Dinner tickets	\$25	See website
Region Choir Clinic Fee	\$20	TBA
New Orleans	\$525	See payment schedule
Rockets game ticket	TBD	TBA
Banquet ticket	\$15-25	TBA

Other expenses might include letter jacket patches and buddy gifts

MONEY COLLECTION:

Every effort will be made to write receipts for money received. In case of dispute, it is the students' and parents' responsibility to maintain all receipts until the end of the school year.

REFUND POLICY:

Most fees charged to the student involve advance payment for a service or item. In such cases (i.e. usage fee, accompanist fees, trip fees, etc.), the choir has a deadline for receiving reimbursement from the supplier. Because of this, the following policy will be strictly followed: *There will be no refunds 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 what the reason is for withdrawal and specifically includes, but is not limited to, the situations of ineligibility, illness, unexpected family travel or withdrawal from the THS Choir. Spring trip payments are refundable at an incremental rate; more information will be sent in regards to that schedule.*

SCRIP CARDS: AN *EASY* FUND RAISER!!

WHAT IS A SCRIP CARD?

- Basically, a Scrip Card is a gift card, just like the ones you can purchase at the grocery store.

WHY USE A SCRIP CARD?

- Because you receive a credit towards your child's Spring trip for every card you purchase.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

1. You place an order.
2. We buy the card at reduced cost.
3. You use it at its face value amount.
4. Choir keeps half the discount and the other part is added to your student's Spring Trip account.

HOW DO I PLACE AN ORDER?

- Look at a copy of the form, available at Booster meetings or on the choir website.
- We only put the stores we thought would be the most popular on the form. The complete list can be viewed at <http://www.glscrip.com> Click on the retailers button to display the terms of each card.
- Send the form along with cash, check or money order to the choir room.
- Orders will be picked up by 2:30 each Tuesday of the month**
- You will be contacted once the cards are received from the supplier. If you have signed a waiver form, we can send the cards home with your student; if not, we shall arrange a mutually convenient pick-up time and place.

SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION

Every year, the Choir Booster Club offers scholarships to graduating seniors. These awards are designed to reward students who have consistently demonstrated dedication, scholastic aptitude, work ethic and a positive attitude. Following is a detailing of criteria for these scholarships:

ARA LYNN BAUMAN SCHOLARSHIP

- ✓ This scholarship is designated for a senior who exhibits the helpful, caring attitude and love for music that characterized Mrs. Bauman.

MERIT SCHOLARSHIPS

- ✓ Applicant must be in attendance at Taylor High School for four (4) semesters
- ✓ Minimum GPA of 2.50
- ✓ Must have taken SAT, ACT or PSAT
- ✓ Must maintain minimum Satisfactory conduct grade
- ✓ Must be enrolled/accepted to an accredited college or university
- ✓ Applications are generally available in March each year. Further details will be available at that time.

BOOSTER CLUB

The Taylor Choir Booster Club is an organization of parent volunteers. Its purpose is to encourage students by assisting in the payment of various student and accompanist fees throughout the year, planning social activities, organizing chaperones, providing publicity, helping with costuming and various other activities.

In order to provide support in all of these areas, the booster club holds two major fundraisers during the year. **Madrigal Dinner**, which involves every choir student, is our major fall fundraiser and includes a silent auction. There are volunteer opportunities large and small, and it is a fantastic way to help out, have fun and get to know the students. Plan now to get involved in this celebrated tradition. Proceeds from this event cover spring trip fee subsidy, accompanists, social activities, major purchases and other choir needs as they arise. There are numerous other ways to get involved as well.

We also seek support through **private sponsorships and corporate matching funds**. Many businesses have grants or matching funds available to support organizations like ours. We are designated as a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization, so **donations are tax deductible**. Please consider asking your employer about this or becoming a sponsor yourself!

The THS Choir Booster Club meets regularly during the school year. Dates are posted on the choir calendar. Please join the THS Choir Boosters and become an active participant in the THS Choir. (No singing required.) Fill out the membership form and return it today.

BOOSTER CLUB OFFICERS

Contact information is available online at www.taylorchoir.org.

President:	Anita Boase	Publicity:	Jane Hargis
VP, Fundraising:	Mary Beth Walt	Spring Trip Chair:	Lisa Clements
VP, Special Events:	Jane Hargis	Madrigal Dinner:	Sherry Piche
Secretary:	Betsey Walker	Webmaster:	Jeanne Budke
Treasurer:	Mary Gilbert	Uniform Chairman:	Trudy Sarlls

TAYLOR CHOIR BOOSTER CLUB

James E. Taylor High School
Katy Independent School District
20700 Kingsland Boulevard
Katy, Texas 77450
(281) 237-9264

August 30, 2011

Dear Parents and Supporters;

How many times have you hummed along with the radio in your car? Maybe even sang out loud with your favorite song? Music makes us happy, can even give us goosebumps and touches all our lives.

The Taylor Choir Booster Club is asking your help in bringing music to life for the Taylor High School Choir and Handbell program. We currently have over 200 students, two fantastic directors and a passion for making this an outstanding music venture.

Each year, the Booster Club provides support by using funds raised to cover the additional costs of a truly successful program. Travel to competitions, uniforms, awards, scholarships, accompanists, clinicians, bell repair and piano tuning are just some of our annual expenditures.

Whether your student is an accomplished vocalist or exploring choral performance for the first time, these important components not fully covered by the school district, will allow all participants to have the best possible experience.

There are so many ways for you to help. Of course your time in volunteer positions is invaluable and I encourage you to become involved with the Choir Boosters. Another way to help is to become a supporter with your tax-deductible cash donation. The following page gives the various supporter levels which range from \$25 to \$1000 or more.

If your business or employer would like to support the Taylor Choir and Handbell program, I'd enjoy speaking with you! Many of the sponsor levels offer great promotional benefits which will reach hundreds of families in the Katy/West Houston area. Please contact me at mbwalt@sbcglobal.net with prospective supporters and I'll make sure they get the information.

Thank you in advance for your generous donation.

Mary Beth Walt
VP Fund Raising
mbwalt@sbcglobal.net

SPONSOR INFORMATION

TAYLOR CHOIR BOOSTER CLUB

Yes! I'll sing along with Taylor Choir!

Name _____

Company Name (if applicable) _____

Mailing Address _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

E-mail _____

Friend \$25

- Recognition at all concerts and performances *

Patron \$50

- Recognition at all concerts and performances *

Bronze \$100

- Recognition at all concerts and performances *

Silver \$250

- Recognition at all concerts and performances *
- 2 free tickets to one performance of the Madrigal Dinner
- ¼ page ad in the Expressions Revue playbill
- Commemorative plaque for your business

Gold \$500

- Recognition at all concerts and performances *
- 4 free tickets to one performance of the Madrigal Dinner
- ½ page ad in the Expressions Revue playbill
- Commemorative plaque for your business

Platinum \$1000 +

- Recognition at all concerts and performances*
- A table for 8 with special signage at the Friday evening performance of the Madrigal Dinner
- Full page ad in the Expressions Revue playbill
- 15 minute private Expressions performance at your venue
- Commemorative plaque for your business

Please send this form along with your fully tax-deductible donation to:

TAYLOR CHOIR BOOSTER CLUB
20700 Kingsland Boulevard
Katy, Texas 77450
(281) 237-9264

* Should you wish to have your donation be anonymous, please check here

CONTACT INFORMATION FORM

STUDENT INFORMATION

Student's Name _____
Mailing Address _____ City _____ Zip _____
Home Phone () _____ Cell Phone () _____
Student E-mail Address _____ @ _____
Date of Birth ____ - ____ Grade Level: 9 10 11 12
Choir (circle one): Men's Choir (1st) Camerata (5th) Concert Women (2nd) Concert Men (6th)
Cantilena (3rd) Chorale (4th) Hand Bells (5th)

PARENT INFORMATION

Please fill out any information that differs from your student's.

Mother's Name _____
Mailing Address _____ City _____ Zip _____
Home Phone () _____ Cell () _____ Work () _____
Home E-mail Address _____ @ _____
Work E-mail Address _____ @ _____

Father's Name _____
Mailing Address _____ City _____ Zip _____
Home Phone () _____ Cell () _____ Work () _____
Home E-mail Address _____ @ _____
Work E-mail Address _____ @ _____

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Please the areas that you will be volunteering for this year. Every parent is expected to volunteer in some capacity.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Whatever you need! | <input type="checkbox"/> Ticket Sales |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scholarship Committee | <input type="checkbox"/> Publicity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Event Chaperone | <input type="checkbox"/> Uniform Repair |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Building Sets/scenery | <input type="checkbox"/> UIL S&E Competition Chaperone |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scrip Cards | <input type="checkbox"/> Spring Trip Chaperone |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Silent Auction (Madrigal Dinner) | <input type="checkbox"/> Costume Party |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Choir Room assistant | <input type="checkbox"/> Madrigal Costumes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Madrigal Dinner | <input type="checkbox"/> District, Region, Pre-Area, and/or Area Chaperone |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spring Banquet | <input type="checkbox"/> Junior High Picnic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Phone committee | |

Yard Signs/Spirit Wear

SIGNATURE PAGE

Sign each portion of this page and return with payment of the \$60 Program Fee.

STUDENT NAME: _____

PUBLICITY RELEASE

Check the desired response:

___ I grant permission for THS Choir to use the name and photograph of my child in publicity releases related to THS Choir performances as well as any individual or group awards that may be received while my child is a part of the Taylor program.

___ I do not grant permission for THS Choir to use the name and photograph of my child in publicity releases related to THS Choir performances as well as any individual or group awards that may be received while my child is a part of the Taylor program.

CHOIR HANDBOOK

I have read and understand the policies of the Taylor High School Choral Department. I agree to abide by the rules and policies as they are stated in this handbook.

Student Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

CHECKLIST

I have completed and included the following items:

- ✓ Parent/Guardian Authorization for Regular Extracurricular Travel
- ✓ Parent Authorization to Consent to Treatment of Student
- ✓ Contact Information Form
- ✓ Signature Page
- ✓ Student Program Fee (\$60)

The Student Program Fee includes the following services:

- Family Booster Club Membership Fee
- End-of-the-year cleaning of all uniform pieces
- Uniform repairs caused by normal wear and tear
- Student choir t-shirt
- Composite picture sitting fee
- Program supplies and music
- Other miscellaneous operating costs
- Check Number _____ *Checks payable to Taylor Choir Booster Club.*
- Cash *(If paying with cash, please put in an envelope, seal, and write student's name on outside.)*

Director Use Only:

Full Payment Received Date: _____