








# WHEAT MIDDLE SCHOOL CHOIR HANDBOOK

## 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> GRADE CHOIRS-2024-2025

### *Classroom Re-CHOIR-ments*

-  1. Be on time for class. When you come into the room, leave all your personal items on the side of the room or on the back shelf. Get your choir binder and pencil and bring those items and your water bottle to your spot on the risers (students are allowed to bring a bottle of water into the rehearsal).
2. Leave the risers only with permission.
3. Do not have anything in your mouth during rehearsal. If you have something in your mouth when you enter the room, throw it away in the trash can by the door on your way into class. Also, no food or drink is allowed in the Choir room at any time (except bottled water).
4. Keep hands, feet, and all other objects to yourself.
5. Do not tease, curse, or fight. Do not make disrespectful remarks. Encouragement and positive remarks are always welcome at appropriate times. 
6. Respect the school, adults, classmates, and the property of others.
7. Never prevent classmates from learning or the teacher from teaching.

### *SUPPLIES NEEDED:*

-  1. **Pencil.**
2. **Binder.** Mrs. Ray will provide you with a binder. You will need to leave your binder on the shelf at the back of the classroom every day. If you choose to take the binder home to practice music, you are responsible for making sure you have it with you during class times. 
3. **Music.** You will be given copies of music to work with in class. Your binder must contain a copy of every piece of music the class is currently working on. 

## **UNIFORMS**

The WMS choir formal uniform will be a long black dress for the girls and black pants, a white tuxedo shirt, a black vest, and a bowtie for the guys. We are happy to announce that the school district will provide all of these pieces for our students, beginning this year! YOU will only be responsible for getting shoes and socks. Girls must have a pair of black flat dress shoes and sheer black socks (knee-hi's or trouser socks). Guys must have a pair of black dress shoes and a pair of black socks. There will be a "fitting day" in September to make sure that your size is correct when we order the uniforms; a representative from the uniform company will be here to measure you. This choir uniform must be worn for all our formal performances (including the Christmas Concert, UIL, the Spring Concert, and any other performance Mrs. Ray indicates). When wearing your choir uniform, you must have your hair combed back and/or pulled back so it is out of your face. Both of your eyes must be visible. Wear small, tasteful jewelry. The director may require a student to remove a piece of jewelry before entering the stage if they expect it to be too bright under the stage lights.

In a few weeks, we will be purchasing of choir t-shirts, which will be worn as a casual uniform with jeans or other dress-code-appropriate pants/shorts.

## **GRADING POLICY**

### **Rehearsal Etiquette**

**Daily grades** for choir are based on your rehearsal etiquette in class as we prepare for performances. Rehearsal etiquette includes:

1. Having all needed music *and a pencil* on the risers when rehearsal begins.
2. Following all instructions from your director the *first* time they are given.
3. Talking only with permission. When we are rehearsing, we will be stopping and starting the music. We should be able to hear a pin drop in the room when the director stops.
4. Giving your best effort on a daily basis to ensure that your contribution builds up and adds to the sound of the whole group.

**Written work** will be a part of students' grades for choir class, also. Classes will be given written tests (major exam grade) regarding music-reading skills that have been covered in class.



## Required Performances

Choir is a performance class. Choir performances often take place outside the hours of a normal school day. **Major exam grades** are based upon your attendance, participation, and behavior during performances. Attendance at concerts is mandatory. Students will **not** be excused from a concert except in case of major illness of the student or immediate family member or a major emergency of another kind. Students earn four major test grades for each performance event. The grades assigned will be pass-fail (either a 50 or a 100). The grades and their criteria are:



1. Attendance, punctuality (being on time), participation, behavior and being fully in uniform at the warm-up
2. Concert etiquette (the students' behavior while their choir is on stage).
3. Audience etiquette (the students' behavior while other choirs are performing).
4. In class the day following a concert, students will view or hear a recording of the previous night's concert and complete a written concert critique, answering short essay questions. Students who did not attend the performance will answer the same questions regarding the concert they view or hear.

## CALENDAR

***Parents are responsible for bringing students to evening concerts! Transportation will be provided for all events that take place during school hours.***

## MANDATORY EVENTS

1. **Pep Rally National Anthem performances**-We will be learning the National Anthem and singing regularly with ALL choir students to open the pep rallies at WMS. If ALL choir members are not singing, there will be a soloist from one of the choirs. Pep rallies are scheduled for: September 6 & 20, October 4 & 18, November 15, December 13, January 17 & 31, February 21, April 11 & 25, and May 9. There will probably be one or two additional dates that are not yet announced.
2. **Christmas Concert**, Thursday, December 5, 6:30 p.m., Don Smith Performing Arts Center at CHS
3. **Christmas caroling at WMS**, Tuesday, December 17<sup>th</sup>, during class time
4. **UIL Concert and Sight-reading contest**, March 4<sup>th</sup> OR 5<sup>th</sup>, during school hours, Aledo High School. Mrs. Ray will make the decision as to whether a choir participates in the UIL contest. She will make the decision based on behavioral, musical, and academic criteria.
5. **Spring Concert**, Thursday, May 1st, 6:30 p.m., Don Smith Performing Arts Center at CHS

## **OPTIONAL EVENTS**

1. **All Region Honor Choir Auditions**, Saturday, October 5, Timber Creek High School, Keller ISD, all day
2. For those who make All Region Choir, the **All-Region choir clinic** is Saturday, November 2, Weatherford High School
3. **All-Region Choir Concert**, Saturday, November 2, in the evening (it's usually 4:00 or 5:00 p.m.), Weatherford High School. Students who are not singing in the All-Region Choir are welcome to attend as members of the audience. The concert is free and open to the public.
4. **Solo and Small Ensemble Contest**, WMS Choir Room, during your Choir class time, Thursday, April 17<sup>th</sup>

## **ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

Choir students have to meet specific grade requirements in order to participate in the All-Region choir and Solo and Ensemble Contest. A student who receives a report card grade below 70 in any class may not participate in extracurricular activities for three school weeks.



If a student does not demonstrate consistently good behavior in class, the director may decide this student is behaviorally ineligible to participate in an activity. This decision is entirely up to the director and applies to all choir activities.

## **FEES & ENTRY INFORMATION**

There is a \$10 fee per student for the purchase of a Choir shirt for each student who needs one. If you have a shirt from last year that is in good condition, you will not need to purchase a new one. If you need a shirt, the \$10 will be due on Friday, September 13<sup>th</sup>, by 4:00 p.m. Please let Mrs. Ray know if there are any problems or questions.

Entry fee for All-Region auditions will be paid by the school district. The school district will also purchase your music for All-Region. The deadline for letting Mrs. Ray know that you want to audition for the All-Region Choir is Friday, August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2024. Students who do not officially sign up by 4:00 p.m. on August 23<sup>rd</sup> will not be entered in the competition.

There is no entry fee for Solo and Ensemble competition. In the months leading up to the All-Region and Solo and Ensemble competitions, directors will be available during class, before school, and after school. Students who participate in these events are **REQUIRED** to meet with a director at least once a week.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attached to this choir handbook, you will find a handbook agreement form. This form **MUST** be signed and returned by 4:00 p.m. on Friday, August 30 in order for the student to be allowed to participate in choir activities. Ask your parent or guardian to review the information on the handbook agreement form and sign. Add your signature and return the page to the director.



## **YOUR DIRECTOR**

**Mrs. Ray** has a Bachelor of Music Education degree from Howard Payne University in Brownwood, Texas, and 24 years of experience teaching music in the Cleburne, Alvarado, Brownwood, Mansfield, and Ruidoso, N.M. school districts. She has also served in music ministry at various churches in Texas, New Mexico, and Oklahoma since 1986.

She has been happily married to her husband, Bob, for 39 years. She serves as the church pianist at First Baptist Church, Purves, Texas, where her husband is pastor. Her husband also works for CISD as a substitute teacher, working at Wheat MS and Cleburne HS. Mrs. Ray and her husband also work at the family goat business, helping the goats give birth, raising them, caring for them, and growing them hay. She has a home in the country on a piece of land that's attached to the family ranch. Mrs. Ray also has a cuddly old cat named Butch.

I plan to send you weekly reminders about upcoming events, and you can view our calendar at any time by scanning the QR code below. I would be happy to answer any questions and address any concerns raised by parents and guardians. If you need to contact me directly, you can do that by phone at the Middle School (817-202-1300), by mail at 1020 Woodard, Cleburne, 76033, or by email ([jray@c-isd.com](mailto:jray@c-isd.com)). I am ready to communicate with you in whatever fashion suits you best.



*Johanna Ray, Choral Director*

*Wheat Middle School*

**WHEAT MIDDLE SCHOOL**  
**CHOIR HANDBOOK**

Please read this form carefully, sign where indicated, and return the completed form to Mrs. Ray.

*My signature below indicates that I have received a copy of the WMS Choir Handbook and that I understand the guidelines as presented regarding classroom rules & procedures, supplies, uniforms, grading policies, the calendar of events, fees, and eligibility requirements.*

*My signature below also indicates that I understand that it will be necessary for me to:*

- Purchase pencils for use during class
- Turn in \$10 for a choir shirt (if I need one) by September 13th
- Purchase a pair of black shoes and black socks (or stockings) by Thursday, December 5th (the date of our first formal performance)
- Provide for transportation for my child to all evening and weekend events on the choir calendar in which my child participates

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Parent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date