**Taylor ISD**

**Choir Department**

**2015 – 2016**

**Handbook**

Kelly McAvoy

Choir Director

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| Taylor Middle School  304 Carlos G Parker Blvd NW  Taylor, TX 76574 | Taylor High School  355 FM 973  Taylor, TX 76574 |

**Hello and welcome to the 2015-2016 school year at Taylor ISD!**

About the Director

My name is Kelly McAvoy and I am the new choir director here at Taylor ISD. Many of you may already know me from working at Northside Elementary and Main Street Intermediate. However, many of you I will be meeting for the first time! I am a vocal musician originally from Elverson Pennsylvania. I moved to Princeton New Jersey to pursue my degree in music education from Westminster Choir College, the only choir college in the world.

At Westminster I studied with world renounced musicians and even got to preform Beethoven’s 5th Symphony as part of the Westminster Symphonic Choir at Carnegie Hall in 2008. While I was at Westminster I also began to study for my Masters in Teaching at Rider University and graduated with both degrees simultaneously. At Westminster I met my husband Russell. Before I knew it, he was trying to convince me to move to a little town called Taylor where his family lives. Shortly after I began teaching pre-k, kindergarten, 4th, and 5th grade music for Taylor ISD. In the last two years I’ve worked with many people to grow the elementary music department from part-time to full-time positions by creating a curriculum for music education, creating more involvement through campus wide events, and creating an after school choir for 4th and 5th grade students to get them ready for middle school choir.

I hope with my experience and dedication to Taylor ISD I can provide some stability to this wonderful program. We have the largest choirs Taylor has seen in a very long time - we’re recruiting and growing everyday! All I ask is for your support. This is not going to be easy. There’s going to be hours of practice, long nights at concerts, and many community events to sing at and attend. However, I can guarantee that it will be extremely rewarding and fun for everyone involved.

If you every have any questions, comments, or concern, please use this handbook as a first reference. If you are unable to find an answer to your question please email me at [kmcavoy@taylorisd.org](mailto:kmcavoy@taylorisd.org) This is the fastest way to reach me since I will be teaching at the middle and high schools this year. I may not get back to you immediately, since my schedule is full, however I promise to respond within 24 hours. Thank you so much for being a part of the Taylor ISD Choir family. I look forward to working with all of you this year!

* Kelly McAvoy

**Class Materials and Procedures**

Items Needed For Class

**You will need to buy the following materials for this class:**

* 1 Hard cover black 3 ring binder. (It must be black)
* 1 paper or soft cover plastic folder (any color) with brads/fasteners for hole punched papers.
  + Please do not buy a pocket folder without brads/fasteners. Your assignments will fall out and get lost!
* 1 Choir T-Shirt (Which will be purchased later and will be worn at community events and some concerts. You do not need to purchase a new one if you bought one last year.)
* Pencils (which you should already have from other classes)
* Highlighters (which you should already have from other classes)

We would appreciate donation (they are not required materials) of the following items for our class:

* Clorox Wipes
* Tissues
* Hand Sanitizer
* Extra required materials for students who cannot afford them.

Rehearsals

**Attend Class Daily**

* If you miss a class you will have to catch up on any markings/changes in the music either before school (7:45 – 8:15) with Ms. McAvoy or on your own time with a student in the same choir. If your markings are incomplete, you may lose points on your markings grade later.

**Be On Time**

* If you miss a portion of class for an unexcused reason you will lose points on your rehearsal grade for having an incomplete warm-up. If you have a pass you will be excused.

**Come Prepared:**

* Bring the Following
  + 2 Pencils (sharpen before class)
  + 1 Highlighter
  + Music/Practice Folder
  + Your Completed Practice Logs on Mondays
  + Theory Folder

**Be Ready to Learn**

* Come in with your materials ready. (Sharpen pencils before class!)
* Grab your newest sight reading / theory assignment.
* Check the board for instructions.
* Sit in your assigned seat on the risers.
* If you finish early, audiate your sight reading until attendance is finished

Classroom Rules and Expectations

**All school rules apply while in the Choir room plus the following additional rules:**

* Walk on and off of the risers. When standing on them, keep to yourself and stand still.
* Please be health conscious! Use tissues, hand sanitizer, drink lots of water, and get plenty of sleep. Your health impacts the entire choir! We need you happy, healthy, and ready to learn if we’re going to be successful!
* Do not apply perfume, lotions, or hair products before or during class. Many students have different allergies and repertory issues and scented/perfumed products can cause reactions.
* Please do not put anything on or play the piano.
* No chewing gum or eating in the choir room. Please dispose of gum appropriately and leave any food in the choir lobby.

**Grading**

Homework 15%

* **6 Parent Signed Practice Logs**
  + Students must practice for 15 minutes 4 times a week. This form must be signed weekly by a parent/guardian.
  + This is a pass/fail grade. It must be turned in Monday during the first 10 minutes of class. After that it will be considered late.
  + Late logs may be turned in up to 2 days later for a 50%
  + After that they will be counted as a 0.

Rehearsal and Classwork 55%

* **2 Melodic and/or Rhythmic Sight Readings**
  + Students will “sight read” a new piece of music alone and in groups. A grading rubric for sight reading can be viewed on the rubric page.
* **1 Music Markings Check**
  + The students choir music will be checked to see if they have made all the markings asked by Ms. McAvoy in class.
  + If a student misses a class it is their responsibility during tutorials to copy the markings from another student or come to Ms. McAvoy.
* **6 Theory Folder Checks**
  + The students music theory folder will be checked weekly to see if all activities were completed during the daily theory warm-up.
* **1 Rehearsal Techniques Grade**
  + During rehearsals students will begin with a 100% in this category.
  + They are being graded if they are identifying notes and rest in their music, standing or sitting in singing position on the risers, showing audience behavior, and singing with proper vocal technique.
  + If a student is intentionally not completing one of these actions, they will be reminded once. After the initial reminder they will be given a demerit of one point.

Test and Quizzes 30%

* **1 Written theory quiz**
* **1 Music memory test**
* **1 to 2 Concert/Small group performance test**

**Concerts**

**Choir concert attendance is mandatory and part of the students test grade.**

* If there is an excused reason for missing a concert (These will be decided on a case by case basis) the grade can be made up for full credit with an alternative assignment.
* If a student has an unexcused choir absence, the grade can be made up for partial credit (50%) with an alternative assignment.

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| Examples of Excused Concert Absences | Examples of Unexcused Concert Absences |
| * Medical emergencies * Death in the family * Major life events in immediate family | * Work * Oversleeping * Lack of transportation |

**Concert Attire**

* We will have formal and informal concerts this season. Please see the charts below:

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| --- | --- |
| Ladies Formal Attire | Ladies Informal Attire |
| * Black shirt/blouse/cardigan. * Black skirt/dress pants. * Black dress shoes.   + If you choose to wear heels, be aware you will be walking up risers! * Please keep all hair accessories black and keep hair either neatly up or down. * No excessive jewelry (decided on a case by case basis) | * Any choir t-shirt OR “Taylor Green” shirt * Jeans (Blue or black are fine.) * You may choose any type of shoe. * No excessive jewelry (decided on a case by case basis) * Please keep hair accessories “Taylor Green” and white. Hair may be worn up or down. |

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| Men’s Formal Attire | Mens Informal Attire |
| * Black button down shirt (black tie optional)   + NO T-SHIRTS * Black dress pants. * Black socks. * Black dress shoes. * No excessive jewelry. (decided on a case by case basis) | * Any choir t-shirt OR “Taylor Green” shirt * Jeans (Blue or black are fine.) * You may choose any type of shoe. * No excessive jewelry (decided on a case by case basis) |

**Choir Calendar**

We do not have a finalized calendar. We are still waiting to hear back from several people about different events. Mainly concert dates need to be confirmed by both the middle and high school before I can send out a calendar. The goal is to have a calendar for you by the beginning of next week.

**Student Academic Agreement:**

I, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (student name) have read the above syllabus and understand the rules and requirements for TMS Choir. I am aware of the required materials, grading policy, class rules, and concert policies. I understand that my choice to not follow the above mentioned policies and rules could affect my success in this class.

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Student signature Date Signed

**Parent/Guardian Acknowledgement of Student Obligations in Choir**

I, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (parent/guardian name) have read the above syllabus and understand the rules and requirements for TMS Choir. I am aware of the required materials, grading policy, class rules, and concert policies. I understand that my student’s choice to not follow the above mentioned policies and rules could affect their success in this class.

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Parent/Guardian Signature Date Signed

**Parent/Guardian Contact Information:**

(To be filled out by parent/guardian ONLY)

The best way to contact me is by (circle one): Phone Call Text Message E-mail

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Parent Volunteer Opportunities:**

Please contact me to when there are volunteer opportunities for the following:

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| Carpooling for concerts. | Helping with fundraising. | Chaperoning trips. |