



Saraland City Schools
Choral Department Handbook
2013-2014

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Mission Statement

The purpose of the Saraland City Schools Choral Department is to help students strengthen their musical skills, develop a love of choral music, and an enjoyment of singing by learning and performing a variety of choral literature. We embrace the mission of Saraland City Schools by helping each student realize his or her unique potential and exemplifying an uncompromising commitment to excellence.

Course Description

The Saraland City Schools choral curriculum is aligned with the Alabama Course of Study for Vocal Music. Students will learn proper vocal technique, elements of music theory, and music reading. All choirs are co-curricular classes. Students join with the understanding that after-school, evening, and weekend rehearsals and performances will be required and graded. Participation in choir also helps develop a positive self-image and a sense of accomplishment through meaningful responsibility and teamwork.

Performing Groups

6th Grade Choir (Middle School Beginning Choir)

This is a performing ensemble open to students in 6th grade. No audition is necessary. Students study correct vocal technique, music theory, sight-singing, ear training, music terminology, and the rehearsal and performance of a wide variety of musical styles and time periods. Students perform at school choral events, including but not limited to the Winter and Spring Choir Concerts. Individual students may also be invited to perform at district and state choral events.

7th and 8th Grade Choir (Middle School Advanced Choir)

This is a performing ensemble open to students in 7th and 8th grade *by audition and instructor approval only*. Students study correct vocal technique, music theory, sight-singing, ear training, music terminology, and the rehearsal and performance of a wide variety of musical styles and time periods. Students perform at school choral events, including but not limited to the Winter and Spring Choir Concerts as well as at district and state choral events.

High School Choir

This is a performing ensemble open to students in grades 9 – 12. No audition is necessary. Students study correct vocal technique, music theory, sight-singing, ear training, music terminology, and the rehearsal and performance of a wide variety of musical styles and time periods. Students perform at school choral events, including but not limited to the Winter and Spring Choir Concerts, as well as at district and state choral events.

Saraland Singers (High School Advanced Choir)

This is a performing ensemble open to students in grades 9 – 12 *by audition and instructor approval only*. Students study correct vocal technique, music theory, sight-singing, ear training, music terminology, and the rehearsal and performance of a wide variety of musical styles and time periods. Students perform at school choral events, including but not limited to the Winter and Spring Choir Concerts as well as at district, state, and national choral events.

Student Expectations and Rules

The key to understanding the expectations for choir students is to understand our purpose. We do not rehearse simply for the sake of rehearsing, but to make strides each day towards individual and group improvement. Our goal is excellence! Just like team sports, having a successful choir takes every individual's 100% effort. Each choir student is expected to participate with a positive attitude and a sincere commitment, maintaining high personal standards, musically and academically. It is each student's responsibility to follow the following guidelines to ensure your success as an individual and as part of the group.

- Always be prepared! Students must have ALL materials (music, folders, pencils, etc.) every day. Students who are not prepared for class will be subject to classroom consequences. Choir folders should be left in the choir room each day unless students are instructed to take them home for individual practice.
- In order to begin class on time, every student must be in their seat with all materials when the tardy bell rings. Please socialize, use the restroom, or go to your locker during break time. Tardies will not be tolerated and will be subject to school disciplinary action.
- Be courteous to those around you. Talking or getting out of your seat during rehearsal not only distracts your neighbors, but prevents you from learning and keeps the group from achieving its best. Every moment in rehearsal is important. Exercise self-control and refrain from talking with others in your section while another section is rehearsing. Excessive talking or distractions will be subject to classroom consequences and/or school disciplinary action.
- Come to class with a positive attitude and always try your best.
- Be patient, attentive, and cooperative at all times.
- Encourage one another in positive ways.
- Be open to all styles of music. No complaining!
- Exhibit professional behavior at all times, especially when we are off campus. No disruptive behavior will be permitted at any time. You represent the choral program and Saraland City Schools! Remember that your actions and attitudes reflect on you, your choir, your school, and your family.
- Treat yourself, your peers, your director, all school staff, and other adults with respect at all times.
- Do not interrupt class for any reason other than a true emergency. Use the restroom and visit your locker at break time.
- **NO GUM, FOOD, CANDY, OR DRINKS ARE ALLOWED IN THE CHOIR ROOM!** Only clear water in a closed bottle is allowed. Empty bottles can be filled at the water fountain outside the choir room. Please fill your bottles with water before class begins. **Students will not be excused from class to get a drink from the water fountain.**
- Please refrain from personal grooming in class. (Brushing hair, applying make-up, etc.)
- Homework from another class may NOT be completed during choir class.
- THE PIANO IS OFF LIMITS TO STUDENTS WITHOUT PERMISSION. We want to be good stewards of our limited choir funds and reserving the piano for rehearsals will keep tuning costs down.
- All Saraland City Schools rules and policies will be enforced at all times. This includes uniforms, cell phones or other electronic devices, attendance/tardies, code of conduct, etc.

FAILURE TO FOLLOW ALL POLICIES AND RULES WILL RESULT IN DISCIPLINARY ACTION.

Materials Needed

All students must have a **BLACK plastic** pocket folder and pencils. **NO PENS ARE ALLOWED IN CHOIR AT ANY TIME.** You must have supplies in class or you will lose points. Please do not ask to borrow from me; I do not have extra supplies.

Vocal music, sight-singing books, and theory books are provided at school and are to be kept in your folder and left in the choir room. It is the responsibility of each student to take care of the music and books. You are expected to pay for the replacement of any music that you damage or lose. This includes markings made in your music with pen.

Rehearsals and Performances

Choir is a co-curricular, performance based class. Therefore, **CONCERTS AND AFTER-SCHOOL REHEARSALS ARE REQUIRED.** Every effort is made to schedule concerts and rehearsals around other school-related activities. However, this is not always possible. Unfortunately, it is impossible to schedule around community or church activities, private lessons, appointments, work, etc. Concert and rehearsals dates are provided in advance so that conflicts can be avoided. **IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO WORK OUT CONFLICTS WITH THE CHOIR CALENDAR. PLAN AHEAD!** Please remember that concerts and after-school rehearsals are graded events. Concerts are worth two test grades and/or an exam grade.

Absences are excused in cases of extreme illness (flu, etc.), hospitalization, death in the immediate family, or other emergency situations as designated by Saraland City Schools. **EXCUSED ABSENCES WILL BE DETERMINED AT THE DISCRETION OF THE DIRECTOR AND PRINCIPAL.** Please notify me as soon as possible in such situations (via email or phone). You must bring a doctor's note or a note signed by your parent or guardian PRIOR TO or within 24 HOURS of your return to class. To make up concert or rehearsal points, you will be assigned a make-up assignment, usually a research paper or project. The make-up assignment will be graded based on the quality of the work. Please remember that the assignment and signed excuse note must be received **on time** in order for any points to be awarded.

Unexcused absences will result in a grade of ZERO for a missed rehearsal or performance. No make-up work will be permitted for an unexcused absence.

Choir Opportunities for Students

- Performances at school and in the community
- District and State Performance Assessments
- All-State and Honor Choir
- Choir Awards in the Spring
- Tri-M Music Honor Society

SHS/SMS Website

I do my best to keep the web pages updated with important information. You can view the Choir link on the Saraland High School website (www.shspartans.com) or my teacher page on either the Saraland High School website or the Saraland Middle School website (www.smspartans.com).

Field Trips

Field trips are one of the most exciting parts of being in choir! **They are a privilege.** You must meet the following criteria in order to participate in a field trip. Additional criteria may be added as need arises.

- You must be passing all classes and exhibit good behavior in every class.
- You must promptly make up all work missed because of a field trip. If you fail to make up missed work, you will not be permitted to attend the next field trip.
- You must follow all choir and school rules while representing your choir and school in the community.

Fees

***All choir students must supply BLACK dress shoes. Ladies' shoes must be CLOSED-TOE FLATS. No athletic shoes, sneakers, Toms, slippers, dance or jazz shoes, sandals, peep-toe shoes, sling-backs, or heels of any kind are permitted.**

6th Grade Choir Fees

Choir Elective fee: \$30.00 (this fee helps cover the cost of state festival fees, music etc.)

Uniform fee: \$30.00 (covers the cost of dry cleaning after winter and spring concerts)

7th & 8th Grade Choir Fees*

Choir Elective fee: \$30.00 (this fee helps cover the cost of state festival fees, music etc.)

Uniform fee: \$30.00 (covers the cost of dry cleaning after winter and spring concerts)

High School Choir Fees*

Choir Elective fee: \$50.00 (this fee helps cover the cost of state festival fees, music etc.)

Uniform fee: \$30.00 (covers the cost of dry cleaning after winter and spring concerts)

Spring Trip: \$1500.00 (optional and subject to change)

Saraland Singers Fees*

Choir Elective fee: \$50.00 (this fee covers the cost of state festival fees, music etc.)

Uniform fee: \$30.00 (covers the cost of dry cleaning after winter and spring concerts)

Girls' Earrings: \$15.00 (includes clip-on converters)

Girls' Necklace: \$20.00

Spring Trip: \$1500.00 (subject to change)

*Saraland Singers will have the following additional costs due at a later time. All prices are subject to change.

Girls' Dance Briefs: \$10.00

Girls' Character Shoes: \$25.00

Contemporary Choir/Show Choir Uniforms: \$85.00

*Additional fees will apply for students auditioning for and/or participating in All-State, Honor Choir, and/or Solo & Ensemble Festivals.

Fundraising

The student choir fee determined by the Saraland School Board does not begin to cover the cost of music, registration fees, piano tuning, transportation, etc. We must raise additional funds throughout the year to help cover these costs. There are several fundraisers that occur during the school year at each school, as well as fundraising outside of the school year that is organized by our choir parents. The following fundraisers are currently scheduled, and more will be added as the year progresses. Several fundraiser requests are still pending approval as well.

- Late November/Early December – Silent Auction at Winter Concert
- Early December—Madrigal Dinner (tentative)
- February – Valentine’s Day Candy-Grams
- April – Talent Show (Saraland High School only)

We need choir parents to help with fundraising! The money we raise directly benefits your students. Please contact our fundraising chairperson, Melissa Bailey if you are willing to help in any way: mbailey4csi@aol.com

Choral Event Descriptions

Solo & Ensemble Festival

Solo & Ensemble is held locally in the fall and spring semesters during the school day. The event is open to soloists and ensembles (groups of 16 or fewer students). Students receiving superior ratings earn medals.

These events are required for Saraland Singers.

State Performance Assessment

State Performance Assessment is held locally in the spring during the school day and is open to the public. Choirs are required to perform and sight-read. **This event is required for all choir students.**

All-State Show Choir

This group is for students in grades 10-12. Students are auditioned in music and dance. Those chosen to participate will perform at the AMEA Conference in January as well as All-State Festival in March.

All-State Choir Festival

These concert choirs are for students in grades 7-12 and are auditioned locally in November. Students chosen to participate spend a weekend at Samford University rehearsing with a renowned clinician and perform in a mass concert setting.

Honor Choir – Honor Choir is held at the AMEA Conference during even-numbered years. Choral directors choose one or two quartets (soprano, alto, tenor, bass) from their best students in grades 10-12. Candidates are screened in each district on the Honor Choir music and, if selected for Honor Choir, rehearse and perform during the AMEA Conference.

Remind101

To receive email and/or text message reminders for your student’s assignments please sign up for Remind101. For more information on Remind101, please visit their website: www.remind101.com

Saraland City Schools
Choir Calendar
Performances and Events
2013-2014
(all dates subject to modification)

October 4 – High School Choirs at **homecoming** football game

October 10-12—All-State Show Choir Auditions, UAB Birmingham (select HS students only)

October 19 – Saraland Arts Council Jazz Festival (fundraiser, all choirs)

November 8 –All-State Auditions, Springhill Baptist (select 7th – 12th grade students only)

November 14 –Fall Solo & Ensemble, Springhill Baptist Church (Saraland Singers only)

November 21 – Honor Choir Screening, St. Paul's (select high school students only)

November/December – Madrigal Dinner (tentative--Saraland Singers only)

December TBA –Winter Concert and Silent Auction (**REQUIRED FOR ALL CHOIRS**)

January 23-26—All-State Show Choir/Honor Choir Festivals, Montgomery (only for students in 10th – 12th grade who have won a place in All-State Show Choir or Honor Choir)

February 14 –Valentine’s Day Candy-Grams Fundraiser

February 20 –State Performance Assessment, Springhill Baptist (**REQUIRED FOR ALL CHOIRS**)

April 2-5 –All-State Choir Festival, Samford University (only for 7th – 12th grade students who have won a place in an All-State Choir)

April 22-27 – High School trip to Carnegie Hall, New York City (tentative)

May 2013—Spring Concert, Saraland High School, Date & Time TBD (**REQUIRED FOR ALL CHOIRS**)

***Additional events will be added. Check the choir calendar on the school website for dates and details.**

Please return the form (completely filled out) with all fees that apply by Friday, August 30, 2013.

Please contact me if you have any questions: cbreland@saralandboe.org

STUDENT: I have read all of the requirements for participating in the Saraland City Schools choirs and fully understand what is expected of me as a student in choir. I agree to follow all the rules and expectations.

Student Signature

Grade

Date

Period

PARENT: I have read the requirements for participating in the Saraland City Schools choirs and fully understand the policies of the class. I agree to abide by all policies and requirements set forth. I understand that choir fees are required of every choir student.

Pictures of students are taken during class and performances for use in the school yearbook, school website, and/or local newspaper(s).

_____ I give permission for my child to be photographed for publication.

_____ I do not give permission for my child to be photographed for publication.

I may be contacted at the following email address: _____

I may also be reached by phone at the following numbers: _____

Parent Signature

Date