

MANSFIELD HIGH SCHOOL

Choral Department Handbook

Mrs. Josi Alexander- Head Director

Ms. Tracy Carroll-Assistant Director



“We are only as strong as our weakest person.”

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Choir Website: mansfieldchoir.com

Dear Students and Parents,

I am looking forward to the upcoming school year. This will be a year of tremendous growth both in numbers and in musicality. I anticipate this year will be one of positive change and I am so excited to become a Mansfield Tiger.

This year, I would like to not only continue in the pathway of excellence, but raise the standards for both group and individual performances, incorporate more technology within the classroom, and allow every opportunity to allow students to be a part of not only the school community, but the Mansfield community as well. I would like to continue choir traditions, increase community outreach, and have fun in the process.

This handbook outlines all of the choir policies that you will need to be aware of. Please familiarize yourself with them. The handbook will also be posted on the choir website.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Josi Alexander, Masters in Music
Head Choral Director
Mansfield High School

Class Schedule 2025-2026

1st/5th 7:25-8:55

NV Tenor Bass/Varsity Tenor Bass

2nd/6th 9:00-10:55

Chamber Choir/Varsity Treble

3rd/7th 11:00-1:20

Concert Choir/Bella Voce

Lunch 12:50-1:20

4th Block 1:25-2:55

Conference

OVERVIEW OF ENSEMBLES

Concert Treble Choir

Consists of Freshmen treble singers (sopranos and altos) and any other treble singer new to the MHS Choir Department. This choir works on vocal pedagogy, quality choral literature, sight reading and music reading skills, choral etiquette, theory and music appreciation. Concert Treble Choir will perform at UIL Concert & Sight Reading Contest and is required to attend all Choir Concerts throughout the year.

Bella Voce Choir

Intermediate to advanced level choir for treble singers (sopranos and altos) who have demonstrated an understanding and mastery of basic to intermediate choral music skills. All-region choir auditions and/or participation in the UIL Solo & Ensemble Contest is recommended.

Varsity Treble Choir

This **auditioned** choir is made up of sophomore, junior, & senior treble singers (sopranos and altos) who have previous choral experience, a good grade history, and the ability to sight-read and move quickly through quick, advanced, and fast-paced rehearsals. Members are strongly encouraged to participate in the auditions for the TMEA All State Choir, UIL Solo & Ensemble and are strongly encouraged to take voice lessons.

JV Men's Choir

Consists of freshman tenor/bass singers and any others with little or no previous choir experience. This choir works on vocal pedagogy, quality choral literature, sight reading and music reading skills, choral etiquette, theory and music appreciation. JV Men will perform at UIL Concert & Sight Reading Contest and are required to attend all Choir Concerts throughout the year.

Varsity Men's Choir

This **auditioned** choir is made up of sophomore, junior, & senior tenors & basses who have previous choral experience, a good grade history, and the ability to sight-read and move quickly through quick, advanced, and fast-paced rehearsals. Members are encouraged to participate in the auditions for the TMEA All State Choir, UIL Solo & Ensemble and are strongly encouraged to take voice lessons.

A Cappella Choir

The A Cappella Choir is a mixed choir combined from Varsity Men's and Varsity Treble Choir. This choir will join together in evening rehearsals to combine into the A Cappella Choir. **The members of the A Cappella Choir are required to attend scheduled evening rehearsals, when planned.**

Chamber Choir

An **auditioned** ensemble made of 40 students from the Varsity Men's and Varsity Treble Choir. This ensemble will focus primarily on upper level, collegiate, and professional level choral music from all genres. This group will be highly active within the community and students must be available anytime for possible engagements. It is **essential** that students be able to maintain good grades to be a part of this ensemble. Students in Chamber Choir must be double-blocked Chamber and an additional choir (typically Varsity Mens/Varsity Treble Choir).

Choir is a performance activity. There may be an audition prior to each performance for students to demonstrate proficiency and readiness to perform the music selections for that concert.

SUPPLIES

Students will need the following for choir class:

- 5 Tab Dividers
- 2 pencils
- Pencil Bag
- Highlighters (yellow, orange, blue, green, pink)

Choir supplies that are included:

- Black Binder

It is your child's responsibility to keep the binders. Binders are for choir use only. The student will be responsible for replacing his/her lost binder at an additional cost. Folder checks will be conducted throughout the year and points will be deducted for failure to have/maintain a choir binder and supplies.

GRADING PROCEDURES AND POLICIES

Mansfield ISD is on a six (6) week grading schedule. There will be at least eight (8) grades taken in the six (6) weeks period, with a minimum of two (2) test grades.

Grades will be given according to the following scale

- | | | |
|-----|---------------------------------------|-----|
| I. | Daily Grades | 40% |
| | 1. Class Rehearsal | |
| | 2. Singing | |
| | 3. Written assignments | |
| | 4. Classroom activities/participation | |
| | 5. After-School Rehearsals | |
| II. | Major Grades/Performances | 60% |
| | 1. Concerts/Performances | |
| | 2. Sight-Reading | |
| | 3. Singing Tests | |
| | 4. Written Assessments | |

CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS

Choir is exciting and different from any other class. In order to be successful, we must work as a team. **WE ARE ONLY AS STRONG AS OUR WEAKEST PERSON.** The following rules are for your benefit and the success of our choir. Your enjoyment of choir depends on following these rules.

- Follow directions the first time.
- Keep hands, feet, and all objects to yourself at all times. This includes the passing period before the tardy bell.
- Food, drinks, and gum are not allowed unless permission is granted from directors.
- You need permission to use the office phone, touch the piano, sound equipment, or computer, enter the choir office, leave the room, or speak during class.
- Students are expected to be in assigned places with choir folder, music, and pencil when the bell begins ringing.
- No bathroom passes will be given due to the shorter length of the class, with the exception of a nurse's pass in extreme emergency situations.
- Class begins when the tardy bell rings. Students should have their folder, pencil, and any other supplies needed for class by the beginning of class. Students who are not in their seat with their materials *one minute* after the tardy bell will be counted as tardy.
- No Cell phones at all. This is a state policy that will be strictly enforced.
- The same rules and procedures apply when a substitute is present.
- All MISD and MHS rules and policies are in effect when we go on trips. Students who consistently follow the rules and procedures in the choir room will be invited to go on field trips. Students who do not consistently follow the rules and procedures in choir, or fail to meet performance and grade requirements will not be invited to go on field trips.

Every day that a student attends class, he/she has the capability to receive 100 total points. The points will be calculated to receive a weekly participation grade. Points are given based upon their participation and effort given in the activities listed under daily grades, being on time, and having their supplies. Points will be deducted as follows:

No participation or insufficient participation	At the discretion of the director not to exceed 50 points
No putting away music binder	-50 points
Gum/drinks/food in class	-10 points
No binder/music by tardy bell	-20 points
Tardy to class	-10 points
No pencil	-10 points
Poor rehearsal techniques	-10 points per infraction

*All choir students will be given a semester exam which consists of 20% of the total semester grade. Students must receive a final grade of at least a 70 in order to receive credit.

Test grades are earned in several ways. Singing and sight reading tests are given throughout the year to monitor the progress of each student. Written tests are also given. Each of the required concerts (see calendar) count as two test grades. Rehearsal grades will at times be counted as daily grades. Concert test grades are determined in the following manner:

1. Arriving on time in your assigned seat.
2. Dressing in the correct uniform, making sure that all parts of the uniform are present and extra parts are not!
3. Listening quietly to the other choirs and following concert etiquette behavior expectations.
4. Walking on and off stage correctly.
5. Performing on stage in the manner that has been instructed

LETTERMAN JACKETS

A total of 25 points are required to receive a letterman jacket. The list of points that can be received is available at the beginning of the year for all students. Every student must individually be responsible for keeping up with their points throughout the year. Each sheet will be turned in at the end of the year and be handed out each subsequent year. The letterman points will be added towards a student's audition points for advanced choirs.

ELIGIBILITY

In order for choir students to fully participate in UIL sponsored choral contests and festivals, each choir member must pass ALL classes with at least a 70 average. Failure to do so will result in academic probation beginning the second week after the end of the six weeks grading period in which they failed. By the end of the third week, students who failed must be passing ALL subjects in order to become eligible. During a students' time of academic probation, all choir members are still obligated to attend all rehearsals. Ineligible students will be able to perform in curricular activities in which a grade is given for participation.

Events Subject to **eligibility requirements**:

1. TMEA Region/All-State Auditions
2. Trips or Concerts that are off campus and/or within the school day
3. Any concert in which admission is charged

Required events not subject to any eligibility rules

1. Extra rehearsals and sectionals after school hours
2. In class rehearsals and performances
3. All concerts in which admission is not charged
4. UIL Concert & Sightreading (but will need director approval)

ATTENDANCE POLICIES

Rehearsals and concerts are very important to the choral program. The choir program is a performance-based class and grades are given based upon students' attendance and participation in both rehearsals and choir concerts. Failure to attend concerts will result in TWO test grades of a zero. Conflicts with other THS events will be worked out by the other club/athletic sponsors and myself; if there is proper PRIOR WRITTEN notification. It is your child's responsibility to notify the director as soon as notice of the conflict occurs. It is the students' responsibility to notify the choir director PRIOR to an absence, except in the case of an emergency. NOTIFICATION THE SAME DAY WILL BE CONSIDERED UNEXCUSED. Non-school related activities will not be excused. Other UNEXCUSED absences include, but are not limited to:

- Transportation issues
- Babysitting
- Doctor appointments
- Non-school related events
- Drive Time

Sometimes special circumstances do occur. In those cases, excused absences will only be excused and at the director's discretion. Whatever the circumstance, the director must be notified as soon as possible.

- Death in the family
- Critical family emergency
- Bed-ridden illness (accompanied by doctor's note and/or notification by parent that the child did not attend school due to sickness or notification if child is checked out of school due to illness)
- Once in a lifetime event (i.e, birth of a sibling, or grandparents' 50th wedding anniversary) In this case, the student must provide PRIOR approval from the director in writing that includes (1) the students' name, (2) the date/time of the conflict, and (3) the specific reason for the conflict.

Unless prior approval has been given, any reason for an absence must be given within TWO school days of the return of the student after the missed rehearsal or performance. **Any written correspondence after the two days will not be excused.**

Students will be given adequate notice of all outside rehearsals and activities. All choir members are required to be in attendance and take part. If there is an unexcused absence, the absence will be reflected in the student's grade for the six weeks. **All students absent from concerts, regardless of if it is excused or unexcused MUST makeup the grade either by examination or alternate assignment. You will need to see the director to make arrangements. Students with unexcused absences receive a grade of no higher than 70% of the assignments total worth.**

TARDY POLICY

Please refer to the Mansfield High School handbook regarding tardies. The same policies and consequences will be followed. In addition, students will be deducted daily points for each tardy. (See point scale above).

Students will need to take care of restroom breaks in between classes. Students will NOT be allowed to go the restroom in the first 20 minutes of class and the last 20 minutes of class, unless its an emergency situation

UNIFORM

All choir members must rent a uniform. Anyone who is unable to pay, or needs to make special arrangements must contact the director. Students must be in complete concert attire in order to perform. Failure to be in full compliance will result in the lowering of the test grade and/or failure to perform in the concert/performance. All students must wear the school issued uniform. All concert attire will need to be returned at the end of the year. Failure to do so AND within the allotted amount of time will result in a fine. The choir fee will NO LONGER cover the cost of dry cleaning. The uniform MUST be returned dry cleaned with the original plastic

and the receipt attached with the students name written on the receipt. Failure to have the receipt will still result in a dry cleaning fine.

Mens' uniform: Will consist of black tux pants, black vest, and black tux jacket. The cost of the rental of these items is included in the choir fee. This includes a t-shirt for informal concerts to be worn along with jeans or black pants. The boys will be responsible for their own tux shirt or white button down shirt (depending upon the choir), bow tie/black tie, black dress shoes and black dress socks

Women's uniform: Will consist of a school issued concert dress. The cost of the rental is included in the choir fee. This includes a choir t-shirt for informal concerts to be worn along with jeans. They may wear the t-shirts at any time. The girls will need to supply their own **solid** black closed toe dress shoes with black panty hose. No necklaces or bracelets should be worn with concert attire. They will be allowed to wear earrings that are studs or hoops no larger than a quarter.

Uniforms should be kept clean and neat at all times. All students will need to return their choir uniform at the end of the year. Failure to return the uniform either in total or in part will result in a fine that covers the cost of replacement (see Finance).

FUNDRAISING

We will be participating in various fundraisers throughout the year. It is important that we have as much participation as possible in order to meet the needs of the choir. Money earned will go either towards your trip account or into the choir fund. This will aid in allowing us to keep costs low for various activities that we would like to participate in throughout the year, AND help with providing scholarships for those students in need who wish to participate in private voice lessons that the district offers. Participation in fundraising is not mandatory, however, we REALLY need the help and participation will help the choir overall have options in doing what we need to do in order to have a more successful year.

ALL-STATE

All students are encouraged to participate in the All-State process. These solo auditions are highly competitive and require intense practice. All Chorale members are expected to audition at this high level competition. Private voice lessons are strongly recommended in order to be successful in this competition. Students must be eligible to participate and pay the initial \$15 fee. Please see calendar for date(s). Required for all students who wish to be in Varsity Choirs.

9TH-10TH GRADE REGION CHOIR

All 9th-10th students are eligible to audition for this All-region choir. Students selected for this choir will perform in the November region concert. This experience prepares them for the rigors of the all-state audition process in later grades. This competition will be held in October. Required for all students who wish to be in Varsity Choirs.

VOICE LESSONS

Through the Mansfield Music Enrichment Program (MMEP), we offer quality vocal instructors to teach private voice lessons on our campus both during class, and/or after school. The function of the private lessons is important to the developing singer and the overall choral program in ensuring success in both local performances and competitions. Lessons are \$100 a month, or \$25 per lesson per week. These lessons are **STRONGLY ENCOURAGED**. More information will be given at the beginning of the school year.

STUDENT TRAVEL

The choral department will be going on a choir trip. Although choir trips are optional, students are strongly encouraged to participate as we will be performing on all trips and need the entire group in order to be successful. Specific regulations concerning student travel will be discussed in detail preceding all trips. More specific guidelines will be given at the beginning of the school year and during subsequent trip meetings.

FINANCES

The following are anticipated expenditures that will occur throughout the year. They are listed in order to help you plan your budget. Ample fundraising opportunities can and will be provided to assist families in meeting these expenses. Please note that some of the fees are approximate. Required fees are indicated.

1. Choir Fee	\$55/\$70	Required
2. All-State/Region Choir	\$15	Optional
3. Camp Thurman	\$50-\$65	For Choir Officers ONLY
4. Choir Banquet	\$40-\$65	Optional
5. Spring Choir Trip	\$2000+	Optional
6. Voice Lessons	\$100/month	Optional/Chamber strongly encouraged
7. Replace Womens' Dress	\$90	If not returned
8. Tuxedo Shirts	\$20	Optional to buy through MHS but required to have
9. Replace Mens' Tux	\$190	If not returned
10. Tie Replacement	\$15	If not returned
11. Various Social Outings	Varies	Optional

Make checks payable to: Mansfield Choir Boosters

REFUNDS

Most fees are charged to the student prior to an event or service. The choral department has a deadline for receiving reimbursement from the supplier at times; however, deadlines must be strictly enforced. There will be no refunds due to a student becoming ineligible. In MOST cases, refunds will not be given; however, the director will consider refunds on a case-by-case basis.

PARENT PARTICIPATION/BOOSTER CLUB

It is important that we have parental involvement in the choir program. Parental involvement greatly adds to the success of the choral program, so please fill out the volunteer link if you wish to be contacted regarding volunteering to be a choir parent.

CURRICULUM

To find out what your child will be learning this year, please [click here](#)

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us. Thanks in advance.

Josi Alexander
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Tracy Carroll
Assistant Director
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