

HLMS Choir Handbook

2023-2024



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Welcome back to the 2023-2024 year! We hope that your summer was full of relaxing, spending time with family and friends, and much more. We are excited that you have chosen to be part of the choral program here at HLMS! We are greatly looking forward to a successful year of music making. Every year brings new voices and personalities to a choir and, we eagerly anticipate all that this year has in store!

Mrs. Gaines is coming to the Horn Lake Middle program from Horn Lake Intermediate School, where she taught for two years prior. She works with the non-profit choral organization, CoroRio where she conducts the children's choir alongside many talented colleagues. Mrs. Gaines graduated from Ole Miss in 2021 with her Choral Music Education Degree. (Hotty Toddy!) She is also a Horn Lake High school graduate, and is so thrilled to be returning "home" to teach! Mrs. Gaines lives in Olive Branch with her husband, Joseph Gaines who is the choir director at Lewisburg Middle School. They have two sweet kitties named O'Malley and Clyde and one dog named Bonnie! Mrs. Gaines will be teaching our 6th grade choir and our Advanced Treble Choir this year.

Ms. Beck is a native of Miami Florida, and has been the Horn Lake High School Choral Director since 2006, she also taught elementary music for four years prior to moving to HLHS. Ms. Beck graduated with her Bachelor of Music Education in 1996 from Lee University, and her Masters Degree in Choral Music Education in 2008 from Florida State University. She has held many valuable positions in Choral Music Education throughout our state, including MS District II Chair, MHSAA Choral Secretary for MS, and a board member for the MS Chapter of ACDA (American Choral Directors Association). Ms. Beck is very excited about moving back to the middle school level to co-teach with Mrs. Gaines this year. She currently lives in Olive Branch with her dog, Pheobe! She will be teaching our Treble Choir, and our Tenor/Bass Choir.

This handbook contains important information for the re-designed choral department here at HLMS. All of the rules and policies are covered here, so you know exactly what to expect in the year ahead! I encourage you to thoroughly review the entire handbook. Being part of the HLMS Choral Department is both a responsibility and a privilege, and it is important that each member knows what is expected of them.

You will also find a page containing the estimated cost breakdown for each choir for the school-year. Some of these costs are mandatory for each member to pay by the due date, so that we may provide each student with what is needed to be successful throughout the year, and the opportunity to attend all contests and choral festivals. The provided sheet will also have some costs that will be optional for select members from that choir to attend throughout the school year. Optional fees will be notated, and if your choir member chooses to participate in these optional events, you will be notified closer to that date with detailed cost information for that event. PLEASE DO NOT SEND ANY MONEY TO HLMS AT THIS TIME. We will send home a definite cost sheet on August 18th that will contain all costs and due dates. Thank you in advance for your patience with this process!

Because choir is an elective that requires extra responsibilities and commitments from students and parents, We have included a contract and the end of this handbook. This contract, when signed by you, indicates that you have read the policies of the program and agree to abide by them. You also agree to honor the mandatory dates listed on the calendar. Please return this signed contract, medical form and the online forms through Dragonfly as soon as possible, but no later than August 11th.

We are so excited to get this great year up and running! We know that great things are in store, and we welcome all returning and new choir members/parents! Please feel free to reach out at any time if any questions or concerns arise. You can find both of our emails listed on the front cover.

**All the Best,
Mrs. Gaines and Ms. Beck**

Behavior Expectations:

- **RESPECT:** Everyone should strive to be respectful & well-mannered, inside & outside of the choir room. We should speak to each other, singers & adults, in a manner that we would like to be spoken to. In return, our actions should also be prompt when asked to do something. Singers should never touch others in a negative or unsolicited manner, nor touch someone else's belongings. We will show respect with our actions, words, & attitude.
- **REHEARSAL PREPARATION:** All singers are expected to be in the choir room before the tardy bell rings. If you do not move promptly, you will be late simply because of the location of the music building! We must move with purpose! Singers should have all necessary rehearsal materials (i.e., Choir folder with music provided by director, pencil, highlighter, water bottle, & whatever other materials are needed for the day...). Class will begin as soon as the tardy bell rings. Tardies to class will result in disciplinary and/or lowering of your grade.
- **REHEARSAL PARTICIPATION:** Singers are expected to participate with a good attitude in all given tasks during rehearsal; every part of rehearsal is planned to help each singer improve! Singers will be responsible for bellwork, to sing, to sight-read, along with many other activities on a daily basis. Positive cooperation & participation are essential for singers. If a singer is ill & cannot sing, the director should be notified upon entering the choir room & the singer should still be involved with rehearsal mentally!
- **DON'T KNOW? ASK!:** Singers are encouraged to ask questions when needed to gain further clarity on any given classroom instruction, announcement, performance details, etc...! Singers should raise their hand & wait to be acknowledged if any questions, needs, or concerns arise. (Emergencies excluded...)

****There will be NO USE of personal or school-issued electronic devices in class unless a student gains permission by the director. Any electronic devices being used during class will be taken the first time and given back at the end of rehearsal. If a second offense occurs, then further action will be taken. (I.e., parent contact, discipline referrals, technology given to admin for the parent to pick up, etc..)**

Health and Safety:

- No perfume, colognes, hair products, scented lotions, or other aerosol/pump products should ever be sprayed in the choir room. This can trigger SERIOUS medical conditions in those around us. This is IMPORTANT.
- NO GUM, CANDY OR FOOD should to be eaten during rehearsal. Doing so during rehearsal can result in a medical emergency.
- Singing & choir rehearsals involve physical requirements. If you have any issues standing for long periods of time, or have physical limitations, please talk to your director. Singers may be asked to submit a note from a medical professional.

Concert Etiquette

- Refrain from talking during a performance
- Please enter & exit between songs.
- Applause is the only appropriate form of expressing appreciation for a job well done. Please wait until the conductor lowers his/her arms to indicate the completion of a song.
- Please eliminate disruptions by turning off all cell phones and removing small children who are screaming or talking loudly.
- Singers should remain until the end of the concert. As performers, we learn by watching as well as performing. Any disrespect, talking, laughing, or pointing of any kind during a concert by students will not be tolerated.

Consequences for Poor Choices:

1. Verbal Warning
2. Student-Director Conference
3. Parent Contact
4. Disciplinary Action (Office Referral, etc...)
5. Removal from the HLMS Choral Program

Grading Policy:

Grades will be determined by the following criteria:

- **Class Contribution:** Daily participation/cooperation, daily attendance, tests (written, aural, singing), projects, concert evaluations, binder/material checks.
- **Homework:** Sight Reading Factory Assignments, practicing music at home, etc...
- **Performance Attendance:** Singers are required to attend ALL concerts, competitions, festivals, and other events throughout the year. If there is a prior conflict with any event, a written note needs to be sent to the director at least a month in advance. If any emergencies arise and a student needs to miss any choir-related event, please contact the director(s) as soon as possible.

If a student must miss a concert or performance, a zero test-grade will be put into the grade book and an alternate assignment will be provided. Once the alternate assignment is completed & submitted, the zero will be replaced in the grade book

Performance Attire:

6th Grade with Mrs. Gaines:

- Choir T-shirt provided by choral department. See fee sheet below...
- Blue Jeans (no holes, no patterns, no leggings or jeggings)
- Close-toed shoes (no sandals, crocs, or bright colored shoes)

7th & 8th Grade Boys with Ms. Beck:

- Black Dress Pants (no patterns or holes; no jeans)
- Black long-sleeved, button-down dress shirt (no polos or patterns)
- Undershirt (plain)
- Black socks (no ankle socks)
- Black Dress Shoes (no designs or color of any kind)
- Tie provided by the choral department.

7th & 8th Grade Treble Choir with Ms. Beck:

- Black Dress Pants (no jeans/leggings/skirts/dresses)
- Black 3-Quarter or Long-sleeve Blouse (no patterns, short sleeves/spaghetti straps)
 **** Please make sure your shirt has proper coverage. ****
- Black, Close-toed Dress Shoes (no sandals, crocs, colors/designs of any kind)

7th & 8th Grade Advanced Treble Choir with Mrs. Gaines:

- Black Choir Dress... Rented from the choral department. See fee sheet below...
- Black, Close-toed Dress Shoes (no sandals, crocs, tennis shoes, colors/designs of any kind)

Cost Outlook Breakdowns by choir:

****This page is an ESTIMATE. A finalized cost outlook sheet, including due dates, will be sent home with each singer by the end of August.****

DO NOT SEND ANY MONEY TO SCHOOL AT THIS TIME

*Optional Events, whose costs will be charged at a later date, are marked with a **

6th Grade: \$12

- Choir T-Shirt: \$10.00
- Sight-Reading Factory App 12 month subscription: \$2.00
- *Elementary Choir Day: Cost TBA

7th & 8th Grade Treble Choir: \$57

- Choir T-Shirt: \$10.00
- Bluff City Choral Festival: \$40.00
- State Performance Assessment: \$5.00
- Sight-Reading Factory App 12 month subscription: \$2.00
- *District Honor Choir (invitation only): \$45.00

7th & 8th Grade Boys: \$57

- Choir T-Shirt: \$10.00
- Bluff City Choral Festival: \$40.00
- State Performance Assessment: \$5.00
- Sight-Reading Factory App 12 month subscription: \$2.00
- *District Honor Choir (invitation only): \$45.00
- *Ole Miss Men's Festival: \$40.00 (8th Graders ONLY)

7th & 8th Grade Advanced Treble Choir: \$67

- Choir T-Shirt: \$10.00
- Bluff City Choral Festival: \$40.00
- State Performance Assessment: \$5.00
- Dress Rental Fee - \$10.00
- Sight-Reading Factory App 12 month subscription: \$2.00
- *Ole Miss Treble Festival: \$40.00
- *District Honor Choir (invitation only): \$45.00

We never want financial struggles to be the reason that a singer does not get to participate in choir events. If there is ever any problem with being able to pay the above fees, please don't hesitate to reach out to us to discuss a solution!

Date & Time	Event	Who	Location
August 11th	Choir Contracts & Dragonfly Due	All Choirs	In Class
August 18th	District Honor Choir Fee Due (\$45)*	Select 7th-8th Grade Singers	In Class
September 1st	<i>ALL Choir Balances Due!</i>	6th Grade	In Class
September 1st-15th	Popcorn Fundraiser	All Choirs	N/A
September 14th-15th	District 2 Honor Choir	Select 7th-8th Grade Singers	Longview Heights Baptist Church, Olive Branch MS
September 23rd (All Day)	Ole Miss Tenor-Bass Festival	8th Grade Tenor/Basses ONLY	University of Mississippi - Oxford, MS
October - Date TBA (Evening)	6th Grade Choir Social	6th Grade ONLY	Location TBA
November 3rd 6:00pm	M.R. Dye Public Library Veteran's Event	7th-8th Grade Tenor/Basses	M.R. Dye Public Library Horn Lake, MS
November 10th (During School)	Desoto County Veteran's Day Luncheon	7th-8th Grade Tenor/Basses	Hernando, MS
December 1st (6:30pm)	Horn Lake Holiday Concert	All Choirs	First Baptist Church Horn Lake, MS
December 8th (All Day)	CoroRio Elementary Choir Day	Select 6th Grade Singers	Hernando, MS
January -Date TBA (Evening)	7th-8th Grade Choir Social	All 7th-8th Grade Singers	Location TBA
January 18th-20th	Mississippi All-State Honor Choir	Select Singers: Audition Required	University of Southern MS Hattiesburg, MS

Date & Time	Event	Who	Location
February - Date TBA (After School)	Choir Retreat	7th-8th Grade Treble & Tenor/Basses	HLMS
February 6th or 13th (After school-Evening)	Desoto County Joint Concert	Advanced Treble	Brown Baptist Church Southaven, MS
Date TBA (During School)	State Performance Assessment	All 7th & 8th Grade Singers	Location TBA
March 23rd (All Day)	Ole Miss Treble Festival	Select 8th Grade Treble Singers	University of Mississippi Oxford, MS
April 12th (All Day)	Bluff City Choral Festival	All 7th & 8th Grade Singers	Senatobia, MS
April 18th 6:30pm	HLMS Spring Concert	All Singers	First Baptist Church Horn Lake, MS
May Dates TBA	Choir Auditions for 24-25 School Year	All Singers	HLMS

All Choir Members are required to participate in ALL events listed next to their group, unless there is an excused emergency. (See Grading Policy above) Please communicate ASAP with Mrs. Gaines or Ms. Beck if any conflicts arise.

THE MISSISSIPPI HIGH SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATION NOW REQUIRES ELIGIBILITY TO BE COMPLETED ELECTRONICALLY BY A PARENT/GUARDIAN OF ALL 7-12 GRADE STUDENTS INVOLVED IN ACTIVITIES/SPORTS. IF A STUDENT IS INVOLVED IN A SPORT OR BAND, YOU DO NOT NEED TO COMPLETE THE PROCESS AGAIN. THE PROCESS IS SIMPLE - FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS THAT ARE HANDED OUT WITH THE CHOIR CONTRACTS AND MEDICAL FORMS. YOU WILL BE ASKED TO COMPLETE THE (1) ELECTRONIC SIGNATURE AGREEMENT, (2) MHSAA STUDENT PARTICIPATION CLEARANCE FORM, & (3) CONSENT TO THE DISCLOSURE AND USE OF PERSONAL HEALTH INFORMATION. THERE ARE STUDENT HEALTH INSURANCE APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE IN THE CHOIR ROOM IF NEEDED.

Follow the instructions below to complete your DragonFly information.

1. Visit www.dragonflymax.com
2. Click “Do My Forms” and follow the prompts to the sign-up page and click “Sign Up for Free.”
3. Follow the prompts to create your Parent Account with your email or phone number.
4. Enter your child’s School Code (BYAHHC) and confirm your school.
5. Click “Add a child” in the DragonFly website then follow the prompts to create your child’s profile and complete their participation forms, including any necessary documents.
6. After completing your child’s forms, you can review their profile or add another child.

The pages at the back of the handbook are forms that need to be completed & returned by the listed date. These forms also serve as your choir member’s PERMISSION SLIP to attend & participate in all choir events throughout the year, including any off-campus events. Forms do not need to be notarized for middle school choir members. Returned forms will be recorded in the gradebook.

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2023-2024 MEDICAL RELEASE & PERMISSION SLIP

Student Name _____

Parents Names _____

Phone #s _____

EMERGENCY INFORMATION (OTHER THAN PARENT):

Name _____ Phone # _____

Relation to the Student _____

Any health problems or allergies _____

Any medications your child must take _____

Family Physician & Phone # _____

Health Insurance & Policy ID# _____

PERMISSION TO ATTEND/DISCIPLINE EXPECTATIONS:

My HLMS choir member has permission to attend all choir related field trips/performance trips during the 2023-2024 school year. I also understand that if my child does not follow any of the listed rules or guidelines, a conference call will be made between the principal, choir directors, & myself and could result in my child being sent home immediately at my expense and/or removal from the choir.

PERMISSION FOR TREATMENT:

My permission is granted for the Horn Lake Middle School Choral Directors, or any official chaperone to obtain necessary medical attention in case of injury/emergency for my child. I/We the undersigned, do hereby release, remise & forever discharge all sponsors from any & all claims, demands, action, past, present, future arising out of any damage or injury while participation in choir events.

.....
Parent/Guardian's Signature

DATE

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ALL FORMS SHOULD BE COMPLETED AND TURNED IN BY AUGUST 11TH

Forms to be turned in are:

- Choir Contract
- Dragonfly eligibility registration (online)
- Medical Release/Permission Slip

2023-2024 CHOIR CONTRACT

All students must be committed to striving for excellence each and every day and in each performance. Auditioned choir students are required to attend several performances each year in order to remain an auditioned student.

I have read the requirements, calendar, and the policies and procedures online and in the 2023-2024 Horn Lake Middle School Choral Department Handbook. I will adhere to the policies, rules, regulations & requirements contained therein. I understand and agree to the necessary financial and time commitment for all HLMS choir students and the consequences for not following through on these commitments. I pledge to support the HLMS Choral Program through positive participation in all mandatory and as many optional activities as possible. I have entered all dates on my personal calendar.

.....
Choir Member's Signature

DATE

.....
Parent/Guardian's Signature

DATE