

Galena Park High School Choral Department

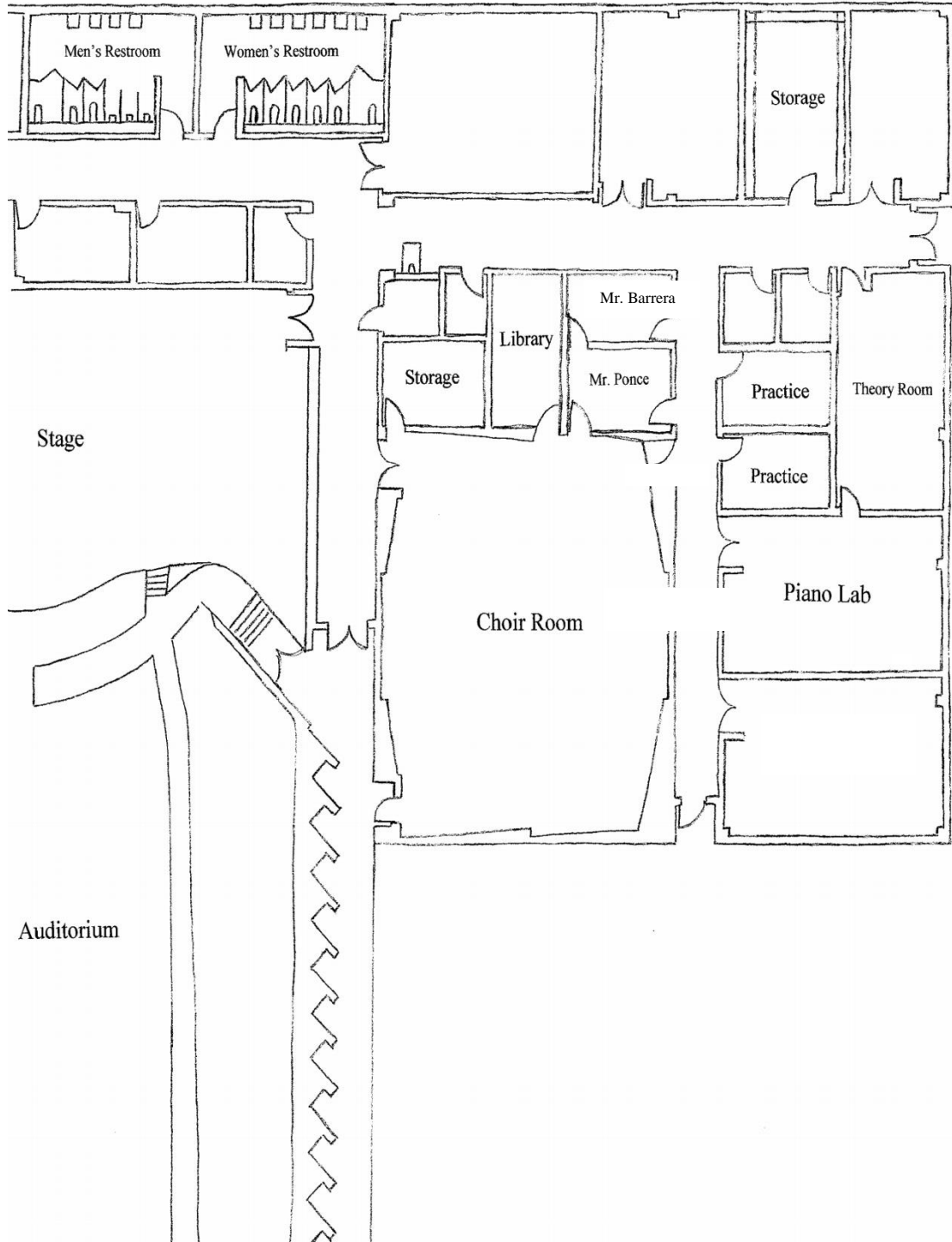


Handbook

Website: GPHSChoir.com

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Welcome to the Galena Park HS Choral Program!

You are entering an award-winning program housed in one of the finest facilities in the greater Houston Metroplex! We are one of the best 5A choral programs in Region XXXIII and intend to only get better. Read this handbook. It will answer many questions you may have. We have an open door policy – speak to us about what concerns you. Be prepared to have a fun and be a part of an award-winning year! -D. Ponce

Choral Program Leadership

Daniel R. Ponce, tenor (Director) is beginning his 24th year as the Director of Choral Activities at Galena Park High School. He is a graduate of Texas State University (formerly Southwest Texas State University). A native of San Antonio, his extensive career as a music educator includes teaching at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. Daniel has established an award-winning program here at GPHS. As an artist, Daniel has composed and published music for both choral and solo voice and recently completed his first stage work. Daniel is currently a section leader and serves on the board for the Bay Area Chorus. He is an adjudicator and is an active member of Texas Music Educators Association and the Texas Choral Directors Association.

Enrique Barrera, tenor (Assistant Director), is in his 2nd year of teaching choral music with the Galena Park District. A North Shore High School alumnus, Mr. Barrera participated in both the band and choir during his days as a mustang. He received his Bachelors in Music Education and Vocal Performance at Abilene Christian University. Mr. Barrera was born and raised in Houston, Texas. He is also an accompanist and is a singer in the Houston Symphony Chorus. Mr. Barrera is an active member of Texas Music Educators Association and Texas Choral Directors Association.

Ms. Ballesteros, soprano (GPMS, Choir Director)

Mr. Orarden, Tenor (WAMS, Choir Director)

Ms. Bendorf, alto (GPMS, Assistant Choir Director)

*****The Basics*****

CODE OF CONDUCT

While in association with the GPHS Choral Department students are to:

- Be Prepared For Each Rehearsal by:
 1. Being on time.
 2. Being mentally and vocally prepared with all necessary materials.
 3. Bring a pencil with you to each and every rehearsal! (Or leave in your folder)
- Listen when the director is speaking.
- Use appropriate language, treat others with respect, and be mindful of your actions around others.
- Be efficient and follow directions the first time they are given:
 1. Mark your music for the problem areas.
 2. Look ahead and stay up in the music.
- Food and beverages are to be enjoyed outside of the classroom.
- Keep the choir facilities clean and free from clutter. Take your belongings home with you.
- Carefully keep track of their personal schedules. Make every effort to be in the right place at the right time. Poor planning on your part does not necessitate an emergency on ours.

Full Participation

As a member of the GP Choral Department, all students are expected to give their full participation. Musical selections that are studied, performed, or used for sight reading are not representative of any religious preference of our department. The GP Choral Department is not a religious institution.

Much of the choral music tradition stems from music of a religious nature. Some of the greatest choral masterworks (e.g. the music of Bach, Mozart, and Beethoven, to name a few) were produced to be used for religious purposes. However, educational institutions, such as the GP Choral Department, use such pieces in order to

communicate an appreciation of the musical mastery demonstrated in the work. To exclude selections of a religious nature from the choral repertoire would be equivalent to removing an entire genre of literature (e.g. fiction or non-fiction) from all libraries.

The only way for us to achieve a high standard of quality for the GP Choral Department is for us get there together. As we endeavor to promote the highest standards in arts education we must establish a freedom to learn from music of any and all genres regardless of our own personal convictions or doctrines.

CHOIR REHEARSAL PROCEDURE

Entrance and Warm-Ups

Upon entering the choir room, all books, backpacks, & purses go along the wall. In order to ensure a great rehearsal, all cell phones will be placed in the box located at the front of the room. Class begins as soon as the tardy bell rings. Students are not allowed to leave the classroom during the first and last 10 minutes of the class period. All students are expected to be in place, ready to sing as soon as the tardy bell rings.

Sight-reading

This is an essential element to becoming a complete musician. During this portion of the class, choir members who cannot read music will learn how to do so and other choir members will refine their sight-reading abilities. Each ensemble can expect to sight-read every day. The “Curwen Hand Sign” chart included in this handbook must be memorized as quickly as possible, for these hand signs will be used daily.

Literature

During each rehearsal, the ensemble will work on selections that are being prepared for a concert or contest. These selections will generally be of contrasting styles and will highlight a variety of musical elements.

- **Do Not Over Sing in Your Section**
When you hear or personally experience problems (intonation, balance, blend, etc.) relax your singing, while still maintaining support, and listen closely. Be a confident singer, but always listen to the others in your section.
- **Every Time A Section Of Music Is Repeated In Rehearsal:**
It should provide correction in some problem area and more security in your singing.
- **Remember:**
 - (1) Pitch accuracy (singing the correct pitch) provides secure intonation (tuning).
 - (2) Secure intonation provides the balance, blend, and sonority that this choir program is striving for.
 - (3) Properly produced vowels, unified throughout the choir and within each section, secure the vocal quality throughout the entire choir.
 - (4) **Mark Your Score!!!!**

STAY CONNECTED

For the latest information, forms, and calendar of events access our website at: www.gphschoir.com

Here you can read about the GP choral program and gain access to various media. You can download the latest forms related to field trips, fundraisers, and performances; print them and return them signed. A detailed calendar of events has all the scheduled activities for the year. Browse our picture gallery to see some of the highlights of the season. Click on the recording section to access the rehearsal tracks.

ELIGIBILITY

UIL rules state that receiving a grade below 70 results in the loss of eligible status. UIL eligibility is what permits students to participate in all competitions that the GPHS Choral Department takes part in. Students must make it a

high priority to achieve and maintain eligible status. Failing an elective class (i.e. PE, Interior Design, Floral Arranging, Band, etc.) does make a student ineligible in the same way that failing a basic course does (i.e. English, Math, Science, etc.).

*Students who have difficulty maintaining eligibility cannot be considered for advancement in the choral program.

Grade Monitoring – We periodically check the grades of each student to ensure that they are in good academic standing and eligible for UIL sponsored events. If a student has a failing grade, it is his/her responsibility to find out what assignments they are missing for that particular class and get them turned in immediately.

ADVANCEMENT

Advancement in the GPHS Choral Program is based on daily class behavior, concert performance and contest participation. Our desire is that our top ensembles are not simply comprised of our strongest singers but rather that they be filled with the best well-rounded students our program has to offer. Simply put, the objective for those students seeking advancement in the GPHS Choral Department is to:

1. Stay Humble – Even the greatest of leaders must first demonstrate the ability to be an exceptional follower. Attitude says a lot about how a person views themselves and those around them. Here in the Choral Department we are looking for team players. Egotists need not apply.
2. Stay Hungry – Remaining idle gets us nowhere fast. The GPHS Choir program is constantly changing to meet the increasing demands that we place on ourselves. We are continually encountering new challenges.

The students that stand out to the directors are those that desire to help their ensemble become the best it can be.

3. Work, Work, Work – No matter what we accomplish, we must never settle on the plateau of complacency. We continually strive for excellence in our art, our knowledge, and our character.

Advanced Ensemble Requirements

The following information is given to help inform students and parents of the higher standards that exist for members of the advanced or “auditioned” ensembles (Chorale and Concert Choir) of the Galena Park High School Choral Department. This information is given so that both students and parents will have several months to plan ahead. This document also helps clarify terminology used in the contracts dispersed among advanced ensemble candidates. Should you have any questions regarding the information given below, do not hesitate to contact either Mr. Ponce at (832) 386-2831 or Mr. Barrera at (832) 386-2830.

TMEA Music

The Texas Music Educators Association (TMEA) is the organization which established the annual All-State Choir audition process. This process has four levels: District, Region, Area, and State. Each school is allowed to enter a select number of students into the annual audition process. Since there are so many talented singers in each choral program, directors must be selective in choosing which students will represent their school through the TMEA All-State audition process. At GPHS, any choir student may learn the All-State music and audition for a chance to represent us through the audition process. Advanced Ensemble members are expected to do so while members of our beginner ensembles may choose to do so. In order to qualify for District level competition, a student must first pass an audition held at GPHS Choir Room. If selected, students will have an opportunity to pursue a position in the All-State Choir. This is a very demanding process but one that holds multiple rewards including university scholarships for students who progress to the Region level and beyond. As the premier contest

of each Fall semester, students are urged to begin working on the TMEA All-State Music during the Summer months and are encouraged to attend Choir Camp.

The Music: The music for the TMEA All-State process typically consists of several different pieces representing a variety of styles, languages, time periods, and genres. The audition music may also include a major work (such as Mozart's "Requiem" or Brahms' "Requiem") which is one large piece comprised of more than one movement. This music is selected for this process because of its difficult nature. A great deal of work is to be expected for any student aspiring to have success through the audition process. Rehearsals are held every day before and after school to help students learn this music. Students who take this process seriously need to attend these rehearsals on a regular basis.

Practice mp3s: To help students learn this difficult music, a link is provided at the www.gphschoir.com website with a recording of a single voice part singing all of the All-State music. A student learning a 2nd voice part (e.g. Soprano 2, Alto 2, Tenor 2, or Bass 2) will need to pay special attention to the audio file so that they do not accidentally learn the 1st voice part (i.e. Soprano 1, Alto 1, Tenor 1, or Bass 1). These audio files are a very helpful tool in learning the music. However, the student must be able to demonstrate mastery apart from the audio file in order to truly learn the music.

When To Expect Your Music & Audio Files: Students who attend Choir Camp will be the first to receive their All-State music and learn about the audio files on the website. Generally, campers receive their All-State music prior to their leaving for Choir Camp in August. Students who do not attend camp but are either required or desire to learn the music will be able to pick up their music at the beginning of August.

U.I.L. Solo & Ensemble

The University Interscholastic League (U.I.L.) Solo & Ensemble competition is an excellent means by which students can grow as musicians. All advanced ensemble members will be assigned a solo, toward the end of the Fall semester, and are expected to work diligently to preparation for this contest. All advanced ensemble members are expected to participate in District Solo & Ensemble. The GP Choir directors will then select those students that will sing at the Region Solo & Ensemble. And finally, a select few will be chosen to represent GPHS at the State Solo & Ensemble contest in Austin in May.

After School Rehearsals

Membership in Chorale requires after school rehearsals. These rehearsals play an essential role in the preparation for performances and contests. However, the underlying principle is that as a member of an advanced group, more is expected of you. Thus, membership is not to be entered into lightly. Following through on commitments is an important quality we desire to instill in all of our choir members. Students who are not able to uphold their commitments are removed from advanced ensembles. When students commit to membership in an advanced ensemble, they must be continually aware of when these additional rehearses occur and that they are expected to be present for the full time indicated. Fall rehearsals are on the calendar, so, mark your calendars now.

CONCERT ATTENDANCE

According to the Texas State Legislature, concerts are curricular activities and are to be graded. The Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills outline that choral members are to perform in a variety of settings, with a variety of musical styles. Performance dates are on the "Calendar of Events" found on the inside cover of this handbook and are deemed mandatory for attendance. Each student is responsible for:

- Being on time to each performance.
- Making sure you have transportation to and from concerts.
- Making sure your complete uniform is clean and ready for use.

Concert grades are counted as major test grades (*see above* "Grading Policy"). Concert grades comprise 40% of each six weeks grade. Failure to attend will be considered an unexcused absence and will result in a grade of zero.

Family Emergencies: All students are expected to take part in every performance. It is the student's responsibility to have their parent notify the director in the event of a true family emergency prior to the performance. Again, the

parent must contact the director prior to the performance. Informing the director of an excuse the day after an evening performance is futile. It won't be excused. "I couldn't find a ride," is never a valid excuse.

Jobs: It is the student's responsibility to make arrangements if they have a job, are thinking of getting a job, or have a job lined up to begin at a later date. The "Calendar of Events" is handed out at the start of the year with ample notice. Sponsors and employers are usually willing to work with high school students. Do not ask your director to call your employer because you "forgot" about a concert. Missing a concert because of work is an unexcused absence.

Course Listing

ENSEMBLES

Treble Choir (1st Period) – This is our beginner choir for ladies. Membership in this group does not require an audition. Female students from any classification may sign up to be part of this ensemble. The primary goal of this ensemble is for the students to develop the basic skills of music literacy and performance practice.

Concert Men's Choir (4th & 5th Period) – The purpose for this ensemble is twofold. It is both our beginner and intermediate choir for men. Membership in this group does not require an audition. Male students from any classification may sign up to be part of this ensemble. The primary goal of this ensemble is for the student to develop the basic skills of music literacy and performance practice.

Concert Women's Choir (6th Period) – This is our intermediate choir for ladies. This is an auditioned group. Students selected for this ensemble are expected to be able to sight-read and perform repertoire at a higher degree of difficulty.

Vocal Ensemble (7th Period) – This mixed ensemble is a performing group of limited size which studies and performs music from a variety of contemporary genres such as pop, rock, musicals, and Broadway. Students selected for this ensemble need to be willing to do choreography. This is an auditioned group.

Varsity Women's Choir (2nd Period) – This ensemble is comprised of the female members of Chorale. This group will meet primarily on weekday afternoons during the Spring semester. Thus, these rehearsals are required. This is an auditioned group.

Varsity Men's Choir (2nd Period) – This ensemble is comprised of the male members of Chorale. This group will meet primarily on weekday afternoons during the Spring semester. Thus, these rehearsals are required. This is an auditioned group.

Chorale (2nd Period) – The GPHS Chorale is a select group of mixed voices, which performs some of the more challenging music from the various periods and styles. This choir, along with Vocal Ensemble, serves as a public relations arm for the GPHS Choral Department. This group tours every year in the Spring. This is an auditioned group. Due to the extensive time and financial demands of being in this ensemble, students and parents/guardians are to sign a contract in full understanding of these responsibilities prior to their being placed in this particular choir.

ADDITIONAL COURSES

Class Piano (3rd Period)– Basic musicianship is taught through reading music, elementary piano technique, and piano repertoire. Prerequisite: Talk with Mr. Ponce before registration for prior approval.

Pre-AP Music Theory (3rd Period) – Beginning with a thorough but concise overview of the fundamentals of music, Music Theory I focuses on the study of principal chord structures in both major and minor modes with emphasis on part-writing and keyboard harmony. The purpose of this class is to successfully prepare students to pass the AP Music Theory Exam administered in the spring. Prerequisite: Talk with Mr. Barrera before registration for prior approval.

AP Music Theory (5th Period) - This course is the continuation of Pre-AP Music Theory I with the addition of modulations to remote and foreign keys, and a survey of modern harmonic trends, including the use of artificial scales and atonalism. The second portion of this course is devoted to the study of form and analysis of music of the Romantic Period and Twentieth Century. Prerequisite: Successful completion of Pre-AP Music Theory I and prior approval from Mr. Barrera.

Curwen Hand Signs



3 Rules for finding “Do”

Rule #1 The last # is always “Ti”

Rule #2 The last b is always “Fa”

Rule #3 If there are no flats or sharps “Do” is on C

The following example is in G major:



The last sharp here is F#.
If this is “Ti”, then
“Do” is on G.

Andante allegro ♩ = 76

The following example is in A major:

The last sharp here is G#.
If this is “Ti”, then
“Do” is on A.

Worshipfully ♩ = 77

The following example is in E major:

The last flat here is A_b.
If this is “Fa”, then
“Do” is on F.

With excitement ♩ = 106

The following example is in D Major:

The last flat is G_b.
If this is “Fa,” then
“Do” is on D_b.

(steady-slowly) ♩ = 120

The following example is in C major:

Brightly ♩ = 84

Since there are no
sharps or flats,
“Do” is on C.

Performance

UNIFORMS

You must pay particular attention to how you dress for a concert. You do not dress the same way for school as you would for the prom or a wedding. Everyone will wear his or her uniform within certain guidelines. This calls attention away from the individual and draws attention toward the group as a whole in the presentation of a musical work. Hold your uniform in high esteem, for it is much more than just a textbook – take proper care of it – they are not cheap!

Ladies: formals

flat black heels

flesh colored hose

hair up and pulled away from the face

no excess jewelry

no perfume

Men: black tuxedo

black socks

black dress shoes

hair neat and out of eyes

no jewelry

no cologne

CONCERT ETIQUETTE

Proper etiquette is an essential part to every performance sponsored by the Choral Department. All audience members, as well as performers, are expected to uphold this policy. Whenever our choirs are in a performance venue that features the performance of several choirs (i.e. UIL contests, Music Festival contests) GPHS Choir students are expected to be an example to those around them. When another choir is singing, you are to remain seated until the end of their performance. You are not to carry on a conversation or create any distractions. The following policy is printed in every program for each performance:

Talking, noise, and disruptions of any kind are not permitted during the program.

Once you have entered the auditorium, please remain seated until the performance has concluded. In case of emergency, it is proper to leave only at the conclusion of a song. Roaming the aisle during a song distracts the group and lessens their performance. Please give all groups the courtesy and respect that their hard work and efforts have earned them.

Smoking is not permitted.

Please turn all cell phones, pagers and other communication devices to the off position.

Food, gum, and drinks are not permitted in the auditorium during the concert.

Please escort crying children to the lobby.

GRADING POLICY

Below is listed the grading policy for all ensembles:

Daily grades (warm-ups, posture, materials, etc.)	20%
Theory/Solfege (hand signs, worksheets, etc.)	15%
Sight Reading/Ear Training (exercises, tests, etc.)	15%
Concerts	50%

**A course syllabus will be created for each non-ensemble course.*

Daily grades are basically how you perform in class. Do you sit up straight or stand up straight when you sing? Do you use hand signs forcefully? Or are you continually trying to talk with your neighbor?

Theory/Solfege grades are worksheets, identifying new symbols, writing solfege in a new piece of music, identifying key signatures, intervals, key changes, and much more. These will get progressively harder during the year.

Sight Reading test involve a student singing a melody they have never heard. The student may be required to perform and/or record a sight reading melody for the director. Students are responsible for any sight reading exercises/assignments that may be given to the student during the grading period. A student may be asked to perform alone any exercise assigned by the director in order to demonstrate proficiency and knowledge application. Students may be required to sight read in smaller groups (e.g. trios, quartets, octets, etc). Ear Training tests involve students transcribing a melody onto staff paper using proper music notation. Both Sight Reading and Ear Training are methods by which aural skills are assessed and strengthened.

Concerts make up 50% of each student's grade per six weeks. Concerts are a mandatory element to the curriculum. There are four major concert grades that all choir students are required to take part in this year. They are:

- Fall Concert
- Winter Concert
- Pre-UIL Concert
- Pop Show

Awards

Individual Awards

TMEA ALL-REGION CHOIR

The TMEA Region XXXIII Choir is comprised of the best singers in our region. Students from all over the east/northeast side of Houston audition in order to earn a position in the choir. Region auditions are preceded by a District level audition. All voice parts must make it through a round of district auditions before being able to take part in the Region auditions. Beginning in Fall 2005 successful advancement past the District audition will secure a place in one of the three region choirs (Women's Choir, Men's Choir, and Mixed Choir). Upon being selected to participate in one of the three TMEA ALL-REGION CHOIRS, students must attend the Region Clinic and Concert in order to receive this honor.

This distinction may be achieved each school year for students in grades 9-12. GPHS Choir members who become TMEA ALL-REGION CHOIR members receive a patch from TMEA. Additional plaques, t-shirts, and recordings may be purchased at the Region concert.

TMEA PRE-AREA CANDIDATES

Those that place in the “Mixed Choir” at the Region audition may advance to the PRE-AREA auditions later in the semester. The Pre-Area audition is 80% prepared music (chosen from the repertoire) and 20% sight reading (an eight measure exercise). Those that place in the top five chairs at Pre-Area auditions are considered “Area Candidates” and advance to the Area Audition., the Area Audition in January determines those students that will comprise the TMEA ALL-STATE CHOIR. This distinction may be achieved each school year for students in grades 9-12.

TMEA ALL-STATE CHOIR

By far, the most prestigious individual achievement the GPHS Choral Department has to offer is the opportunity to earn a position in the TMEA ALL-STATE CHOIR.

The Area audition is 80% prepared music (chosen from the repertoire) and 20% sight reading (an eight measure exercise). Those that place in the top five chairs will be placed in the ALL-STATE MIXED CHOIR. Chairs six through nine (men) will be placed in the ALL-STATE MEN’S CHOIR, and chairs six through 10 (women) will be placed in the ALL-STATE WOMEN’S CHOIR. Each recipient of this award receives a letter jacket and/or an All-State patch.

Students from Galena Park High School that make the TMEA ALL-STATE CHOIR will be escorted to San Antonio to take part in the ALL-STATE concert. The distinction may be achieved each school year for students in grades 9-12. Earning a place in the TMEA ALL-STATE CHOIR makes students eligible for thousands of dollars in scholarship money from Universities and Colleges across the nation and around the world.

TMEA MUSIC SCHOLAR AWARD

The TMEA Music Merit Scholar Award designates students in high school music programs who exemplify attributes of meritorious performance in the areas of scholarship, musicianship, and citizenship.

The director awards this designation, upon recommendation, to students in grades 9-12 that have met the following criteria during the current school year:

- Is a viable member of the school’s parent musical organization for the entire school year
- Maintains on overall “A” average as defined by the local school district for the entire school year
- Maintains academic eligibility for the entire school year
- Participates in all scheduled events of the parent organization
- Attends, as an audience member, two director-approved concert events of high school, collegiate or professional level during a school year.
- Is selected and participates as required as a member of a TMEA or ATSSB organization (band, orchestra, or choir).
- Performs a UIL Prescribed Music List Class 1 solo for a competition or public performance

- Consistently exhibits behavior which brings honor to the parent organization, school and community

This distinction may be achieved each school year. Texas Music Merit Scholars receive a certificate, patch and letter from the Texas Music Educators Association signed by the Executive Director.

DISTRICT SOLO & ENSEMBLE

All secondary schools in GPISD are invited to take part in this competition. Most of our students prepare a solo to perform at the competition. Select students may take small ensembles. Students who receive a superior rating on a class 1 solo or a class I ensemble may advance to Region Solo & Ensemble. Students earn medals for superior ratings on each solo and ensemble performance.

UIL REGION SOLO & ENSEMBLE

All secondary schools in Region 19 are invited to take part in this competition. The level of competition at the Region level is more difficult than that of the District level. Soloists and small ensembles who receive a superior rating on class 1 pieces may advance to State Solo & Ensemble contest. Students earn medals for superior ratings on each solo and ensemble performance.

UIL STATE SOLO & ENSEMBLE

This annual competition is held on the campus of the University of Texas at Austin. Students from all across the state of Texas may compete at the State level if they maintain eligibility and have received a superior rating on a class 1 solo or class I ensemble at the Region level. The competition level at State is more difficult than that of the Region level. Students earn medals for superior ratings for a solo performance or an ensemble performance.

Outstanding Performer. The Outstanding Performer Award represents the attainment by an individual of superior musicianship as demonstrated in the exacting competition of the Texas State Solo-Ensemble Contest. The award will be sent to each student designated as an Outstanding Performer after the contest.

GPISD FINE ARTS LETTERMAN JACKET CRITERIA

A student must earn fifteen **(15) points** to receive a letterman jacket. All points are cumulative within a year and carry over from year to year. A student moving into the GPISD from another public school will have points assigned according to GPISD Policy.

Jackets are ordered once each spring and awarded the first choir concert the following year. A student who is removed for suspension or removed to an alternative educational setting forfeit all points earned during the school year of the removal. Students earning jackets their fourth year through participation in an organization must fulfill all obligations to the organization throughout

the entirety of that fourth year or forfeit their award jacket. Jackets must be returned to the building principal at that time.

Jacket Point Sheets are available at your request. A point sheet is also posted on the announcements billboard for review or reference. **Each student is responsible for tracking their own individual points, completing the Letterman Jacket Point Sheet and informing their sponsor no later than February 25th, 2019.** Directors will verify all points earned towards a letter jacket prior to placing the letterman jacket order.

Students must get sized the day the jacket company arrives to size all Fine Arts Jackets or they may forfeit the jacket.

THE MOST DEDICATED AWARD

The MOST DEDICATED AWARD is given to those students that have shown strong dedication to their choral ensemble, performance, and character. This distinction may be achieved each school year for students in grades 9-12. Each recipient of this award receives a ribbon.

THE MOST IMPROVED AWARD

The MOST IMPROVED AWARD is given to those students that have shown measurable improvement in their music education, performance, and character. This distinction may be achieved each school year for students in grades 9-12. Each recipient of this award receives a ribbon.

OUTSTANDING CHOIR MEMBER AWARD

The OUTSTANDING CHOIR MEMBER AWARD designates males and females from each classification (i.e. freshman, sophomore, junior, senior) that demonstrate the highest standards or excellence in the GPHS Choral program for that academic school year. Each recipient of this award receives a medal.

THE ACADEMIC SPOTLIGHT AWARDS

The ACADEMIC SPOTLIGHT AWARDS are presented each year during the Awards Day ceremony at Galena Park High School. These awards are given to students who have demonstrated a superior academic performance in choir. This distinction may be achieved each school year for students in grades 9-12. Each recipient of this award receives a certificate.

THE OUTSTANDING PERFORMER AWARD

The OUTSTANDING PERFORMER AWARD is given to the singer or singers who have shown an exceptional commitment to representing the Choral Department through performance at a multitude of school, GPISD, and community events. This distinction may be achieved each school year for students in grades 9-12. Each recipient of this award receives a pin.

THE OUTSTANDING MUSICIAN AWARD

The OUTSTANDING MUSICIAN AWARD is given to the singer or singers who have excelled in the art of choral music through competition in both the TMEA audition process and UIL solo & ensemble. This distinction may be achieved each school year for students in grades 9-12. Each recipient of this award receives a pin.

DIRECTOR'S AWARD

Presented to a pair of senior choir members who have displayed the highest standards in academics, musicality, dedication and leadership during their time with the GPHS Choral Program. Recipients of this award receive a trophy..

CHOIR OFFICERS

Each August the members of the GPHS Choral Department elect CHOIR OFFICERS to serve term for the current school year. Each class may nominate two students per position (i.e. president, secretary, historian, and representative). The director awards this nomination to students in grades 9-11 that have met the following criteria during the current school year:

- Must be nominated and seconded by their fellow classmates.
- Must not have any serious eligibility issues.
- Must have been a member of the choir program for at least one year.
- Must not have other substantial commitments with other organizations that would be a hindrance to their serving as a Choir Officer.
- Must accept the nomination by their peers.
- Is required to submit a **video advertisement** after their application has been submitted.

CHORAL AWARDS

UIL CONCERT & SIGHTREADING

This is the most important of all competitions that the GPHS Choral Department takes part in. This annual competition, held at Summer Creek High School, is the culmination of all of the hard work we do all year long. All of the choirs in Region take part in this contest. This contest is divided into two portions:

Concert – During this portion of the contest each ensemble will perform three selections, of contrasting styles, which were prepared prior to the contest. A panel of three judges will look for a well rounded performance. Some of the elements they look for are: vowel modification, supported tone, correct entrances/ cutoffs, dynamic contrast, intonation, phrasing, and syllabic stress just to name a few. Judges give a rating designating the excellence of the performance as follows:

Division 1 (Superior) – A superior performance for the event and the class of participants being judged; worthy of the distinction of being recognized as a first place winner.

Division II (Excellent) – An unusual performance in many respects but not worthy of the highest rating due to minor defects in performance or ineffective interpretation. A performance of distinctive quality.

Division III (Average) – An average performance, but not outstanding, showing accomplishment and marked promise, but lacking in one or more essential qualities.

Division IV (Below Average)

Division V (Poor)

Sight Reading – This portion of the contest follows immediately after the choir has finished the Concert portion of the competition. Students are escorted into a designated room where they are handed a piece of music that they have never seen or heard. Students must not look at the music until instructed to do so. The choir will be allowed a 6 minute instruction period to prepare the sight reading selection for the first reading. At the end of the six minutes, the choir will perform its first reading. Following the first reading, the choir will be allowed a 2 minute instruction period to review any problem areas and correct any mistakes. At the end of the 2 minute instruction period, the choir will perform its second reading. Both readings will be judged.

An ensemble that earns a superior rating in either portion of the contest will receive a plaque. Ensembles that earn a superior rating in both concert and sightreading portions of the contest earn what is known as a “sweepstakes.” Sweepstakes choirs receive a trophy.

MUSIC FESTIVALS

During years that the GPHS Choral Department sponsors a Spring Trip, This is done with the primary purpose of competing at one of the many music festival competitions held nationwide. Depending on the ensembles that represent GPHS, the number of possible awards will vary.

****Fundraising****

GP CHOIR BOOSTERS

GP Choir Boosters is the parent booster club that supports the GPHS Choral Department. This group, comprised of parents of current choir members, is an integral part of our program. This group holds monthly meetings to plans fundraisers, coordinates special events, and serves as chaperones for choir competitions. These moms and dads are an invaluable team that connects our choir program with the resources of our community. Membership in GP Choir Boosters is open to any parent of a current GPHS Choir member. A few recent projects by the GP Choir Boosters have been:

- Pledge Car Wash
- Candy Sale
- Baked Potato Sale
- Walk-a-thon
- Fall Festival/ Car Show
- Dinner Theatre

Any monies received for fundraising, to pay for a trip, choir banquet, show tickets, etc. go through GP Choir Boosters. **Any checks that are written must be made out to: Galena Park ISD.**

****Travel****

PERMISSION SLIPS

Before a student is eligible to participate in school-sponsored competitive extracurricular activities or field trips, a written parent consent form, including student and parent signatures, will be required annually. Participation in school-sponsored competitive extracurricular activities are privileges and not rights.

Special permission slips may be signed by parents concerning food items offered throughout the year on a reward basis. These must be on file for the year before students may ask to participate in special food days.

CHOIR TOUR

Each year the Choral Department sponsors a tour by a top choir or choirs with the purpose of competing in one of the many Music Festival competitions held nationwide. Tour destinations will be planned a minimum of one year in advance. GPISD policy states that trips to destinations greater than 500 miles away may be taken once every three years. Thus, the GPHS Choir Department seeks to utilize that privilege by taking a tour of great distance once every three years.

Choir Tour provides students with a unique opportunity to experience the world outside of Galena Park, Texas. Likewise, it allows Galena Park High School and GPISD the opportunity to be represented by the finest choral ensembles. It also provides opportunities for our students to hear some of the best musicians in the world and visit and perform in some of the most prestigious venues in the world.

Some past trips have included:

Orlando, FL	Los Angeles, CA	Washington, D.C.
New Orleans, LA	New York, NY	

It is the individual student's responsibility to fund-raise or bring in the sufficient funds to pay for their portion. Extra attention should be given to bringing in sufficient funds as early as possible. Each year, the GP Choral Department provides multiple fundraising opportunities to help students pay off such costs.

Safety is top priority in the GPHS Choral Department, especially during Choir Tour. Students and parents/guardians must be aware that improper conduct and behavior will not be tolerated on any trip. Likewise, the possession of alcohol, drugs, or any illegal paraphernalia will prevent anyone from taking part in any trip. Thus, anyone taking part in Choir Tour is required to go through a security search of both their person and all luggage before being allowed to depart on the trip.

It is also the student's responsibility to maintain academic eligibility. Students are strongly encouraged to start making preparations, in terms of fundraising, so as to ensure that they will not miss out on this incredible opportunity. Start planning to take part in Choir Tour today!

CHAPERONES

We actively encourage parents to attend as many of our concerts, competitions, and fundraisers as possible. Particularly, it is essential that we have female parents/guardians who can accompany our group. Those that are interested in serving in this fashion may contact the GPHS Choral Department or simply attend the regularly scheduled GP Choir Booster meetings.

*****Leadership*****

RECRUITING

Recruiting is big part of what we do each year. We strive to remain a successful program that is visible to the whole school in order to attract those students who truly have something to add to this program. Students who are already members of the Choral Department are encouraged to share their choral experience with other students. Taking pride in our choir program is the most basic form of leadership.

Also, special effort is made to attract students that are already beginning their choral education while in middle school. When we have opportunity, varsity ensembles will makes special performances at Galena Park Middle School and Woodland Acres Middle School in order to attract potential choir members. The Choral Department also hosts special social events in order to attract potential members from the general student body at GPHS.

CHOIR OFFICER REQUIREMENTS

The Choir Officers are a leadership council of students chosen by their fellow choir members to represent them within the choral department of Galena Park High School. The top six positions are elected in the Spring of the previous school year.

President – is generally an upperclassman leader who leads by example. This person:

- Acts as a spokesperson for the choir.
- Organizes a leadership council retreat to take place during the summer.
- Calls monthly meetings of the council.
- Leads officers in their duties by overseeing their progress
- Sets up committees, select chairs for these committees

Vice President – This is the President’s right hand person. This person:

- Helps identify and locate resources for events, functions, etc. with the president.
- Is present at every meeting and addresses issues or concerns within the choir.
- Helps delegate responsibility and ensure productivity and progress.
- Is a responsible role model and leads by example.

Historian – knows how to get the word out (advertise) and in the record books (chronicle). This person:

- Collects pictures, newspaper articles, programs, and other memorabilia throughout the year.
- Constructs an annual scrapbook recording the events of the Choral Dept. in that year.
- Is responsible for spirit signs throughout the year.

SECTION LEADERS

Section leaders are those leaders within each section of an ensemble that are selected by the director. These people assist in rehearsals by making sure the section learns the music when sectionals are taking place. It is their job to tell their fellow students where mistakes are being made and correct those mistakes. Section leaders are responsible for recording the attendance of their section at all performances.

Class Representative – is a person that represents his/her choir class. This person:

- Expresses the concerns or interest of the class.
- Serves as a voice and vote for the group
- Leads by example and maintains an outstanding character.

*****Development Opportunities*****

POP SHOW

Here it is! The best of the best! The annual Pop Show highlights the talents of the Choral Department with solo, medium, and large ensemble numbers incorporating the very best in singing, costumes, and choreography. Always a night to remember, each year’s Pop Show features the best in pop, rock, rap, and country, etc.! Auditions for this show are open to members of the GPHS Choral Department only.

CHOIR CAMP

Choir camp is an excellent way for our advanced students to get a head start on learning the All-State music for the year ahead. Choir camp is open to students entering grades 9-12. Many students are encouraged to take part in choir camp. However, participation in a choir camp does not guarantee:

- That the student will be selected to represent GPHS at the TMEA District or Region auditions.
- That the student will be selected for the TMEA District or Region Choir.

(*Students are not limited to attending choir camps which the GPHS Choral Dept. helps promote.)

Texas Future Music Educators (TFME)

The GPISD chapter of this statewide organization is made up of students in grades 9-12 who are interested in becoming music educators. Students who desire to be a part of this organization must submit an application with the required membership dues. This group meets 4 to 6 times a year, at various locations, and would help facilitate creating future music teachers. Members of

this group also have the opportunity to travel to TMEA on the Friday of the annual convention and return home Saturday night. They will attend various sessions devoted to them, including the All-State Concert. These students will be responsible for the cost of the trip to San Antonio.

*****Social Events*****

NEW MEMBER PICNIC

Each year, the Choir Officers sponsor a special social in honor of the newest students to the GP Choir. This particular event has taken on several different forms and themes. Although this social is in honor of those that are new to the GPHS Choir, all choir members are encouraged to be a part. This event is customarily held at the beginning of the Fall Semester.

Parade Float Design and Construction

Get in the Spirit of Homecoming and show your Choir and Jacket Pride with the planning of the parade float. Join other choir members to brainstorm and come up with a design and concept that will take first place in float contest.

Opera

Have an unforgettable evening at the Houston Grand Opera and listen to world class talent and masterpieces. Before the Opera, enjoy a great dinner with other choir members at one Houston's featured restaurants.

CHRISTMAS PARTY

Each December the Choir Officers organize a Christmas party to enjoy each other's company with dinner and a "white-elephant" gift exchange. This event is open to all GPHS Choir members.

Musical

Have an enchanted moment with Houston Hobby Center's outstanding Musical productions. Have a laugh and sing along as familiar and favorite show tunes are performed live!

AUDITIONS

Open auditions into the Choral Department are held each year in the spring. Either Mr. Ponce or Mr. Barrera will lead prospective choir members through some simple vocal exercises to help us become familiar with their voice. All students that are new to choir are encouraged to audition. However, only students seeking membership in one of our varsity-level ensembles are required to audition (i.e. Concert Choir, Vocal Ensemble, or Chorale). Students interested in joining Treble Choir or Men's Choir are not required to audition.

CHOIR BANQUET

No doubt, the award for "Best Party of the Year" always goes to the GPHS Choral Dept. for its annual Choir Banquet. Banquet is an evening of fun and entertainment that includes dinner, our choir awards ceremony, the "year-in-review" slide show, and dance. Students may make reservations for Banquet each April. Payment for Banquet can come from funds that the student's personal account or may be paid for separately. All members of the GPHS Choral Department are welcomed and encouraged to attend Banquet.

END OF THE YEAR PICNIC

Each year, the Choir Officers sponsor a special social to close the year. This particular event has taken on several different forms and themes. All choir members are encouraged to be a part. This event is customarily held at the end of the Spring Semester, typically on the last day of school.

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