Dear Parents/Guardians & Students,

Welcome to the Shadow Creek High School Shark Choir!

This handbook is designed to foster the success of the SCHS Choral Department, inform the students and their parents, and address questions and concerns that may arise throughout the school year.

I am excited to lead in the formation of a choir program that will earn the respect of the larger community through the diligent efforts of students, parents, directors, and administrators.

As a choir student, each of you accepts membership into an organization we will build together upon pride and commitment to excellence.

As a choir parent, each of you accepts the responsibility of understanding the expectations of your child in this choir program and supporting his or her endeavors to the fullest extent.

Please take time to read the handbook thoroughly and complete by the due date the signed paperwork acknowledging that you have read the handbook completely, and please note that you are responsible for all information presented, including the schedule as presented on the Shark Choir Calendar and all graded participation requirements.

Due to Mrs. Gallagher by Friday, September 2nd, 2016:

- Acknowledgement Page
- Consent to Travel/Medical Form

I hope that you will find this handbook a valuable resource for “all things choral” at SCHS, but should further questions arise, please don’t hesitate to visit our official website:

http://www.shadowcreekchoir.com

Welcome to the SHARK FAMILY! #finsup #choralreef #sharkchoirnation

Sincerely,

Mrs. Jennifer Gallagher
Director, Shadow Creek High School Choirs
jegallagher@alvinisd.net
281-245-3865
Choral Department

Program Goals

To present students at Shadow Creek High School with the opportunity to learn, sing, and perform music in our graded and leveled choir program.

To offer a quality musical experience through performance and competition of diverse choral literature.

To promote the cultivation of student relationships through teamwork and camaraderie.

To offer aspiring students opportunities for leadership.

To promote and develop good character in each student—including, but not limited to: self-discipline, creativity, self-esteem, and enthusiasm for learning.

To develop an aesthetic appreciation for choral music in students and in the surrounding community.

The Purpose of the Ensemble

Music performance teaches students to overcome anxiety and to take risks. They learn poise, composure, and the value of continued effort to achieve excellence. As a direct result of making music as a team, students have the opportunity to build and cultivate lasting friendships. Above all, music performance students know the satisfaction of the successful result of hard work, and this carries over into every other aspect of their lives.
Shark Choir Ensembles

Beginning Treble & Tenor/Bass Choruses
The beginning ensembles are open for any Shadow Creek High School student in any grade level. All ensemble members will receive valuable training and practice in sight-reading, building vocal tone, and mastering proper vocal technique. This ensemble will perform at every Shark Choir concert and will be a part of all Shark Choir social events. Eligible members of this choir may compete in UIL Concert & Sight-reading Contest in April. In the future, the beginning ensembles will remain open to any SCHS high school student. Students who have not had prior experience in choir may be required to be a member of this ensemble for at least one year before auditioning for any of the varsity ensembles.

Varsity Treble & Tenor/Bass Choruses
The varsity ensembles are for Shadow Creek High School students who have had prior musical experience (either in junior high choir or at SCHS). Students receive placement into these ensembles by audition only. All members will strengthen existing sight-reading skills and polish proper vocal technique, which will enable students to meet the demands of accelerated ensembles in high school. This ensemble will perform at every Shark Choir concert and will be a part of all Shark Choir social events. Eligible members of this choir may compete in UIL Concert & Sight-reading Contest in April. Varsity students are required to participate in either the TMEA Texas All-State audition process or prepare a solo for UIL & Ensemble Contest. Members of this choir are expected to maintain good grades and serve as representatives of our school and its choir program. In the future, these ensembles will continue to serve students who have had prior experience in choir, and placement will be determined by audition. Students without prior experience in choir may not be allowed to audition for the varsity ensembles.

Soundwaves Chamber Choir
This elite ensemble is for students who have superior musicianship and place a high dedication to choral singing in their lives. Students receive placement into this ensemble by audition only. All members will strengthen existing sight-reading skills and polish proper vocal technique, which will enable students to meet the demands of this accelerated vocal ensemble. In addition to fulfilling all community performance requests (examples include: football games, banquet dinners, pep rallies, Holiday tours), this ensemble will perform at every Shark Choir concert and will be a part of all Shark Choir social events. Soundwaves will compete in UIL Concert & Sight-reading Contest in April. Soundwaves students are required to participate in both the TMEA Texas All-State audition process and prepare a solo for UIL & Ensemble Contest. Members of this choir are expected to maintain good grades and serve as representatives of our school and its choir program. In the future, this ensemble will continue to serve students who have had prior experience and excellent musicianship, and placement will be determined by audition only. In addition, students may not be allowed to audition for Soundwaves membership without being concurrently enrolled in a large ensemble chorus.

NOTE: As the SCHS Choral program continues to grow; ensembles may change and/or additional ensembles may be added at director discretion.

Required Materials
- 1” 3-ring black hard cover binder (with folder pockets inside)
  - Pencil(s)
- Music (to be issued to students in class)
Students will be receiving music during the initial weeks of school, so the student’s choir binder will be needed in class ASAP to protect music. The very first materials check (see “Grading” section) will be in class on **Friday, September 2nd, 2016**, and by that point, the choir binder will be a daily requirement, along with a pencil. Students are certainly welcome to bring their materials BEFORE the official grade check—they will be able to take home their music that much sooner.

Students are required to keep this binder in good condition, as it may be used for performance onstage. In addition, the choir binder is a house for expensive music that is LOANED to the student. Writing, stapling, coloring, painting, drawing, and other things considered hazardous to be binder will not be permitted. If at any time in the school year the director deems that a student’s binder is unfit and needs to be replaced, another binder must be provided.

Regarding music, students may be issued choir octavos throughout the year. These octavos are borrowed property. After a concert is over, students will be required to turn their music in. All musical markings on the music must be made in **pencil** (erasable pens are NOT acceptable). Markings will be erased when the music is turned in. If the music is lost, torn, or returned with permanent markings, students must pay the replacement cost for the octavo.

Please see the “What If...” section for information regarding lost or forgotten music.

**Shark Choir Fee**

Each student in choir is required to pay a $40.00 fee. Here is a general breakdown of how the fee may utilized throughout the year:

- Choir t-shirt - $15.00
  - Mandatory purchase
  - Will be used as a uniform for the first concert and for all traveling events
- Uniform Maintenance - $15.00
  - Alterations (hemming), dry cleaning, repairs, etc.
- Miscellaneous program costs - $10.00
  - May include, but not limited to: travel, accompanist fees, social events, contest entries, general supplies, etc.

Checks should be made payable to “Alvin ISD”. A marked envelope has been provided for your convenience.

Please pay this fee as soon as possible, or by Friday, September 2nd, 2016.

NOTE: Please make the director aware if your family cannot pay the choir fee at this time.
**Anticipated Additional Choir Costs**

The following are some anticipated choir costs for the remainder of the school year. These costs are subject to change and serve for budgeting & planning purposes only. Scholarships are always available for students who need assistance.

- **TMEA District & Region Auditions (varsity choir members) = $20-$45**
  - Covers audition fees & transportation
- **Solo & Ensemble Contest (varsity choir members) = $20-$50**
  - Covers audition fee, transportation, & accompanist fee
- **Choir Banquet Ticket = $15-$40**
  - Covers catered food, desserts, awards, & after-party
- **Spring Choir Trip = details and cost TBD**
- **NOTE**: Students on any of the leadership teams (Section Leaders or Officers) may be required to purchase a shirt for their organization/team.

**Refund Policy**

Most fees charged to the student involve advance payment for a service or item. In such cases (i.e. accompanist fees, trip fees, game tickets, etc.), the choir has a deadline for receiving reimbursement from the supplier. Because of this, the following policy will be strictly followed: **There will be no refunds in any case where a student has paid for an activity or supply but is no longer able to participate. This policy applies no matter what the reason is for withdrawal and specifically includes, but is not limited to the situations of ineligibility, illness, unexpected family travel, or withdrawal from the SCHS Choir.**

**Shark Choir Attire**

Formal concert attire is the property of Alvin ISD, is loaned to the student, and must be returned at the end of the year. All SCHS students will be issued formal uniforms during the first semester.

**Full formal attire for treble choirs:**
- Black choir dress
- Black shoes (must be close-toed, can be heels or flats, but no tennis shoes or sandals)*

**Attire accessories for Soundwaves (women):**
- Colored ribbon for dress empire waist (to be determined later in the year)

**Full formal attire for tenor/bass choirs:**
- Tuxedo pants
- Tuxedo jacket
- Ocean blue tie
• Black button-down shirt, long-sleeved*
  o Male students will purchase their own black button down shirt, but they can do so through our uniform provider if more convenient.
• Black dress shoes (no tennis shoes)*
• Black socks (no white, brown, or navy socks)*

*must be purchased, if not owned

Dress hemming is scheduled to be done (all at once, in bulk) during choir time at some point during the first semester. Students who miss the official dress hemming date on campus (or neglect to pay their choir fee in full) will need to make arrangements to have their dress hemmed at an alteration site of their choice prior to the first concert where formal attire is required.

NOTE: No other alterations may be made on the dress (taking in the waist, raising the shoulders, etc.) These types of alterations completely change the sizing of the dress, and when reissued for subsequent years, the actual sizing will not correspond with the sizing on file. A fee will be charged if a student alters the dress (apart from hemming).

Students are expected to keep all items well laundered throughout the year.

Failure to return any part of the uniform in good condition and at the appropriate time will result in a fine and/or replacement fee for the uniform.

Unless instructed otherwise, students are expected to wear full formal concert attire for every SCHS choral concert. Failure to wear full formal attire will result in a grade deduction for that performance.

**Informal Attire**

Shark Choir t-shirts will be ordered at the start of the year. Students will be required to purchase the choir t-shirt to wear at certain Shark Choir events. This cost is included as part of the Choir Fee.

NOTE: Former choir t-shirts (Regular, Officer, & Pop Show) from previous years are dress code-approved and can certainly be worn to school on a regular basis.

For many events, we will wear something a little less formal that still looks unified and professional. Informal uniforms for specific events will be discussed in class, but for things like National Anthems at sporting events, all students (men and women) will wear our choir shirts with formal black pants (no black jeans) and nice black shoes and socks (no tennis shoes or chunky shoes). Please be aware that if we are singing on a playing field that is grass, women may not be allowed to wear heels because they damage the playing field or can get stuck in the dirt while walking on the field.

Other times, we will wear a nice black outfit with ocean blue accents of your own choosing. Examples of this may include for women a black pants outfit with blue
jewelry/belt or hair accessories or a black dress (not the choir formal dress) with blue jewelry. For men, it might be a pair of black slacks with a blue shirt and black jacket, or black slacks with a black shirt with a blue tie. The individual is responsible for finding a nice-looking outfit that is appropriate.

Specific dress for specific occasions will be reviewed in class prior to the event, but you should have ready at any time a pair of black pants and nice black shoes (flats for ladies).

**Shark Choir**

**Calendar for the 2016-2017 School Year**

**DOWNLOAD THE CHOIR CALENDAR TO YOUR PHONE!**

http://www.shadowcreekchoir.com

**PROVIDED SEPARATELY ON CARDSTOCK FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE**

**PLEASE NOTE:**

The choir calendar is intended as an aid for your schedule and for that of your student. Please understand that if certain dates change, your student will still be required to participate in all designated rehearsals, contests (where his/her ensemble are competing), and performances.

The director reserves the right to call after school or before school rehearsals as deemed fit, particularly in regard to preparation for concerts and contests. Advance notice will be given of any rehearsals outside of class time. Should scheduling conflicts with outside rehearsals arise; proper documentation and notice must be given to the director.

Any changes in the calendar or notices will be sent home with ample time for you to arrange for transportation or to become aware of conflicts. Please see the “Grading” and “Attendance Policy” sections for the policies on scheduling issues.

NOTE: There are only 4 major concerts (and corresponding dress rehearsals) for the entire year. Please mark your calendar in advance and make arrangements for your student to be picked-up/transported on these dates. There are many other students in choir, and rides can be arranged with other choir parents, if advance notice is given. Performing is the primary purpose of this class; therefore, students who cannot commit to these performances are limiting their experience and hindering the team.
Communication

Students are given ample notice of scheduled rehearsals, performances, and activities so that conflicts are minimal. As students continue their quest to be responsible adults and perfect the art of balancing and organizing activities and calendars, it is their responsibility to inform parents, employers, coaches, sponsors, and other teachers of choir activities. Mrs. Gallagher will encourage and expect the student to communicate with the various sponsors and generate their own solution to the conflict. Simply stating that, "I won't be at the rehearsal because I have a dance practice," is neither adequate nor appropriate.

Instead, something along the following lines will be outstanding and show maturity and understanding: "I have spoken with the dance teacher and have spoken with you, and I have worked out that my participation in the dance rehearsal in two weeks is more vital than this week's because our show is the following Friday. Is it OK if I come to this week's choir rehearsal but miss next week's so I can attend the dance dress rehearsal? That's OK with the dance instructor, and I realize that I will have a make-up assignment for choir."

Never, ever go up to Mrs. Gallagher and just say, “I can’t be at the concert tonight.” It shows disrespect for your team and what the group is trying to accomplish together. Would you ever go up to your coach and say, “I can’t be at the game tonight because I have...”? NO! So why would you do that to your choir director?

Instead, a better thing to say would be, "Something came up that is a conflict with the concert tonight, and I need some help in finding a solution," or "There's a conflict with tonight's concert, and I can't figure out how to solve it." Those types of approaches show that you care about the conflict's resolution and respect your director, your fellow choir members, and the choir's goals enough to try to work something out.

When conflicts arise between two organizations, students should try to work out the conflict well in advance by communicating with both directors/sponsors. If the student is unable to work out a solution, the parents and directors will then get involved and work out a solution. Learning to work conflicts out through proper means of communication is an essential life skill, and it is one that the SCHS Choir wishes to encourage its students to develop.

Academic Eligibility

All choir students are responsible for maintaining high academic standards. Eligibility rules for participation are as follows:

1. Please note that throughout the year, curriculum-based performances (Fall Concert, Winter Concert, Pre-UIL Spring Concert) that are a performance grade for the choir does NOT require eligibility to participate. Students must perform on these concerts as part of their choir grade regardless of academic eligibility.
2. All students are eligible the first six weeks of school.
3. At the end of the first six weeks, students with a failing grade in any class (69 or below) will become academically ineligible and may not participate in many activities (trips off
campus, participating in singing at pep rallies, participate in any activity that requires admission, or compete at any TMEA/UIL-related events.)

4. Every nine weeks, if the student fails (below 70%) one or more subjects on a report card, he/she will not be permitted to participate in extra-curricular activities for the next three weeks.

5. Every three weeks, an ineligible student may regain eligibility by passing ALL subjects. S/he will be eligible to participate in choir activities following a one-week grace period. If s/he is failing any course, the student will continue to be ineligible for the next three weeks.

6. Please note that, with the exception of the second progress report of the year (given out at the six-week mark), a student can only LOSE eligibility from Report Cards. A student who passes everything on a report card stays eligible for the next 9 weeks regardless of any progress report grades. A student cannot lose eligibility based on a progress report grade, but failing a class on a progress report can KEEP a student ineligible.

7. Choir officers, members of Soundwaves, and students in the varsity ensembles must maintain their eligibility status throughout the year. Any student in these groups who becomes ineligible may be on probation for the rest of the year. If a probationary student is ineligible a second time during the year, the director reserves the right to move the student to an alternate choir, thus allowing the student more time to focus on their academic needs.

8. It is possible that during the school year, a student may fail an advanced placement or dual credit course, but meets the requirements listed in the AISD Student/Parent Handbook to complete an eligibility waiver. Whether or not Mrs. Gallagher will complete a grade waiver for a student will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Please note that some non-UIL events require eligibility due to Texas Education Agency rules.
These include but are not limited to any event that charges admission (Pop Show, National Anthems at sports events), pep rallies, any competition, and some other performances. Mrs. Gallagher will allow ineligible students to participate in any event where it is legal to do so, so if they say that ineligible students may not participate, it is because the state legislature has dictated thus, not because they chose to limit participation.

Grading

Grades in choir are earned by assessing each student’s knowledge (classroom assignments, quizzes, and exams), skills (sight-reading and mastering repertoire), and participation in daily rehearsals and required performances.

Grades will be assessed on a percentage system as follows:

- Rehearsals (in class & outside of school): 45%
- Classroom assignments and sight reading quizzes: 25%
• Performances: 30%

Rehearsals:
In a given week, a choir will rehearse 5 times, for a total of 100 points per week (20 points per day). Points may be subtracted for an infraction of a choir rule (see “Discipline Policy” section). A rehearsal grade encompasses all daily participation in choir class. The rehearsal grade will be worth a total of 45% of a student’s choir grade.

Classroom Assignments & Quizzes:
Students will be routinely quizzed on sight-reading skills and for knowledge of the performance repertoire rehearsed in class. Quizzes are to check for comprehension and to encourage closer study of music and sight-reading materials. Students may also be given brief written assignments or quizzes to enhance and drill further study of performance repertoire. Classroom assignments and quizzes will be worth a total of 25% of a student’s choir grade.

Performance Attendance:
As this is a performance-based class, attendance at all performances is mandatory. Why is attendance mandatory at performances?

• Performing for an audience is the primary focus of this class. Concerts provide an experience that cannot be reproduced in the classroom.
• Performances are the means by which the skills learned in class are evaluated.
• Choral singing is a group effort. The performance is weakened by every missing voice. We rehearse together and we perform together.

A student will earn full credit (100) by simply appearing and performing. If a student is late for the warm-up time, they will receive 90 points. If a student appears after a performance has already begun, they will receive 80 points. If a student appears on time to a concert without proper attire or materials (i.e. music binder), 5 points will be deducted for each missing article. A student will receive zero points for not appearing. As performance attendance encompasses 30% of a student’s choir grade, a student will be in danger of failing choir for the term if s/he fails to appear at a performance with no valid excuse (see “Attendance Policy” section for explanation of an excused absence).
**Choir Room Expectations**

1. Feel free to do anything that does not cause a problem for anyone else.
2. Teaching will happen when there are no distractions or other problems.
3. Students who raise their hand will be acknowledged.
4. The director will listen to one person at a time.
5. Please treat your director with the same respect you are shown.
6. If someone causes a problem, something will be done.
7. The action of the director will depend on what happened and what the person is willing to do to solve the problem.

**Discipline Policy**

Our choral ensembles are music teams. The actions of any individual can help or hinder the entire ensemble in both rehearsal and performance. Self-discipline is not optional; it is required. Repeat offenders may be removed from the class at the director’s discretion and asked to complete written assignments to earn their grade.

Students begin each week with a clean slate (100 points). A tally will be taken by the director each day and points will be deducted at the end of each week from the student’s weekly grade.

- 10 points: no music/binder
- 10 points: no pencil
- 10 points: chewing gum
- 10 points: tardy
- 5 points: out of seat without permission
- 5 points: each reprimand for behavior (talking or other disruptions) or redirect to participate
- 20 points: failure/refusal to participate in lesson

**Shark Choir: Bank Account**

Students will earn “choir money” for their “Choir Bank Account” that will correlate with their weekly grade (ex: 100 weekly grade = $100 in the bank account). This money can be spent for prizes and is used to pay monthly choir rent ($250).

- Free tardy pass
- Free restroom pass
- Free seating pass (you can sit where you want during any 1 rehearsal)
- Free sitting pass (you can sit down during any 1 rehearsal, even if the rest of the choir has to stand!)
- Materials check pass (excused on a day you accidentally forget your materials)

This management/reward system is meant to mirror life-skills: earning, budgeting, saving, and paying bills. Remember, the more you earn—the more you have to spend!
**Attendance Policy**

As a member of the Shark Choir, students have an obligation to their ensemble to be at school, at rehearsals, and at performances on time, prepared, and with all necessary materials. Please read the following carefully:

1. All choir students are expected to have good daily attendance at school.

2. Attendance at rehearsals is **required and graded**. Each member is a vital part of the ensemble, and there are elements of a rehearsal that cannot be reproduced if missed. Students must make the director aware in advance if they will not be at a choir rehearsal (due to a doctor’s appointment, meeting with counselors, sporting event, etc). The exception is if the student is ill, and advance notice cannot be given, but a note must still be provided after the missed rehearsal has occurred.

3. Absence from before or after school rehearsals will be excused for the following reasons:
   - Medical emergencies or personal injury (requires a handwritten and signed note from a parent or doctor)
   - Death in family
   - Another extracurricular conflict (band, theater, athletics, etc) which the director was made aware of at least 2 days prior to the rehearsal in writing.

4. Absence from a concert will be excused for the following reasons:
   - Medical emergencies or personal injury (requires a handwritten and signed note from a parent or doctor)
   - Death in the family

5. If a concert is missed due to an excused absence, a makeup project will be assigned and will be due within one week of the student's return to school (see “Makeup Work” section). A student's grade may be withheld until the assignment is completed.

6. Examples of unexcused absences include, but are not limited to:
   - Work
   - Oversleeping
   - Transportation issues
   - Babysitting

7. Chronic absenteeism from school, multiple unexcused absences from rehearsals or performances, and multiple tardies may result in:
   - Grade reduction
   - Loss of performance status (in concerts, in competitions, or in class)
   - Removal from choir program
   - Removal from all Shark Choir social activities

**Make-up Work**

Students who miss a regular rehearsal (whether excused or not) must do the following:

- Check in with their section leader about what selections or pieces were rehearsed
- Update markings in their music that were made when they were absent
Students who miss a concert (for an excused absence) will be required to make up the grade. Students who miss a concert for an unexcused absence (oversleeping, transportation, work, or babysitting) will be allowed to make-up the grade, but only for reduced credit. Students who miss a concert and do not complete a corresponding assignment will be in danger of failing choir for the term. This nature of the assignment is subject to change based on director discretion.

Make-up assignments are not meant to be punitive. They are intended to reflect the importance of the concert preparation and performances, as well as give the director a chance to assess the 6-9 weeks' worth of classroom preparation that occurs before a concert. The concert is a major grade, so the make-up work will reflect that.

Examples of a concert make-up assignment (may include, but not limited to):
- Performing missed music in class or outside of class (as a solo or with a small group)
- Watching and evaluating the concert missed
- Essay and/or project or presentation on specified topic of director’s choice

**Extra Credit**

Students who wish to complete extra credit can attend an outside classical music concert. Here are some examples of appropriate concerts:

- Shadow Creek High School band concerts
- Manvel High School choir or band concerts (football games don’t count, sorry!)
- Alvin High School choir or band concerts
- Houston Symphony or Bay Area Symphony concerts
- Houston Grand Opera
- Houston Chamber Choir concerts
- Choir concerts at the University of Houston, Rice University, St. Thomas, etc.

In order to receive extra credit, students must attend the entire concert, and they must bring the director a program (within 3 days of the event) that is signed by a parent or guardian. Extra credit will be added where needed.

If you are planning on attending an outside concert, and you are not sure if it can be used for extra credit, just ask!

Sorry – no extra credit can be given for rock, pop, or country concerts!

**Connect with the Shark Choir**

Official Website: [www.shadowcreekchoir.com](http://www.shadowcreekchoir.com)

[HTTPS://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/SHADOWCREEKCHOIR/](https://www.facebook.com/ShadowCreekChoIR)

[TWITTER: @SCSHARKCHOIR](https://twitter.com/SCSharkChoIR)

[INSTAGRAM: SHADOWCREEKCHOIR](https://www.instagram.com/shadowcreekchoir)
“What if...”

*The following are likely choir scenarios and how to deal with them:*

- **“... I lost my music.” OR “I forgot my music at home.”**
  - Students are responsible for ALL of their music and their music binder. These are required materials for every rehearsal.
  - In the event that a student loses their music, they will be required to pay the replacement cost for each piece they cannot find.
  - A new black binder must be provided if lost.
  - Students are responsible for setting up a time with their section leaders or the student music librarian to get new copies of music (*during rehearsal is not an appropriate time*).
  - Students who fail to pick up music BEFORE REHEARSAL STARTS will face discipline/grading consequences.
  - In the event that music is accidentally forgotten one day, the student may ask one of their section leaders for extra copies that MUST BE RETURNED at the end of the rehearsal.
  - Students who are not bringing their music to class will incur grade penalties.

- **“... I don’t have a pencil.”**
  - A pencil (or 2-3) should be kept in the choir binder at all times.
  - In the event that a pencil is missing from the binder, a student may ask one of their section leaders for an extra pencil that MUST BE RETURNED at the end of the rehearsal.
  - It is not appropriate to get up in the middle of rehearsal to sharpen a pencil. Please take care of this BEFORE REHEARSAL STARTS.
  - Pens, highlighters, markers, sharpies, etc are not appropriate for marking music.
  - Students who fail to pick up a pencil BEFORE REHEARSAL STARTS will face discipline/grading consequences.
  - Students who are not bringing a pencil to class will incur grade penalties.

- **“... I have to go to the bathroom/I need a drink of water!”**
  - Students are expected to use the restroom and get water from the water fountain during passing periods.
  - Rehearsal time is not restroom or drink time.

- **“... I have to go to the nurse.”**
  - If a student becomes seriously ill during rehearsal, they should raise their hand and wait for the director to address them.
  - If a student feels they will need to go to the nurse in a given class period, they should ask the director for a pass BEFORE rehearsal begins.

- **“... I was absent last class.”**
  - You are responsible for checking with your section leader and updating any markings that were made in your absence.
  - Do not ask the director, “What did I miss last class?” Your section leaders will have that information.

- **“... I didn’t get the new music from yesterday.”**
If you were absent and you know that new music was handed out, you must ask your section leaders for copies.
Do not come to the director and ask about new music. If you have questions about which piece you need to pick up, ask your section leader.

- “... my cell phone goes off in class.”
  - Cell phones and other electronic devices are not permitted during choir class unless directed by the director & her lesson plans.
  - School policy will be strictly adhered to regarding cell phones.

- “... I’m sick and I can’t sing today.”
  - If you are ill and can still sing (just not at full voice), you must let the director know BEFORE rehearsal starts that you will be marking that day.
  - If you are so ill that you cannot sing at all, you must let the director know BEFORE rehearsal starts. Failure to let the director know BEFORE rehearsal will result in disciplinary and grade consequences.
  - You will still participate in all of the rehearsal in your assigned seat, and you will be responsible for all of the music markings made that day. You will be required to mouth the words and stand when your section is standing.
  - Students who are too sick to sing for more than 2 consecutive rehearsals will be required to provide a signed parent note or doctor’s note stating the reason for not singing. Failure to provide this note will result in the student sitting outside of the rehearsal area and copying lines.
  - NOTE: These strict policies are to alleviate students who routinely take advantage of being sick and use it as a catalyst not to participate. If your child is severely sick and will really not be able to sing for several days, please send a note or an email to the director.

- “... I need a tissue.”
  - During rehearsal, it is not appropriate to leave the rehearsal area to get a tissue.
  - Please bring your own tissues to class and take them with you to your chair if you know you are sick.

- “...I need some hand sanitizer.”
  - During rehearsal, it is not appropriate to leave the rehearsal area to get hand sanitizer.
  - Feel free to utilize your own personal hand sanitizer during your passing period or before class starts.

- “... I love to play the piano!”
  - The piano is off-limits to all students, except when section leaders and/or student directors are given direct permission from the director.
  - The piano is an instrument, not a table for drinks, papers, etc.
  - Do not move the piano unless given direct permission from the director.
  - NOTE: All of these rules also apply to the keyboards in the practice rooms.

- “...I love choir SOOO much, I want to be here all of the time!”
  - When a director is not present is not in the room (before school, after school, lunch time) the choir room is strictly off limits. If you come into the choir room and a director is not there, please leave and wait outside of the room for them to return.
  - Mrs. Gallagher’s desk/office is strictly off limits if she is not there.
Students who are not in choir (even if they are your best friend forever) will not be allowed to “hang out” in the choir room.

- “...I love so-and-so and I want to write our names on the board together inside a little heart!”
  - Use of the following items requires director approval:
    - dry-erase board
    - piano
    - stereo & other media components
    - phone
    - choir office, choir library, & practice rooms

- “...I was a monkey in another life!”
  - Please refrain from the following:
    - Walking on the chairs
    - Using the chair in front of you as a foot rest
    - Putting several chairs together to lay across them
    - Sharing a chair with your BFF
    - Jumping from chair to chair
    - Hanging on the back of the risers
    - Crawling through the back of the risers to get to your seat
    - Crawling underneath the risers

- “...my hair is gross/my legs are ashy/but I just got out of PE!”
  - Personal grooming at your seat is unacceptable. This includes:
    - Brushing your hair
    - Spraying deodorizer, colognes, perfumes, or hairspray
    - Applying scented lotions
    - Grooming other people’s hair
    - Applying cosmetics

- “I lost my...”
  - Anything found in the choir room at the end of the day is gathered up and put into the “Lost & Found Box”.
  - Students are responsible for checking this box to see if their missing items are there.
  - The choir leadership team will go through this box at the end of every month to empty and clean it. Items may be thrown away or those that are in good condition may be donated.

**Student Leadership: Shark Choir Council**

Student leadership is an integral part of any choral program. The development of our choral council will be vital in promoting the choir program, assisting the director, and serving the surrounding community.

Any SCHS choir student may serve on the choir council. Membership in the choral council is maintained by an active point system. Students who fall under the required point system can regain membership on the choir council simply by earning the required amount of points to remain active.

Only students who are a choir council member are eligible to run for the executive board. The first election for the inaugural executive board will take place within the first few weeks of school.
Executive board members are expected to attend meetings and follow the terms of their contract to maintain active status. Executive board members who do not meet the terms of their contract can be replaced (by director appointment or emergency council election) at any time throughout the year.

The following are possible executive board positions and their functions:

- **President:**
  - Spokesperson for the Shark Choir program
  - Liaison between students and director
  - Presides over choir officer meetings
  - Year 1: must be a junior (in the future, must be a senior)
- **Vice-President(s):**
  - Liaison between their grade and the choir President
  - Keeps track of choir birthdays
  - Takes pictures at choir social events
  - Serve as committee chairs for various events
- **Secretary:**
  - Maintains the Shark Choir calendar & all classroom decorations
  - Keeps minutes at choir officer meetings
  - Collects and alphabetizes forms
  - Updates student correspondence
- **Wardrobe Officer(s):**
  - Assists with uniform fittings
  - Assists with t-shirt distribution
  - Assists with collecting and cataloguing the uniforms at the end of the year
- **Librarian:**
  - Assists director with filing new music octavos
  - Helps distribute music to choir students
  - Helps collect and re-file music after concerts
- **Stage Manager:**
  - Assists with all stage set-up and tear-down for all performances
  - Directs the stage crew
- **Historian:**
  - Collect pictures from every event to be utilized in Shark Choir publicity
  - Create the end-of-the-year slideshow for choir banquet.

The following are the musical leadership of the Shark Choir program. They are responsible for assisting the director with all attendance and musical tasks. The musical leadership team will be under the umbrella of the choir council and members are required to attend meetings and follow the terms of their contract to maintain active status.

- **Student Director (may be added in subsequent years):**
  - Leads ensembles in the director’s absence
  - Conducts at concerts (determined by director discretion)
  - Must have vast prior musical experience
  - Must demonstrate superior leadership
  - Ambassador for the Shark Choir program
- **Section Leaders:**
  - 2-3 per choir, at the discretion of the director
  - Leads sectionals and ensembles in the director’s absence
- Must have some musical experience & superior leadership
- Reviews past rehearsals with students who are absent from choir class
- Must have excellent attendance
- Assists new choir students with sight reading
- Section Leaders will primarily be considered on the basis of superior musical leadership and excellent behavior. Section leaders may change throughout the year, at director discretion.

**Concert Etiquette**

During Shark Choir concerts, students will watch the other choirs perform; therefore, correct concert behavior is an expectation.

In addition, since choir is a performance-based elective, students may attend a classical musical concert for extra credit.

The following are some guidelines for general concert attendance for audience members:

1. Enter and exit your seat only between selections. If possible, wait until the audience is applauding before moving. The only exception is if you need to remove a restless or crying child.

2. Don’t talk during a performance. Not only is it inconsiderate of the performers onstage, but also it is distracting for your fellow audience members.

3. Please turn cell phones off (not just on silent or vibrate). Many classical concerts are being recorded or have advanced amplification equipment, and cell phone signals will interfere and could create feedback.

4. If your performance venue allows you to eat in the auditorium, do not unwrap candy or slurp soda while the musicians are playing.

5. It is customary to applaud when the conductor first comes out on the stage. S/he will bow to acknowledge the audience’s applause and the concert will begin.

6. Some classical pieces of music are broken down into parts called “movements”. In between these movements, the music will stop for a few seconds. Do not applaud until the conductor has dropped his/her hands and has turned around to acknowledge the audience.

7. Whistling, yelling, or screaming for the performers are generally not appropriate gestures for classical music concerts.


**Choir Extras**

_The following are extra musical opportunities for your student. They are not mandatory, and participation or lack thereof will not reflect your child's grade in any way._

_(See exception for varsity choir students below.)_

**TMEA All-State Choir Auditions**

_(REQUIRED FOR SOUNDWAVES & VARSITY CHOIRS)_

This experience is unforgettable and rewarding, but a definite challenge. Each student who auditions must use his/her own individual repertoire performance for placement into the Texas Music Educators Association (TMEA) Region XVII Choir. High school choir students from all over the region compete for placement into this honor choir by preparing difficult music for a panel of judges. Unlike junior high auditions, students who earn a certain chair will continue with new music in the All-State process (district, region, pre-area, area, state). All students who are currently in Soundwaves are required to audition. Varsity choir students must either choose to participate in TMEA All-State auditions OR perform a solo at UIL Solo & Ensemble contest. Students who place into the district or region choir after the initial auditions give a concert under a renowned clinician in November. The music is advanced and challenging, and students who are interested are strongly encouraged to take private voice lessons and attend a summer All-State camp. After school rehearsals are also encouraged. Students participating in this process are required to maintain an active amount of “all-state points” in order to audition for each round.

**UIL Solo & Ensemble**

_(REQUIRED FOR SOUNDWAVES & VARSITY CHOIRS)_

Students will prepare a solo for a judge who will rate the performance based on memorization and execution of musicianship. Students who receive a high rating at this competition receive a medal. All students who are currently in Soundwaves are required to audition. Varsity choir students must either choose to participate in TMEA All-State auditions OR perform a solo at UIL Solo & Ensemble contest. Please see the calendar for the corresponding date for this event.

**Private Voice Lessons**

Private voice lessons are a wonderful asset for students who plan on auditioning for All-State and preparing a solo for competition. Private lessons strengthen a student’s vocal technique, and the one-on-one assistance is invaluable.

Lessons occur once a week, either after school or during choir class. Depending on the instructor, the price may be anywhere between $15 - $25 for a half-hour lesson. If you are interested in private voice lessons for your student, please stay tuned for additional details/paperwork, and a teacher will contact you to set up private lessons.

Please note that signing up for private lessons is a **year-long** monetary commitment.

**Spring Choir Trip/Tour**

Mrs. Gallagher is currently researching dates and pricing for our inaugural choir trip. At this point in time, the trip will likely occur in either March or April. It will be a day trip/tour, open to all SCHS choir students. The goal is to do a concert exchange with another high school in the area, shop/ice-skate at the Houston Galleria, and attend a Houston-area performance in the evening. Charter buses will likely be provided and chaperones will certainly be needed. Stay tuned for more details!
Letter Jackets

Due to the transitory nature of the inaugural SCHS junior class, the director and the district reserve the right to amend the requirements below for the first year the Shadow Creek High School is open.

In addition to specific program requirements for choir, the following Alvin ISD general requirements for an award, must be met by the student:

1. Complete successful participation for a minimum of one year in choir.
2. Not leave choir for disciplinary reasons.
3. Not be suspended or placed in an alternative education program the school year the award is received.
4. Not end the one-year period with a probationary status.
5. Receive the recommendation of the respective organization’s sponsor.*

*A student may not receive the recommendation of the choir director, which is required to be awarded the letter, if any of the following have occurred:
   - Excessive behavior problems.
   - Excessive academic eligibility problems.
   - Excessive attendance problems, including any required after-school events.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>YOUR POINTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Choir member in good standing</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choir council member in good standing</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in All-State audition process</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advance past the district audition</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member of region choir</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advance to area audition</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member of Texas All-State Choir</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in UIL Solo &amp; Ensemble</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superior rating in UIL Solo &amp; Ensemble</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in SCHS Musical</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perform a solo at pop show</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member of a choir that competes in UIL</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choir officer (must finish a full term)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choir section leader (must finish a full term)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total points needed for a letter jacket - 20

YOUR TOTAL POINTS _____

If you think you might have enough points for a letter jacket, use this form to add up your totals and turn it in to your choir director.

NAME______________________________ GRADE__________ DATE SUBMITTED ______________

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Acknowledgement Page

TO SAVE PAPER, THE 2016-2017 CHOIR HANDBOOK IS ONLINE.
PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE:
http://www.shadowcreekchoir.com

If you do not have internet access at home, please initial below:

_____ Provide me with a hardcopy of the choir handbook (will be sent home with your student)

Please read the entire handbook, complete this page, detach it, and return it to Mrs. Gallagher by Friday, September 2nd, 2016

I, _______________________ and my child _________________ have received, read, and understand the contents of the Shadow Creek High School Shark Choir Handbook. We agree to adhere to all policies, procedures, rules, and fees described therein. These include, but are not limited to: required materials and expenses, the calendar of required events, grading and discipline policy, attendance policy, student responsibilities and expectations, and all performances and contests.

I, the student, understand that my failure to abide by this agreement may result in appropriate action including, but not limited to: teacher/student conferences, teacher/parent conferences, grade penalization (as stated in the grading and conduct policy), discipline referrals, restriction from any choir events, and dismissal from the Shadow Creek High School Choir Program.

______________________________  ____________________
(Student Signature)              (Date)

I, the parent/guardian, agree to support my child in his/her participation in choir, and to help foster the sense of pride, teamwork, and success that s/he can acquire through such participation.

______________________________  ____________________
(Parent/Guardian Signature)      (Date)
Shadow Creek High School – CHOIR
Consent to Travel - Medical Release Form

Student Name __________________________________    Grade _____________________
Father’s Name ____________________________________    Home Phone Number ________
Address _________________________________________    Work Phone Number ________
City __________________, Zip _______________    Cell Phone Number ______________

Mother’s Name ____________________________________    Home Phone Number ________
Address _________________________________________    Work Phone Number ________
City __________________, Zip _______________    Cell Phone Number ______________

ALVIN ISD IS NOT LIABLE FOR INJURY TO STUDENTS. EACH INJURED STUDENT IS RESPONSIBLE
FOR PAYMENT OF ALL MEDICAL OR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES.

ALTERNATE EMERGENCY CONTACT:
Name ____________________________________________    Phone Number ________________
Doctor’s Name ____________________________________    Phone Number ________________

Health Information — Please circle yes or no
1. During the past 12 months:
   a. Was he/she hospitalized? yes no
   b. Did he/she have any injuries requiring medical attention? yes no
   c. Did he/she have any illness lasting more than 1 week? yes no
2. Do you know of any reason why there should be a limit
    in his/her participation in this activity? yes no
3. Has he/she ever had a concussion/been knocked unconscious? yes no
4. Has he/she ever had a convulsion? yes no

Please check if applicable:
( ) Allergies ( ) Blood Disease ( ) Bone Disease ( ) Asthma ( ) Hypoglycemia (low blood sugar)
( ) Wears Contact Lenses ( ) Diabetes ( ) Heart Disease ( ) Stomach Disorder ( ) Reaction to Insect Sting
( ) Wears Glasses ( ) Hyperactive ( ) Epilepsy

Does your child take any medicine on a regular basis? yes no
If yes, state type, dosage and time given:
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________

Insurance Carrier: ________________________________________________________________________
Policy/Group Number ____________ Deductible Amount ______

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:
(I)(WE), THE UNDERSIGNED PARENT AND GUARDIAN OF ___________________________________,
A MINOR, GRANT PERMISSION TO TRAVEL WITH THE SHADOW CREEK HIGH SCHOOL CHOIR FOR THE
PURPOSE OF CLINICS, CONCERTS, SOCIAL EVENTS AND/OR CONTESTS. AS A PARENT AND/OR GUARDIAN, I
AUTHORIZE SCHOOL PERSONNEL TO TAKE SUCH EMERGENCY ACTION AS MAY BE DEEMED NECESSARY
INCLUDING THE TRANSPORTATION OF THE STUDENT TO A HOSPITAL OR MEDICAL FACILITY.

I DO HEREBY AUTHORIZE THE MEDICAL TREATMENT OF THE ABOVE NAMED MINOR IN THE EVENT OF A
MEDICAL EMERGENCY; WHICH, IN THE OPINION OF SCHOOL PERSONNEL OR OF THE ATTENDING
PHYSICIAN, MAY ENDANGER HIS/HER LIFE, CAUSE DISFIGUREMENT, PHYSICAL IMPAIRMENT OR UNDUE
DISCOMFORT IF DELAYED. I WILL ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY FOR FINANCIAL COST INCURRED IN
RELATION TO THE TREATMENT OF MY CHILD.

THIS RELEASE FORM IS COMPLETED AND SIGNED OF MY OWN FREE WILL FOR THE PURPOSE OF
AUTHORIZED TRAVEL AND MEDICAL TREATMENT UNDER EMERGENCY CIRCUMSTANCES.

FATHER/MOTHER/LEGAL GUARDIAN SIGNATURE: __________________________________________
DATE: ______________________________________

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