

# Welcome to Armstrong Choir!

Hello, Parents and Guardians!

I am so excited to be returning to Armstrong MS Choir this year! This is my 9th year teaching, with this being my 2nd year at Armstrong.

This year is sure to pose unique challenges never faced before in education. However, I am eager to tackle the unique challenges to provide your child with a fun, safe environment they feel connected to through music.

Because of the “unique-ness” of this year, I don’t have all the answers, and **what I have planned is subject to change at any time according to district policy.**

That being said, let’s have a fantastic year!

Stephanie Montgomery

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## What is Choir?

In this choir, you will

- Work hard, play hard.
- Learn how to read staff notation using rhythm counting & solfege at an independent level.
- Develop “ear training” skills to understand tuning and intervals.
- Learn proper choral tone, known as “bel canto” singing.
- Experience diverse genres of music in some foreign languages.
- Learn how to make music come alive, by making emotional connections to the text.
- Contribute to a team effort while celebrating individual identity.
- Have a place to call home.

## Rules

- If you attend in person, you must wear a mask for the duration of the choir class period. It greatly helps mitigate singing aerosols from spreading.
- Please enter the room (or Google Meet) safely and be seated with your choir binder *before* the tardy bell rings.
- Treat director and fellow choir students in a respectful manner. Patience & understanding go a long way!
- Be open and receptive to choral instruction, being willing to improve instead of accepting “good enough.”
- No food, drink, candy, or gum! Bottled/sealed water is allowed.
- ZERO cell phones during rehearsal. Place it on “airplane mode” and away from arms reach (in-person learning = place in your backpack)
- There are breaks to talk, but during active rehearsal, there is no talking allowed.
- Take care of all materials, such as binders, piano, risers, and student area.

## Consequences

- 3 strikes system
  - Strike 1 = verbal warning.
  - Strike 2 = student conference.
  - Strike 3 = Note/text sent home regarding behavior, and student completes a rehearsal etiquette form before returning to rehearsal.
- Consistent misconduct or more severe actions (such as, but not limited to: bullying, defiance, violence)
  - Parent Phone Call
  - Detention
  - Office Referral

## Grading policy *“Choir is an easy A, but not a lazy A!”*

- 40% Daily Grades
  - Weekly Rehearsal Etiquette Grade, Sight Reading, Practice Logs, Google Forms, etc.
- 60% Tests
  - Concerts & Solfege Tests

## Importance of Concerts

In Plano ISD, concerts are deemed as **curricular** events, meaning that **all concerts are counted as test grades** (50 points for attendance, 50 for performance etiquette).

## Concerts during Covid

We will still aim to have a “concert” every nine weeks (exception = 6th grade will have their first in December). Concerts will look different at this time. **There will not be any after-school, audience-attended concerts until social distancing guidelines are lifted.**

When a “concert day” is reached, the in-person students will be recorded performing in the choir room, with masks on. This recording will then be shared with all the at-home students, who will use the track to help submit recordings of themselves singing along. I will then do my best as an amateur to combine the videos into a single performance, which will then be shared with parents.

6th grade is 3 different class periods. So, in-person students will be required to stay after school until just 4:30 on concert days so we can do our recordings together. We will attempt to have these rehearsals spread out in the cafeteria so we can remain spread out.

## **Dress Code for Concerts**

Normally, we would all get a choir T-shirt. At this time, I am not sure how we would handle this with several students at home. So, in an effort to make everyone's life a little easier, we will wear student-provided, all-black attire for every concert.

## **Calendar**

Because so much is up in the air, any socials and competitions will be announced as information becomes available.

The only required dates known so far are for the 6th grade students. They must meet together to have their after-school recording for the concerts on the following days from 3:40-4:30pm.

December 8

March 16

April 29

Even though this is right after school, no audience of parents or siblings will be allowed to attend these recording sessions.

## **Receipt of Handbook - due August 30**

Please complete this Google Form to acknowledge receipt of this handbook.

Students = (please, be logged into your PISD account)

<https://tinyurl.com/AMSChoirHandbookStudent>

Parents =

<https://tinyurl.com/AMSChoirHandbookParent>