

Centennial High School Choral Department

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To the Parents of Incoming 9th Grade Students & Future CHS Choir Members,

Now more than ever, students in Texas high schools are being encouraged to explore courses and content areas that they believe will challenge them and assist them with their preparation for post-secondary educational experiences. The new graduation requirements established by our state board have exponentially expanded student's ability to invest and participate in four years of instruction in a variety of content areas (ie: Athletics & Fine Arts, Dual Fine Arts Programs, Language and Fine Arts, etc.), enabling them to graduate with a wide variety of Endorsements and Performance Distinctions (the new Distinguished Achievement Benchmarks).

Over the years, numerous studies have been conducted to determine and measure the benefits of music education. The results have repeatedly been an overwhelming testament to it's positive and long-term impact on the lives of young people, both personally and professionally.

Here are just a few examples of what researchers have found:

"Music students out-perform non-music on achievement tests in reading and math. Skills such as reading, anticipating, memory, listening, forecasting, recall, and concentration are developed in musical performance, and these skills are valuable to students in math, reading, and science." B. Friedman, "An Evaluation of the Achievement in Reading and Arithmetic of Pupils in Elementary School Instrumental Music Classes," Dissertation Abstracts International.

"College admissions officers continue to cite participation in music as an important factor in making admissions decisions. They claim that music participation demonstrates time management, creativity, expression, and open-mindedness." Carl Hartman, "Arts May Improve Students' Grades," The Associated Press, October, 1999.

"In a 1999 Columbia University study, students in the arts are found to be more cooperative with teachers and peers, more self-confident, and better able to express their ideas. These benefits exist across socioeconomic levels." The Arts Education Partnership, 1999.

So, "Why does this matter?" or you might wonder "Why should my student continue to be involved in the CHS Choral Department?" Because as a member of the CHS Choral Department, not only will your student become a literate and capable musician, but also a more well-rounded individual equipped with tools that will enable their success in life for years to come.

I believe our mission statement answers this question best:

It is the mission of the CHS Choral department to establish and maintain a dedicated community of student musicians, motivated to experience and share the joy of singing with each other, as well as the community in which we live. Students will work as individuals and ensemble members to produce music of the highest quality through: Continually improving musicianship and expressive skills, A mutual respect, concern, and appreciation for others, and a dedication to the pursuit of academic, musical, & social excellence.

Fine Arts are a valued part of the curriculum at Centennial High School and believed to be essential to the well rounded education. A sample schedule/planning template has been attached to this email to help students visualize their four year plan and how music instruction can compliment your student's pursuit of high school credits that include AP/Honors Courses, CTE Courses, Athletics, and other area of Fine Arts.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions about enrollment or anything you have read here today. If you would like to speak with someone about enrolling your student in choir, please contact me or the Counselor's Office as soon as possible.

Respectfully,

Eric Cooley, director
CHS Choral Department
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