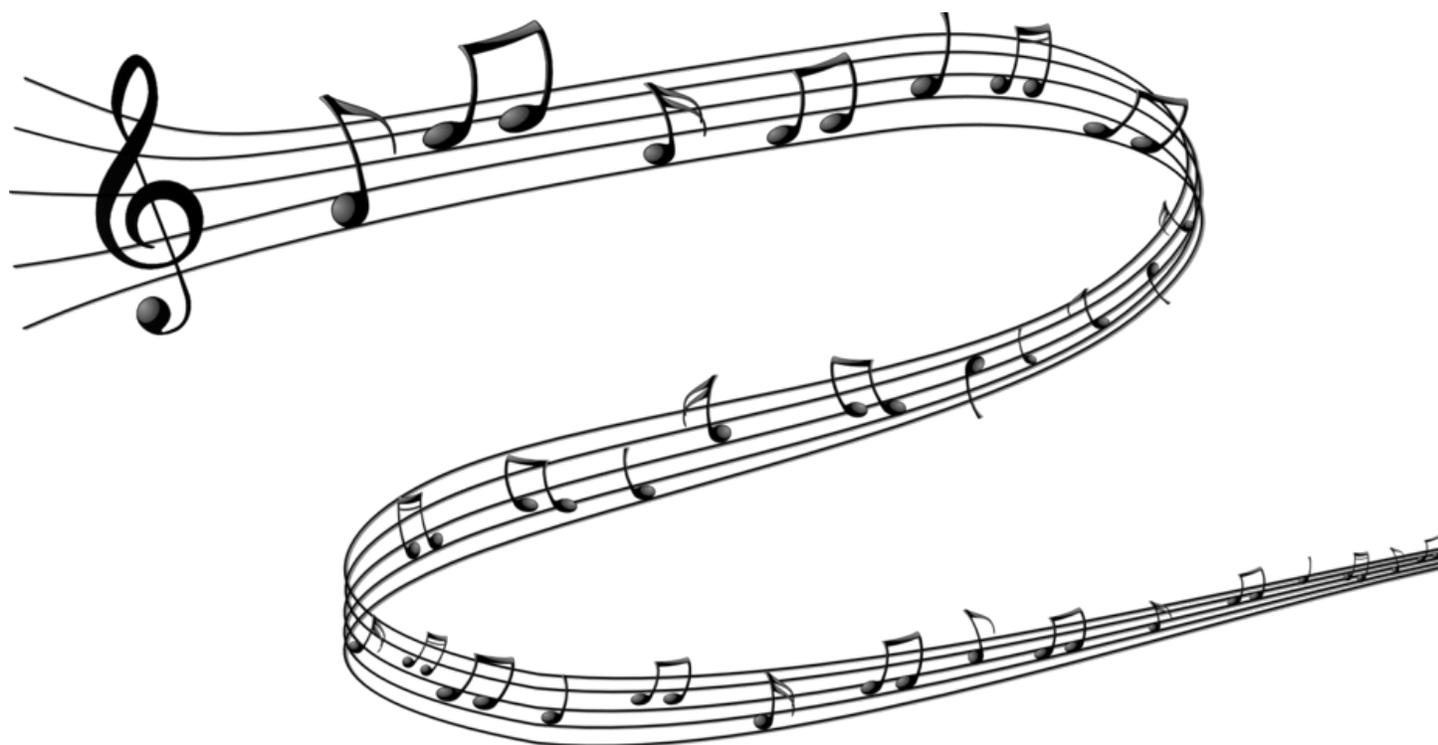


# CHOIR HANDBOOK & SYLLABUS 2019-2020



*Heritage Academy Laveen*

CHOIR HANDBOOK

2019-2020

Ms. Stoffer

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[HALfinearts.com/choir](http://HALfinearts.com/choir)

# Welcome to Choir!

I am here for each and every one of you and want to see all of you reaching for the stars. I look forward to making beautiful music with all of you this year. We are going to explore the world of music and that means I need all of you to come to class with open minds and a willingness to try new things. Whether you are a seasoned performer or a beginner that never sings in front of anyone, we can take your skills and improve upon them. This can only happen if you are willing to work hard in class and practice singing at home. A good attitude is the most important component in the classroom. My goal is to help you become a knowledgeable and confident performer. Please come ready to work hard and be willing to step out of your comfort zone!

Please take the time to read through this handbook, as it will provide important information regarding the Heritage Academy Laveen Campus Choral Organization. After the material has been read,

**please sign the consent documents which are in the back of this handbook and return them by the due date (August 13th 2019).**

I hope you will enjoy your musical studies here. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask!

Ms. Stoffer

# WHY MUSIC?

## MUSIC IS A SCIENCE:

It is exact, specific; it demands exact acoustics. A conductor's full score is a chart which indicates frequencies, intensities, melody and harmony all at once and with the most exact control of time.

## MUSIC IS MATHEMATICAL:

It is rhythmically based on the sub-division of time and space into fractions which must be done instantaneously and not worked out on paper.

## MUSIC IS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE:

Most of the musical terms are in Italian. We sing in a variety of languages, such as Latin, German, French, and Italian, and the notation of notes certainly is not English, but a highly developed kind of shorthand that uses symbols to represent ideas. The semantics of music is the most complete and universal language.

## MUSIC IS HISTORY:

Music has always reflected the environment and times of its creation.

## MUSIC IS PHYSICAL EDUCATION:

It requires fantastic coordination of the body. Depending on the instrument, it will engage fingers, hands, arms, lips, and facial muscles in addition to extraordinary control of the diaphragmatic, back, stomach and chest muscles which must respond instantly to the sounds the ear hears and the mind interprets.

## MUSIC IS ALL OF THESE THINGS, BUT MOST OF ALL MUSIC IS ART:

It allows a human being to take all of these dry, technically boring (but fantastically difficult) techniques and use them to CREATE EMOTION!

THAT IS WHY WE LEARN MUSIC....

**MISSION:** The mission of the Heritage Academy Laveen Choral Department is to provide a safe and fun environment where each student will have the opportunity to learn, experience, and express, through music, their intellect, creativity and culture.

CHOIRS: There are currently two choirs available at Heritage Academy Laveen. As enrollment and interest in the program grows, there may be opportunities to expand and include more choirs on our campus.

### **BRAVO CHOIR:**

This choir is made up of Jr High boys and girls. We will explore a wide variety of music from various cultures. We will be performing at the Maricopa County Fair in the Spring, during multiple school events, and at the KROC center at the end of each semester.

### **Bel Canto Choir:**

This is the High School Choir and is intended to be a large group. All students are expected to audition for Regional Choir and take advantage of other opportunities to grow as singers. We will sing a variety of genres of music. We welcome beginners and more experienced singers to this group. Bel Canto will be performing at NAU in the Jazz and Madrigal festival in the Spring as well as the State Fair in the Fall. Other opportunities may arise throughout the school year. If a scholar is unable to attend one of the extra events, a make-up assignment will be assigned to avoid a zero.

## **COMING SOON....**

### **Vocality (by audition only):**

This will be our school's elite audition choir. Members will only be allowed to sign-up with instructor approval after proving themselves to be experienced choir singers. This group sings music of all genres. We will sing Madrigals, jazz, show, a cappella, and other songs. This will be the traveling group that represents Heritage Academy Laveen in several festivals and perform at community events. Members of Vocality are expected to audition for Regional Choir and take advantage of other opportunities to grow as singers. Scholars must be academically eligible to participate. This group will meet outside of class time this semester and is expected to rehearse on their own.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

In each choir, the students will be able to-

- 1) Develop and enhance appropriate skills that enable the student to effectively perform selected choral music.  
(Make music).
- 2) Develop skills pertinent to the evaluation and understanding of music and musical performance.  
(Understand music).
- 3) Develop an appreciation for and enjoyment of quality music and skilled musical performance.  
(Value music).

# CLASS RULES:

I will treat my singers as young professionals. Our class rules can be summed up in three simple rules:

1. Everyone in my classroom is treated with respect at all times! 2. All property is to be respected! 3. Give your best effort each day!

**RESPECT EVERYONE:** Our class is a safe place. It is acceptable and even encouraged to make mistakes. This can only happen if we encourage one another. Students are never to bully, or demean other students, or anyone that enters our classroom in any way. Likewise, leave it to the teacher to give any necessary corrections or criticisms. Some choirs will have student Section Leaders to assist in learning parts. Those students will be selected, in part based on their ability to help support their section in a positive way.

Please bring any concerns about this topic to Ms. Stoffer.

A choir director must have the complete attention of the choir at all times if the choir is going to be successful. There is no room for talking during rehearsals. A choir can only function as a unified ensemble if the role of director is fully respected.

**RESPECT PROPERTY:** Our classroom is used for many purposes. There are lots of exciting and expensive things to be found here. They are not here for our amusement. Students are never to touch instruments or the property of others without express permission.

Likewise, food and drinks (other than water), and gum can do some serious damage to our classroom. (Chewing gum while singing can do serious damage to you!)

**Any of these offenses will result in an automatic log entry!**

(You are encouraged to bring a water bottle —preferably clear—to class each day.)

**DO YOUR BEST:** Your growth as a singer and your choir's success depends entirely on the effort each member is willing to give. Focus and follow directions, have a cheerful attitude and don't be afraid to make mistakes! The biggest mistake you can make is being afraid to make one!

**PREPARING TO SING:**

It is imperative that scholars come to class ready to focus and sing and use rehearsal time wisely. School policy is that students have their material and **be in their seats** by the time the bell rings. To be counted on-time they will have to have completed the following each day:

Place Backpacks (including phones, and any other distractions) against the designated wall. {Water bottles with lids are allowed—and encouraged as it is much easier to sing when hydrated} Retrieve their assigned folders and Music Bellwork Journal from the cabinet. Ensure they have a sharpened pencil! Be seated in their assigned seat and working on the day's Bellwork.

**MATERIALS:** You will be provided with a music folder and copies of music. Your folder and music will be numbered and you are responsible for your number. Your folder is to be kept at school in its designated cabinet unless given permission to take home for practice. If your folder or music goes missing for any reason, you will be required to pay to replace the folder and sheet music.

Please provide one composition notebook to be stored in the cabinet and used in class each day, as well as pencils for marking your music. Pencils are needed daily! Don't forget your water bottles!

GRADING: We are working to develop specific skills and prepare for performances each day. Scholars must plan to attend, be on time and participate every day! As choir is a group activity, everyone is counting on each other to perform their part. Poor attendance, tardiness, or a lack of effort will affect the entire group negatively. For this reason, scholars will earn participation points each day. Points are earned by being present, on-time and prepared, and by participating positively in rehearsal. Points will be taken away for any behavior that disrupts class time or rehearsal. Participation grades are recorded each week.

### Final Performances = 33%

Attendance of the Final performance is **mandatory** to pass the class. You will NOT pass the class if you miss the Final Performance. Semester Concerts: The other most important grade in choir comes from performing in our Choir Concerts each semester and sometimes in other performance opportunities/festivals. (See attached calendar at HALfinearts.com/choir). This is a performance-based class. Students are required to be at all concerts. If a student does not come to a concert they will receive 0 points for that event. Approval to miss a concert must be requested in writing to the director and approved prior to the event.

Make-up assignments will only be allowed in extenuating circumstances.

The main concerts this year will be held on:

**DECEMBER 6TH & MAY 1ST.**

Please mark your calendars today!!

### In-Class Performances/Other Performances = 20% of grade

We will have opportunities throughout the year to perform at the state fair, school events, field trips and during class. The more we perform, the easier it becomes. 1st and 3rd quarters we perform in solos or small groups for each other during our class time since we don't have a major concert those quarters.

More information about those performances to come.

### Class Participation/Bellwork/Behavior/Citizenship = 27% of grade

Scholars may have some short homework assignments throughout the term. The main assignment in this category is the following: Vocal Music Concert Attendance Report: Students will need to attend a concert involving vocal music as an audience member at least once during each semester. They will be typing a 3 page paper analyzing the performance. See handout for more information. Find a concert to attend now and put it on your calendar! Also, please share concert dates you find with the class. This Report will be due DECEMBER 10th. Don't procrastinate it!

### Tests/Quizzes/Personal Improvement = 20% of grade

We will have a written final covering music theory we learn in class. There will also be a vocal skills practical test. There may also be quizzes periodically. Scholars who pay attention and complete daily activities should be prepared to pass these tests.

We will not be holding formal Parent/Teacher Conferences. Please follow your scholar's grades in PowerSchool and contact me if you have any concerns or would like to set-up a conference at any time.

## **FESTIVALS and other Field Trips:**

Some of our choirs will be participating in festivals, exchanges, and someday hopefully a choir tour. It is important that students understand that they are representatives of Heritage Academy Laveen wherever we go and must conduct themselves in accordance with the high standards and values of our school. Choirs who demonstrate these qualities in our daily rehearsals will be given more opportunities to have these awesome experiences. Students who have not demonstrated that they can conduct themselves appropriately will not be able to travel with the choir. Students who are ineligible academically (less than 70% in any class) will not be permitted to travel with the choir. Please keep your grades up!!

High School students are highly encouraged to plan and prepare to audition for the Regional Choir Festival early in the Spring semester. All students (8th grade and up) should consider attending the Fine Arts Retreat.

**CONCERT DRESS:** Each choir has a designated wardrobe to wear for concerts. Dressing in a uniform fashion unifies our choirs and creates a more powerful stage presence. Appropriate concert dress is outlined below. Prior to the concert I may designate a “dress check” day in which all students must bring their wardrobe items to class so I can see and approve them.

**BRAVO WOMEN:** Scholars will wear black, knee length skirts (no pants) and dressy black tops of their choosing or a solid black dress ALL WITH SLEEVES. Only conservative jewelry will be allowed. They need to wear black, closed-toe shoes with no more than a 1.5” heel, and black nylons.

All wardrobe items must adhere to the Heritage dress code standard. Hair will need to be neatly arranged off the face and small amounts of make-up should be worn. We may provide other costumes or accessories for various concerts. These must be returned immediately in order to avoid fines.

**BRAVO MEN:** Scholars will wear black pants (no jeans) with a belt, long-sleeved white button-down shirt tucked in, black socks, and a bow-tie (acceptable colors: Fire Engine Red, Navy Blue, White, Black, or Grey) and black shoes.

**BEL CANTO CHOIR:** We have an official wardrobe that must be purchased for choir. The wardrobe fee ranges from \$55-\$65 depending on whether you are purchasing new or used items. There are two options for the fee payment:

1) **TAX CREDIT:** Use your Arizona tax credit money (married couples can donate up to \$400/tax year). If you choose this option you cannot participate in the Buy-Back program and will keep your wardrobe when you are no longer in choir.

2) **BUY BACK PROGRAM:** Pay the fee (without the tax credit) and have the option to sell-back your wardrobe items when you are done with choir. You will be paid up to \$50 for your used items depending on their condition and cleanliness. This offer is only valid at the end of the semester (must be returned within a week of our final performance of the semester)..

**LADIES:** All ladies will need black closed-toed shoes—not more than 1.5” heels, make- up, and conservative jewelry.

**GENTLEMEN:** Men need to wear black shoes and socks. There may be less formal performance opportunities where our required uniform may be the Heritage polo and uniform pants, or our official choir t-shirt.

CHOIR COUNCIL: High School students who are serious about their involvement in choir and are eligible in all their classes can run for the offices of:

- President
  - Vice President
  - Secretary
  - Treasurer
- We will also elect two representatives from the Jr. High Choir. Together this group will help manage the Fundraising efforts for our choir, as well as help with other administrative tasks and provide positive leadership for the rest of the choir.

## **FUNDRAISING AND PARENT VOLUNTEERS:**

In addition to the students, we could really use some parent involvement in our fundraising efforts. We have many needs as we expand our festival participation this year. We are planning to sell concessions at Heritage Heroes football games and are open to other fundraising suggestions. Please contact me if you are available to help! Please remember our choir program when considering where to spend your AZ Tax Credit. If you need more information on how the Tax Credit works please contact the front office. Be sure and designate that your funds are to go to CHOIR!

We could also use parent volunteers to help us reach out to the community to advertise our concerts, and the School Musical. There is a form on the website where you can share other skills you have to offer, or just email me and let me know what you can do!

## **CONTACT & OFFICE HOURS:**

Office Hours: I am available for meetings before or after school and by appointment only. Students should feel free to come to the classroom (room 242) after school on Tuesdays and Thursdays to have any questions or concerns they might have answered.

Contact: Email is generally the best way to contact me: [estoffer@heritageacademyaz.com](mailto:estoffer@heritageacademyaz.com). Please take a moment and ensure that the contact information we have for parents in Power School is accurate, so I can contact you as needed. I have set-up the BAND App this year for quicker communication.

## **Website:**

We have a Choir website with pertinent information as well as links to rehearsal tracks and other aids. Please bookmark this website so it is easy to find. A PDF copy of this handbook will also be available on the website under the choir tab: [HALfinearts.com](http://HALfinearts.com). You will also find a link to our choir website which will be available soon!

# Heritage Academy Choirs CONTRACT

Choral Ensemble contract Acknowledgements 2019/2020 Please return by August 13, 2019

After reviewing the Heritage Academy Laveen Choir Handbook, please acknowledge that both the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) and student accept the expectations as stated in the handbook.

Student Name (printed): \_\_\_\_\_ Choir: \_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Name (printed): \_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Parent e-mail addresses: \_\_\_\_\_

## HERITAGE ACADEMY LAVEEN CHOIR WARDROBE POLICY CONTRACT

By signing below, the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) and student acknowledges that they understand the policies in regards to uniform responsibilities.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## CHOIR TRANSPORTATION PERMISSION

I give permission for \_\_\_\_\_ to ride on the Heritage Academy vans for all choir activities during the 2019-2020 school year (see attached calendar for more info).

Emergency Contact \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Please list any allergies to medication \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_