A black panther with red eyes

Description automatically generatedWelcome to Payne Junior High School Choir!

I hope you are excited about this upcoming school year, where I will challenge each singer to experience familiar musical styles and those of different cultures and traditions. We will work to improve singing skills, and develop musicianship by learning sight reading, choral singing technique, ear training, composition, improvisation, *and* *much more*.

I will regularly send notices about choir and events at school through the choir club website, Parent Square, email attachments, and the occasional paper document. As you look over the handbook, let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

I look forward to hearing from you, and to working with the students this year.

Howard McPhail

Music Room C10

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Shape

**Payne choirs sing choral literature that includes music from many styles here in the US and around the world, and from many time periods.**

**Harmonies (Beginning Choir)**

Harmonies consists of 7th & 8th grade students. This choir perform unison and two-part music in different styles: traditional choral music, Spirituals, folk songs, African songs, Broadway, & pop culture. Skills recommended: Members must have a willingness to learn, a good sense of humor, and positive energy.

***Showstoppers* (Show Choir/Intermediate Choir) Audition Required**

Participation in this class is by audition only. Showstoppers consists of 7th & 8th grade students who show singing and dancing skills, and a high level of commitment to the choir program. Showstoppers perform two-part music and sing and dance to Broadway, movie music & pop culture songs. Skills recommended: In addition to the skills listed for Harmonies, *Showstoppers* must have dance skills, a love of show music, and being familiar with current and past Broadway musicals is a plus!

***Payne Bellas* (Advanced Choir) Audition Required**

Participation in this class is by audition only. *Payne Bellas* consist of 7th & 8th grade students who show advanced vocal skills, an ability to read music, and a high level of commitment to performing and the choir program. Payne Bellas perform two- and three-part music in a variety of styles: traditional choral music (including foreign languages), Spirituals, folk songs, African songs, Broadway, & pop culture. Skills recommended: In addition to the skills listed in for Harmonies, members of *Payne Bellas* must have strong vocal talent and skills, general dance/movement ability, and commitment to high-level music achievement.

**Necessary Resources and Materials:**

Choir students will learn and rehearse music using printed music scores. Some scores are only a few pages, and some are small books. Class music folders will be provided and assigned. These folders stay in the classroom to reduce wear and tear on the music. Copies of music will be available to use for each student. If students would like to access music outside of class, most scores will be on file in Google classroom.

* Music folder - Students are given folders to organize their music and handouts in class. Individual copies of music will be provided. Students are responsible to keep music in good condition, keep it in the classroom, and return it after performances.
* Paper for written assignments - Students will need some paper to complete occasional written work. Some students may choose to have loose paper to put in their music folder instead of a separate notebook.
* Concert Uniform shoes, Beginning Choir: White top, Black bottom for concerts

**Grading scale:** A: 90% B: 80% C: 70% D: 60% F: 59%

**Class Participation**

* Students earn participation points in class for preparation, vocal effort, and following class rules

**Concert Attendance - Attendance at formal concerts is a major grade event.**

Performances are an important part of the learning process for musicians. They give each group a chance to highlight the growth and development of their musical abilities. There may be different themes that link each piece performed, as well as some *audience participation*. Most concerts will be from the Payne Cafeteria stage. \*Graded

* CUSD choirs sing National Anthem at Diamondbacks game – August 28, 5:45pm
* \*Combined Choir Fall concert at Perry High School – Monday September 16
* Combined Choir sings National Anthem at Basha Homecoming – September 20
* Winter/Spring School Pep Assembly (As scheduled)
* [CUSD Secondary Choir festival](https://www.smore.com/e26m9) – October 16, 9am to 1 pm, Chandler Center for the Arts
* \*Holiday concert (Sounds of the Season) – Thursday December 12, 6pm
* Incoming 7th grade Orientation (Payne Bellas/Showstoppers) – TBD
* Recruitment concerts (Payne Bellas), January 9-10, 2025, 9am – 1pm
* \*Why We Sing (Payne Bellas/Harmonies only) – Thursday February 27, 2025, 6pm
* \*Payne Spring Festival (Showstoppers) – TBD
* Az-ACDA Choir Festival (Payne Bellas) - Friday May 2, 2025
* \*Spring Pops Concert – Thursday May 8, 2025, 6pm

Out of courtesy to our families participating, please communicate as early as possible any concerns or conflicts with a particular date. Not participating or communicating will result in a failing grade for the concert.

**Class rules and procedures:**  
Each class will develop clear rules for behavior to have meaningful learning every day. Rewards for following these rules, and consequences for breaking them will also be listed. For example: Best times to socialize with friends in class, or how many students for restroom breaks (in school), snack parties after a performance, etc.

**Leadership:**

Classes will be organized into groups by voice parts. We will determine what skills and accomplishments are necessary to be considered as a group leader. Leadership duties may include parties, communication (problems, concerns), and organizing sectional rehearsals.

**Assessments**

 Weekly participation, Music theory, Vocal part checks (singing correct pitches in a small group), and Memorization checks

**Classwork/Homework**

 Bell work and other short assignments to activate learning in class

 Although it is rare that homework is assigned, permission slips and assignments with due dates are considered homework.

**Semester Finals**

 At the end of 2nd and 4th Quarters a final is given to all students in every graded class. The final will impact the grade in a breakdown of 1st Q 45%, 2nd Q 45% and Semester Final 10%

\*For school activities (field trips, sports, etc.) students are sked to communicate with their other academic teachers BEFORE absences happen for reassignment of class activities and tests.  
\*\* Late work: students will have 1 school day for each absence to make up missing work, unless otherwise arranged.

\*\*\* All missing assignments are marked as “M” in Infinite Campus, resulting in a zero until turned in, which may result in a reduced grade for the completed assignment.

**CHOIR CONCERTS:**

**Informal Uniform:** There will be a choir t-shirt for informal performances (spirit days, school assemblies, etc). For formal performances (Fall Concert, Holiday, etc):

**Harmonies (Beginning Choir)**

Each singer is to wear black flat shoes. Lace up shoes are preferred. Make sure there are no toes showing and because heels are a tripping hazard – no heels are best. \*Please make sure that all uniforms are hemmed if needed - see instructions below.

* On top, a white dress shirt.
* On bottom, black dress pants or black skirt (modest knee length or longer), black socks and closed-toe, flat black shoes

**Payne Bells (Advanced Choir)**

Payne Bellas Concert Uniforms will be assigned and provided by Payne Choir Department.

Each singer is to wear black flat shoes. Make sure there are no toes showing and because heels are a tripping hazard – no heels! \*Please make sure that all uniforms are hemmed if needed - see instructions below.

* On Bottom - black socks and closed-toe, flat black shoes (no heels)

A person's legs and feet wearing shoes

Description automatically generated

**Showstoppers (Intermediate Choir)**

Showstopper Concert Uniforms will be assigned and provided by Payne Choir Department. Each singer/dancer is required to have closed-toe character shoes (Capezio, etc) to change into *for each day* of class – Caramel color. Please contact me with any questions or concerns.

\*Uniforms should be hemmed up to 2 inches above the ground. Make sure to leave 2 ½ inches of material when hemming so dresses/pants can be lengthened for the future if necessary.

**Participation fee:** $30

Use the “In Touch” fee payment system on Infinite Campus to pay this fee that supports the purchase of uniforms, t-shirts, and helps with music expenses. If you need financial assistance to fulfil fee requirements, contact me for alternative opportunities! This fee covers T-shirts (worn for concerts and socials), one choir folder, and music. The choir fee does not cover additional socials/field trips off campus.

**Fundraising:**

The money needed to sustain our choir program is greater than what we obtain each year. Parents and community members can always help with donations through tax credits and other fund-raising opportunities throughout the year.

**Tax Credit:**  
Support the Payne music department and take advantage of the Arizona State Income Tax Credit by designating your tax credit donation(s) to Payne Choirs. http://www.cusd80.com/page/1131

**FIELD TRIPS :**

Field trips are fun, and we love to participate. Choir members will have different opportunities to participate. Field Trip fees will vary depending on the activity. Students and families will be notified as soon as information is available for requirements and costs associated.

In the past few years, the choirs visited and performed at the:

* Choirs at the Capitol Museum (Downtown Phoenix)
* Arizona AZ-ACDA Choral Festival
* Spring Recruitment concerts – at surrounding feeder elementary schools
* Spring Fling Carnival

There are also opportunities for solos in our performances, as well as individual singing opportunities outside of school, such as:

* Cantaremos Honor Choir
* Arizona All-State Junior High Choir

**LEADERSHIP**

Classes will be organized into groups by voice parts. We will determine what skills and accomplishments are necessary to be considered as a group leader. Leadership duties may include post-performance party planning (P4), communication (problems, concerns), and organizing sectional rehearsals.

**Cantaremos Honor Choir: TBD**

This 1-day commitment includes singing with the best singers from all over the state, t-shirt, lunch, choir music (they can keep) and a performance at 4pm for families.

Interested students should be able to do the following for the solo audition:

1. Sing a scale, starting and ending on the same pitch without the use of a piano
2. Sing “My Country Tis of Thee” without the use of a piano
3. Sing a short musical section from a choir song (chosen for you) without piano
4. Commit to attend all related practice and performance dates and times (TBD)
5. Commit to practice at home with music until memorized.

\*The cost for participating students if selected is TBD but in the past has been around $45. \*\*Financial help may be available for participating students

**PJHS Receipt of Choir Handbook/Online Syllabus review**

I understand that the success of the Payne JH choir program depends on accepting the expectations explained in the handbook. I understand and will complete my commitment to my choir class by attending rehearsals and performances.

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Student Name and Signature:

**Circle student’s T-shirt size:** (Large enough to still fit by next May)

Youth Small, Youth Medium, Youth Large, Adult Small, Adult Medium, Adult Large, Adult XL

I acknowledge that I have read and understand the expectations as given in this handbook, as well as the online class syllabus. I agree to help my student succeed by supporting them in fulfilling the provided expectations and requirements for choir.

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Parent/Guardian Name: Parent/Guardian Signature: Date:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Please provide preferred contact info

**Will you help by volunteering with the Choir Program?** We run this program with family members offering their time to volunteer for various tasks. Choose as many as you’d like:

**Basic level** of support

\_\_\_\_\_ Chaperone trips and events \_\_\_\_\_ Food donations/food prep

\_\_\_\_\_ Event photos/video \_\_\_\_\_ Stage set up and take down

\_\_\_\_\_ Uniform committee

**Moderate level** of support

\_\_\_\_\_ T-shirt design or distribution \_\_\_\_\_ Social Media coordination

**More Involved level of support**

\_\_\_\_\_ Pianist (rehearsals/concerts) \_\_\_\_\_ Video & video editing (concerts)

Questions/Comments:

Please return this signed page to Howard McPhail