**Syllabus for Braswell High School Choirs, 2016-2017**

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**SUPPLIES:**

* **#2 Pencils, regular or mechanical, with an eraser.**

***Welcome to the Braswell High School Choral Music Department! I am so pleased that you have decided to make choral music a part of your education and life! Being a part of a choral organization at Braswell High School will provide students with wonderful experiences that will be remembered for a lifetime. Participation in choir will also help students to develop both musically and as rising young adults. The following will give choir students and parents an introduction to the Choral Music Program at Braswell High School, provide additional necessary information, and hopefully answer any questions about choir at Braswell!***

**BRASWELL PERFORMING CHOIRS:**

**bengal*VIVA* (Vocal Ensemble): *VIVA* is a choir consisting of advanced 9th, 10th and 11th grade girls with a successful past singing experience, a proven sight-reading background, and an exemplary academic record. In addition to mandatory concerts, this choir will participate in UIL competitions and serve as a premier performing choral ensemble at Braswell High School. Several out-of-school time rehearsals may be required to adequately prepare for concerts and competitions, and will be mandatory. Participation in the Spring Trip is required for all members of *VIVA*. Students must have a strong work ethic and commitment to excellence. Placement is by audition and director recommendation only.**

**bengal*VANTAGE* (Women’s Vocal Ensemble):  *VANTAGE* is a non-auditioned choir consisting of 9th, 10th and 11th grade girls that may or may not have a past singing and sight-reading experience. Students are charged with maintaining an exemplary academic record and work ethic to assure success for the choir. In addition to school concerts, this choir may participate in UIL competition. Several out-of-school time rehearsals may be required to adequately prepare for concerts and competitions and will be mandatory. Placement is by director recommendation.**

**bengal*VALIANT* (Men’s Vocal Ensemble): *VALIANT* is a non-auditioned choir consisting of 9th, 10th and 11th grade boys. Past singing experience and sight-reading are not required, however, an exemplary academic record and work ethic are essential for success. In addition to school concerts, this choir will participate in UIL competition. Several out-of-school time rehearsals may be required to adequately prepare for concerts and competitions and will be mandatory. Placement is by director recommendation.**

**bengal*VOX* (Mixed Choir/not a class): *VOX* is a select choir consisting of students in grades 9-11. Enrollment in *VIVA* and *VALIANT* is required for consideration of membership.**

**bengal*VIBE*!: *VIBE!* is an auditioned select performance choir consisting of students in grades 9-11. Choral singing experience is required and *VIBE!* will have rehearsal time exclusively outside of the school day. Repertoire for *VIBE!* will be from every music style period (including popular music) and will be a cappella. A successful past singing experience, a proven sight-reading background, and an exemplary academic record will be required to audition, with auditions for *VIBE!* will be held in late September/early October for the 2016-2017 school year, and in the preceding Spring for subsequent school years.**

**All Braswell High School Choirs are performance-based classes. Music studied during each nine weeks will include selections from various musical eras (many styles) and possibly different languages. In addition to performing at various concerts throughout the year, students in Braswell High School Choirs will have the opportunity to participate in UIL events, Concert & Sight-Reading and Solo & Ensemble Contests, as long as they are director approved and meet the necessary eligibility requirements for these extra-curricular events (no pass/no play). Please note the BHS Choir Calendar with concert dates and certain events being set for the year; additional rehearsal or performance dates may be added as necessary. Students will be given as adequate a notice as possible for all additional activities outside of the regular class period. Every effort will be made to minimize the amount of out-of-class time rehearsal and activities. In the event a choir activity, rehearsal or concert conflicts with another school sponsored event, it is the student’s responsibility to notify the choir director and the sponsor of the other activity of the impending conflict. The sponsors can then work together to try and accommodate both events.**

**GOALS:**

**\*develop correct methods of tone production;**

**\*develop a working knowledge of theory and music history (especially in relation to music studied);**

**\*develop ear training (cadences and chord progressions);**

**\*increase student proficiency in sight-reading;**

**\*enjoy the beauty of music through expression;**

**\*learn to utilize good intonation, correct breath control, expressive and proper tone quality, blend with other voices, and artistic interpretation;**

**\*listen with discrimination;**

**\*develop poise, stage-presence and self-confidence;**

**\*develop a self-discipline of personal dignity; and**

**\*develop team spirit, cooperation and camaraderie.**

**REQUIREMENTS:**

**Enrollment in this organization carries with it responsibilities that each student and parent must accept to foster the tradition of choral excellence here at Braswell High School. Attendance at all rehearsals and public performances is absolutely mandatory, as performances are held to satisfy state-mandated essential knowledge and skills. Since every member of a musical organization is a key performer, the success of the entire organization depends on everyone attending each and every performance. The Fall, Holiday, Pre-UIL and Spring Concert Performances are MAJOR SUMMATIVE GRADES, worth 60%. By enrolling in choir, students and their parents are committing to attend the Fall, Holiday, Pre-UIL and Spring Choir Concerts during the year.  Failure of a student to participate in a co-curricular performance could definitely affect the student’s grade. Students in select groups (*VOX*, *VIVA* and *VIBE!*) must commit to attendance at every performance.**

**Students in this organization represent themselves, their families, Braswell High School and members of the Choir, present and future. One student who is ill-prepared can invalidate weeks of rehearsal and spoil a performance. Students are expected to arrive on time in a clean, pressed uniform and to cooperate in making every performance a success. All students will be required to arrive at the school no later than the stated warm-up call time (6:00 p.m. here at Braswell HS). All students are expected to stay until the end of the entire concert, as it is highly motivating and educational for all students to hear the more advanced choirs perform. Choir students will sit together as class units, and exemplary behavior is expected of each student.  To help reinforce the TEKS Performance Etiquette standard for all choir students, the audience should stay seated and refrain from talking during the performance so as not to distract the performers. In addition, all cell phones and electronic devices should be turned to the silent or off mode during the concert, and no flash photography/pictures should be taken while a choir is performing.**

***All choir students will be required to pay a $50.00 choir fee.* This fee will include the cost of a Braswell High School Choir Shirt (required for each choir member); Instructional copies for students to keep as reference and for the student to take home when needed for additional study, festival contest entry fees for choirs, festival clinicians, uniform rental, and other student costs for consumables that cannot be covered by the school budget. These fees do not include the following:  TMEA student entry fees, Solo & Ensemble student entry fees, all TSSEC fees (for eligible students, TSSEC is the state level competition for solos and ensembles), and any extra-curricular events that do not require the participation of every choir member.  The BHS Choir Shirts will be worn throughout the school year, both at school and in various performance situations to promote choir spirit and Bengal pride.   In addition, this fee does not include the cost of Choir Hoodies. Choir sweatshirt hoodies will be available at an additional cost of approximately $25.00 for students who have paid the basic fee ($50.00). Hoodies will not be ordered until mid-October, and information regarding the hoodies will be posted on the choir website in mid to late September. Hoodies are not a required purchase! STUDENT CHOIR FEE MONEY IS DUE BY Thursday, December 1, 2016.   Cash, checks and money orders are acceptable, and all checks should be made payable to Braswell HS Choir. ALL OF THE MUSIC PERFORMANCE GROUPS AT DISD HIGH SCHOOLS HAVE A CHOIR FEE.**

**Formal Concert attire will be as follows:**

***VIVA:*  *VIVA* members will, at the present time, wear the school-issued Black Dress, with Black closed-toe and heel dress shoes to be provided by the student (low heel preferred); and NO jewelry except small stud earrings.**

***VANTAGE*: *VANTAGE* members will wear the school-issued Black Dress, with Black closed-toe and heel dress shoes to be provided by the student (low heel preferred); and NO jewelry except small stud earrings.**

***VALIANT*: *VALIANT* members a school-issued Tux Jacket, Pants, Tie and Cummerbund; Tux shirt (wing-tip), black dress shoes and black socks to be provided by the student; NO BLACK TENNIS SHOES and NO WHITE SOCKS!**

***Casual Concert attire for all students:* Braswell Choir Shirt, Blue Jeans, and Tennis Shoes. NO SHORTS, CAPRIS, SKIRTS, LEGGINGS OR SKORTS. Jeans may not have any rips or tears.**

**CLASSROOM RULES:**

***All choral music students are asked to observe the following rehearsal/classroom rules:***

**1.    No food, drink and gum in the choir room.**

**2.    Hands, feet and objects to yourself.**

**3.    On task during class!**

**4.    Instructions: follow the first time given.**

**5.    Remember music folder and pencil!**

**CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS:**

**1.    Maintain a voice level of ZERO after the bell rings to start class, unless otherwise directed by Mrs. Sadler. (Level TWO or less before and after class.)**

**2.    Raise your hand for specific questions when prompted by Mrs. Sadler.**

**3.    Be in assigned place when bell rings (with music folder and sharpened pencil), ready for warm-ups, SR and rehearsal.**

**4.    Remain in your assigned seat/riser position unless given permission from Mrs. Sadler to move.**

**5.    Participate in every activity during class with 110% of your ability.**

**6.    Success!**

**CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR CONSEQUENCES:**

**High school students have the power to make their own decisions regarding personal behavior, and good choices work toward making choir both successful and rewarding for all involved are essential for every student. Poor choices made by students will result in the following consequences with regard to routine infractions of classroom rules and expectations:**

**1.    1sttime: Documented verbal warning.**

**2.    2ndtime: Documented parent contact.**

**3.    3rdtime: Documented parent contact and detention.**

**4.    4thtime: Office administrative referral.**

**Severe infractions will result in immediate referral to an assistant principal.**

**Additional Consequences: Any behavior that endangers the safety of the director, other students, instruments or equipment (running, horseplay, etc.) will be subject to an immediate Detention and/or parent notification, or, in the case of fighting, hitting, or threatening other students, a referral to the office. These are serious infractions which have no place in the choir room. Even friendly horseplay can result in broken equipment and costly repairs. *Successful performing ensembles require self-discipline and positive commitment from their members.* Students who repeatedly make choices damaging to the ensemble will be considered for removal from the choir program. Being a choir member demands the best conduct, character and citizenship in the school. In School Suspension (ISS) at Braswell High School is reserved for only the most severe breaches of these values. In the event that a student is placed in ISS, they may not be permitted to participate in extracurricular parties, events and the spring choir festivals and trips.**

**EVALUATION/ASSESSMENT/GRADES:**

**Since choral music is performance-based, the primary indication of how well a student has mastered the skills taught is through their active participation in every class (formative instruction). Failure to follow instructions and/or comply with classroom rules will adversely affect a student’s choir points (see below), and will be very obvious when students are assessed each week. As a part of their class requirements, BHS Choir students will be responsible for (1) learning to sing their voice part independently, (2) sight-reading for their voice part independently, and (3) continued active participation in class each and every day. On choral music and sight-reading, students will be quizzed both individually (solo) and in small groups.**

**Grade percentages for each nine weeks will be 40% Minor Summative Assessment (All classroom assessment criteria, including but not limited to singing, sight-reading and music theory), and 60% Major Summative Assessment (All Concerts and Major Singing Tests). As stated above, failure of a student to participate in a co-curricular performance will definitely affect the student’s grade.**

**Each nine weeks, all choir students will be monitored for behavior which will not affect their grade, but will affect whether or not they will be eligible to participate in the spring trips and festival performances. Unacceptable behavior includes, but is not limited to, the following infractions: chewing gum, bringing food or drink in the choir room, no pencil, no music, and lack of attention and/or participation. *Students are expected to be prepared to sing (pencil and music) and participate fully each and every class period.***

**MAKE-UP WORK:**

**Make-up work for any choir class missed due to an absence should be requested by the student as soon as he/she returns.  All minor summative assessment will be given during class time, before school or after school. *All choir students who miss a concert for any reason will be required to sing a jury of the concert music for two music teachers (including Mrs. Sadler), one administrator and one additional teacher to fulfill the public performance aspect of the TEKS for Choral Music. The jury requirement is in place for all DISD Middle and High School Choral programs.***

**CHOIR SOLO & ENSEMBLE CONTEST:**

**Any Braswell choir student who learns an appropriate solo or ensemble (as chosen by Mrs. Sadler) may participate in the UIL School Solo & Ensemble Contest at Guyer High School on February 4, 2017. All solos and ensembles come from the UIL Prescribed Music List (PML), and are classically based (i.e. no popular music). Each student may enter two vocal events which may consist of: (A) A vocal solo and a vocal small ensemble, or (B) Two vocal small ensembles provided they are different voicings, different music is performed and the majority of ensemble members are different.  Before and/or after school rehearsal with Mrs. Sadler is required for all solos and ensembles, as you are representing the Braswell High School Choral Program. The entry fee for students, unless it changes between now and the entry deadline, is $8.50 for a solo and $8.50 per ensemble member. Mrs. Sadler will approve all ensembles for balance and blend. Soloists will also have a $15 fee for an accompanist (two rehearsals and the performance). All vocal solos and ensembles MUST BE MEMORIZED. Medals are given to students who earn a first division rating. Students earning a first division rating on a Class 1 solo or ensemble (Class 1 ensembles have one singer per part) will have the opportunity to compete at the Texas State Solo and Ensemble Contest in Austin at the end of May (at the student’s expense. Eligibility is in effect for both the region UIL Solo & Ensemble Contest and the TSSEC event.**

**TMEA:**

**Any Braswell choir student may learn the Region 2 TMEA HS Large School Region Choir music in preparation for the auditions that start in early October. The entry fee for any student entering the audition process is $20 (cash only) and non-refundable after the entry is made on September 15, 2016. Students must purchase their own music packets ($18.00 for the Large School Treble (girls) or Large School Tenor-Bass (boys) music packets) at Pender’s Music in Denton (on Elm Street south of the Square) no later than September 12, 2016. Upon purchasing the music, Mrs. Sadler will send rehearsal recordings via email to students who plan to participate. These recordings should be used to initiate your music learning. This music will not be taught in class or by rote after school. Any student participating is expected to spend extra time after school working on this music with Mrs. Sadler to polish and perfect the music. Any student who does not pass a pre-audition at BHS with Mrs. Sadler within 3 school days of the audition date(s), and at each level for advancing students, will not be allowed to audition and will forfeit the non-refundable entry fee. Due to the large number of women taking part in the audition process, all women have a Phase 1 audition on Monday (late afternoon and evening), October 3rd at Guyer High School. Girls who advance and all boys will audition for the Large School HS All-Region Choir on Monday, October 24th (late afternoon and evening) at Flower Mound Marcus HS in Lewisville; there will be a bus for students to both auditions. Students who advance from this audition have a Pre-Area audition on Friday (starting at noon), November 18th at Texas Woman’s University in Denton. The Region Choir Clinic and Concert will be at Texas Woman’s University on Friday (Treble Choir) and Saturday (both Mixed and Treble), November 18 & 19, 2016. Students named to a Region choir are required to attend the Clinic and Concert on these dates.**

**Auditioning for TMEA is a very time-intensive commitment. Any student who is not willing to spend considerable dedicated hours outside of school working on this music should reconsider any decision to enter the auditions at the first level for their voice part. Students who do not commit to a maximum of time and effort will not have a successful audition (advance to the next level). Students must advance to stay in the current school year audition process. This is an extra-curricular activity and eligibility is in effect at each level.**

**FUNDRAISING:**

**Students in the Braswell High School Choral Music Program are encouraged and expected to participate in the fundraising efforts undertaken throughout the school year. The program’s philosophy is that fundraising should be appropriate for the school year needs, and that when a fundraiser is underway we strive for maximum involvement and return on our effort.**

**PARENT SUPPORT: BENGAL CHOIR BOOSTERS!**

**Like most school districts, our high school is encouraged to have Booster Clubs for organizations such as the BHS Choir.  The purpose of the Booster Club is to give support and help throughout the year at concerts, with fundraising, and at TMEA and UIL events. The first meeting for parents is set for September 14, 2016 in the BHS Choir Room. Please plan to attend!**

**SPRING TRIP/FESTIVAL:**

**The trip/festival events for the Spring of 2017 are still in the planning stages. Being a new school, we are looking at various options this year to help defray individual costs and allow as many students as possible to participate. We are also looking at a big trip next year which will be discussed at the parent meeting on September 14th in the BHS Choir Room.**

**REMEMBER:**

**In music, we are all winners. We are not competing with each other or against other schools, only against ourselves, individually and as a group, as we strive to meet excellence. Please acknowledge the efforts of other groups and individuals in a positive manner such as polite applause, smiles and kind comments after any performance.**

**I know from past experience that parent support and involvement are two of the greatest assets any choral program strives to develop and maintain. I look forward to working with my students’ parents and guardians to help further the goals of the choir students and the Braswell Choir program. The greatest asset to any choral program is the development and nurturing of the students, and I am very excited to work with the fabulous students here at Braswell High School. Please feel free to contact me if there are any questions or concerns regarding the Choral Music Department at Braswell High School!**

**Sincerely,**

***Mrs. Sadler***