

Rice Raven Choir

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CHELSEA FARMER & MANDE YOUNG, DIRECTORS

Dear Fifth Grade Parents and Students,

Welcome to Rice Middle School! We are so excited for your child to be a part of our Choir Family. The RMS Choirs have a celebrated tradition of excellence, and we know your child will have fun working hard in choir!

The Rice Choir Department has consistently achieved high honors in both group and individual competitions, and we want you to be a part of the success! Rice consistently has more students selected to be in the All-Region Choir than *any other* school in our Region. In **2020, 2017, and 2016**, our girls and boys choirs were each **National Winners** in the Foundation for Music Education's Mark of Excellence Competition. In 2018, our seventh and eighth grade boys were selected to perform at the **Texas Music Educators Association Convention in San Antonio** as the **ONLY** Tenor/Bass Choir in Texas earning this honor.

We will help to foster the musical experiences you have already gained from your elementary music teacher as you grow into an even more advanced singer. Activities include singing at school concerts, pep rallies, basketball games, and group or individual competitions. As with all music classes, choir students also enjoy fun social events like Jump Street, Studio Movie Grill, Six Flags, and Main Event.

All cultures have some form of vocal music. Vocal music is the oldest form of music, as the only instrument it requires is the human voice. You've had your voice your whole life, but it is changing as you get older. The most dramatic changes happen during childhood and adolescence. It is important for both male and female adolescents to sing throughout their voice change, in order to be prepared to sing when the voice matures. Your new voice is a complex instrument that you will have for the rest of your life, so it is important to understand how to use it properly. Frequent and regular singing in middle school choir will allow students to sing throughout all stages of development. We want to help make music and singing a life-long experience for you!!

On the next page, there are answers to some frequently asked questions to help you and your child decide if choir is the place for them! Please feel free to contact us if you have further questions.

What will I learn in Choir?

Middle School Choir is very different from singing in elementary school. Because you receive training every day for 50 minutes, instead of just once a week, middle school choir is more specialized and advanced. Each choir student learns proper singing technique. This includes appropriate breathing, posture, diction, vowel formation, and tone production. In addition, choir students learn to sing in a variety of styles and foreign languages. We have 4 concerts each year, with music ranging from classical to pop. Sixth grade choir also provides an introduction to sight-singing skills, as students learn to read music notation and sing melodic ideas without assistance. In seventh and eighth grades, these sight-singing skills are relied upon to learn challenging music, compete as an ensemble in the annual UIL Choral Contest, and compete as an individual for selection in the All-Region Choir. You will also have the opportunity to take private voice lessons during choir class.

Do I have to audition/How do I join?

No, you do NOT need to audition. The 6th grade choir students meet in 3 different mixed gender classes during the day, but perform together as one large group for concerts. Simply circle "CHOIR" on your enrollment card if you would like to join. 7th and 8th graders have the opportunity to audition for more advanced choirs and pop choirs.

Do I have to sing by myself?

NO! However, we do have solo opportunities for most concerts. There is also an optional solo festival in which students can elect to participate. If you ENJOY singing by yourself, we will give you the opportunity.

Can I sign up for choir even if I didn't sing in my elementary choir?

YES!!! There is no previous experience required. Your elementary music specialist has equipped you with the necessary skills ... all you need is the DESIRE to SING! 😊

Does choir take a lot of extra time?

Choir does not take much time outside of our daily class. As with anything, the more you choose to practice, the better you will perform. You will receive a calendar with all the required dates for the entire school year in August. Most of our choir students are involved in other school and extra-curricular activities like football, basketball, volleyball, track, swimming, soccer, cheerleading, dance, speech and debate, art, theater, Spanish, Student Council, National Junior Honor Society, etc... We support our students' involvement in multiple activities and help them learn time management skills at a young age.

Can I hear the Rice Raven Choir perform?

Yes!! You can hear clips and see videos from some of our concerts on our website: www.ricemschoir.com.

What do current students say about Rice Choir?

- ❖ “I’m glad I’m in choir because I get to experience singing and performing at the next level while having fun.” - Bryce
- ❖ “Choir is a stress free place where you have fun while doing something you love!” – Tayah
- ❖ “We work very hard every day! We are one of the best choirs in the whole nation! We have a big reputation, and it's very rewarding to see how hard work gets us great results. That is probably the most unique thing about our choir. It is actually super fun to work hard in choir!!” – Lehka
- ❖ “The best part of choir is that every time I join the choir Google Meet I know I am always going to leave with a smile.” – Abhinav
- ❖ “Choir is a family, so it is really easy to make friends. Mrs. Farmer and Mrs. Young are so fun and exciting.” – Faizah
- ❖ “I am glad that I am in choir because I get to be part of a great group. We don't just sing- -we have fun while doing it.” – Rishi
- ❖ “Since being in choir, I have improved my leadership, confidence, and singing.” - Emilio
- ❖ “Choir has always been the most refreshing part of my day. Out of all of my classes, choir is the one that I always look forward to the most!” - Odinaka
- ❖ “Rice Choir taught me so many things that made me a great singer, as well as a good person. The best part about choir is making new friends and boosting your confidence.” – Archana
- ❖ “The best part of choir is definitely the choir directors. They always make the lessons very funny and humorous.” – Aarna
- ❖ “The best part of choir is...Everything! I love the games, the warmups, sight reading, and of course, the music! – Vedhav
- ❖ “Choir has helped me improve my courage, tenacity, and teamwork.” – Rohan

We are so excited to work with you and your child next year! Please feel free to call or email us if you have any questions. Thank you for your support of the fine arts and the fantastic music programs here at Rice.

Sincerely,

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