



EAST HIGH SCHOOL Choirs

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JEFFREY A MURDOCK, JR., DIRECTOR * FREDERICK W. CURRY, SR., PRINCIPAL

Mr. Willie Griffin, Esq.
218 S Theobald St
Greenville, MS 38701

May 24, 2008

Dear Mr. Griffin:

My name is Jeffrey Murdock, and I am in my second year as Director of Choral Activities at East High School in Memphis, Tennessee. East High School is a Title One school who services mostly underprivileged students from the Binghampton area, near Midtown. These first two years have definitely been a year of many hardships, yet one of many triumphs.

Prior to last year, there had not been a classical concert choir at East High School. Essentially, my job has been to build a program from the ground. Now, although many of our students are lower on the socio-economic chain, there is much talent at East, some of which has been tapped into, and some has yet to be harvested. I was fortunate to have the opportunity to work with many of these talented students, and our team has become another ray of hope in the current movement to "reclaim" East High School in the name of academic excellence. These two years have already seen many milestones. We have had many successful concerts, both on campus and within the community. Our students have participated in the All-West Honor choir auditions, and two of our students had the distinct honor of actually making the Honor Choir. They have also participated in community-wide efforts by singing the National Anthem at some of the Memphis River Kings' hockey games, singing for the Senior Adult Ministry of Christ United Methodist Church, rendering service music for Mississippi Boulevard Christian Church and Idlewild Presbyterian Church, singing in the Choirs at Christmas hosted by Clear Channel television, and participating in the Christmas Spectacular at the Orpheum. We've crammed a lot into the last two years! But that is only the beginning!

In the Spring of 2009, our choir has been invited to participated in a Concert tour of France with Encore Festivals. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for most of my students, largely due to the mean socio-economic status of the students we serve. Consequently, this tour cannot happen without help from the community. The total cost of this trip is \$120,000.00 for 40 students. My hope is that we can raise as much as \$50,000.00, which would substantially reduce the out-of-pocket expense of the students/parents. Any donation that your organization can make to push us towards and

beyond that goal will be governed and allocated by our committee and would be greatly appreciated.

Should you decide to invest in the lives of our children, you will be partnering with us in promoting excellence in music education. Statistics over the years have proven that education in the fine arts is a catalyst for academic excellence. Students well educated in the fine arts are likely to perform better in mathematics, science, and engineering especially, but in other chambers of academia as well. In this upcoming year, I believe that the groundwork is continuing to be set for academic and musical excellence for years to come, and should you decide to plant a seed into this fertile ground, you are guaranteed to see a bountiful harvest. Thank you for your time and consideration, and I hope to hear from you soon!

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Murdock
Director of Choirs