

There is a lot on the table for Mollie Phillips.

The start of a new school year always brings plenty of chores and tasks to complete to ensure everyone has a smooth transition.

For Phillips, the first day of school on July 27 meant even more change than just the Lowndes County School District's move to a modified calendar. After getting her footing last week, Phillips wrapped up the Monday of her first full week with an organizational meeting for New Hope middle and high school students and their parents who want to be involved with show choir.

As director of "Encore" and "Take One" – the names for show choir at the schools – Phillips discussed the show choir contract with the students and parents and laid out what looks to be a busy start of an exciting school year.

"This new building (New Hope High School) and the classrooms are incredible," Phillips said. "I have enjoyed seeing faces I have been around for years, and now I get to see the children of those people, too, and be involved in show choir with them.

"Joining the Trojan family and establishing new relationships has been wonderful."

Phillips, who is from Columbus and grew up in the city, attended New Hope Elementary School, so it is no wonder she said New Hope "is kind of home to me." She graduated from Mississippi University for Women in 2016 with a degree in Music Education and then went to work with the Starkville Home School group, where she served as the director for the middle school choir for two years.

Phillips then went to Heritage Academy and taught music to students in kindergarten through grade four as well as students up to 12th grade. She said general music was her focus for the students in kindergarten

through sixth grade and that she directed the choir for the high school students.

Directing two groups will keep her busy at New Hope, but Phillips is eager to get off to a fast start. She said show choir will have its first performance at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 12, at Pleasant Hill Baptist Church. The time will be announced. Phillips said the show will honor the juniors and the seniors in the group, and that those members will select their favorite moments of show choir to be incorporated into the performance.

“There are ones some of them – maybe a lot of them -- will know, but some of them won’t know the songs, so we will have to teach those,” Phillips said. “We want to honor their legacy at New Hope.”

Phillips said she also hopes to get show choir involved in several festivals and events, including the Mississippi chapter of the American Choral Directors Association, and the 12th-annual Mississippi State University Choral Colloquium on Sept. 10-11.

“It is kind of a lot in September, being back to back, but (the colloquium) is where they can go and be immersed with a lot of the high school students from all over Mississippi,” Phillips said. “They can go and sing with 300-400 kids who are just like them. They will learn a concert in two days and then present the concert at the end of the event. That is something I have always enjoyed doing with students. I think the students will learn a lot from that.”

If you’re interested in getting involved with show choir at New Hope, contact Phillips at: mollie.phillips@lowndes.k12.ms.us.