

# A&M Consolidated High School

## Choir

**2021-2022**



*Emily Ramos, Director*

*Updated 8/19/21.*

Dear A&M Consolidated High School Choir Students and Parents:

I am really looking forward to working with each one of you to help create a rich and varied choir program for AMCHS! Together we can build a choir program founded on excellence!

This year the AMCHS Choir Handbook, as well as student information & medical release forms will be available online on the AMCHS Choir Schoology page. Please take time to become familiar with the contents of the A&M Consolidated High School Choir Handbook. It includes everything you ever needed to know about what it means to be a member of the "Tiger Choir Family" --- student expectations, finances, policies, grading, uniforms, rehearsals, contests, and lots, lots more. If you have any questions about anything having to do with choir, this is the place to start.

In addition to the information you will find in the handbook, you will receive a calendar outlining the events of the choir year. Please put concert dates on your family calendar EARLY to avoid conflicts later. Be sure to check the choir web site regularly for updates and changes to the choir calendar. Once you have read the handbook and looked over the schedule, please fill out the Handbook Acknowledgement Form. Please understand that by submitting this form, you are affirming that you have read this handbook and understand its policies regarding grading, rehearsals, eligibility, refunds, etc. It also means that you intend to support the students at Choir events throughout the year.

**Handbook Acknowledgment Form (*paper copy must be signed & returned*) Due to Mrs. Ramos by September 1, 2021**

**Choir Fee of \$65 Due to the online InTouch system by October 1st, 2021**

I look forward to a fantastic year of music making! Thank you so much for your support!

Sincerely,

*Emily Ramos*

Emily Ramos  
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# Goals of the A&M Consolidated High School Choral Department

- ❖ Develop a sense of the importance of music in the life of each student.
- ❖ Develop self-confidence, self-discipline, responsibility, and social interaction skills in each student through positive interaction with teachers and students.
- ❖ Develop the musical potential of each student to the fullest.
- ❖ Develop the musical skills of each student, including fundamentals of vocal production, music theory, sight reading, learning and using solfege syllables and hand signs, and singing well in an ensemble.
- ❖ Develop a greater understanding and appreciation of our own culture and different cultures through different types of music.
- ❖ Develop student understanding of stylistic traits of different periods of music.
- ❖ Develop self-expression through practice and performance during class, rehearsals, and concerts.
- ❖ Learn proper concert etiquette through participation in and attendance of live performances.
- ❖ Build a sense of teamwork among the choir members.
- ❖ Encourage personal and group excellence.

## Choir Program Structure

All choirs participate in concerts at AMCHS & CSISD choral activities. All students who demonstrate a mastery of skills and maintain academic eligibility also participate in U.I.L. Solo and Ensemble Contest, as well as U.I.L. Concert and Sight-reading Contest.

**Men's Choir** -- Men's choir of intermediate and advanced sight readers. Placement in the Varsity Men's Choir is based on sight-singing ability, choral music experience, musicianship, vocal tone quality, attitude, and academic eligibility. Placement auditions are at the end of each school year. All members are strongly encouraged to audition for All-Region Choir and to participate in U.I.L. Solo & Ensemble Contest.

**Women** -- Treble choir of intermediate and advanced sight readers. Placement in the Varsity Women's Choir is based on sight-singing ability, choral music experience, musicianship, vocal tone quality, attitude, and academic eligibility. Placement auditions are at the end of each school year. All members are strongly encouraged to audition for All-Region Choir and to participate in U.I.L. Solo & Ensemble Contest.

**Chorale** -- Mixed choir of intermediate and advanced sight readers. Placement in the Chorale is based on sight-singing ability, choral music experience, musicianship, vocal tone quality, attitude, and academic eligibility. Placement auditions are at the end of each school year. All members are strongly encouraged to audition for All-Region Choir and to participate in U.I.L. Solo & Ensemble Contest.

**Vocal Ensemble** -- Students who have achieved the highest level of vocal development and music reading skills. Students must be an active member of another ensemble during the same semester/year that he/she is a member of Vocal Ensemble. This group will require extra time commitments outside of the regular school day for extra performances and rehearsals. Students are strongly encouraged to participate in the All State Choir audition process and UIL Solo & Ensemble contest.

## AMCHS Choral Department Student Outcomes

The following list of skills based on the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for High School Fine Arts and the education philosophy of the AMCHS Choral Department summarizes the outcome of a student engaged in the choral program for 4 years:

### 1. Vocal Technique

- a. The student can demonstrate good singing posture and proper breath technique.
- b. The student has a basic knowledge of the biology associated with the vocal instrument.
- c. The student can sing with a consistent tone throughout their vocal range.
- d. The student has a basic knowledge of the registers of the voice and navigates properly through all vocal registers.
- e. The student can sing accurately and expressively at different tempi and with a full range of dynamics.
- f. The student has basic knowledge of singing diction in English, Latin, Italian, German, French and other languages encountered in the repertoire.
- g. The student can evaluate vocal performances and identify strengths and weaknesses.

## 2. Musicianship

- a. The student can accurately sight-sing melodies in major and minor keys using chromatic tones within functional harmony.
- b. The student can accurately read rhythms in a variety of simple and compound meters.
- c. The student can accurately sight-read a single part in a four part choral texture.
- d. The student understands basic musical terminology and can evaluate the expressive and technical markings in a choral score and respond appropriately.
- e. The student can evaluate structural qualities (form) of a piece of music regarding repetition and formal properties.
- f. The student understands basic conducting gestures and their connection to choral performance.

## 3. Ensemble Skills

- a. The student demonstrates proper ensemble etiquette through consistent performance in rehearsals.
- b. The student demonstrates the ability to perform choral music for an audience.
- c. The student can sing their choral part accurately and expressively either alone or as a member of an ensemble with attention to tone, blend, intonation and balance.
- d. The student can memorize music and perform music from memory for an audience.
- e. The student can identify the historical and cultural background of the literature being performed.

## 4. Life Skills

- a. The student will develop a life-long appreciation for choral music and the other arts.
- b. The student will obtain the skills needed to engage in music as a performer, patron, and/or consumer throughout their lives.
- c. The student will develop cultural awareness and tolerance learning to cooperate with an eclectic group of people to reach a common goal.
- d. The student will develop communication and time management skills needed for success in higher education.
- e. The student will develop self-discipline and the ability to focus on difficult tasks in order to achieve goals.
- f. The student will demonstrate the core values of the AMCHS Choral Department (Responsibility, Professionalism, Dignity and Compassion) in all of their daily endeavors.

## Choir Student Conduct and Values

AMCHS Choir students have a high profile on campus and in the community. It is important that the conduct and appearance of all choir students be exemplary. Choir members have the opportunity to participate in field trips and activities. As representatives of CSISD and A&M Consolidated High School our students must reflect an image of positive leadership, character, responsibility, and great competitive spirit.

**AMCHS Choir students are expected to demonstrate the Tiger Qualities at all times:**

**T**rustworthy – Do the right thing; be honest & trustworthy; exhibit high morals

**I**ntegrity – Make good decisions; Motivate & inspire others; Make a positive impact

**G**oal Oriented– Dare to dream; Reach high; Strive toward success.

**E**xcellence – Acquire knowledge & skills to be successful in life; Be motivated by your self-worth; Passionately pursue perfection.

**R**esponsibility~ Take initiative; Exercise self-discipline; Honor your obligations.

**S**ervice– Make a difference in your home, school, and community; Be involved & engaged; Be a part of something bigger than yourself – pay it forward.

## Travel Conduct

All rules for the Choir Classroom, AMCHS, and CSISD are enforced on all choir trips. The penalty for violating these rules may be loss of field trip privileges and possible removal from the AMCHS Choir Program. When we travel we represent AMCHS and CSISD. Our dress and behavior must maintain a high standard.

## Discipline

With the exception of tardies (described in AMCHS Code of Conduct), discipline infractions shall be handled as follows:

1. Warning
2. Teacher/Student Conference
3. Detention/Parent Contact
4. Referral to administrator

Students assigned to ISS the day of choir activities will not be allowed to participate. Students may be allowed to participate in curricular activities, but not extra-curricular. In accordance with CSISD policy, any student suspended from school for any reason will not be permitted to participate in any choir activities during the period of suspension.

## Choir Rehearsal/Room Expectations

### Upon entering the classroom...

1. Pick up any worksheets or new music on the table by the door. Go to your assigned seat with your choir binder and pencil. Be ready to sing when the bell rings.
2. Backpacks, notebooks, books, etc. are not allowed on the risers. Please place these items in the designated space as you enter the room.
3. Put your cell phones away. They are not allowed during rehearsals. **#bepresent!**
4. Absolutely no chewing gum, candy, food, or drinks will be allowed in the choir room. Students may keep clear, bottled water at their seats. *(Please write your name on your water bottle)*
4. Do not play pianos or touch stereo equipment or computers without permission.
5. Students are not allowed into any of the adjacent rooms without permission.
6. If you are ill and need to see the nurse, please ask for a pass.
7. Please inform the director of any problems that may interfere with your attitude and performance during the rehearsal. Any choir member who is too ill to sing but is in a rehearsal will be required to **notify the director at the beginning of class**. They should observe the rehearsal carefully and make individual score markings. Prolonged health problems will require written assignments and/or individual tutoring/testing by the director at an agreed time to make up rehearsal work. A doctor's note will be required for chronic absence from rehearsal (sitting out during class).

### During rehearsal...

1. Bring a positive attitude to class every day.
2. Sing to the best of your ability, every moment of every rehearsal.
3. Stand with a SUPERIOR singing posture.
4. ALWAYS use solfege hand signs.
5. Raise your hand and ask the director questions when you do not understand something.
6. BE PRESENT: Talking and disruptions are not allowed during rehearsal. Come to class focused and prepared to be an active participant in the rehearsal – EVEN if the director is not rehearsing with your section at that moment. There is always an aspect of the music upon which you could be improving.
7. Be sure that your pencil is visible at all choral rehearsals (and use it). Please note that writing in pen is unacceptable (even erase-able pen), and writing in pen will result in a fine to replace the music.
8. Respect others and their property (choir members and directors alike).

9. Stay in your assigned place; do not wander around the room; do not disrupt rehearsal.
10. **The use of cell phones, cameras, iPods/other digital media players, and other electronic devices is prohibited unless the director grants permission to the class.**
11. Use the restroom on an emergency basis. **Please, no grooming in the classroom. Be considerate of others who have allergies: Avoid using scented lotions or sprays in the classroom!**

### **After rehearsal...**

1. Put your folder in your assigned slot after each rehearsal and before leaving the room (your binder may go home with you for practice purposes).
2. Check the calendar to ensure that you are aware of all choir activities.

### **And finally, please remember that...**

All Student Handbook Rules and Procedures apply, just as they would in any other classroom.

## **Choir Binder & Music**

You will not be issued an academic textbook in choir class, but your music is considered to be your "textbook" for the class. It should be treated with respect and care. You are responsible for the following regulations regarding binders and music:

1. Students will provide a black, 1-inch 3 ring binder. Students must keep a pencil in their binder at all times.
2. Students are financially responsible for all music provided by the school. Loss or damage to music can result in a replacement fine that can be anywhere from \$1.00 on up (usually not more than \$3.00) per piece, depending on what music it is. PLEASE NOTE: It is never proper to mark in your music with pen - even erasable pen. Always use a pencil.
3. Please keep track of your binder so you are not fined for missing or damaged music.
4. Students are welcome and encouraged to take music home to practice. However, it must be brought to class every day. Your grade will be penalized if you do not have your binder/music.
5. If for some reason you do not receive a piece of music, it is your responsibility to look for the music on the choir shelves. If you need assistance, ask.
6. Only the Choir Director or the Choir Librarian may be allowed to issue binders or new music or retrieve copies of music from the choir office or library.

## **Grading Policy**

Grading for the choir program reflects the importance of daily participation and performance. Because of the unique nature of performance ensembles like choir, band, and orchestra, there are not many daily written assignments or six weeks tests that make up the grades of the academic core courses. Learning music is a progression that occurs over time -- choirs improve because they build on skills that were learned the day before.

**This process makes the daily responsibility of the individual student important.** Our rehearsing culminates in one or more performances that exhibit the hard work that the students have completed. Therefore, students are graded heavily on their daily participation in the classroom rehearsals and involvement in the concerts.

### **30% Academic Practice**

- Practice
  - Group and individual vocal development exercises
  - Group and individual choral/vocal sightreading exercises
  - Written assignments utilizing musical terminology
  - Skill/technique exhibition/observation
- Application



- Rehearsal technique involvement/observation
- Sightreading skill demonstration
- Choral/vocal skill demonstration

**70% Academic Achievement**

- Vocal/Choral/Sightreading skill quiz/test (group/individual)
- Vocal individual/small group singing tests
- Written Test over music terms/symbols
- Public performance (concert/contest)

***Because of the importance of your student experiencing the reward of performing in the concert, participation in before-school and after-school rehearsals, dress rehearsals, and concerts is required. This policy is supported by the State of Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills, or TEKS standards adopted by the Legislature.***

**"Participating in the required rehearsals and concert" means the student will:**

- ❖ arrive on time to any rehearsals
- ❖ stay for his/her entire portion of the rehearsals
- ❖ arrive at the concert site on time
- ❖ be dressed in appropriate concert attire
- ❖ stand on stage with his/her choir
- ❖ sing all songs in a professional manner
- ❖ represent our school positively
- ❖ stay until the end of the concert
- ❖ display proper audience etiquette during the concert.

If students participate in the rehearsals and concert in the manner described here, they will have a 100 for the rehearsal and concert portion of their grade. Not completing make-up work from absences, arriving late to or leaving early from required events, or non-productive behavior during a rehearsal or concert may result in lower grades.

**After School Rehearsal / Performance Attendance Policy**

It is expected that choir members will attend **ALL** scheduled after-school rehearsals and performances. However, when the situation arises that an absence is unavoidable, the following criteria shall apply:

**An EXCUSED absence will be assigned in the following situations:**

1. ALL DAY ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL. If absent from school (followed by an excused admit), please call prior to the after-school rehearsal to indicate the nature of the absence. If present for part of the day, personal contact with a director **MUST** take place **BEFORE** the beginning of rehearsal. This includes checking out of school.
2. PRE-APPROVED conflicts IN WRITING with other SCHOOL organizations at least ONE WEEK in advance.
3. In case of unavoidable emergency, personal contact must be made with a director at the earliest possible opportunity. If contact is impossible, send an email to [eramos@csisd.org](mailto:eramos@csisd.org)

There is no predetermined limit to the number of excused absences allowed. If excused absences become questionable or excessive, then the choir member is subject to removal from the upcoming performance. If the performance is curricular (Fall, Winter or Spring Concerts), an alternate assignment must be completed to earn the performance grade. Failure to complete the alternate assignment will result in a zero for that performance.

**An UNEXCUSED absence will result from the following situations:**

1. Work conflicts. Driver's Ed.
2. Doctors' appointments (unless related to an absence that day).
3. Out of town trips.

4. Any other situation not specifically addressed under the EXCUSED ABSENCES or not cleared by the director IN ADVANCE.

**An unexcused absence from an extra-curricular rehearsal will result in possible removal from the activity. An unexcused absence from a curricular rehearsal will result in a zero. Alternative assignments will not be offered for unexcused absences.**

## **Eligibility**

AMCHS Choir students are responsible for maintaining high academic standards. Eligibility rules for participation are as follows:

1. All students are eligible for the first six weeks of school.
2. At the end of the first six weeks, if the student is failing (below 70) or has an incomplete in one or more subjects he/she will not be permitted to participate in extra-curricular activities for the next three weeks or until the incomplete is cleared through the Student Services office. (i.e. trips off campus, TMEA, UIL sponsored events, and other specified activities.)
3. An ineligible student may re-gain eligibility status at the end of the third week of the six weeks grading period. If the student is passing ALL subjects, he/she will be eligible to participate in choir activities following a one week grace period. If he/she is failing any course, the student will continue to be ineligible for the remainder of the grading period.

**All choir concerts (fall, winter, pre-UIL, spring) fall under the category of curricular (part of the course TEKS requirement), therefore, academic eligibility is NOT REQUIRED. However, the following choir activities are considered extra-curricular, therefore academic eligibility IS REQUIRED: events associated with the TMEA All-State audition process, UIL Solo & Ensemble Contest, choir spring trip, etc... Eligibility is not required for UIL Concert and Sightreading Contest.**

## **Communication**

In striving to become responsible adults, all students will be expected to balance their activities and organize their calendars. Students must make sure that all parents, employers, coaches, sponsors, and other teachers are informed of their choir activities. **Please keep in mind that rehearsals and concerts are mandatory.** Students are given a choir calendar and ample notice about scheduled rehearsals, performances, and activities. As a result, prior notice should take precedent in most cases and conflicts should be minimal. (Please avoid scheduling doctor or dentist appointments on top of previously scheduled rehearsals or performances)

**Planning ahead is a necessity!** With proper planning, all conflicts can be avoided or at least worked out between sponsors ahead of time. In case of an unavoidable emergency, please email the director at: [eramos@csisd.org](mailto:eramos@csisd.org) If a student is having problems with grades or keeping up with the demands of the choir department, they are urged to discuss it with the director so that a solution can be worked out.

**1. AMCHS Choir Website: [amchschoir.org](http://amchschoir.org)**

**2. Schoology**

## **Performance Attire**

Choir uniforms create a professional look for concerts. All choirs will wear formal uniforms provided by CSISD. These uniforms are the property of the AMC High School Choir Department and only used for choir functions.

**Formal Choir Uniform:**



1. All women will receive a black formal dress for performances. ***Black, low-heeled, closed-toed dress shoes must be provided by the student.***
2. All men will receive a black tuxedo jacket, black slacks, white tux shirt, and a black bow tie. ***Black dress shoes and socks must be provided by the student.***

Students will be responsible for their uniform. Damage or loss of uniforms will result in replacement fines that could easily exceed \$100, and these fees must be cleared before finals can be taken or a student can graduate. Please also note that uniform cleaning fees are paid at the beginning of the year, so students do not need to turn in uniforms already laundered.

### **Alterations**

The hemline of the choir formal should be exactly 1" off the floor while wearing performance shoes. Care must be taken in hemming the dress or pants. Note that all hems MUST be temporary!! PLEASE CHECK WITH THE DIRECTOR BEFORE CUTTING THE DRESS OR TUXEDO PANTS!!! DO NOT USE STAPLES, SAFETY PINS, OR TAPE!!! It is the responsibility of each young man or woman and his/her parents to see that the necessary alterations are made on his pants or her dress in order that it fit properly. If major alterations are necessary, they must be approved in advance by the choral director.

### **Hair and Jewelry**

For men and women, long hair should be worn back and away from the face. Shoulder length hair or shorter may be worn down, but must be away from the face. Ladies: NO BOWS! Hair clips and accessories should be nondescript and blend with hair color. **No visible jewelry, such as watches, necklaces, and excessive rings. Post earrings only.**

**\*\*\*Improper concert attire (inappropriate shoes, wearing bows in hair, hair covering face, jewelry, missing items, etc.) will result in a lowered test grade for that concert.\*\*\***

### **Informal Choir Uniform:**

1. AMCHS choir T-shirt, and BLUE JEANS (NO HOLES) and tennis shoes. (no flip-flops)  
*No shorts / capris / legging; No holes or rips!*

**\*\*\* Parents: please help us maintain a uniform, professional look\*\*\*  
*If purchasing jeans is a financial problem, please let the director know.***

2. The cost of AMCHS Choir shirts is included in the Choir Fee.

## **Choir Expenses**

All choir members will have the following expenses:

1. Choir Fee – \$65 (choir shirt, uniform rental/maintenance, folder/music, CDs, pencils, etc.)
2. Boys – black dress shoes & socks
3. Girls – Black, low heeled, closed toe dress shoes

## **Fundraising**

Fundraising projects afford students the opportunity to earn money needed for choir expenses. All fund-raisers are optional but students are encouraged to participate. Fundraising projects for this year will be announced ASAP.

## **TIGER Choir Booster Club**

Parents of choir members are invited to join the Tiger Choir Boosters at the beginning of each year. This organization is the primary support group of the AMCHS Choir Department. Parents may volunteer to assist in a variety of ways. Membership Forms are available on the AMCHS Choir webpage. **YOUR HELP IS NEEDED AND APPRECIATED!!!**

## **TIGER Choir Corporate Sponsors**

We invite local businesses to become a Tiger Choir Sponsor. Sponsors receive ads in our programs and our webpage. Forms will be available on our webpage. Please fill out the appropriate form and return information and any graphics in a timely manner. Please contact any choir student or the choir director to become a sponsor. Due ASAP

## **Refund Policy**

Most fees charged to the student involve advance payment for a service or item. In such cases (i.e. accompanist fees, trip fees, game tickets, etc.), the choir has a deadline for receiving reimbursement from the supplier. Because of this, the following policy will be strictly followed: **There will be no refunds in any case where a student has paid for an activity or supply but is no longer able to participate.** This policy applies no matter what the reason is for withdrawal and specifically includes but is not limited to the situations of ineligibility, illness, unexpected family travel, or withdrawal from the AMCHS Choir.

## **Music Enrichment Program**

Private instruction in voice will be offered during the school day through the CSISD Music Enrichment Program (MEP) depending upon student interest. Student google forms must be submitted and lessons will begin the third week of classes. There is a per lesson fee (*\$25.00 for a 25 min lesson and \$45 for a 45 min lesson*) and must be paid monthly in advance. Payment will be made directly to the instructor. Private students will be expected to commit to lessons for a full semester/year. Lessons will be taught during choir classes, lunches and before/after school. Lessons will be taught by qualified vocal instructors selected by the CSISD Fine Arts Department. For more information, ask Mrs. Ramos.

## **Honors Choir Credit**

Students interested in receiving Honors credit must fill out an application form. Upon completing all of the required assignments, the counselor will be notified and the change made for the student to receive Honors Credit for that semester.

## **Letter Jackets**

Letter jackets are earned through participation in extracurricular activities. These activities benefit both the student earning the jacket and the choir in which that student sings. These activities are also evidence of the student's hard work and dedication. A student lettering in choir cannot have an outstanding balance due to the Choir Program. In addition, students must perform in all scheduled performances and U.I.L. Concert/Sightreading contests for the entire year. They must also have NO unexcused absences from after-school choir rehearsals.

### ***Letter Jacket Qualifications (must have at least one to qualify):***

#### ***A student who has completed 9<sup>th</sup> Grade:***

- Made All State Choir
- Made a First Division on a Solo or Ensemble at the U.I.L. Texas State Solo & Ensemble Competition

#### ***A student who has completed 10<sup>th</sup> Grade:***

- Auditioned for Region Choir
- Made All State Choir
- Received a First Division on a Class 1 Solo or Ensemble at UIL Solo & Ensemble Competition
- Completed two years in a Varsity Choir

#### ***A student who has completed 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> Grade:***

- Auditioned for Region Choir
- Made All State Choir
- Received a First Division on a Solo or Ensemble at the U.I.L. Solo and Ensemble Competition
- Completed three years in a Non-Varsity Choir
- Completed two years in a Varsity Choir

## **Choir Officers**

All choir officers must be academically eligible and maintain a satisfactory conduct grade in all classes. Students not meeting this standard may be replaced. Any choir officer placed in ISS or suspended from school may be removed from

office at the director's discretion. If you are interested in being a choir leader, please complete an application form. **All Choir officers will meet several times each semester. This meeting time will be established once school begins. Applications will come out in April.**

## **Concert Etiquette**

Choir students will exhibit proper concert behavior during all performances in order to reflect positively on the AMCHS Choir program.

Students will be graded on their concert etiquette. The following rules will be followed at all performances:

1. Talking is not allowed. It is disrespectful to the performers on stage and audience members who wish to hear the performance and does not show support for the AMCHS Choir program.
2. Do not leave your seat FOR ANY REASON (other than extreme emergency). You will be given ample opportunity to use the restroom and drinking fountain before concerts begin; therefore, these are not considered extreme emergencies. If you must leave, do so as quietly and as inconspicuously as possible ONLY between songs or during applause (making sure doors do not slam shut).
3. No food or drink is allowed in the performance area, including the stage, backstage, and seating area. This includes water bottles.
4. Support your fellow choir members with appropriate applause. Yelling, whistling, shouting names, etc. is not acceptable. The audience should never cause attention to be shifted from the performers on stage.
  - a. During serious music, applaud only after the conductor has lowered his or her arms.
  - b. During pop or jazz music you may applaud for a soloist during the song.
  - c. In songs that have multiple movements, applaud only after the final movement. This will be noted in the concert program. The conductor will lower his or her arms when the final movement is over.
5. Set a good example for the audience and other students. Other people may not know how to act at a choir concert and will be watching you for clues.
6. **Cell phones should be left in the choir office during the concert.**
7. Move between the stage and seating areas in quiet, single file lines. Sit in your assigned seat/row.
8. Enjoy the concert. This is the only time you will ever get to see it!
9. Stay for the entire concert.

## **TMEA All-State Choir Auditions**

**To become a member of the All-State Choir, a student must be selected through a series of auditions:**  
Region Auditions (September); Pre-Area Auditions (November); Area/State Auditions (January)

### **Cost:**

- AMCHS Choir pays the entry fees for the auditions. *Students are required to repay the \$15 entry fee if they do NOT attend the audition – no matter what the reason.*

### **Sectionals**

- Sectionals will be held after school to rehearse All-State audition music.
- Sectionals begin the 1st Monday of school and continue until there are no more students left in the process or the process has ended.
- Individual rehearsals with a choir director will be offered on an "as available basis." Sign-up sheets will be posted.

## University Interscholastic League (UIL) Contests

### Solo & Ensemble Contest (February)

- All students are encouraged but not required to participate.
- Students are judged based on their individual or small group performance.
- Students choose classical songs from the Prescribed Music List put out by UIL.
- Participation in this event WILL require extra time outside of the school day.
- Please note that students who participate in the solo contest are required to pay the entry fee of \$10.00.
- Students must demonstrate proficiency on their music before being allowed to participate.

### Concert & Sight-Reading Contest (April)

- This is a required contest for all choir students who meet the requirements.
- Students are judged based on the overall performance of the choir in which they participate.
- This UIL contest takes precedence over other school activities and any absence from school is considered excused. Students are responsible for any missed work.
- Rehearsals for this contest will take place during class; however, sectional and other rehearsals before or after school will also be required.
- Any student who misses required UIL rehearsals may not be allowed to participate in the contest, at the director's discretion.
- Students will be asked to demonstrate proficiency on the music before being allowed to participate.
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## **Trips**

The AMCHS Choir takes small choir trips throughout the year, which may include:

- TMEA Region, PreArea & Area Auditions
- RenFest Early Music Festival
- Houston Grand Opera performance
- Local choir concerts
- UIL Solo & Ensemble & UIL Choir Contest
- Tours to elementary & middle schools
- Spring Trip
- Social Times

*Parents are encouraged to attend these trips as chaperones.*

*(Please note: you must fill out the Volunteer Application form every year to be a volunteer in CSISD.)*

## **Driving Policy for Off-Campus Choir Events**

For safety and liability reasons, the following rules must be followed:

1. Students are not allowed to drive to or from any off-campus choir event without written permission IN ADVANCE from their parent/guardian and the approval of the Director.
2. If a student must come late or leave early, they are encouraged to do so with a parent.
3. Students will not be released to anyone except their parent. A note should be given to the Director in advance.
4. No changes may be made partially through a trip without receiving notice of the change in writing.
5. Students may not ride with other students or other students' parents.

## **Attendance Policy for Trips**

1. All choir trips are *optional* unless otherwise specified.

2. Only AMCHS Choir members and their parent chaperones are allowed to participate in AMCHS Choir trips.

3. The following additional criteria may apply to choir students attending any choir trip:

- a. No unexcused choir concert absences during the school year.
- b. No more than one unexcused choir rehearsal/sectional absence during the school year.
- c. No ISS assignments
- d. No more than 4 detentions in a semester.
- e. No office referrals from a choir director.
- f. No more than 2 office referrals from any teacher or administrator during the semester in which a trip occurs.

## Trip Pick-Up Times

Sometimes it is difficult to determine our exact arrival time when itineraries are set for choir trips. To help parents with this, we follow this policy:

- Students can call on their cell phones or director cell phone to alert parents when we will be arriving at the high school.
- Parents must be prompt when picking up their children from choir trips.

## After Hours Drop-Off and Pick-Up Location

When students must arrive at school for choir activities outside of the regular school day, the AMCHS choir will meet outside the front of the school on Nueces.

## Appendix A

### AMCHS Choir Grading Rubric

This document is aligned with the expectations set forth in the AMCHS Choir Handbook. Choir students will be evaluated throughout each grading period based on the scale below. Grades will be raised or lowered based on performance.

#### REHEARSAL GRADES

5 = 100    4 = 80    3 = 60    2 = 40    1 = 20

#### Ensemble Singing and Participation – The student:

5. Always participates and sings with good tone, technique and musicianship.
  - The elements of *good tone* are: a centered, focused quality of sound, intonation, control, support, volume, intensity, blending within a section [with “tall” vowels], balancing between sections, and dynamic contrasts without distortion (UIL Forms 4 & 6).
  - The elements of *good technique* are: pitch accuracy, rhythmic precision, vocal dexterity and flexibility, observance of ties, slurs and articulation markings, attack, release, fluency and diction (UIL Forms 4 & 6).
  - The elements of *good musicianship* are: style, phrasing, observance of musical markings, appropriateness of dynamic contrasts, observance of tempo, note spacing, accents, rhythmic patterns, expression, fluency, and demonstration of a musical understanding (UIL Forms 4 & 6).
4. Usually participates and sings with good tone, technique and musicianship.
3. Sometimes participates and/or sings with inconsistent tone, technique and musicianship. Cellphone use during rehearsal.
2. Seldom participates and/or sings with inappropriate tone, technique and musicianship. Cellphone use during rehearsal.
1. Never participates and/or sings with poor tone, technique and musicianship. Cellphone use during rehearsal.

#### Posture / Presentation – The student:

5. Always applies good breath support and good posture.
  - Breath Support  
*Inhaling:* Expand the lungs down and out, pushing the diaphragm muscle down. Inhale silently without making any other noise. Expand your entire waistline, keeping the shoulders low and relaxed.  
*Breath Control:* Blow a steady stream of air.
  - Posture  
*Standing:* head level, shoulders low and relaxed, backbone straight, rib cage high, knees flexed, feet slightly apart, and music held high  
*Sitting:* head level, shoulders low and relaxed, rib cage high, backbone straight, both feet flat on the floor, and music held high.
4. Usually applies good breath support and good posture during rehearsal.
3. Sometimes applies good breath support and good posture during rehearsal, but has to be asked to do so.
2. Seldom applies good breath support and good posture during rehearsal and must be constantly reminded to do so.
1. Does not apply breath support and good posture during rehearsal.

#### Following the Conductor – The student:

5. Always follows rehearsal instructions the first time they are given, marks the score, corrects errors when they are addressed, and does not have to re-visit problem spots in the music that were addressed in prior rehearsals.
4. Usually follows rehearsal instructions the first time they are given, marks the score, corrects errors when they are addressed, and remembers to correct most of the problem spots in the music that were addressed in prior rehearsals.

3. Sometimes follows rehearsal instructions the first time they are given, occasionally marks the score, corrects some of the errors when they are addressed, and has to be reminded to correct problems that were addressed in prior rehearsals.
2. Seldom follows rehearsal instructions the first time they are given, does not mark the score, does not correct errors when they are addressed, and does not correctly sing problem spots that were addressed in prior rehearsals.
1. Does not follow rehearsal instructions, does not mark the score, does not correct errors, and does not correctly sing problem spots that were addressed in prior rehearsals.

**Rehearsal Materials** – The student:

5. Always brings necessary materials to rehearsals and sectionals (music, pencil, highlighter, etc.).
4. Usually brings necessary materials to rehearsals and sectionals.
3. Sometimes brings necessary materials to rehearsals and sectionals.
2. Seldom brings necessary materials to rehearsals and sectionals.
1. Never brings necessary materials to rehearsal and sectionals.

**Attitude / Contribution** – The student:

5. Always maintains a consistent positive attitude, participates in rehearsal, strives to attain the performance goals of the choir, and works well with others.
4. Usually has a positive attitude, participates in rehearsal, works to attain the performance goals of the choir, and works well with others.
3. Sometimes has a positive attitude, participates in rehearsal, works to attain the performance goals of the choir, and works well with others.
2. Seldom has a positive attitude, does not consistently participate in rehearsal, and occasionally distracts others from attaining the performance goals of the choir.
1. Does not maintain a positive attitude, distracts others from attaining performance goals, does not work to meet the performance goals of the choir, and does not consistently participate in rehearsal.

**Follows Student Expectations** – The student:

5. Always follows student expectations, policies and procedures outlined in the Choir Handbook and never needs reminders.
4. Usually follows student expectations, policies and procedures outlined in the Choir Handbook and rarely needs reminders.
3. Sometimes follows student expectations, policies and procedures outlined in the Choir Handbook but needs occasional reminders.
2. Seldom follows student expectations, policies and procedures outlined in the Choir Handbook and needs frequent reminders.
1. Does not follow student expectations, policies and procedures outlined in the Choir Handbook or exhibits severe behavior.

**Sight-Reading Participation** – The student:

5. Always participates and sings with good tone, technique, musicianship, accurate syllable names and Kodaly hand signs that pulse the beat and move according to pitch.
4. Usually participates and sings with good tone, technique, musicianship, accurate syllable names and Kodaly hand signs that pulse the beat and move according to pitch.
3. Sometimes participates and/or sings with inconsistent tone, technique, musicianship, inaccurate syllable names and Kodaly hand signs that sometimes pulse the beat and move according to pitch.
2. Seldom participates and/or sings with inappropriate tone, technique, musicianship, inaccurate syllable names and Kodaly hand signs that seldom pulse the beat and move according to pitch.
1. Never participates and/or sings with poor tone, technique, musicianship, inaccurate syllable names and Kodaly hand signs that do not pulse the beat and move according to pitch.

**Dress Rehearsals / Extra Rehearsals / Sectionals** – The student:

5. Punctually attends, participates and follows all instructions during the entire rehearsal / sectional.
4. Attends, participates and follows instructions during most of the rehearsal / sectional.
3. Attends and participates in some of the rehearsal / sectional or briefly disrupts the instruction.
2. Attends and participates in little of the rehearsal / sectional or disrupts instruction.
1. Arrives extremely late or leaves extremely early, fails to participate or severely disrupts instruction.

**PERFORMANCE GRADES**

**5 = 100    4 = 80    3 = 60    2 = 40    1 = 20**

**Concert Performance / Concert Etiquette** – The student:

5. Punctually attends the warm-up/rehearsal, participates in the entire rehearsal/performance, and displays excellent concert etiquette.
  - The concert begins with warm-up/rehearsal time. Students must be on time or their concert grade may be affected.
  - The concert concludes after the final song is performed. Students will be dismissed to clean up and assist with the take-down after the concert.
  - Concert etiquette refers to proper behavior during a performance. Enjoying the music without interrupting anyone else's enjoyment should be the goal.
  - Concert grades will be lowered for inappropriate behavior such as talking, leaving one's assigned seat without permission, and causing any kind of distraction.
4. Attends most of the warm-up/rehearsal, participates in the entire performance, and displays appropriate concert etiquette.
3. Attends some of the warm-up/rehearsal, participates in some of the performance, or displays inappropriate behavior.
2. Attends little of the warm-up/rehearsal, participates in some of the performance, or displays inappropriate behavior.
1. Misses the warm-up/rehearsal, fails to participate in the entire performance, or displays inappropriate behavior.

**Singing Tests (Individual or Group)** – The student:

5. Always sings with good tone, technique and musicianship.
4. Usually sings with good tone, technique and musicianship.
3. Sometimes sings with good tone, technique and musicianship.
2. Seldom sings with good tone, technique and musicianship.



1. Never sings with good tone, technique and musicianship.

**Sight Reading Tests (Individual or Group)** – The student:

5. Always sings with good tone, technique musicianship, accurate syllable names and Kodaly hand signs that pulse the beat and move according to pitch.
4. Usually sings with good tone, technique musicianship, accurate syllable names and Kodaly hand signs that pulse the beat and move according to pitch.
3. Sometimes sings with good tone, technique musicianship, accurate syllable names and Kodaly hand signs that pulse the beat and move according to pitch.
2. Seldom sings with good tone, technique musicianship, accurate syllable names and Kodaly hand signs that pulse the beat and move according to pitch.
1. Never sings with good tone, technique musicianship, accurate syllable names and Kodaly hand signs that pulse the beat and move according to pitch.

**Tests**

The 1 to 5 point scale will not be applied to assignments. These assignments will be graded on a traditional 100 point scale. Grades will be lowered for written work that is turned in late.

Written work may include:

1. score preparation
2. solfege
3. worksheets
4. homework
5. papers
6. quizzes and tests
7. performance evaluations
8. rhythm
9. sight-reading
10. singing tests

**END OF YEAR FINAL EXAM (20% of the semester grade)**

There will be a required choir “final exam” at the end of each semester. It may be a written evaluation or it may consist of a multiple choice test taken on scantron..