

2025 - 2026 SPHS CHOIR HANDBOOK

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Behavior Expectations

We are pleased to have each and every member of the choir join this amazing team of musicians! Participation in this program means you are a member of a team, and our success or failure depends on each of its members. As your Directors, we are committed to providing some of the most fun and memorable experiences of your life. In order to do that, we are here to ensure that you gain the tools for success, and we are going to ask that you work very hard toward the common goals of every member of this team. Please know that this means you will be asked to treat both your peers and Directors with a high level of respect and courtesy at all times. You will be asked to participate fully in all parts of our daily rehearsals, and you will be asked to remain focused and quiet during instruction.

Public Display of Affection (PDA) is described as any physical contact between two people. PDA while in a professional setting is not allowed. This includes, but is not limited to: rehearsals, meetings, tours and performances. PDA is not allowed in the choir room, the immediate hallways around the choir room, or during any choir-sponsored events. If your Director finds that an individual or group of students is holding the rest of the group back from progressing toward success, those students will be removed from rehearsals, performances, and even from the program, in order to provide the group with the greatest opportunity for amazing and memorable experiences!

Students removed from rehearsals or concerts will be given an alternative written assignment to take the place of their regular rehearsal or performance grade. Once a student reaches a maximum of three (3) dismissals, he/she may be removed from the choir program altogether.

Choir Program Goals

Through participation in the ensembles offered at Stony Point High School, students are afforded the opportunity to achieve the following goals of the program:

- **Attain** a healthy sound through the exploration of vocal technique and proper posture.
- **Develop** strong musicianship skills through the performance of “quality” choral literature, including the following:
 - Sight-reading previously unrehearsed music.
 - Singing with melodic direction.
 - Singing with proper diction and articulation.
 - Singing with dynamics and expression.
 - Singing as an ensemble.
- **Sing** in a variety of styles, languages and ensembles
- **Learn** through teamwork, a sense of responsibility, and commitment through a variety of performance opportunities.
- **Achieve** a better appreciation, understanding, and respect for choral and vocal literature through performance and experience.

Students are presented with the opportunity to build individual musicianship skills through small ensembles and solo performance opportunities throughout the school year.

Concert Etiquette

Choir students will exhibit proper concert behavior during all performances, in either their own choir or as an audience member. Students will be graded on their behavior. Concert etiquette is an integral part of choral music education. Appropriate conduct in formal and informal concert settings is included in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) set by the Texas Education Agency.

The following rules will be followed at all times:

- Talking is not permitted on stage or in the audience. It is disrespectful to the performers on stage and audience members.
- Do not distract the performing choir in any way.
- Do not leave your seat for any reason during a performance. You will be given ample time to use the restroom and drinking fountain before the concert. If you must leave, do so as quietly and inconspicuously as possible (make sure the doors do not slam shut). Leave between songs only.
- No food or drink is allowed on stage, backstage, or in the seating area. This includes water bottles and gum.
- Cell phones are not permitted in the performance venue at any time.
- Move between the seating area and stage in quiet, single-file lines. Sit in your assigned seat/row. Do not talk as you enter or exit.
- Support your fellow choir members with appropriate applause. Yelling, whistling, shouting names, etc. is not acceptable.
- Set a good example for the audience and other students. Other people may not know how to behave in a concert setting.
- We hope all parents and guests will stay for the concert when bringing a student to a concert. If a student needs to be picked up, please do so in a timely manner.
- Stay for the entire concert.

Conflicts with Choir Activities

Absences and tardiness for concerts and rehearsals will be excused in the case of medical emergency or death in the family only. Please call and leave a *detailed* message on the choir office phone or email if any of these incidents occur: 512-428-7183 or director@stpchoir.com.

WORK OR LACK OF TRANSPORTATION DOES NOT CONSTITUTE AN EXCUSED ABSENCE. Check your Choir Calendar now and plan ahead. Transportation issues can almost always be worked out; please let us know in advance if there is a problem.

In the event of a conflict with another scheduled school activity, it is the responsibility of the student to notify the sponsors of the conflicting activity. The sponsors will then determine the student's obligation.

If a concert is missed due to an excused absence, the student must coordinate with the Director how to make up their absence. Generally, students will be required to either perform the concert, solo, for the Directors, or the student may provide a written critique of the missed performance. Students will have one week from the missed performance date to complete the requirements for the make-up assignment. If the excused absence is due to a disciplinary decision or the absence is unexcused, students will not earn a grade higher than 70.

Per school policy, students must be in attendance most of the day of a concert in order to participate, so please be mindful of these dates when scheduling appointments. An excused absence during the school day does not automatically become an excused absence from an evening performance.

All choir activities, events, and performances are scheduled on the Choir Calendar available on the Choir Website. As dates or information may change, the Calendar will be updated.

Eligibility

According to the Texas UIL “No Pass-No Play” Rule, no student may participate in interscholastic competitions including athletics, academic competition, or performance competition, unless he/she is passing all classes. Failure to comply with this rule can result in disqualification of the entire team or group from the event or competition.

If a student receives a grade below 70 on his/her report card for any six-week grading period, he/she will not be allowed to participate in any choir competitions or off-campus performances during the regular school day for the following six-week grading period. Note: waivers may be available once per semester for AP and IB courses if the failing grade is 60 or above.

A three-week progress report will provide failing students an opportunity to regain eligibility for the remainder of that six-week grading period, but will not cause any student to lose eligibility if they were already passing all classes on the previous report card. Even though we will use nine-week grading periods, UIL still follows a traditional six-week grading period structure. Closely monitor the calendar for eligibility checkpoints throughout the year.

Please note: academic eligibility requirements do not apply to regular choir rehearsals or concerts in which all choir students are required to participate.

Exception: Effective May 1, 2019 TEA has amended 19 TAC Chapter 76, Extracurricular Activities, Subchapter AA, Commissioner's Rules, §76.1001, Extracurricular Activities Summary: This amendment allows a student who has not passed all his or her classes but who is enrolled in a state-approved music course that participates in University Interscholastic League (UIL) Concert and Sight-reading Evaluation to perform with the ensemble during the UIL evaluation performance at the discretion of the Director.

MAINTAINING ELIGIBILITY IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE STUDENT!!!

It is unfortunate to have to inform a student who has worked hard to prepare for an upcoming activity that they do not meet the eligibility requirements and cannot participate. No refunds will be given for entry fees, ticket costs, etc. due to ineligibility for any event. Please communicate with classroom teachers, ask questions, keep up with your assignments (especially after an absence), check Home Access often, and make choices of which you can be proud!

Participation in Stony Point HS Choirs is a privilege, not a right, and all privileges come with responsibilities!

Grading Policy

Grades in all choir classes will be based on the following criteria:

DAILY ASSIGNMENTS - 60%

Graded by individual and small group performance; this includes, but is not limited to:

- Classroom Participation: Posture, positive attitude, having materials.
- Singing Tests: Students will be tested to demonstrate knowledge of music (choir music repertoire) currently being taught in the classroom.
- Sight-Reading Tests: Every student will be graded on progress of sight-reading skills.
- Outside of School Rehearsals: Special circumstances may arise in which outside of school rehearsals may be needed. These rehearsals, when called, are mandatory for each ensemble member and may be scheduled before or after school. Rehearsals will not be called without a minimum of two (2) weeks advanced notice. Students with prior school related conflicts are expected to communicate with the Director at least twenty-four (24) hours ahead of time.
- Homework & Written Work: This includes, but is not limited to parent letters, worksheets, music theory tests, rhythm tests, concert evaluations, journal grades, etc.

MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS - 40%

Scheduled public performances are the ultimate goal of our class rehearsals and students **MUST** be present. Concerts are scheduled well in advance; therefore, necessary arrangements should be made to ensure attendance. Required concerts count as a major performance grade. Each grading period will include a minimum of two (2) major assignment grades so one poor grade does not cause a student to fail the grading period.

Late Work will receive a 20-point grade deduction. Students will have ten (10) calendar days to complete any missed grades.

Payments

We work very hard to keep costs down for our students in choir and recognize that advanced notice is helpful to parents when it comes to meeting these cost requirements. While the financial demands of running a successful program are high, district funds are used to supplement whenever possible, and we carefully consider which costs are absolutely necessary to pass along to students. Some can be met with an optional fee, required only from those that participate in the activity. We have done our best to lay out the potential costs for you below.

Please note that we never want a student to feel he/she cannot participate in choir due to financial hardship. If you are unable to pay any of the following fees, please contact your Director. We may be able to arrange a payment plan or scholarship assistance for your student!

Required Fees: \$100

This fee includes a \$35 cost required of all students as part of their informal uniform (\$20 t-shirt) and uniform cleaning fee (\$15) which pays for all of our formal uniforms to be professionally cleaned during the summer. Also included is a \$65 supply fee which helps purchase music, binders, pencils, highlighters, paper clips, and transportation expenses that are provided for students throughout the year.

Additional/Optional Fees:

Reserved only for students participating in these particular activities.

- Show Choir Activity Fee \$100 (includes polo shirt & spring festival payment)
- Region Choir Audition Entry Fee \$20
- Solo/Ensemble Entry Fee \$15
- Solo/Ensemble Accompanist Fee \$40
- Tickets to special events (Austin Opera, Texas Stars Hockey, etc.)
- Banquet Tickets
- Spring Trips (including transportation, performance fees, lodging, meals)
- Texas State Solo/Ensemble Entry Fee \$20
- Texas State Solo/Ensemble Accompanist Fee \$60

Additional/Optional Fees will be paid on or prior to the payment deadline for that particular activity. Any fundraising credit that a student earns during the Fall and Spring Fundraiser may be applied toward these additional/optional fees.

Procedure for Turning in Money (Cash or Checks):

Fill out an envelope in the left, second drawer of the classroom desk – COMPLETELY. Please include Name, Date, Amount, and Purpose (Activity Fee, TMEA Audition Entry Fee, Solo/Ensemble Entry Fee, Banquet Ticket, Etc.) Once your envelope is filled out accurately please place the sealed envelope in the dropbox outside the Director's office window. *Please make sure checks include the full **printed first and last name** of the check signer, the **driver license number**, and a **current phone number**.*

Online payments can be made by visiting rrisdpay.com.

Texas Music Educators Association (TMEA) All-State Auditions

Students must be academically eligible for each level of audition and performance!

District Auditions

- All students entering the audition process must participate in this 1st round.
- Larger sections may be zoned into multiple audition rooms.
- All SPHS Varsity students are STRONGLY encouraged to participate. Any concerns must be brought to the attention of the Directors and will be handled case by case. The SPHS Choir Program pays the audition fee for this first round of auditions.
- Students ranking Chair 1-36 (1-18 in zoned rooms) will advance to the Region Audition.

Region Auditions

- Students who advanced at District Auditions will audition on the selections from the listed literature and must pay the \$20 audition entry fee (regardless of eligibility/performance).
- Students ranking Chair 1-12 place into the Region Mixed Choir and advance to Pre-Area Auditions; Soprano & Alto voices ranking Chair 13-36 place into the Region Treble Choir.

Region Clinic and Choir Concert

- Students who are placed into a Region Choir must attend the weeknight AND Saturday clinic and concert.
- Performing students will wear their formal school-issued choir uniform.
- Performing students will be transported TO the Region Clinic/Concert site, but will need to provide their own transportation home following the concert.

Pre-Area Auditions

- Students who advanced at Region Auditions will audition on the selections from the listed literature.
- Students ranking Chair 1-5 (6 & 7 are alternates) advance to Area Auditions.

Area Auditions (Area F consists of TMEA Regions 9, 26, 27, 33)

- Students who advanced at Pre-Area Auditions will audition on the selections from the listed literature.

Placement in All State Choirs is defined by the TMEA Apportionment Policy. 20 students, 5 from each region, compete for the following placement to the respective All-State Choirs:

- Chairs 1 - 4 in Soprano and Alto sections, and Chairs 1 - 5 in Tenor and Bass sections place into the All-State Mixed Choir
- Chairs 5 - 11 in Soprano and Alto sections place into the All-State Treble Choir
- Chairs 6 - 9 in Tenor and Bass sections place into the All-State Tenor-Bass Choir
- 2 additional chairs per voice part will be named as Alternates to the Texas All-State Choirs

Trips

Guidelines & Conduct

In addition to those policies set for by RRISD and SPHS, Choir members will adhere to the following procedures:

- Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that reflects positively on the Choir, SPHS, and RRISD.
- Students must follow all SPHS, Choir, and RRISD rules as well as legal, ethical, and moral requests from Directors or chaperones while on the trip.
- Follow the instructions of the choir Director, staff, bus drivers, and parent chaperones at all times. They are your legal guardians in the absence of your parents
- Students must have all necessary forms (Medical/Travel Release) completed and on file with the choir office to travel on any trip with the choir.
- Be on time
- Everyone travels with the group and returns with the group. Special permission to travel in some other manner may be granted if the Director is consulted and has received written authorization from the parents PRIOR to the trip. Permission will be granted or denied based on the individual situation.
- Students will not be released to anyone other than their parents unless a permission note, signed by the parent, has been turned in and the student has checked out with the Director or designated chaperone.
- You are responsible for your own possessions. The choir program assumes no responsibility for personal items lost or damaged on choir trips.
- No changes may be made at any time during a trip without receiving notice of the change in writing.
- Students may not ride with other students. Students may not ride with other students' parents unless they bring written permission IN ADVANCE from their parent/guardian.
- Ride the same bus for the entire trip.
- **DRUG, ALCOHOL, AND TOBACCO POLICY:** The use of these items will not be tolerated during any choir activity at home or away from school by students, chaperones, or Directors. School and local authorities will deal with any student found with these items with the same penalties as if the offense occurred during the school day on campus. In addition, the students will be sent home immediately at the parent's expense. Students in violation of the policy will face the penalties set forth by the school and community where the violation occurred, including removal from the SPHS Choir Program.
- For the safety and security of all of our students, the Director and chaperones reserve the right to check all luggage prior to and/or during any choir trip.

Bus Conduct

The choir will frequently travel on either school buses or commercial buses. Student conduct is expected to be at the highest level on any trip.

While on the bus, students will:

- Remain seated with safety belt (if available) fastened at all times to and from our destination. Texas Department of Transportation requires a seating chart be completed for all school bus rides.
- Sit properly in a forward position.
- Keep the bus clear of food, drinks, and debris (at times it may be necessary to eat on the bus. Every effort should be made to keep your area clean.)
- Keep all body parts inside the bus.
- Refrain from loud, boisterous talking, singing, screaming, whistling, inappropriate jokes, music players with speakers, etc.
- No public displays of affection.

Attendance Policy for Trips

All choir trips are optional unless otherwise specified. Only SPHS choir members and their parent chaperones are allowed to participate in SPHS choir trips. The following additional criteria may apply to choir students attending any choir trip:

- No unexcused choir concert absences during the school year.
- No more than one unexcused rehearsal/sectional during the school year.
- No office referrals from the Choir Director.
- No RROC assignments at any time during the school year.
- All required fees, expenses, and debts have been paid and cleared.

Trip Reservation and Payment Guidelines

The SPHS Choir may take one or more trips per year within or outside the state of Texas. Trip location will be determined by the Choir Director with the input from the Student Choir Officers and the SPHS Choir Boosters.

The SPHS Choir Boosters will sponsor several fundraisers throughout the year to help us raise money to use toward trips and special events.

Students and parents interested in participating in the choir trip will sign a travel contract and pay the trip deposit, along with scheduled payments.

The tour company controls trip refunds. The refund policy will be set out in the Travel Contract given to each family when signing up for the trip. Students will forfeit all or part of the money they paid to attend the trip if they cancel FOR ANY REASON after the refund deadlines unless another student is found to take their place.

Trip availability may be limited. Students who exceed the number allowed on the trip (based on transportation availability) will be placed on a waiting list.

Trip payments must be made on time so that we may pay the tour company. Failure to make a trip payment on time will cause a student to be placed on the waiting list or dropped from the trip.

Parents are invited to attend trips and must pay accordingly. Chaperone spots are limited.

Trip payments, unless paid directly to the travel company, may be made in cash or check (payable to SPHS Choir).

Trip Pick-Up Times

Parents must be prompt when picking up their children from choir trips. Students will call parents regarding our arrival time on our way home. Please be respectful of the time the Choir Director spends away from their families in order to provide students with special opportunities outside of the school day by picking up students quickly upon return to school.

Uniforms

Informal Uniforms:

All choir students will receive a choir t-shirt in September each year. These t-shirts must be worn with appropriate blue jeans (no holes/frays) and closed-toe shoes (tennis shoes; no sandals or flip-flops). The informal uniform is used for the Fall Concert, football games, pep rallies, school functions, and other activities throughout the year. Additional or Replacement t-shirts are available for purchase as stock is available.

Formal Dresses:

Students may be issued a black dress to wear at formal concerts. These dresses will be worn at the Winter Concert, UIL Concert & Sight-reading, and for our annual photos. Dresses must be worn with black closed-toe, flat shoes. Soft soles are recommended but not required. Flip-flops, tennis shoes, boots, etc. are not an acceptable part of this uniform. Appropriate black undergarments should be worn with the dress. Parents will be available to make sure all students are appropriately dressed for events! *Students are responsible for providing their own black dress shoes and undergarments.*

Formal Pants/Shirts:

Students may be issued black tux pants, black button-down shirt, blue vest, and blue tie, to wear at formal concerts. These uniforms must be worn with black dress shoes and black dress socks. Flip-flops, tennis shoes, boots, etc. are not an acceptable part of this uniform. Black athletic ankle socks are also not an acceptable part of this uniform. Parents will be available to make sure all students are appropriately dressed for events! *Students are responsible for providing their own black dress shoes, socks, and undergarments.*

Show Choir Uniforms:

Informal Events: Show Choir Polo, nice blue jeans, and tennis shoes

Semi-Formal Events: Show Choir Polo, black slacks (dress pants), and black dress socks/shoes

Formal Events: Choir-issued dress and/or pants/shirt.