



# **2025-2026**

# **Handbook**

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## WELCOME LETTER/CONTACT INFO

Michel Kennell, Director

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Cell: 737-443-9461

Like us on Facebook! Search "Lamar Middle School Choir"

[www.lamarchoir.com](http://www.lamarchoir.com)

Dear Choir Parents and Students,

Welcome to a new school year and a new year for the Lamar Choir program! I am excited to have you in my class, and I can't wait to make music with all of you! The goals I have for my students are:

- To promote, provide, and encourage interest and participation in choral music.
- To develop the individual voice and an understanding of its relation to the choral ensemble.
- To foster confidence through creative self-expression.
- To increase and develop musical skills and knowledge.
- To develop an appreciation for aesthetic beauty through the arts.
- To instill the values of effort, sacrifice, cooperation, fellowship, self-discipline, and dedication.
- To instill a sense of pride in the school, the choir program, and in the individual student.

This handbook is designed to explain procedures, activities, financial commitments, and the expectations of students in choir at Lamar Middle School. Please take time to look through all the sections to be aware of necessary supplies and to make sure you are connected with the choir program to continually receive further updates and information via email. Please read the handbook carefully and fill out and sign the forms at the end indicating that you have:

1. Read and discuss this information with your child.
2. **Thoroughly** examined the calendar section for conflicts.

If you have any questions, you can reach me by email.

The calendar and all handouts are available on BLEND next week and on the Choir website: [www.lamarchoir.com](http://www.lamarchoir.com)

**\*\*Please bookmark this page.**

**All forms/money due by Friday, September 5<sup>th</sup>**

Best,

*Mrs. Kennell*

## CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS

- We are a TEAM!
- **Maintain a good and respectful attitude.**
- You may use the restroom/drink water during the first 15 minutes. Using the restroom any other time costs 5 ClassDojo points off your participation grade or your class ticket for the 9 weeks.
- Being on time means being in your seat with all materials when the bell rings.
- Follow directions the first time they are given.
- Respect the teacher by not talking without permission. Questions concerning the music and our lessons are great; just be sure to raise your hand and be called upon before you speak.
- No food, drinks, or **GUM** will be allowed in the choir room. Water in a closed container is allowed and encouraged.
- **Please keep your hands to yourself while rehearsing; this includes not grooming another student's hair, etc.**
- Cell phones are not allowed out during class unless given explicit permission from Mrs. Kennell. If your cell phone is out, it will be placed in "Cell Phone Jail" and can be bailed out at the **end of the period**.
- Students who are ill or otherwise unable to participate in singing must have a written note and are expected to remain focused on the music during class.
- Choir students are expected to be model citizens in and out of the choir room.
- Proper concert etiquette will be observed at all performances.

## GRADING

Choir is a performance-based class; therefore, performances are considered major test grades. **All dress rehearsals and concerts are major test grades!** Students will also be graded on warm-ups, singing tests, written tests, projects, and sectionals.

### Breakdown of Grades for Beginning Choirs (Purple Pups/Canine Chorale):

Proper Etiquette During Class (TEKS 117.208-1.3,5 ex: starting class with materials ready, performing vocal warm-ups)	40%
Dress Rehearsal and Concert Attendance/Tests (TEKS 117.208-1)	30%
Projects (TEKS 117.208-1.2,3 ex: songwriting project)	15%
Quizzes (TEKS 117.208-1,1,2,3 ex: performing rhythm exercise)	15%

### Breakdown of Grades for Intermediate/Advanced Choirs (Top Dawgs, Doggie Dames, & Scottie Singers):

Proper Etiquette During Class (TEKS 117.208-1.3,5 ex: starting class with materials ready, performing vocal warm-ups)	40%
Dress Rehearsal and Concert Attendance/Tests (TEKS 117.208-1)	30%
Sectionals ((TEKS 117.208-1; Scottie Singers and Doggie Dames Only)	10%
Projects (TEKS 117.208-1.2,3 ex: songwriting project)	10%
Quizzes (TEKS 117.208-1,1,2,3 ex: performing rhythm exercise)	10%

### Weekly grade will be figured as follows:

Each student will have the opportunity to earn a 100 for every week. Students who are on time to class, have their materials, and remain on task will be awarded the full 100 points. Points will be deducted for non-participation, lack of required materials, talking out of turn, etc.

## SUPPLIES

Ms. Kennell will provide a choir folder/binder for your child. Your child will need to provide the following supplies below:

Purple Pups & Canine Chorale	Top Dawgs, Doggie Dames (Intermediate Choir), & Scottie Singers (Advanced Choir)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pencil Bag</li><li>• Pencil &amp; Highlighter</li><li>• One box of Kleenex</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pencil &amp; Highlighter</li><li>• One box of Kleenex</li></ul>

## UNIFORMS AND FEES


Purple Pups & Canine Chorale	Top Dawgs, Doggie Dames, & Scottie Singers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fair Share Fee (\$50) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Covers sheet music purchases, binder, pencils students can borrow, etc.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Purple Choir T-shirt (\$20)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fair Share Fee (\$50) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Covers sheet music purchases, binder, pencils students can borrow, etc.</li> </ul> </li> <li>If you do not have your Purple Choir T-shirt from last year or are new to choir (\$20)</li> <li>UIL Uniform</li> </ul>

### NORMAL UNIFORM:

The Lamar Choir's informal uniform for **ALL** members will consist of **jeans** (regular **blue** pants or jeans purchased on your own), and the purple **Lamar Choir shirt** (purchased through the school). Please adhere to the AISD dress code with regard to the jeans and **be sure they are not torn/ripped or excessively faded**.





### FORMAL UIL UNIFORMS (Top Dawgs, Doggie Dames, & Scottie Singers):

- You will need to purchase your **UIL uniform on your own** (if you do not have the one from last year) at <https://sepapparel.com/> before the end of December. Students can wear one of the two options below:

OPTION 1 for Top Dawgs, Doggie Dames, Scottie Singers	
Black Corelli dress	
Students will need to purchase <b>black hose/knee-highs and black close-toed shoes</b> . These items can be found at several retailers such as Target, Wal-Mart, TJ Maxx, Ross, etc.	

## OPTION 2 ON NEXT PAGE

## UNIFORMS AND FEES CONTINUED...

OPTION 2 for Top Dawgs, Doggie Dames, Scottie Singers	
White tuxedo shirt	
Black vest	
Black pants	
Purple bow-tie	
Students will need to purchase a <b>black pair of dress shoes</b> and <b>black socks</b> to complete the uniform.	

Some items of used formal uniforms are sometimes available in select sizes for \$25. These are on a first come, first served basis. Please send Mrs. Kennell an email at [michel.kennell@austinisd.org](mailto:michel.kennell@austinisd.org) if you are interested in purchasing a used uniform.

**\*\*Students will not be allowed to perform if concert apparel is not correct & will receive a 50 for their concert grade\*\***

### FEES

There is a required \$50 student fee for all choir classes that helps fund choir operating expenses such as sheet music, fees for competitions, expensive equipment, field trips (buses, substitutes, student meals, entertainment), accompanists, incentives, awards, & supplies for choir class. Choir students must also pay \$20 for a choir t-shirt, as well as any uniform fees, unless choir students already own those items. Guardians must talk to Mrs. Kennell if special payment arrangements are needed to help cover the cost of fees. **Students will not receive their choir t-shirt or uniform until all fees are paid or payment arrangements have been made with Mrs. Kennell.**

## UNIFORMS AND FEES CONTINUED...

Please send cash (in an envelope) or check made out to Lamar MS Choir with your child's name on the envelope (in the 'Memo' Line as well if a check)

\*\*Donations are accepted at all times throughout the school year.

\*\*7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> graders who will be auditioning for All-Region Choir will need to pay the \$12 entry fee. This fee includes your sheet music (not photocopies).

## FUNDRAISING

Lamar Choirs have two major fund-raisers a year, the Musical, in addition to our Fancloth and World's Finest Chocolates. Money raised will help pay for music, uniforms and other instructional materials. Any remaining funds will go toward other choir expenses that develop during the year. Donations are also welcomed and accepted at any time during the school year. The LMS Choir Booster Club will also have various fundraisers throughout the year on a strictly optional basis.

## SECTIONALS

Scottie Singers and Doggie Dames will be asked to attend morning sectionals from 7:45-8:10 once every other week based on voice part. Makeup sectionals will be on Thursday mornings from 7:45-8:10. Other choirs will be asked to attend after school sectionals on an as-needed basis. These rehearsals will be posted on the choir website ([www.lamarchoir.com/sectionals](http://www.lamarchoir.com/sectionals)) to provide ample planning time.

## COMMUNICATION

### Remind

We will be using a text-message service made for teachers called Remind. Students and parents are encouraged to sign up based on the child's choir class. To sign up, please text one of the following codes to the number **81010**:

<u>Choir</u>	<u>Code</u>	<u>Choir</u>	<u>Code</u>
Purple Pups	@purplepup	Scottie Singers	@scotti
Doggie Dames	@doggiedame	Top Dawgs	@topdawg
Canine Chorale	@k9sings		

[How to join a Remind Class \(for new users\)](#)

[How to join a Remind Class \(for existing users\)](#)

## CALENDAR

An up-to-date choir calendar is available on the choir website containing the rehearsals and events for the entire school year. These dates are subject to change with ample notice. Please mark your calendars with all dates to check for any conflicts. Furthermore, I encourage all parents to email me at any time. The web address is [www.lamarchoir.com/calendar](http://www.lamarchoir.com/calendar) or scan the QR Code to add the calendar.



## PRIVATE VOICE LESSONS

Currently, Lamar MS Choir works with a couple of companies to provide private lesson teachers during school hours or right after school. Please check the link below for more information regarding voice lessons here:

<http://www.lamarchoir.com/privatevoicelessons>

## SOCIAL EVENT & TRIP GUIDELINES

The choir will provide several opportunities for students to socialize & travel during the school year. These opportunities may include the AISD Honor Choir Festival, TMEA Region 18 MS Choir Contest/Clinic/Concert, UIL Choir Contest, and the Spring choir trip.

In order to be eligible for these events & trips, students must...

1. have all choir forms & fees turned in
2. pass all classes the previous 9 weeks (or have no failing progress reports the following 9 weeks if they failed the previous 9 weeks)
3. attend all required choir concerts & performances the previous 9 weeks
4. have appropriate behavior in choir in the previous 9 weeks
5. NOT receive ANY referrals the previous nine weeks.
6. participate in the UIL Choir Contest, if their class competes.

When attending an event or trip, students should...

1. wear the required uniform or attire for that day.
2. bring any snacks, music, money, or other materials that are specifically needed for that event or trip.
3. follow bus rules by remaining seated, refraining from loud conversations or loud singing, & never allowing any object to go beyond the bus windows.
4. not talk to strangers, tell them who they are, who they are with, or leave with them for any reason.
5. be respectful to chaperones and follow directions.
6. not draw unnecessary attention to the group by exhibiting behaviors such as shoplifting, aggressive behavior, loud conversations, profanity, fighting, inappropriate relations, drugs, etc...
7. never display inappropriate affection.
8. provide their own meal or snacks if they have special dietary needs in the event a meal is provided by the choir.
9. never leave the group without Mrs. Kennell's consent.
10. be checked out through the front office before leaving with a guardian if the event or trip is during the school day.
11. leave the buses clean before getting off of them.
12. make arrangements with their other teachers to make up any work they may have missed during the school day while attending an event or trip.

## SACRED MUSIC

*"It is the position of MENC: The National Association for Music Education that the study and performance of religious music within an educational context is a vital and appropriate part of a comprehensive music education. The omission of sacred music from the school curriculum would result in an incomplete educational experience."*

Students in choir WILL encounter music with religious texts of any culture, however there will be no effort whatsoever on the part of the director to influence or proselytize towards any religious belief or ideal. Please find an excerpt below from the AISD policy on religious music:

*"The study of religion as it relates to history, culture, literature, music, drama, and art is an appropriate element of school curriculum. Such programs can be a valuable tool for teaching values of tolerance and cultural understanding. The public school curriculum, including the study of religion, should be presented objectively and neutrally as part of a secular program of education"*



Please sign this page and return before September 5th

STUDENT NAME \_\_\_\_\_ CHOIR CLASS or PERIOD \_\_\_\_\_

I have read & understand the Lamar MS Choir Handbook & agree to the stated requirements therein. I also give my child permission to travel with the Lamar MS Choir for choir singing trips & competitions during the school year. These may include, but are not limited to, the Austin ISD All City Festivals, choir caroling trips, choir recruiting trips, TMEA Region 18 MS Choir Contest & Clinic/Concert, UIL Choir Contest, & the Spring choir trip. While in attendance at these events, I understand that my child will follow all AISD, Lamar MS, & Lamar MS Choir policies. I understand that my child will be dealt with accordingly in the event that he/she does not comply with these policies. Failure to follow these policies may result in removal from the trip/competition & possible loss of all privileges to attend future trips/competitions. I understand that AISD, Lamar MS, & Mrs. Kennell will not be liable for any accidental injury that might occur to my child while attending a choir trip/competition. Should medical assistance be required during one of these trips/competitions, Mrs. Kennell is authorized to seek appropriate medical attention for my child.

### Checklist:

(Please initial each item to confirm you have completed all steps.)

\_\_\_\_ I have filled out and submitted the LMS Choir Contact Information, Image Release, & Fees Google Form



\_\_\_\_ I have paid my child's choir fees or have made payment/scholarship arrangements with Kennell:

<u>A1-Purple Pups &amp; B7-Canine Chorale</u> \$50 Fair Share Fee \$20 LMS Choir T-shirt	<u>Top Dawgs, Doggie Dames &amp; Scottie Singers</u> \$50 Fair Share Fee \$20 LMS Choir T-shirt
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\_\_\_\_ My student and/or I have joined the correct class on Remind

Purple Pups - Text "@purplepup" to 81010  
Canine Chorale - Text "@k9sings" to 81010

Doggie Dames - Text "@doggiedame" to 81010  
Top Dawgs - text "@topdawg" to 81010  
Scottie Singers - text "@scotti" to 81010

\_\_\_\_ I have checked the LMS Choir Calendar for any conflicts at [www.lamarchoir.com/calendar](http://www.lamarchoir.com/calendar).  
Then list any conflicts below that are unavoidable, such as weddings, funerals, or other family emergencies. PLEASE provide specific dates/times).



Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Click the Link below for the spanish version of this handbook

[https://www.canva.com/design/DAGxNxy2dMQ/RQ82eIQBH5IDM1iwyZD1sw/edit?utm\\_content=DAGxNxy2dMQ&utm\\_campaign=designshare&utm\\_medium=link2&utm\\_source=sharebutton](https://www.canva.com/design/DAGxNxy2dMQ/RQ82eIQBH5IDM1iwyZD1sw/edit?utm_content=DAGxNxy2dMQ&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=sharebutton)