



2026-2027

Handbook

Table of Contents

[WELCOME LETTER/CONTACT INFO](#)

[CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS](#)

[GRADING](#)

[SUPPLIES](#)

[FEES & UNIFORMS](#)

[FUNDRAISING](#)

[SECTIONALS](#)

[COMMUNICATION](#)

[CALENDAR](#)

[PRIVATE VOICE LESSONS](#)

[SOCIAL EVENTS & TRIP GUIDELINES](#)

[SACRED MUSIC](#)

[HANDBOOK FORM \(TO BE RETURNED FRIDAY, SEPT. 4TH\)](#)

WELCOME LETTER/CONTACT INFO

Michel Kennell, Director
Cell: 737-443-9461

michel.kennell@austinisd.org
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:

- Read this handbook and discuss it with your student.
- **Thoroughly** examined the calendar section for conflicts.

If you have any questions, you can reach me by email. The calendar and this handbook will be available on google classroom. **All forms/money due by Friday, September 4th**. Please send cash (in an envelope) or check made out to Lamar MS Choir with your student's name on the envelope (in the 'Memo' Line as well if a check). You may also use the QR code below. If you require financial assistance or have questions, please email me at michel.kennell@austinisd.org.

Best,

Mrs. Kennell

[Linktree for websites & social media links](#)



CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS

- We Are a Team! So maintaining a positive, respectful attitude towards classmates and Mrs. Kennell is a must!
- Be in your seat with all materials ready when the bell rings.
- Follow directions the first time they are given.
- Raise your hand and wait to be called on before speaking.
- Restroom and water breaks are allowed during the first 15 minutes of class. Using the restroom after that will result in a 5-point deduction from your participation grade unless approved by the teacher.
- No food, drinks, or **gum** (choking hazard) in the choir room. Water in a closed container is encouraged.
- Keep your hands to yourself at all times.
- Personal communication devices (including cell phones) must remain put away throughout the school day, in accordance with Texas House Bill 1481. Any visible device will be held until the end of class.
- If you are unable to sing due to illness, bring a written note and remain actively engaged in class.
- Represent the choir with professionalism by demonstrating proper rehearsal, backstage, and concert etiquette at all times.

GRADING

Choir is a performance-based class; therefore, dress rehearsals & performances are considered major test grades as well as the music theory SLO Assessment in the Spring for Purple Pups. ***All dress rehearsals and concerts are major test grades!*** Please see below for additional information regarding grading.

Breakdown of Grades for 1st, 2nd, 3rd, & 8th Period (Purple Pups, Top Dawgs & Canine Chorale): Rehearsal Etiquette During Class (TEKS 117.208-1.3,5 ex: bell ringers/do nows, starting class with materials ready, performing) Dress Rehearsal and Concert Attendance/Tests (TEKS 117.208-1) Projects (TEKS 117.208-1.2,3 ex: songwriting project) Quizzes (TEKS 117.208-1,1,2,3 ex: music theory assessment)	40% 30% 15% 15%
Breakdown of Grades for 6th & 7th Period (Scottie Singers & Doggie Dames): Rehearsal Etiquette During Class (TEKS 117.208-1.3,5 ex: starting class with materials ready, performing vocal warm-ups) Dress Rehearsal and Concert Attendance/Tests (TEKS 117.208-1) Sectionals ((TEKS 117.208-1; Scottie Singers and Doggie Dames Only) Projects (TEKS 117.208-1.2,3 ex: songwriting project) Quizzes (TEKS 117.208-1,1,2,3 ex: music theory assessment)	40% 30% 10% 10% 10%

Weekly rehearsal etiquette grade will be figured as follows:

Each student will have the opportunity to earn a score of 100 each week. Students who consistently demonstrate proper rehearsal and audience etiquette—including, but not limited to, being seated with materials ready, beginning the bell ringer before the bell rings, and displaying proper vocal technique and professionalism—will earn the full 100 points. Points will be deducted for non-participation, lack of required materials, talking out of turn, etc.

SUPPLIES

Mrs. Kennell will provide a choir folder/binder for your student. All students will need to provide for themselves a pencil, highlighter, & one box of Kleenex.

FEES & UNIFORMS

Please send cash (in an envelope) or check made out to Lamar MS Choir with your student's name on the envelope (in the 'Memo' Line as well if a check). If you require financial assistance, please email michel.kennell@austinisd.org. Please note 7th & 8th graders who are required to audition for All-Region Choir will NOT have to pay the \$12 entry fee this year. There is a required \$50 fair share fee for all choir classes that helps fund choir operating expenses such as sheet music, practice tracks, expensive equipment, field trips (buses, substitutes), incentives, materials for choir class and more.

Purple Pups	Canine Chorale	Top Dawgs	Doggie Dames	Scottie Singers
1st & 3rd Period	8th period	2nd period	7th period	6th period
- Fair Share Fee (\$50) - Purple Choir T-shirt (\$20)		- Fair Share Fee (\$50) - If you do not have your Purple Choir T-shirt from last year or are new to choir (\$20) - Student will order UIL Uniform (<i>please see Formal UIL uniforms</i>)		

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

The guardian or student 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 August. 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 black hose/knee-highs and black close-toed shoes . These items can be found at several retailers such as Target, Wal-Mart, TJ Maxx, Ross, etc.	

SPACE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK
SEE NEXT PAGE FOR OPTION 2 OF FORMAL UIL UNIFORMS

FEES & UNIFORMS CONT.

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 black pair of dress shoes and black socks to complete the uniform.	

Limited items of used formal uniforms are sometimes available in select sizes for \$25 or less. These are on a first come, first served basis. Please send Mrs. Kennell an email at michel.kennell@austinisd.org if you are interested in purchasing a used uniform. ****Students will be graded accordingly if concert apparel is incorrect because it will be a part of your concert test grade.****

FUNDRAISING

Lamar Choirs will sometimes have fundraisers to help supplement funds for choir operating expenses such as sheet music, practice tracks, fees for auditions for region choir, field trips (buses, substitutes, etc.), incentives, binders and more. The LMS Choir Booster Club will also have various fundraisers throughout the year on a strictly optional basis for student meals, accompanists and other expenses throughout the year. Your cooperation in these fundraisers are greatly appreciated!

SECTIONALS

6th Period Scottie Singers and 7th Period Doggie Dames have graded morning sectionals (7:45–8:10 a.m.) roughly every other week by voice part. Makeups are Thursday mornings at the same time. Other choirs may have occasional after-school sectionals as needed. All schedules are posted at www.lamarchoir.com/sectionals. Mrs. Kennell works to accommodate busy season conflicts; guardians with morning scheduling issues should email michel.kennell@austinisd.org

COMMUNICATION

A link to our google calendar will be posted on google classroom for important dates and a paper copy will be sent home as well. However, there will be occasional reminders or last minute announcements/cancelations due to inclement weather, teacher illness or other unforeseen circumstances. Therefore, students and parents are highly encouraged to sign up for our Remind text groups based on the student's choir class. To sign up, please text one of the following codes to the number **81010**:

Purple Pups	Canine Chorale	Top Dawgs	Doggie Dames	Scottie Singers
1st & 3rd Period	8th period	2nd period	7th period	6th period
Code: @purplepup	Code: @k9sings	Code: @topdawg	Code: @doggiedame	Code: @scotti

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 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. These lessons are optional please check the link below for more information regarding voice lessons here: <http://www.lamarchoir.com/privatevoicelessons>

SOCIAL EVENTS & TRIP GUIDELINES

The choir will provide opportunities for students to build community with their classmates outside of the classroom. These opportunities may include socials, AISD All City Choir Festival, TMEA Region 18 MS Choir Contest/Clinic/Concert, UIL Choir Contest, the Spring UIL Choirs trip, End of Year Party and more.

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

- pass all classes the previous 9 weeks
- NOT have received ANY disciplinary actions the previous nine weeks

SOCIAL EVENTS & TRIP GUIDELINES CONT.

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

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

From The National Association for Music Education "...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." Therefore, students WILL encounter music with religious texts of any culture (EX: Latin Gregorian Chants, Hebrew Cantillations, Hindu Chants and more). However, there will be no effort whatsoever on the part of Mrs. Kennell to influence or proselytize towards any religious belief or ideal.

Please read the following excerpt from AISD's policy regarding performances and instruction that include 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*" More information about religion in the curriculum can be found in AISD's "Religions in the Schools" handbook.

SPACE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK
SEE NEXT PAGE FOR A FORM TO SIGN AND RETURN BY 9/4.

Please sign this page and return before September 4th

STUDENT NAME _____ CHOIR CLASS or PERIOD _____

I have read and understand the Lamar Middle School Choir Handbook and agree to the policies and expectations outlined within it. I understand that my student is expected to follow all AISD, Lamar Middle School, and Lamar Middle School Choir policies. I understand that if my student does not comply with these expectations, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken. Failure to follow these requirements may result in removal from an event, including performances, and the loss of eligibility to participate in future trips and competitions.

Checklist - Please initial each item to confirm you have completed all steps below:

1. _____ I have filled out and submitted the LMS Choir Google form for my student's shirt size, student's cell phone # (if applicable), secondary parent info and more.



2. _____ I have paid my student's choir fees or emailed Mrs. Kennell for financial assistance.

Purple Pups	Canine Chorale	Top Dawgs	Doggie Dames	Scottie Singers
1st & 3rd Period	8th period	2nd period	7th period	6th period
- Fair Share Fee (\$50) - Purple Choir T-shirt (\$20)		- Fair Share Fee (\$50) - If you do not have your Purple Choir T-shirt from last year or are new to choir (\$20) - Student will order UIL Uniform (<i>please see Formal UIL uniforms</i>)		

3. _____ My student and/or I have joined the Remind text (Highly Encouraged, but Optional). To sign up, please text one of the following codes to the number 81010:

Purple Pups	Canine Chorale	Top Dawgs	Doggie Dames	Scottie Singers
1st & 3rd Period	8th period	2nd period	7th period	6th period
Code: @purplepup	Code: @k9sings	Code: @topdawg	Code: @doggiedame	Code: @scotti

Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

END