

Rodriguez MS Choir Handbook

2019-2020



Mr. Emilio Sanchez, Director

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Dear RMS Choir Students and Parents,

I am Emilio Sanchez, the choir director here at Rodriguez Middle School! I am very excited to see what all we accomplish this year. Together with the students, the Rodriguez Middle School Choir will create a legacy of many great successes and performances!

Before becoming the choir director at RMS, I taught in my hometown Mansfield, TX and spent 5 years as the choir director of Howard Middle School. The students were successful, and the program grew each year! I also taught at Sheldon ISD in Houston, TX where I first began my teaching career and learned a whole lot about teaching choir. I graduated from the University of Texas at Arlington with my bachelor's degree in Music. Aside from singing, I enjoy playing the drums and piano, as well as composing music (when I get the chance)!

Choir is unlike any other class! Due to this, it is helpful to have this handbook of policies, procedures, and expectations. Please familiarize yourself with the choir policies. The handbook will also be posted on our choir website and distributed electronically through email. This handbook and packet of information is being provided to you so you can understand the policies, rules, and procedures of choir. We appreciate your time in **returning the necessary forms, and choir fees by September 6th!** If you need more time to turn in choir fees, you may contact myself and we can figure out a plan!

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns!

Sincerely,

Emilio Sanchez

Choir Director

Rodriguez Middle School

esanchez2@dentonisd.org

Class Schedule

Period 1 – 6th Grade Boys Choir (8:15am – 9:02am)

Period 2 – 7th/8th Grade Boys' Choir (Beginner/Intermediate) (9:06am – 9:53am)

Period 3 – 7th/8th Grade Girls' Choir (Beginner/Intermediate) (9:57am – 10:44am)

Period 4 – 7th Grade Girls' Choir (Advanced) (10:48am-11:35am)

Period 5 – Conference (11:39am-12:26pm)

LUNCH - 12:30-1:00

Period 6 – Conference (1:04pm-1:51pm)

Period 7 – 7th/8th Grade Boys' Choir (Advanced) (1:55pm – 2:42pm)

Period 8 - 6th Grade Girls' Choir - (2:46pm-3:35pm)

OVERVIEW OF ENSEMBLES

6th Grade Girls/Boys' Choir (Choir 1)– This choir consists of 6th grade girls or boys who may have had choir experience, but will learn proper vocal techniques, as well as sight-reading skills to prepare them to be strong, independent musicians. Additional rehearsals may be required in order to best prepare for performances and contests.

7th/8th Grade Girls/Boys Beginner/Intermediate Choir (Choir 2/3) – This choir consists of 7th and 8th grade boys or girls who wish to train and develop their voices, and participate in vocal performances. This ensemble will acquire beginning vocal techniques and sight-reading skills and may participate in UIL and other competitions. Additional rehearsals may be required in order to best prepare for performances and contests.

7th/8th Grade Girls/Boys Advanced Choir (Choir 2/3) – This is a choir that consists of 7th & 8th grade boys or girls who may have had choral experience and show an advanced level of vocal technique, sight-reading skills, performance practices, and the ability to cooperate and work with other students as a team. Students in this choir exhibit a high level of commitment and dedication. This is a course for students who really love singing and are willing to work hard! This ensemble will travel (UIL, competitions, etc.). Students in the advanced choir **MUST** audition for either the All-Region Choir or Solo and Ensemble (or both!). Additional rehearsals may be required in order to best prepare for performances and contests.

SUPPLIES NEEDED DAILY

Students will need the following for class:

- 2 sharpened pencils
- 1 highlighter
- 1 pencil bag to be put in choir binder (provided by Mr. Sanchez)
- ½ inch-1 inch BLACK Three-Ring Binder (provided by Mr. Sanchez)

DONATIONS

The RMS Choir would greatly appreciate if you are able to donate some items that are used extensively in choir! These items include

- A ream of Multi-Use Copier Paper (8.5" x 11") for handouts/music
- Pencils
- Highlighters
- Expo Markers
- Monetary donations to help students in need

GRADING PROCEDURES AND POLICIES

Grades will be given according to the following scale

1. Major Grades 60%

- Concert Performances
- Sight-Singing and Ear-training Tests
- Music Score Mark ups (solfege, vowels, rhythms, dynamics, etc.)

2. Minor Grades 40%

- Sight-reading and Ear-training Quizzes
- Written Quizzes (vocabulary, music theory, etc.)
- Music Score Mark ups (solfege, vowels, rhythms, dynamics, etc.)

CONCERTS

Test grades are earned in several ways. Singing and sight reading tests are given throughout the year to monitor the progress of each student. Written tests may also be given. **Each of the REQUIRED concerts (see calendar, separate) count as test grades!!** Concert test grades are determined in the following manner.

1. Being an actively involved **performer** and singing concert literature with correct intonation, vowels, dynamics, diction, and posture.
2. Being able to be an actively involved **listener** while other groups are performing their concert literature.

Both of these skills are found within our Music TEKS and will be assessed at each concert. If a student is not present, I cannot fully assess a student for mastery of all these skills.

Concert attendance is **very** important to the RMS Choir program. Conflicts with other RMS Choir events will be worked out by the other club/athletic sponsors and myself. It is your child's responsibility to notify the director as soon as possible if a scheduling conflict occurs. Non-school related activities will NOT be excused. THE KEY IS PLANNING AHEAD!

Other UNEXCUSED absences include, but are not limited to:

- Transportation
- Babysitting
- Doctor appointments
- Non-school related events

CONCERT MAKE-UP GRADES

If a student misses a choir concert, they must make up the grade (similar to when a student is absent and misses a test, they must also make up the grade). Students will find a time to perform their concert literature (either in class, or lunch tutorial time), and I will grade them based upon singing correct pitches, rhythms, intonation, posture, tall vowels, musicality, etc.

Students who do not attend concerts do not attend field trips for choir.

REQUIRED FEE FOR RMS CHOIR

It is always my goal to make fees as little as possible for a student in choir. But with any fine arts program, there may be a fee required to be able to purchase certain items (dry cleaning for choir uniforms, music, supplies, etc.)

The one, mandatory fee for the 7th & 8th Grade Choir students will be \$35.00 to order the choir t-shirt, rental and maintenance (dry cleaning) for choir uniforms (for formal performances), music, choir binders, and other necessary supplies.

The one, mandatory fee for the 6th Grade Girls & 6th Grade Boys is \$35.00. 6th Graders will be receiving a choir t-shirt, choir polo (for formal performances), music, choir binders with pencil pouch, and other necessary supplies.

You can pay using cash or cheques. Write out cheques to "RMS Choir".

****All required fees for choir must be paid before a student can pay for field trip fees.****

NON-REQUIRED FEES FOR CHOIR

Choir trips, and other choir related events that cost money will NOT be required or mandatory, but those who take part will have to pay the necessary costs for those events when they are due. Students must be passing all classes in order to go on any trips. I will let students know when they must be passing classes in order to go on certain trips.

UNIFORM/ATTIRE FOR CONCERTS

All choir members must purchase a choir t-shirt. Anyone who is unable to pay, or is needing to make special arrangements must contact the director. **Students must be in complete concert attire in order to perform!!**

For **NON-FORMAL concerts**, **ALL STUDENTS** will be wearing their choir t-shirt, jeans (no holes), and closed-toe shoes.

Formal Concert Attire

7th & 8th Grade Boys' Choirs – Boys will wear be wearing a white tuxedo shirt, black pants (not jeans), black dress shoes (NOT TENNIS SHOES), black dress socks, black vest, and a bow-tie. The tuxedo shirts, vests, and ties will be provided for students. They must provide their own black dress pants.

7th & 8th Grade Boys will be paying for the drycleaning and maintenance of these items (included in choir fee).

7th/8th Grade Girls' Choirs– ****Concert dress.** The girls will need to provide their own **solid black closed-toe shoes** - Black heels/wedges or Black flats, which are HIGHLY recommended, especially if the students are standing for a while during performances. ***No necklaces or bracelets should be worn with concert attire unless everyone is wearing a provided necklace from Mr.Sanchez.*** They will be allowed to wear earrings of modest size. **Hair must be pulled back!**

7th & 8th Grade Girls will be paying for the maintenance of the school-owned choir formal wear (included in choir fee).

****When the 7th & 8th Grade choir girls receive their choir dress, they will also be given a Concert Dress Agreement Form that explains information about the dress. If a dress returns damaged, students will have to pay for the repairs or the dress!****

6th Grade Boys and Girls Choir - 6th Grade Boys and Girls will wear be wearing the choir performance polo (provided by Mr. Sanchez), black pants, black dress shoes - (girls can wear black flats) (NOT TENNIS SHOES), black belt, and black socks. Performance polos will be tucked in when worn for performances.

--6th Grade students are responsible for providing the black pants, shoes/flats, socks, etc. Mr. Sanchez will provide the embroidered performance polo--

CHOIR EXPECTATIONS

Choir is an exciting and different experience from any other class. In order to be successful, we must work as a team in class. The following rules are for your benefit and the success of our choir. Your enjoyment of choir depends on adhering to these expectations:

1. Follow directions the **FIRST** time they are given.
2. Be on time. Class begins when the tardy bell rings. Students should have their folder, pencil, and any other supplies needed for class by the beginning of class. Students who are not in class with their materials by the tardy bell will be counted as tardy.
3. Once a student is in the classroom, the student stays in the classroom! Go to the restroom/water fountain first!
4. Keep hands, feet, and all objects to yourself at all times. This includes the passing period before the tardy bell.
5. Food, drinks, and gum are **NOT** allowed unless permission is granted from the director.
6. You need permission to use the phone, touch the piano, sound equipment, or computer, leave the room, or speak during class.
7. Students are expected to be in assigned places with choir folder, music, and pencil when the bell begins ringing.
8. Restroom and water fountain use should happen before or after class! I am understanding of emergency situations, health reasonings/note from nurse, and such, but students are not to abuse restroom use and disrupt the learning flow of the class. Students are not allowed to leave the classroom for the first or last 10 minutes of class, unless directed by the nurse.
9. Cell phones that are seen or heard will be taken up and given to the office. Devices are only used if for a specific purpose in class. **CELL PHONES MUST REMAIN OFF THE CHOIR RISERS!!** (Keep in Backpack, charge station, etc.)
10. The same rules and procedures apply when a substitute, other teacher, or adult is present!
11. All DISD and RMS rules and policies are in effect when we go on trips. Students who consistently follow the rules and procedures in choir will be invited to go on field trips. Students who do not consistently follow the rules and procedures will not be invited to go on field trips.

Consequences for misbehavior may include but are not limited to the following:

1. Warning (**DON'T GO ANY FURTHER THAN THIS!!**)
2. Detention, served before/after school, lunch or at teacher's convenience, parent is also contacted
3. Detention, served before/after school, lunch or at teacher's convenience, parent is also contacted, guidance counselor meeting
4. Office Referral and parent contacted

Fundraising

We will be participating in various fundraisers throughout the year. **It is important that we have as much participation as possible in order to meet the needs of the choir.** This will aid in allowing us to keep costs low for various activities that we would like to participate in throughout the year, purchasing supplies and raise money for fun activities as well (buses for trips, choir parties, etc.)

All-Region and Solo/Ensemble Contest

The 7th and 8th graders are encouraged to audition for the All-Region Choir. Students receive music and practice CDs/tracks and prepare audition music. They also receive specialized instruction with the director or private lesson teacher in order to prepare for the competition. If selected, students get to participate in a weekend event that culminates in the All-Region Choir Concert. All Region Choir members are also awarded a patch. **This is the highest honor that a middle school singer can earn and should be pursued by any 7th or 8th grader who has high musical goals and aspirations!** Voice lessons are strongly encouraged for these students.

Students will also have the opportunity to participate in the Solo/Ensemble Contest. **Singing a solo for competition will only be required for those students who are enrolled in private voice lessons but all dedicated choir students are strongly encouraged, especially if wanting to be a part of the advanced choirs.** More info to come!

Eligibility

In order for choir students to fully participate in UIL sponsored choral contests and festivals, each choir member must pass ALL classes with at least a 70 average. Failure to do so will result in academic probation. If a student can bring all grades passing to the following progress report, they can become eligible again. During a students' time of academic probation, all choir members are still obligated to attend all rehearsals. **Ineligible students will be able to perform in curricular activities in which a grade is given for participation, such as the required concerts.**

All-Region choir auditions, All-region concert/clinic, UIL, and field trips is where eligibility takes effect! Concerts are an assessment, therefore students are required to be at concerts, whether or not they are passing!

Choir Fee Dues

Please initial and specify what you are paying for below!
FORMS AND FEES DUE BY SEPTEMBER 6th!

Student Name: _____

Parent Signature: _____

****MANDATORY FEE (Choose 1)****

____ **7th & 8th Grade Mandatory Fee** - \$35.00 (includes choir t-shirt, school owned uniform maintenance/dry cleaning, choir binder, and any other necessary choir items (music, etc.)

PLEASE CIRCLE STUDENT **T-SHIRT SIZE** (EITHER YOUTH OR ADULT SIZE)

(YOUTH): S M L XL

(ADULT): S M L XL 2XL 3XL 4XL 5XL

____ **6th Grade Mandatory Fee** - \$35.00 (includes choir t-shirt, choir binder & pencil pouch, choir performance polo, and any other necessary choir items (music, etc.)

PLEASE CIRCLE STUDENT **T-SHIRT SIZE** (EITHER YOUTH OR ADULT SIZE)

(YOUTH): S M L XL

(ADULT): S M L XL 2XL 3XL 4XL 5XL

PLEASE CIRCLE STUDENT **POLO SIZE** (EITHER YOUTH OR ADULT SIZE)

(YOUTH): S M L XL

(ADULT): S M L XL 2XL 3XL 4XL 5XL

NON-MANDATORY ITEMS

____ Choir Hoodie(s) - \$20.00 each - Quantity: _____ Adult Size(s): _____

____ Extra T-Shirt(s) - \$10.00 each - Quantity: _____ Adult Size(s): _____

MANDATORY CHOIR FEE (6th-8th Grade): \$35.00

+ **NON-MANDATORY FEE(S):** _____

= **GRAND TOTAL** _____

Please contact Mr. Sanchez to set up a payment plan if needed

Cheques made out to "RMS Choir"*

RMS CHOIR HANDBOOK STATEMENT

Please fill out the following page and return to Mr. Sanchez no later than Friday, September 6th **WITH your choir fee included!** Please let Mr. Sanchez know if a student will need to pay the choir fee in payments.

Signed commitment of student and parent or guardian.

I have read the Rodriguez Middle School Choir Handbook (provided online/email) and I do understand and agree to abide by the policies that are outlined in the handbook. This includes the following items:

1. Supplies needed daily
2. Grading Procedures & Policy
3. Concert Performances & Attire
4. Choir Fees
5. Choir Classroom Expectations
6. Eligibility
7. RMS Choir Calendar
8. RMS Choir Handbook Statement (This Form!)

I understand that being a part of the RMS Choir is a privilege, therefore if a student does not abide by these policies, schedule changes may take place and the student will be removed from the RMS Choir.

Student Name (Printed) _____

Student's Signature _____

Date ___/___/___

Parent's Signature _____

Date ___/___/___