****Parent/Student Handbook

2017-2018 **Mr. Kashif Trimble**

**Alief Middle School**

**Director of Choirs**

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**281-641-5304**

My Name is Mr. Trimble, I am the Choir Director here at Alief Middle school. I have a Bachelor of Music Degree in Music Education from Houston Baptist University, and I am certified to teach in the state of Texas.  I hope to give all of my students an early introduction to music that will provide them with the necessary tools to achieve success in all areas.  I look forward to bringing my love of music and passion for teaching to every student I meet this year.

**Purpose**

The purpose of this handbook is to provide information for students and parents on the organization and operation of the choir program here at Alief Middle School. Choir is a class that teaches students music skills and singing technique through group singing. Students are expected to participate, practice, know and demonstrate these skills. As indicated by the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), students will demonstrate characteristic vocal technique, use standard musical terminology, perform expressively, demonstrate appropriate performance techniques, sight read, identify music symbols & terms, perform music representative of diverse cultures, evaluate the quality and effectiveness of music & musical performances, and exhibit proper concert etiquette.



**Benefits to Being in Choir**

* Learning musical skills, discipline, and perseverance
* Learning how to read, write, and speak a foreign language - music
* Ability to continue to participate in other activities, such as athletics or clubs
* Obtaining many wonderful memories
* Reinforcing language and math skills as well as the knowledge and skills in other content areas
* Having an opportunity to earn vocal scholarships at many colleges and universities throughout the United States (often times with or without majoring in music)
* Choosing how much challenge they want-students decide the level that they want to be involved.
* Having fun while learning music concepts
* Increasing their spatial reasoning skills (as shown by studies-sometimes called the “Mozart Effect”)
* Learning a lifetime activity
* Opportunities to enjoy professional musicians on the stage
* Having little to no homework-students can concentrate on their academic studies.

**GRADING POLICY**

**Grade Breakdown**

**40% Formative (Rehearsal Preparation and Rehearsal Performance)**

Weekly Participation Grades Written Work/Assignments

Extra Rehearsals – Participation Rehearsal Technique

Attendance Records

**60% Summative**

Performances – participation

 Singing, Sight-reading, and/or Ear Training Tests

\_\_\_\_\_ Written Test

**100%**

\*\*\*Extra credit may be earned for attending other concerts, such as WMS band or orchestra concerts or Summer CreekHigh School choir concerts, etc. Students should bring a program from the concert with his/her name on it and a parent signature. The program may be turned into the “In” box, and credit will be given for that grading period. Other extra credit can also be given at the teacher’s discretion.

**Participation Grades**

Participation within the daily choral rehearsal, extra rehearsals and performances are an essential part of the class. Student’s participation grades will be assigned according to the following criteria:

**A** Student actively and consistently participates in daily classroom activities, including, but not limited to, singing, correct posture, and correct use of hand signs.

**B** Student’s active participation in daily classroom activities is inconsistent.

**C** Student does not actively participate in daily classroom activities.

**F** Student refuses to participate in daily classroom activities.

**Conduct Grade**

Student’s conduct grades will be assigned according to the following criteria:

**E Excellent –** Student is rarely called on for poor conduct.

**S Satisfactory –** Student is called on multiple times for poor conduct. However, when the behavior is mentioned, he/she quickly fixes the problem.

**I Needs Improvement –** Student is called on often for poor conduct, and when the behavior is mentioned, he/she is not quick to fix the problem.

**U Unsatisfactory –** Student has been referred to the office for an incident within that grading period, and/or the student is called on often for poor conduct and becomes belligerent and argumentative with the teacher. \*

\*Students who do not agree with the teacher’s assessment of a situation are encouraged to speak with the teacher about the situation after class or after school when the student is in a calm state of mind. The teacher will be more willing to listen to the student’s case at this time.

**Extra Rehearsal & Performance Attendance Policy**

* Extra Rehearsals – Participation in all extra rehearsals is for a grade. If a student must miss a rehearsal, a written note signed by a parent/teacher must be turned in, preferably before the rehearsal date. Failure to turn in a note will result in a zero for the missed rehearsal. All excused absences must be approved by the director. Some absences that are excused are for illness, death in the family, etc. It is the student’s responsibility to make arrangements for a ride home from or to a rehearsal. Not having a ride home is considered an unexcused absence. Most students are able to arrange a ride home with a friend.
* Performance – Participation in all concerts is a grade. If a student must miss a concert, a written note must be turned in signed by a parent with alternative , preferably before the concert. Failure to turn in a note will result in a zero for the missed concert. All excused absences must be approved by the director. See above for more details.
* Eligibility Rules – All competitions, performances where admission is charged, and activities which cause a student to miss school are subject to the no pass/no play law. Students who are ineligible will be notified as soon as possible and given alternate work.
* Scheduling Conflicts
* School Activities – All choir members are encouraged to be involved in other school activities. When a conflict arises between two school activities, it is the student’s responsibility to inform both teachers involved as soon as possible. The teachers will work together to help the student be involved in both activities if possible.
* Non-School Activities – Most choir members are involved in non-school activities. Entering our choir activities for the year into the family calendar will hopefully prevent many conflicts from occurring. However, some conflicts cannot be helped. All conflicts should be brought to the directors’ attention as soon as possible. Some conflicts can be resolved, but please keep in mind that choir is a class, and therefore, should be a top priority. Unless approved by the director prior to the conflict,

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT PLAN

* **Responsible**

• Be prepared for class with your folder, music, paper, and pencil.

• Participate fully in each choir rehearsal as a contributing member to our team.

* **On time, on task**

• Be in your assigned place working on the bell assignment when the bell rings.

• Use time wisely

* **Always following directions**

• Listen carefully to instructions and follow them the first time they are given.

• Follow classroom procedures

* **Respect**

• Be courteous, positive, and supportive of your fellow choir members.

• Raise your hand and wait to be recognized before you speak.

• Refrain from talking during important rehearsal time

• All property belonging to the school, classmates, the teacher and places we visit will be respected.

**Daily Procedures**

Each student will:

* Enter the room calmly and quietly.
* Place all backpacks, purses, electronic devices, and all other personal items on the side of the room where indicated.
* Check the student table for any handouts
* Read the board for bell assignment, announcements, and instructions.
* Be seated and prepared for class before the bell rings.
* Speak to the teacher about private matters after class except for emergencies.
* Turn in all written work/letters into the “In” box. All music should be turned in at the end of class unless otherwise stated.
* Turn in all money by placing it in the student’s money envelope and turning it into the designated area.
* Refrain from writing on marker board, playing the piano, entering the practice rooms, storage rooms, music library, or office unless given permission.
* Immediately get silent and give their attention to Mr. Trimble
* Wait until dismissed by the teacher before putting up music in order to leave.

**Choir Folders/Pencils**

Students will be issued a choir folder for their use during the year. Students are expected to have a sharpened pencil for class every day. Students are not to write on their music with anything but a pencil unless given permission by their director. Also, students are not allowed to write on or tear up their folders or any other item place in their possession. If a student loses their pencil during the year, the student is responsible for providing a new one or may purchase one from the choir for 25 cents. If a folder is lost or destroyed, it will need to be replaced by the student. Missing or damaged music or sight reading books will be charged to the student at the cost of at least $5 each. If a student is unable to abide by the folder policy, then he/she may lose the folder privilege.

**Social Media**

With the popularity of social media, students are reminded that anything that is uploaded is available to anyone at any time. Use good judgment when uploading videos or pictures of yourself and/or your peers. Also, think twice in regards to what you say about others as well. In other words - if you don’t have anything nice to say, don’t say it (or type it). Be respectful of others as you represent yourself as well as the WMS Choir on the internet!

**Miscellaneous**

* **Class Tardies** – Students who are not in their seat and prepared for class when the bell rings will receive a class tardy. These tardies will result in the lowering of the weekly participation grade. A student’s 3rd tardy for the nine weeks will result in a referral and no further grade reduction will occur. Subsequent tardies will result in referrals to the assistant principal.
* **Bathroom Policy** – No bathroom breaks are allowed during class. Students need to use the restroom before or after class. If a student has a medical condition that requires frequent use of the restroom, the director will need to be notified by the parents so that other arrangements can be made. However students are allowed three emergency bathroom breaks per 9 weeks. After three the student will receive a referral.
* No open food or drink is allowed in the choir room without the permission of the director.
* Students may not chew gum or candy during the rehearsal. Students will lose at least five points on their weekly participation grade for each incident because it inhibits proper vocal technique. Excessive gum/candy chewing will result in a pre-referral and/or referral.

**Negative Consequences for Inappropriate Behavior**

* Generally, the first time a student breaks the rules during a class period, he/she will be given a warning. Depending on the offense, there may not be a warning before points are deducted from the student’s grade, e.g. chewing gum.
* The second and following times, because misbehavior is keeping the student and others from fully participating in the class, that student’s name will be recorded, which will lower the student’s weekly participation grade.
* If the misbehavior becomes a consistent problem, the student will be assigned a behavior improvement form.
* Other consequences may be assigned based on the nature of the behavior problem. These are a few examples:

Parent phone call and/or email

Alternate Assignment

Last to leave the room

Student-Teacher conference

Loss of privilege

Office Referral

Exclusion from a choir concert\*\*

Lack of student success

This list is not exclusive. In order for the consequences to logically follow the inappropriate behavior, we may choose a consequence that is not on this list.

\*\*The director feels strongly that as a “team” effort, the choir is dependent on each student’s full participation and cooperation. If one student is causing consistent problems for the choir as a whole, the director feels that it is not right for the one student to poorly affect the other students’ hard work. Therefore, if necessary, that student may be excluded from performing at a concert with the hopes that the student will realize what he/she is missing, and that the student’s behavior will, in the long run, improve because of this experience. If I exclude a student from performing at a concert, he/she will be expected to attend that concert for his/her grade.

**Positive Consequences for Appropriate Behavior**

Positive note

Positive call home

Student success

Special Friday!Team building

Sense of accomplishment

A more enjoyable class

**We are a Team Sport!**

**Fundraising Info**

We have worked hard to provide the highest quality experiences available to us within and outside the city of Houston. In order to keep providing these kinds of opportunities to our students at the best possible price, the choir will be promoting two fundraisers this year. Students are not required to participate but are encouraged to do so.

AliefMSChoir.weebly.com

• This will bring up the main parent page. This will allow you to look at your child’s program’s **public**

**calendar, event list, handouts and other files**.

• Clicking on an event on the calendar brings up the details for that event, such as times, attendance requirements and equipment/uniform necessities. Clicking on “event list” puts all of the calendar information in a list form for easy printing.

• When you enter your child’s ID NUMBER,\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ another more detailed screen appears

with even more options to view your student’s uniform assignments, music assignments, financial records, forms and inventory. Enter your child’s ID FIRST – then you may create your own, unique password by clicking on the “**keys** icon”

• Two areas in which you can help the director maintain his/her records:

o **Student information form** – if the director has allowed it, you may help make changes to your child’s **student information page** (such as updating phone numbers and email addresses if they change) to help the teacher communicate with you more effectively.

o **Credit card payments for fees, trips and deposits to your student’s account**. If the director has created a **PayPal account** for the booster club or school activity account, you may pay for your child’s fees or trips easily with a credit card.

• Most importantly, the parent page assists both you and the teacher to communicate with each other.

• You will also see links to **enter Practice Logs**, **view Grades**, and use the **Recording Studio** if the teacher has enabled these options.

**Remind.com**

This website will allow the teacher to communicate with the students and parents if they choose to sign up. Text reminders will be sent out with information about our program. Sign Up information can be found on the Choir Web Page.

Text: 81010

Message: @mrktrimbl

**UNIFORMS**

Uniforms are expected to be worn by each member for every performance. Just as athletic teams wear uniforms, choirs wear uniforms as well. Uniforms take the audience’s focus off individuals so they may fully enjoy the music the choir is singing. Uniforms create a good impression for an audience and a judge, and they also allow the students to look and feel their best as individuals and as a choir. For all performances, no jewelry or watches should be worn except for stud earrings for the girls (stud pearl earrings and a pearl necklace can be paired with the formal dress). Also, all girls must wear their hair so that it does not cover their face.

**Choir T-Shirts** - All students will be expected to purchase a Alief Choir T-Shirt (included in the Usage Fee). These T-Shirts are subject to change every year. The Sixth Grade Choir will wear this to all Concerts. These shirts will be worn at informal performances with:

* Blue jeans (free of decoration and free of rips or tears)

 **7th & 8th Grade Girls: Harmony**

Each student will be provided with a floor length dress. Students must provide:

* black, closed-toe, comfortable dress shoes with a heel no higher than 2 inches
* appropriate undergarments
* appropriate make-up,
* no perfume

**Upcoming CHOIR EVENTS**

\*=District and or Region event

**\*Alief Honor Choir Auditions**- September 29th  (@ Holub Middle School  9515 S. Dairy Ashford, Houston, TX 77099)

**AMS Choir Fall Showcase**- October 12th 6:30-7:15( @AMS Cafeteria)

**Alief Honor Choir Clinic/Concert- October 28th** @ Mission

**Rennaissance Choral Competition**- November 8th ( @Renaissance Festival  21778 FM 1774, Todd Mission, TX 77363)

(This event is subject to change)

**AMS Winter Concert-** December 7th(AMS Cafeteria)

**\*Region 23 Choir Auditions**- January 20th (@ Beckendorf Junior High 8200 S Fry Rd, Katy, TX 77494)

**\*Region 23 Clinic**- February 9th (@Cardiff Junior High  3900 Dayflower Dr, Katy, TX 77449)

**\*Region 23 Concert**- February 10th (@ Cinco Ranch High School 23440 Cinco Ranch Blvd, Katy, TX 77494)

**\*Solo & Ensemble**- April 21st (@ Killough Middle School7600 Synott Rd, Houston, TX 77083 )

**Performances**

The following is a list of our major performances. We will also be singing at various other times during the year, but you will be notified of those as the year progresses. These concerts are a major portion of each student's nine weeks grade. Students who continually miss events with no valid excuse will be removed from the class.

The no pass/no play law does not affect most of our concerts. Therefore, all students must attend our performances unless otherwise noted. Students will be notified as soon as possible if they are not eligible for an event.

**CHOIR EXPENSES**

The following is an anticipated list of choir expenditures that will occur throughout the year. They are

listed to help you plan your budget. Please note that in some cases, fees are approximate. Required

expenditures are so indicated.

1. AMS Choir fee (includes choir t-shirt, $30 for Harmony and $15 for all other choirs
2. Other expenses might include other additional trips any choral group might take.

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 AMS Choir.

**CHOIR CONTRACT & FORMS**

Please return all forms One Week From Today

**Choir Contract**

1. I understand that there are activities involved in membership in the choral program at Alief Middle School that will require my attention and efforts and my parents’ attention and efforts outside of the regular classroom school day. I also understand that the choir grade is based upon participation and commitment to the choir program, thus failure to meet the responsibilities as discussed in the choir handbook will directly affect my grade.
2. I am also aware that a typed assignment must be turned in for all missed concerts and extra rehearsals. My signature verifies that I understand the significance of the responsibilities required of me as outlined in the choir handbook and that I am willing to fulfill them.

Student’s Name (Please Print) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Period\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

My signature verifies that I understand the significance of the responsibilities required of my child and of myself as outlined in the choir handbook and that I am willing to help him/her fulfill them.

Parent/Guardian Signature\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Please choose 1 box

Website Permission

0 I will allow my child’s picture and/or name to be posted on the choir website.

0 I will allow my child’s name only to be posted on the choir website.

0 I will not allow my child’s name or picture to be posted on the choir website.

VOLUNTEER FORM

Please fill out the form below if you can be of assistance during the year. You will be contacted as events draw near.

□ I would be willing to chaperone at concerts in the evening starting around 5:30 PM.

□ I would be available to chaperone social events in the evenings..

□ I can be available during the school day to help with sizing students’ uniforms, measuring for

alterations, or any other activities needed during the school day.

□ I can play the piano and read music and would be willing to come in during the school day and help teach a sectional.