

Welcome to Calhoun Middle School Choir!

Choir Handbook 2026-2027

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Please keep this packet for future reference.



Dear Choir Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to choir! My name is Naomi Kilpatrick, and I am proud to be the choir director at Calhoun Middle School as well as the General Music Teacher for Central Elementary! I am from West Monroe, and I received my Bachelor's in Vocal Music Education from the University of Louisiana at Monroe. I recently completed my Master's in Vocal Music Education in the ULM Summer MME Program. I have been a musician for as long as I can remember, and come from a family of musicians. This is what inspired my passion to share music with the younger generation. I cannot wait to teach your students!

This handbook contains information on opportunities, procedures, rules, and expectations for this school year. Please take the time to read through this packet thoroughly. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me (I check my email frequently)! I am so excited to have the opportunity to share and educate your students about the wonderful world of music!

Thank you!

Naomi Kilpatrick

Choir Director at Calhoun Middle School

Choir Fees:

Due to the high cost of music, binders, equipment, supplies, choir t-shirts, buses, performance entry fees, and so many other things that the choir needs throughout the year, it is necessary that we charge a choir fee of **$35.00.** The choir fee is due on **Monday, September 7th (Labor Day).** Failure to pay the choir fee by this date will result in your student being removed from the choral program and moved to an alternative elective. For your student to participate in optional performances, required performances, trips, and off-campus events, they **must** have their choir fee paid. Thank you for paying this fee in a timely manner so we can quickly order shirts and music for the school year.

Grading:

Weekly Grade/Binder Checks: **100** points each week (**20** points each day). This grade will be given based on the student's daily participation, preparation, behavior, and completion of their Daily Downbeat page that needs to be turned in every other week.

Theory Grades: We will introduce and test basic theory concepts, which will be tested throughout the year with varied weights and grades. Theory Test grades will usually be for 100 points.

Forms: All forms, especially this contract, will be due for a grade and must be turned in by a set deadline for full credit.

Concerts: Concert attendance is **mandatory** and non-negotiable. Each performance is worth **500** points. The only exceptions are loss of a family member, contagious sickness, or emergencies. Failure to appear for a concert without prior contact with the choir director will result in a **0** in the gradebook until a makeup assignment is completed.

Makeup Assignments: Makeup assignments are in the form of a short, creative essay. These essays should be handwritten and turned in before the end of the marking period in which the concert was held. Makeup assignments can be submitted for full credit for missing performances, but are only eligible with a parent or doctor's excuse. Failure to supply a doctor's excuse or parent contact will result in your student's makeup essay not being accepted for full credit for that performance and a 0 will be put in the gradebook.

Mandatory Activities:

Concerts: As stated above, all concerts are mandatory. There are **three** major concerts in which the students are required to perform, including their Christmas Concert, District Choral Assessment (Festival), and Spring Concert. The dates for these concerts will be listed under Important Dates and may be subject to change. If there is a change of date, you will be notified as soon as possible. Attendance for these performances is mandatory and non-negotiable and will be a **500-point** grade. Failure to perform at these concerts without contacting the choir director will result in a **0** in the gradebook until a makeup assignment is completed.

District Choral Assessment (Festival): In the spring, the choirs will prepare pieces to be performed for a panel of judges to receive a rating. This is a required performance that occurs during school hours. This year's festival will be held at **ULM on March 23rd and 24th**. Festival is an extremely important part of being in a choir program. It allows the students to receive validation and valuable feedback on all of the hard work that they have done both inside and outside the classroom. Attendance to this performance is mandatory and nonnegotiable and will be a **500** point grade. Failure to perform at festival without contacting the choir director, will result in a **0** in the gradebook until a makeup assignment is completed.

Optional Activities:

LMEA District 1 Honor Choir: Honor Choir is an opportunity to sing with choir members from North Louisiana. You make the choir by submitting an anonymous recording of a music selection assigned by the state. Ms. Kilpatrick will teach and record the selection during school. These recordings are judged by an anonymous panel of judges, and students are selected to perform with this choir. Students selected miss one day of school to practice on Friday, January 29th (transportation provided) with a concert on Saturday, January 30th (transportation NOT provided) at ULM. Please take the date and fees into consideration before agreeing to audition. Auditioning, being selected, and not going are not an option. This takes the spot of another child who would have been able to participate.

Honor Choir Fees: No audition fee. Registration Fee is **$30.00** (only paid if you are selected to participate), which pays for music and a t-shirt. Lunch money will be needed for the rehearsal day on Friday.

ACDA All-State Choir: All-State is an opportunity to sing with choir members from across the state of Louisiana. You make the choir by submitting an anonymous recording of a piece assigned by the state. Ms. Kilpatrick will teach and record the piece in class. These recordings are judged by an anonymous panel of judges, and students are selected from those who submitted recordings. From there, if you make it, you will learn assigned pieces in class with Ms. Kilpatrick. Parents will be responsible for bringing their student to **New Orleans, LA**, to rehearse with a world-renowned conductor on **Thursday, October 15th** and have a final performance on **Saturday, October 17th**. A parent/guardian/chaperone MUST accompany the student to New Orleans for this trip. This does fall on our Fall Break, so please take that into consideration. Each student is responsible for all expenses listed below. Please take the dates and fees into consideration before deciding to audition. Auditioning, being selected, and not going are not an option. This takes the spot of another child who would have been able to participate. If your student makes All-State, they automatically make Honor Choir as well.

ACDA All-State Choir Fees: Audition fee is **$20.00**. Registration fee is **$75.00** (only paid if you are selected to participate). You can also purchase a t-shirt for your student for an additional **$15.00**. Hotel in New Orleans for two nights minimum, approximately **$500.00** (rough estimate). Travel expenses such as gas, parking, and meals. Prices are subject to change.

ACDA National Honor Choir: The National Honor Choir gives your child the opportunity to meet and sing with children their age from all over the world! They bring in world-renowned clinicians to work with the students. With thousands of applicants sent in each year, it is a HUGE honor to make such a prestigious choir. This is an excellent opportunity to immerse your child in the diverse world of music. They have the opportunity to learn exciting and challenging repertoire that will enhance their musical knowledge and abilities. This opportunity is one that will come with lots of discipline outside of school to learn the audition piece on their own, and only a few after-school rehearsals. A parent/guardian/chaperone MUST accompany their student to **Minneapolis, Minnesota on March 7th-10th**. Each student is responsible for all expenses listed below. Please take the dates and fees into consideration before deciding to audition. Auditioning, being selected, and not going are not an option. This takes the spot of another child who would have been able to participate.

ACDA National Honor Choir Fees: Audition fee is **$35.00**. Registration fee is **$135.00** (only paid if you are selected to participate). Hotel in Memphis, Tennessee for four-to-five nights. Travel expenses such as gas (or plane ticket), parking, and meals. All prices are subject to change.

All of these optional choirs are special in their own ways, and I encourage you to look into all three of these exciting opportunities. I also ask that you think carefully about the expenses and the dates. There are limited spots available in each choir, so auditioning, making it, and not going is NOT an option. This would take the spot of another student who could have gone and had an amazing experience. Please look and plan ahead to be courteous to all applicants. If you have any additional questions about these opportunities, please email me at naomi.kilpatrick@opsb.net. I want to give your students as many opportunities to sing as I possibly can and will be more than happy to assist in any way possible!

Here is a chart that might be helpful! *I did my best to find average prices, and I chose to round up when given the chance. I want everyone to be aware of the cost of these trips.

Name of Choir:	Honor Choir	All State	Nationals
Dates	Jan. 29th and 30th	Oct. 15th-17th	March 7th-10th
# of Days	2 days	3 days 2 nights	5 days 4 nights
Audition Fee	Free!	$20.00	$35.00
Registration Fee (only paid if your student is accepted into the choir)	$30.00	$75.00 (optional $15.00 t-shirt)	$135.00
Location	ULM	Hilton Riverside Hotel in New Orleans	Minneapolis, Minnesota
Meals	$20.00 (Friday lunch)	Estimate: $160	Estimate: $175
Hotel	None	Estimate: $348	Estimate: $476
Misc. (Gas, Parking, etc.)	Estimate: $10 (for gas to bring students to ULM on concert day)	Estimate: $80 for gas both ways, $40 parking	Estimate: $85 for gas both ways, $40 parking
Total Estimated	$50.00	Estimated: $738	Estimated: $946

Activity Expectations:

As a member of the Calhoun Middle School Choir, your student will have the opportunity to be taken off campus and expected to represent this school and this choir program. We show courtesy and good sportsmanship. We will be respectful of any and all facilities. Students are expected to follow the directions of the adults in charge (parents, chaperones, judges, or directors). Bus rides will be orderly and calm, and the buses left clean. Your student represents our school, our program, their director, and their family. Any disciplinary issues while at a choir event will result in removing that student from the activity and are immediate grounds for potential removal from the CMS Choir Program.

Please also be aware that serious discipline issues in choir will result in your student not being allowed to go to ANY off campus off campus trips. Your student will also not be allowed to participate in off-campus events if they are on the failure list for the nine weeks in which the event occurs. Your student is expected to be responsible and respectful throughout the course of the year in choir and in their other classes. Choir is a privilege to be a part of, and your student must earn the right to represent their school and this program.

Uniforms:

For each choir event we will have a required dress code that all students are expected to follow. Please see below for the expected dress code for the corresponding event.

Advanced Girls' Ensemble: for Christmas Concert and Festival

- Formal black dress (provided by choir program)
- Black closed toed shoes (NOT provided by the choir program)

Beginning Girls' Ensemble: for Christmas Concert and Festival

- Formal black dress (provided by choir program)
- Black closed toed shoes (NOT provided by the choir program)

Boys' Ensemble: for Christmas Concert and Festival

- Formal black tuxedo set (provided by the choir program) this includes: black tux jacket, white button down shirt, black pants, and red bowtie.
- Black dress shoes (NOT provided by the choir program)

- Plain white undershirt (NOT provided by the choir program). This is required as it helps reduce stains.

All Choir Members: for field trips during the year, Honor Choir Friday rehearsal day, and Spring Concert

- Choir t-shirt (included in the school fee and provided by the choir program)
- School-appropriate blue jeans (please no rips!)
- Comfortable tennis shoes (please no Crocs or slides!)

Important Dates for 2026-2027 School Year:

All dates are subject to change. You will be notified as soon as possible of any changes.

Due Dates (due dates for registration fees for optional choirs will be given after results are posted)

- ACDA All-State Audition Fee Due **Friday, August 28th**

- All Choir Forms Due **Friday, August 28th**

- Choir Fees Due **Monday, September 7th (Labor Day)**

Event Dates

- ACDA All-State Choir in New Orleans **Thursday through Saturday October 15th-17th**

- Christmas Concert at First Calhoun Baptist Church **Tuesday December 15th**

- LMEA District 1 Honor Choir at ULM **Friday and Saturday January 29th and 30th**

- ACDA National Honor Choir in Minneapolis, Minnesota **Wednesday through Saturday March 7th-10th**

- District Choral Assessment (Festival) at ULM **Tuesday and Wednesday March 23rd and 24th**

TBA:

Nursing Home Caroling, Spring Concert, and End of the Year Trip to Altitude