

TMEA Region 15

High School Vocal Division

Handbook

2026 - 2027

Purpose

This handbook was formulated and revised to better inform our membership of the Region XV practices and procedures. Although it may not cover every situation or circumstance, it serves as a guideline to meet the needs of our region.

General Information

Organizations

In Texas there are two statewide professional associations that all directors should be aware of:

1. Texas Choral Directors Association referred to as TCDA.
2. Texas Music Educators Association referred to as TMEA. This association governs all activities of the District Choir, Region Choir, Pre-Area Auditions and All-State Choir. It also publishes the *Southwestern Musician* magazine.

Directors should also be aware of the University Interscholastic League referred to as UIL. This organization governs activities such as Solo & Ensemble Contest at the local and state levels as well as Concert & Sight Reading Evaluation.

Meetings

There are three primary business meetings held by Region XV each year.

(These meetings will occur on corresponding dates each year.)

1. Fall Meeting Early August
2. TMEA Convention February
3. Spring Meeting Late April

Other meetings are held as needed (*i.e. on the same day as auditions, clinics, and concerts*).

Publications

Directors should also obtain and read current and appropriate sections of the following state issued manuals, which are available online at:

- *UIL Constitution & Contest Rules* (C&CR) www.uiltexas.org
- *Prescribed Music List* (PML) www.uiltexas.org/music/pml
- All-State Choir Performance Notes www.tmea.org
- Audition Procedures Manual www.tmea.org

Other sources of communication regarding region activities are:

- TMEA Region XV Vocal Division Handbook
- TMEA Region XV Vocal Division Minutes
- Website: www.region15choir.com
- *Southwestern Musician* Vocal Division Column
- TMEA Website: www.tmea.org
- UIL Website: www.uilmusic15.com
- *UIL Leaguer* (UIL's monthly newspaper)
- Region XV Division Chair
- District XV Executive Secretary
- UIL Region XV Music Contest Duties & Responsibilities

TMEA Membership

Each director should become a member of TMEA. Membership is required for any director whose students wish to participate in a TMEA activity. A director must be a member in order to vote on TMEA issues or hold a TMEA office.

There are separate officers for the Region XV Junior High Division and the Region XV High School Division. However, the high school chair is the official representative of TMEA. All correspondence and information addressed to the Region must be submitted to the high school chair for approval before it may be sent to the membership.

Any additional TMEA information is available from the TMEA Office (www.tmea.org).

Region Directory

Becoming a member of TMEA does not guarantee that a director's name will appear on the region's mailing list. A director new to the region must attend the Fall Meeting to ensure that their name will appear on the region's roster. Each director listed on the roster will receive notification of all region events via e-mail. If you miss the Fall Meeting, contact the region vocal chair to have your name listed in the roster.

TMEA Region XV Choir Information

Entry Guidelines for TMEA

Entry Procedures

- No limit applies to the number of students entered. However, students must be certified individually on all audition music by the student's director before the audition or the student will not be allowed to audition.
- Notify the Region XV Vocal Division Chair of any withdrawals of students (DNA's) as soon as possible. If a student becomes ineligible, the student's director should notify the Region XV Vocal Division Chair immediately so an alternate can be notified.

Online Entry Instructions are available at: www.tmea.org/auditions/

Music

The District/Region music is selected from the TMEA All-State Choir repertoire through an online vote and then the round repertoire is posted on the region website. Corrections and additional information pertaining to the All-State Choir music will be listed on the TMEA Website.

District Honor Choir repertoire is selected by the members that attend the selection meeting held in May or June. Four ~~SATB~~ **SAB** pieces will be selected for this ensemble.

Rehearsal/Accompaniment Recordings

All-State Mixed

Rehearsal and piano accompaniment recordings and files are available from:

EERC - Debbie Talley

P.O. Box 4053

Pasadena, TX 77502

(713) 475-8555

District Honor Choir

Distributed through Google email following the District Audition.

Fees

Fees for each participant are set by the Region at the Spring or Fall Meeting.

Currently the fees are as follows:

- A one-time ~~\$18.00~~ **\$20.00** fee for each student entered in the District Mixed Audition and a one-time campus fee of ~~\$150.00~~ **\$300.00**.

***Fees and proof of membership are due to the Region Secretary on the day of the audition date for the number entered online. Make checks payable to the TMEA Region XV Vocal Division.*

Method of Choosing Cuts

- Audition cuts shall be prepared by the Region XV Vocal Division Chair.
- Suggestions may be submitted by any director by submitting the Google form prior to the deadline. The Google form will be emailed by the region chair 2 weeks before the audition. Please do not send suggestions via text message. The final responsibility of choosing the cuts from the suggestions will be at the discretion of the Region XV Vocal Division Chair.

Registration/Audition Guidelines and Procedures

- Director responsibilities
 - Directors are responsible for informing their students of all the information in these guidelines and procedures of the audition before attendance at the event.
 - Directors must register immediately upon arrival at the audition site and report student names that are to be withdrawn (DNA's).
 - No one will be allowed to register once the auditions have begun, except those students approved by the chair prior to the audition date. Approved late auditionees must register by **12:00 pm** to audition.
 - Directors are responsible for requesting early or late audition times prior to the DNA deadline (usually at 4:00 pm the Thursday before the audition).
 - Only school-sponsored activities shall be considered for approval by the region chair.
 - Directors shall secure a chaperone to accompany their students throughout the duration of the contest day. Name of chaperone will be submitted via Google form to the chair.

- Directors will inform the chair of any special medical needs a student (and chaperone) may need to attend to while at the contest. Student names will be submitted via Google form to the chair.
- Director Penalty - All directors are to attend all TMEA activities. Directors failing to fulfill their assignment will be subject to the TMEA Grievance Process. Directors are required to arrange for and pay a fee of **\$100.00** for an appropriate proxy, who must be approved in advance by the region chair. It is at the discretion of the region chair to excuse or not excuse a director.
- Student's Responsibility
 - Each student will receive a badge with an audition number, and when applicable, a sight reading number, that is to be worn throughout the audition day.
 - Students will sing portions of the selected music. The "cuts" will be announced before the beginning of the audition. Students should have pencils and paper clips.
 - Students will have the opportunity to sing their cuts.
 - After the cuts have been sung, no students will be allowed to sing or play the cuts. Late students receive the same procedure.
 - No electronic devices may be used or accessed by a student participant until the auditions for the student's section have concluded. Failure to comply with this regulation may result in student disqualification. The list of non-allowable electronic devices includes, but is not limited to, phones, electronic games, computers, cameras(within an audition room), smartwatches, and playback systems.
 - When the student's audition number is displayed or announced, the student will proceed to the monitor. The first group of students will go directly to the audition room, all others will go to the warmup room before auditioning.
 - The monitor will direct the student to the proper audition area.
 - Upon entering the audition room, the student's number will be announced by the monitor. The student should remain behind the screen throughout the audition.
 - Each student will sing the assigned part of the selected literature with the recorded piano accompaniment. The recording will play all voice parts on unaccompanied numbers. Pieces having a piano accompaniment independent of the voice parts will be played as printed. If the "cut" of a song with a piano accompaniment contains passages that are unaccompanied, the recording will play the voice parts until the regular accompaniment is resumed. The accompaniment used in all auditions will be the same accompaniment that is available from Educational Enterprises. (See **Rehearsal/Accompaniment Recordings** above).
 - All students will return to the waiting area at the conclusion of their audition.
 - Students should remain attentive to the announcements and/or screens for possible call backs. If there are call backs it is the responsibility of the student to be available to sing again. Any student not available for a call back may forfeit their possible selection.

- If a student is permitted to leave the audition site early, it is understood that if the student is called back to sing, they will forfeit any possible placing in the auditioned choir.
- All students should accept the announcement of results with a display of good taste and good sportsmanship.
- All school rules and regulations apply.
- The use of tobacco products, alcohol, drugs, and other illegal substances will not be permitted.
- **All students MUST have original copies by the day of the audition.**

***Failure to adhere to any of the above listed student responsibilities are grounds for dismissal.**

****Chaperones may use electronic devices such as laptops, tablets, etc. but may NOT allow students to use them. Any emergencies requiring the use of cell phones by students must be cleared with the Region chair. Situations will be taken on a case-by-case basis.**

Certification Procedures (HS only)

Though this is the process, students may qualify for Area auditions in both Wind/Percussion and Vocal, and then choose the one in which to audition. The TMEA Eligibility Rules state: *A student may audition in band and/or choir and/or orchestra, but once notified of placement in either the All-State Jazz Ensemble, All-State Orchestra (strings), or All-State Mariachi may not advance to Area for another All-State group.*

Each director/member sponsor documents which students wish to audition in both the Wind/Percussion and Vocal Divisions on the web-based Official Entry Document, which is submitted to the Region Chair. Following the final audition for Area certification, the director(s) must have all dual certified students from their organization complete the **Area Declaration Form**. The student must complete the Area Declaration Form which must also be signed by both Divisional Directors/Sponsors of that student. The form must then be submitted to the TMEA Deputy Director via fax or email by December 15 in order that an alternate may be notified.

Choir Selection Criteria

- Technical knowledge of the music (rhythm, pitch, and intonation)
- Voice quality (vocal technique and appropriate sound)
- Overall musicianship (diction, phrasing, style, and dynamics)

Number of Students Selected

Audition:	District	Region	Pre-Area	District Honor
	<i>Round 1</i>	<i>Round 2</i>	<i>Round 3</i>	<i>Chosen from Round 1</i>
Members:	20	20	5	15 S/A; 10 T/B
				20 S/A; 15 T/B

Judging Procedures

1. Protocol

- a. All judges must be in attendance at the directors meeting where the judging procedures will be reviewed.
- b. All judges have the responsibility to be familiar with all music before the audition.
- c. Errata should be considered by judges at all levels of auditions.
- d. All judges have the responsibility to avoid contact with any students they may be judging.
- e. All judges must be silent and sit facing away from the screen once a student enters the audition room.
- f. There shall be no discussion between judges about a student's audition.
- g. Cell phones, iPads, iPods, and smartwatches may NOT be used during the audition.
- h. All judges must remain in the director's lounge until their panel is cleared by the region chair.
- i. Judges may not duplicate scores.
- j. All judges must use a consistent method of scoring. Leave sufficient space between scores to avoid "boxing" oneself in by scoring students too closely together.
- k. All judges shall utilize the Judging Tips and Sightreading Deduction sheet.

2. Etiquette

- a. Judges should have the courtesy and professionalism not to make remarks that might be heard by a student and misinterpreted.
- b. All judges should be actively involved in the audition process and not involved in doing other tasks.
- c. Avoid making visual contact with any auditionees.
- d. Abstain from entering tabulations and the computer room.

Tabulation of Scores

All ties will be broken by the audition software program as outlined in the TMEA Audition Procedures Manual.

Announcement of Results

Announcement of the results will be made available online for students to access. Directors may also provide students with the results only after they are certified by directors. Results posted on-site will list all students in alphabetical order indicating the students advancing or selected to an organization. Rankings will not be included.

District/Region Choirs

Clinics and Concerts

1. Clinic: Region Mixed and District Honor Choir.....Friday afternoon
Schedule: 1:45pm - Roll Call
2:00pm - Clinic Begins: Region Mixed: stage, District Honor: Sectionals
5:00pm - Dinner (provided by region; students must remain on campus)
5:45pm - Clinic and Sectionals Resume
8:00pm - Clinic and Sectionals Conclude
2. Clinic: District and Region Mixed Choir, District Honor Choir.....Saturday morning and afternoon
Schedule: 8:15am - Roll Call
8:30am - Clinic Begins: District Honor: stage, District Mixed: Choir Room
9:30 - 10:30am - District Mixed Sectionals
11:30am - Lunch (on your own)
12:45pm - Roll Call
1:00pm - Clinic Resumes:
District Mixed on stage, District Honor Choir Choir Room
4:00pm - Clinic Concludes
3. Concert: District Honor Choir, Region Mixed Choir, District Mixed Choir.....Saturday at 6:00pm

Patches

Students selected for the District and/or Region Choir will receive a district and/or region patch upon the completion of the Region Clinic and Concert requirements.

Participation

Any student selected for the District/Region Choir is required to participate in the rehearsals and performance of the District/Region Choir. Any deviation from this rule must be approved by the Region XV Vocal Division Chairperson BEFORE the rehearsal or performance that will be missed and must be a school-related activity.

Guidelines for Clinic/Concert Attendance

1. The first unexcused tardy to a rehearsal will result in a reprimand.
2. The second unexcused tardy to a rehearsal will result in dismissal from the District/Region Choir and all District/Region honors will be forfeited.
3. Any unexcused absence from rehearsal will result in dismissal from the District/Region Choir and all District/Region honors will be forfeited.
4. An unexcused tardy to the concert can result in dismissal from the District/Region Choir and all District/Region Choir honors will be forfeited. A student's tardiness is determined by the section leader. No student may leave the area after roll call without the permission of the section leader.
5. The use of tobacco products, alcohol, drugs, and other illegal substances will be grounds for dismissal.

6. All school rules and regulations will apply during the region clinic and concert.
7. The obvious use of visual or verbal profanity and/or obscene acts will result in disciplinary action by the student's director and may be grounds for dismissal from the choir.

Alternates

If any member of the District/Region Choir cannot participate in the Clinic and Concert, that student's director must notify the Region XV Vocal Division Chair by 5:00pm on the Thursday before the clinic so that an alternate may be notified. Alternates will be called in order.

Clinicians

The District/Region Choir clinician will receive an honorarium of \$750.00, plus actual hotel cost, meals, and transportation costs of actual airfare or state allocated mileage. The District Honor Choir clinician will receive an honorarium of \$500.00 plus the expenses listed above.

Accompanists

The accompanists shall be selected by the Region Chair and will receive an honorarium of \$500.00 for the District/Region Choir and \$300.00 for the District Honor Choir.

Additional instrumentalists shall be hired by the Region Vice-Chair and will receive an honorarium of no more than \$150 for both rehearsal and performance. If the instrumentalists are playing for more than one song, they will receive an additional \$50 per selection.

Pre-Area Clinician

The selected clinician will receive an honorarium of \$300.00 plus actual hotel cost, meals, and transportation costs of actual airfare or state allocated mileage. A maximum of \$300.00 will be allotted for travel.

Pre-Area Accompanist

The accompanist shall be selected by the Region Chair and will receive an honorarium of \$200.00.

District Honor Choir Recordings

- Recording Engineer fee: not to exceed \$300.00
- Vocalist fee: not to exceed \$100 per voice part
- Accompanist: not to exceed \$125.00
- If available, the region may opt to utilize commercially produced recordings such as those found at choraltracks.com.

Officers and Volunteers Region XV Vocal Division

Offices

Elected by Region XV Vocal Division

- Chair - stipend not to exceed \$600.00
- Vice-Chair - stipend not to exceed \$300.00
- Secretary - stipend not to exceed \$500.00

Volunteers

Appointed by Region Chair

- Computer Operator - stipend not to exceed \$500.00
- Region Clinic/Concert Section Leaders
- Webmaster - stipend not to exceed \$300 + Annual Web Associated Fees, not to exceed \$150

Volunteers from Region XV Vocal Division

- Audition Hosts
 - District Audition Host
 - Region Audition Host
 - Pre-Area Audition Host
- Region Clinic/Concert Hosts
 - Region Clinic/Concert Host
 - Pre-Area Clinic Host

Elections

- Elected in even numbered years at spring meeting
- Two year term

Duties of the Officers and Volunteers Region XV Vocal Division

Region Chair

- General Duties
 - Preside at Region XV Vocal Division Meetings
 - Represent Region XV Vocal Division at all TMEA state-wide affairs
 - Notify each director through written correspondence of TMEA state-wide affairs
 - Secure clinicians prior to Fall meeting and supply them with appropriate music
 - Serve as liaison with the UIL Executive Secretary
 - Complete State Office reports
 - Provide links to the following information:
 - Region XV Vocal Division Handbook and all appendixes
 - A schedule of event dates, entry deadlines, sites, and fees for the current year
 - State Audition Procedure Manuals and all relevant appendixes

- Entry fee forms for UIL Solo & Ensemble Contest and UIL Concert & Sight Reading Evaluation
 - All-State Choir Repertoire List and Rehearsal Notes
- The chair or designee shall post audition results
- Provide screens for audition rooms
- Spring Duties
 - See that new officers are elected at the Spring Region meeting every two years
 - Select and secure accompanists for the Clinic/Concert
 - Arrange for all District and Region patches from the TMEA State Office prior to June 1
- Fall Duties
 - See that each participating director is a member of TMEA
 - Notify directors of selections to be heard at each audition
 - Notify directors of music to be performed at the concert
 - Assist in arranging the clinics
- Audition Duties
 - Certify that each student is entered according to audition regulations by the entry deadline
 - Notify each director by written correspondence in the event of any changes in Region activities
 - Certify eligible students at each audition
 - Contact the director of an alternate immediately upon notification of a student withdrawal
 - See that each audition follows the guidelines of the Audition Procedures Manual
 - Provide each director with a list of the songs to be auditioned
 - Be present when audition scores are tabulated
 - Provide the following materials:
 - MP3 players prepared with cut material, score sheets, and all other pertinent materials to the contest
 - MP3 players and speakers
 - Extension cords
 - Pens and pencils
 - Paper clips, rubber bands, scissors, tape, stapler
 - Writing paper
 - Large envelopes

Vice-Chair Duties

- Audition Duties
 - Duties as assigned by chair
 - May conduct a judging workshop at each audition at chair's discretion
- Clinic and Concert Duties
 - Make lodging arrangements for the clinicians
 - Arrange for any additional instrument and players
 - Arrange for the printing of the concert program
 - Arrange for a professional recordings of the concert

- Make seating and standing arrangements
- Assign section leaders
- Arrange for Friday night meals for students and clinicians/directors
- Arrange for snacks and bottled waters for Friday and Saturday

Secretary Duties

- Take minutes at all meetings
- Post a copy of current minutes on the website within two weeks of the meeting
- Have minutes from the previous year available
- Provide a copy of audition sites, dates, and fee deadlines to each director following the Fall Region Meeting
- Provide a calendar of events and distribute copies of written procedures and rules which have been approved by the membership
- Preside over Region meetings when the Chair and Vice-Chair are in absentia
- Pay all Vocal Division bills
- Prepare and present a financial statement for each Spring meeting
- Be the collecting agent for all monies pertaining to the Vocal Division
- Notify the Region Chair of any school in debt to the Vocal Division
- Keep all Region monies in a non-interest bearing checking account

Audition Host Duties

- Reserve contest facilities
- Provide students for registration of participants
- Provide food and refreshments. The Region XV HS Choir Division will reimburse/pay up to \$14.00 per working director/adult for lunch, breakfast, and hospitality items to be allocated as the host school sees fit. All directors/adults will pay \$7.00 to the region for food/drink/hospitality (including hosts, officers, and guest judges; excluding UTRGV student monitors). Up to \$150.00 will be reimbursed to the host school for student workers' meals and drinks.
- Provide the following personnel:
 - Room monitors (1 per audition room - adults)
 - Guides (2 per audition room - students or adults)
 - Hall Monitors (1 per audition room or hallway - students or adults)
- Provide the following materials and facilities
 - Tables, desks, and chairs in the judging, tabulation, registration, and waiting areas as needed
 - Music stands in the audition rooms
 - 2 computers and 2 compatible printers
 - Piano for warm-up
 - Signs for directions, room identification, etc.
 - Lunch area and arrangements for judges and workers
 - Audio system for announcements and instructions
 - Separate holding area if sight reading is included in the audition process
 - Make sure school bells have been turned off

Clinic/Concert Host Duties

- Clinic Arrangements
 - Secure clinic facilities
 - Rehearsal and performance areas
 - Provide piano, risers, chairs, and music stands
 - Optional accommodations
 - Cafeteria, or other area, for schools to eat
 - Lounge for clinicians and directors
 - Private area(s) for clinician(s)
- Concert Arrangements
 - Secure concert facilities
 - Provide pianos, risers, and acoustical shells
 - Reserve seating area for choirs
 - Be available to assist the clinician(s)

Clinic/Concert Section Leader Duties

- To be selected by Vice-Chair
- Check roll for your section at the beginning of each rehearsal and at the concert
- Notify Region Chair of any absences or tardies

All Directors

- Notify students of....
 - Rules of conduct for all TMEA and UIL activities
 - Music to be used at each audition
 - Dates, places, and events
 - Dress for Region Choir (each school's uniform). If applicable, appropriate attire shall be worn under robes.
- Arrange for lodging, meals, and transportation where appropriate
- Bring all forms and fees to each audition
- Pay \$7.00 to the Region for lunch
- Be present at all Region events in which your students are involved or send a qualified proxy to be responsible for your duties and/or be responsible for the payment of a qualified judge in the amount specified by the region chair
- Notify the Region Chair at the earliest possible time in the event of a person's inability to participate
- Get District and Region patches from the Region Chair and distribute patches to the qualified students
- \$7.00 fee for all students advancing to the Area Round, paid for by Region XV
- \$30.00 fee for students earning membership to an all-state ensemble. Due following results according to TMEA guidelines.