



**ST. PAUL'S
SINGERS
HANDBOOK
2025-2026**

MARK ALBERSTEIN, DIRECTOR

**ST. PAUL'S SCHOOL
VISALIA, CA**

**PARENTS AND STUDENTS CAN VIEW AND DOWNLOAD
THIS HANDBOOK AND CURRENT PRACTICE MATERIALS
AT:**

WWW.SPSCHOIRS.COM

Welcome to the St. Paul's Singers 2025-2026

Dear Parents:

Your child has joined The Saint Paul's Singers: a choir program for 4th and 5th grade singers that is committed to achieving quality and excellence in choral music and in character. It is a big responsibility for your child to be a member of this group. Every member of the group is expected to support their fellow singers by learning the music and performing to best of their ability. This requires hard work and dedication to the choir from every member.

This program focuses on developing a solid musical background to create singing musicians for life. Students in the program can expect to sing a variety of styles of music, from early musical forms to more modern, contemporary compositions. Students will learn about the physical mechanisms of voice, vocal development, posture, performance, sight-singing, music history, and other cultures. All the selections and materials used in our class are age appropriate.

As we enter our thirteen year, I remain extremely honored and excited to have the opportunity to share the joy of music with the students at St. Paul's School. We've worked hard to develop a choir program worthy of your support, and I hope you'll see continued growth in our singers this year.

Please feel free to drop by the classroom on any day during 4th and 5th grade lunch to watch a rehearsal. There's no need for an appointment: just check in at the office. We love visitors, and we always sing better with an audience! Please call or text me at 559-205-5574, or you may contact me by email at the address below should you have any questions about our program, or the requirements described in this handbook.

I look forward to meeting with you at our **Choir Parent's Meeting on Tuesday evening, September 9th**, if not sooner. Let's make this year a great memory for your child and a foundation for musical growth in the years to come.

Mark Alberstein

Mark Alberstein
Director of Choral Music
559-205-5574
malberstein@spsvisalia.com

Saint Paul's Singers – General Info

Saint Paul's Singers is a mixed (male and female) choir, for singers in 4th and 5th grade. The Saint Paul's Singers is not a regular class in the school program, and no grades are issued for participation. Membership in the choir is completely voluntary. We aim to be as inclusive as possible, so all students who wish to join may do so.

There are, however, expectations about rights and responsibilities that come with being a member of a choir. Choir members are expected to attend all rehearsals if they are in school at the time of an assigned rehearsal. Choir members are expected to work hard at home on the music we prepare for performance. Choir members are expected to maintain good grades in both their academic classroom learning and a grade of at least an "A-" in their general music class. Choir members are expected to demonstrate a high level of citizenship both in their academic and music classes and at all other times and places on campus.

Performance Attire and Appearance

For most performances, **GIRLS** and **BOYS** will wear a red Saint Paul's Singers polo shirt. This shirt is available from me for \$15. Students must supply their own **black** slacks, belts, shoes and stockings. Black shoes must be leather or give the appearance of leather. They may have shoe strings or be slip-ons. No casual boots or athletic shoes are allowed. Dress boots are allowed. Hosiery must be black. Hair must be out of the eyes and off the eyebrows. We want to see their eyes clearly. Bangs are ok if cut above the eyebrows. Girls may wear their hair up or down. Girls must wear no jewelry other than earrings. Earrings must be studs or small hoops (1/2 inch or less).

Tardies & Absences

Rehearsals are held during lunch recess, from 12:20 – 12:40 PM. Singers will usually rehearse two days per week. Students must come straight to rehearsals after eating, although they may stop at the restroom first. ***A 20-minute rehearsal is very little time to get our work done.*** Students who are more than 5 minutes late without excuse will be marked Tardy. Two Tardies will equal one "unexcused" absence. If a student is disruptive, the student will be dismissed, and that day will be counted as an "unexcused" absence.

Absences are excused if the student is not on campus during the rehearsal, or if the student is doing another required school activity. A sign will be posted by the music room door each day to inform students when they have rehearsal. Absence due to failure to check the sign will be unexcused.

A student with 2 "unexcused" absences during a trimester will be dismissed from the group for the remainder of the year and will not receive credit for that trimester towards end of the year awards.

St. Paul's Singers NEW Policies and Procedures to Bring Improvement and Satisfaction to all Members of the Choir

The following policies and procedures are intended to challenge and inspire all singers to progress as singing musicians:

- 1) Any student who wishes to join St. Paul's Singers may do so. The student will not be an official member of the group until their permission form (see end of this Handbook) is returned, signed by both student and a parent.
- 2) Within the first two weeks of attending St. Paul's Singers practice, every singer will be evaluated on their ability to sing on pitch, with clear articulation and at medium volume. The results of this evaluation will be shared with the singer and the singer's parents. Singers who decline to do a voice evaluation will be dismissed from the group.
- 3) A schedule for learning all pieces of music will be provided for each singer, and learning and practice materials will be provided in both hard copy and online. ***Students are expected to study and learn their music at home. Our short rehearsals are for bringing our voices together on the pieces we've learned at home.***
- 4) At least once every 6 weeks, each singer will be called upon to perform, in a group of 3 or 4 other singers selected by the director, a 12-16 measure part of one of the pieces we have learned. Each singer will be evaluated on whether they have learned the part as well as their peers have learned it. The results of this progress check will be shared with the singer and the singer's parents.
- 5) Following the progress check, a student who has not demonstrated that they have learned the music at the level of their peers will be given one week to learn the same section they were evaluated on and will be reevaluated after the week is up.
- 6) Singers who have still not learned the music, or who decline to attempt the selection will be dismissed from the choir. Parents will be notified.

An unexcused absence from rehearsal is defined as: "The singer is on campus during rehearsal but did not attend rehearsal." Exceptions are made for singers who received their lunch too late or who were required to be in another school activity at that time – not detention. A student with 2 "unexcused" absences during a trimester will be dismissed from the group for the remainder of the year and will not receive credit for that trimester towards end of the year awards.

****** IMPORTANT **** PLEASE READ******

Students and their families must arrange their personal and family schedules to allow every student to attend all scheduled, mandatory performances. Students who have transportation difficulties must ask the director for assistance.

It is the responsibility of the choir student and parents to clear the student's schedule well in advance of all choir performances, and you agree to do so by signing and returning the "Agreement" at the end of this handbook.

This includes students who participate in other outside of school activities. Parents and Students should clear the dates of choir performances well in advance with coaches and other youth leaders.

Students who do not attend a mandatory performance will receive an "unexcused" absence for the trimester. Sickness or family emergencies are the only excuses accepted for missing a performance.

“Discipline is not about Punishment... Discipline is a person’s HABIT of CONSTANTLY MAKING CHOICES that open the door to continual growth, achievement and a true sense of self-worth.”

CHOIR - STUDENT DISCIPLINE

Goals: Each student should have a desire to:

1. Be an important part of a choir that performs as well as or better than any school in our area.
2. *Learn as much about music and good singing as possible and to always apply this learning in practice and performances.*
3. Be personally successful in choir and encourage all other choir members to be successful.
4. *Sacrifice personal time and energy to achieve these goals.*

Rules:

1. Be on time, in your assigned place and ready to begin when rehearsal begins. The director will allow 2-3 minutes leeway for students to stop at restrooms on the way to practice. Late passes to class must be signed by a staff member or the student will be marked TARDY. (1/2 unexcused absence)
2. *Give your attention to the director and follow all directions. If you DIDN'T hear, you are not listening. If you CAN'T hear, raise your hand.*
3. Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself. Do not disturb another singer or their possessions. (1/2 unexcused absence)
4. *When we are in rehearsal mode, raise your hand and wait quietly to be called upon by the teacher before speaking to anyone. NEVER start talking when the singing stops!*
5. Show respect to your teacher and your classmates. What you say and the way you say it shows how important the goals of the choir, and your membership in it, are to you.
6. *No Food. Nothing but water, is allowed during instruction.*

Rewards every student receives for having great discipline:

1. Productive and Enjoyable Rehearsals
2. *Superior Performances*
3. Praise from the Teacher and the Audience
4. Satisfaction in Personal Achievements

All Travel is Regarded as a Performance Event

When the choir travels, rehearses, or performs off-campus, we represent ourselves, our families, our school, and our community. All choir members are required to conduct themselves honorably and to never detract from our pride and dignity. All choir members are required to strictly obey all rules of our school including Dress Code. This applies to all travel, including events outside of regular school hours or regular school days.

Any member of St. Paul's Singers, who violates any school rule while traveling, including serious infractions of the School Dress Code, will be dismissed from the group for the remainder of the school year.

Chaperones

We will need drivers and chaperones for our off-campus events. Please indicate on the form at the back of this handbook, if you can provide transportation and chaperoning.

Food in Classroom

Food is not allowed in the classroom. Students who bring food to their seat will be instructed to put it away immediately, if the student fails to do so they will receive a ½ unexcused absence on the attendance record.

Water bottles - (not required) Hydration is a basic need for a healthy singing voice and students are encouraged to bring sealable water bottles. Trips to the drinking fountain are generally not allowed during our very short rehearsals.

Choir Calendar of Events

There is a Choir Calendar of Events included in this Handbook. Please remove and save it in a place where you can refer to it throughout the year. At the time of this printing, some of the calendar dates are unknown, so look for calendar updates from time-to-time.

We will do everything possible to notify you far in advance of choir activities or changes to the calendar. Please do everything you can to ensure that your child will attend and participate.

St. Paul's Choir Boosters

The St. Paul's Choir Boosters includes all choir parents, interested community members and staff. A donation of \$50 makes you a **INDIVIDUAL SUSTAINING SUPPORTER**. A donation of \$75 pays for **FAMILY SUSTAINING SUPPORTER** for a couple or family. With either donation, you and your immediate family will receive **FREE** admissions to all Concerts, and your name(s) will be printed with a list of Sustaining Supporters in all concert programs. Additionally, Sustaining Supporters will be given first consideration if there are limited chaperone positions open for an event.

ALL Parents are **MEMBERS AT LARGE** whether they are paid **SUSTAINING SUPPORTERS** or not. All parents are invited to attend every Boosters Meeting. We hope you will join us at booster meetings and at choir events throughout the year.

The Choir Boosters purpose is to assist the choir program in several ways:

1. Collaborate with the director in setting short and long-range goals for the program.
2. Collaborate with the director in setting standards for the program and periodically reviewing these standards for possible modification.
3. Collaborate with the director in determining funding needs for the program and creating fund raising events to benefit the program.
4. Collaborate with the director in planning performance events and handling the non-musical aspects of those events, including but not limited to decorations, taking admissions at the door, providing refreshments, assisting the director and students with wardrobe issues, providing on-site meals for students during special events, and arranging transportation for students on an as-needed basis.
5. Collaborate with the director in finding opportunities for St. Paul's Choir Groups to perform in the community and beyond.
6. Collaborate with the director in creating awards and incentive programs for choir students. These might include such rewards as scholarships toward private vocal instruction, or free student admission to paid events.

The St. Paul's Choir Boosters will **NOT** be an independent organization with its own bank account. Office staff will deposit all funds raised into the St. Paul's Choral Department account.

YOU MAY WISH TO REMOVE AND POST THIS PAGE

Calendar of Choir Boosters Meetings

Meetings of the Choir Boosters are on selected dates, from 5:45 pm to 6:30 pm.

Tuesday, Sep 9, 2025

MEETING FOR ALL CHOIR PARENTS

Discuss Choir Boosters

Discuss Choir Requirements

Other Highlights of Handbook

Monday, Oct 20 Fall Concert

Disney Choir Trip: March 19-20, 2026

Tuesday, Oct 14, 2025

Planning:

Monday, Oct 20 Fall Concert

Performance at Church/Rest Home in Dec

Disney Choir Trip: March 19-20, 2026

Tuesday, Nov 18, 2025

Report: Fall Concert

Planning:

Church/Rest Home Performances in Dec.

Monday, Dec 15 Christmas Concert

Disney Choir Trip: March 19-20, 2026

Tuesday, Feb 24, 2026

Planning:

Monday, March 16 - Pre-Disney Concert

Disney Choir Trip: March 19-20, 2026

Tuesday, Apr 21, 2026

Planning:

End of Year POP Concert Monday, May 11

End of Year Awards May

YOU MAY WISH TO REMOVE THIS PAGE

For POSTING AT HOME

St. Paul's Choir Boosters SUSTAINING SUPPORTERS 2025-2026 Enrollment Form

Name(s) as you want them to appear in our program.

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Select Your Membership: (check one box)

___	INDIVIDUAL	\$50.00
___	FAMILY	\$75.00

Checks Payable to: St. Paul's Choir
Memo: Choir Boosters

Amount Enclosed: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

YOU MAY WISH TO REMOVE THIS PAGE

YOU MAY WISH TO REMOVE AND POST THIS PAGE

ST. PAUL'S SINGERS

Calendar 2024-2025

Tues Sep 9 – All Choir Parents Meeting 6 pm in the Chapel

Tues Oct 14 – Choir Boosters Meeting 6 pm in the Music Room

Mon Oct 20 – Fall Concert 7 pm in the Chapel

Tues Nov 18 – Choir Boosters Meeting 6 pm in the Music Room

Dec ____ – St. Paul's Singers Sing in the Community

Mon Dec 15 – Christmas Concert 7 pm in the Chapel
or at St. Paul's Church (TBA)

Tues Feb 24 – Choir Boosters Meeting 6 pm in the Music Room

Mon Mar 16 – Pre-Disney Concert 7 pm in the Chapel

Thurs/Fri Mar 19/20 - Disneyland Trip & Performance (on the 19th)

Apr/May? – St. Paul's Singers and Concert Choir sings the National Anthem @ Visalia Rawhide Game

Tues Apr 21 – Choir Boosters Meeting 6 pm in the Music Room

Mon May 11 – End of the Year “POP” Concert 7 pm in the Chapel

**LOOK FOR THIS PAGE TO BE UPDATED DURING THE YEAR
AS NEW SITUATIONS ARISE**

YOU MAY WISH TO REMOVE THIS PAGE

Important: REMOVE THIS PAGE & RETURN this page in person (student or parent) or by email. Students who do not return this form by September 26, 2024 will be dismissed from the group.

AGREEMENT

We, the undersigned student, and parent have read, understood, and do agree to abide by the requirements, policies, and expectations described in the
"St. Paul's Singers Handbook 2024-2025."

STUDENT'S NAME _____ Grade Level _____
(Printed)

STUDENT Signature x _____ Date _____

PARENT'S NAME _____
(Printed)

PARENT Signature x _____ Date _____

Best Contact Phone Number _____

Parent's E-Mail Address _____

*****WE NEED HELP!*****

____ I would like to be driver/chaperone when needed, for off campus events.

Name Relationship to Student

Best Contact Phone Number