

# Mariachi Los Leones

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to the Mariachi program at Castleberry High School. We are anticipating an exciting year filled with successful performances and highly successful music education. We believe that participation in the Mariachi will prove to be one of the most rewarding educational experiences in high school. Our goal is to provide a positive and highly successful musical experience for each and every student in Mariachi.

In order for the Mariachi to maximize its potential we will follow certain guidelines. It will take all of us working together to build and maintain a quality program. Please take time to review this handbook. You may access it online on our CISD website in our Mariachi Section. Each year there are several updates made with the full intent of improving your student's Mariachi experience.

We have a burning desire to give the Mariachi students here at Castleberry every opportunity to compete and perform at the highest level possible, to make great music together, to have a Mariachi family and to create a place at school where students feel at home. We have high expectations for ourselves and each student in the Mariachi program at Castleberry as well. Our hope is for each of you to determine how you will contribute to the program's highest goals. Look to inspire others by your words and actions and you will be remembered by those who've come in contact with you. Each of you is an extension and representation of the Castleberry High School Mariachi Program so make sure the legacy you create at Castleberry High School is the best! We are here to challenge you and to comfort you, to advise you, enlighten you and even learn from you. Be ready to work, be ready to laugh, and be ready to inspire others with your amazing talents. We look forward to an amazing and productive year!

Sincerely,

**Juan Carlos Sigala**

Mariachi Director  
Castleberry High School  
[sigalaj@castleberryisd.net](mailto:sigalaj@castleberryisd.net)



# Academic Grade

A student's six-week grade is determined among two categories, totaling 100 points.

- ☐ 70%
  - o TEKS (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills Mastery) Found on the TEA Website
  - o Objectives
- ☐ 30%
  - o Concerts
  - o Performances
  - o Testing
  - o Homework (i.e. recorded tests, live tests, written exams)

Academic grade is calculated from successfully achieving the following below:

I.e. demonstrating professional rehearsal decorum, positive attitude, classroom policies etc.

- ☐ Demonstrating Daily Mastery of TEKS
- ☐ Demonstrating Aural or Technical improvement, etc.
- ☐ Submitting Recordings and Tests on time
- ☐ Attending Rehearsals and Sectionals
- ☐ Performances and Concerts

## Tests

Students will be tested on a regular basis in one of the following ways as determined by the director.

- ☐ Live tests performed in class for the director
- ☐ In-class recorded test
- ☐ Students will play live using a recording device during class. Students will have one chance to record their test. ("Do overs" are not allowed)
- ☐ At-home recorded test
- ☐ Students will be required to record tests and submit them by email by the due date indicated at the time of the assignment. (Instructions on how to submit a test will be abundantly available.)

# Attendance

Absences from concert performances will only be excused in the event of a student's illness or unavoidable family emergency. The director must be notified ASAP in writing by filling out a "UIL Activities Directive". It is up to the sole discretion of the director to excuse or not excuse an absence.

\*\*\* Birthday celebrations, quinceañeras, work, transportation problems, non-school related sports/dance etc. will not be excused.

In order for a student to be excused from any extra rehearsal or performance, he/she must fill out a "UIL Activities Directive" available in the Mariachi office. Failure to do this will result in their academic grade being affected and NO EXTRA CREDIT will be accepted to repair the grade. A form signed by the director is required for each and every rehearsal missed to avoid loss of credit. Do not assume that the director "already knows" of your conflict.

## ABSENCES SUBJECT TO BEING EXCUSED:

- 1.) Other School Sanctioned Activities when notified well in advance (A "UIL Activities Directive" form is required)
- 2.) At School Tutoring with Academic Teachers  
(Only if a session cannot be scheduled at any other time – including LUNCH. (A UIL Activities Directive form is required with the tutoring teacher's signature from that classroom teacher on the form.)
- 3.) Student Illness (Written notification from Doctor/School Nurse)

## UNEXCUSED ABSENCES: Check your calendar and plan ahead!

- 1.) Doctor, Dentist, & Orthodontist appointments which are NOT emergencies.
- 2.) D-Hall Follow school rules at all times (including tardy policies) and avoid d-hall assignments.
- 3.) Transportation arrangement problems – either yours or someone else's. Plan ahead.

Communication is vital when requesting an unexcused absence. Students are expected to follow the stated guidelines and procedures according to the attendance policy. Failure to follow such guidelines will render any absence inexcusable and the grade will be affected.

## Tardiness

Unexcused lateness to a rehearsal or performance is unacceptable and will result in the student's grade being affected. On occasion the room may be set up differently making it difficult to know where to sit. Students who fail to follow directors' instructions immediately to prepare for rehearsals will be considered tardy.

# Mariachi Concert Expectations

There will be 2 concerts that are required of all students enrolled in Mariachi. Those are our Winter Christmas concert and our end of Year Spring concert. Students will be required to attend and/or perform in both concerts. Please note that some concerts may be split into 2 dates. Students will be required to attend both. "The Winter and Spring concerts will feature all students, and students will be expected to remain in attendance for the portion they are not performing."

**A message to parents:** Please make every effort to attend and support your children in their performances. Mariachi concerts are not designed to be a "come and go" affair. Students are expected to attend each entire concert as part of their performance requirement. Parents please make arrangements to attend the entire concert. Please do not just attend your child's portion of the concert and then leave. It is very important that parents model proper concert etiquette along with their child. Cell phones, ipads and ipods are to be turned completely off during performances. Even just the light from the device is very distracting during performances.

## Expectations for Mariachi Students

- ☐ Every student is expected to rehearse in a professional and positive manner on a daily basis. Respect for other students and the director is expected at all times. Excessive behavior that disturbs the learning process is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. This includes talking excessively, throwing objects, etc.
- ☐ Students must be seated, ready to rehearse when the tardy bell rings. Students who are not prepared at that time shall be marked tardy.
- ☐ Students are to remain in the Mariachi room until dismissed by the director.
- ☐ Students are expected to maintain their fingernails and keep them short for optimal playing ability. Any synthetic nails MUST be kept short and maintained. Nails that extend past the pad (tip) of the finger are too long and must be trimmed for ALL rehearsals. It is the sole discretion of the director to determine fingernail length and shape as being acceptable for optimal playing condition. Special events will be given consideration for up to 2 days (Friday and Monday).
- ☐ Students are expected to be responsible and meet deadlines as requested by the director. This includes forms that must be turned in, recorded tests, etc.
- ☐ Student cell phones, ipods, ipads etc. must be turned OFF and put away during class unless otherwise instructed by a director to be used for educational purposes.
- ☐ Students are expected to proactively communicate with parents, employers, coaches, teachers, and anyone else necessary about upcoming events in order to promote performances and prevent schedule conflicts.

## Practice Expectations

As the level of expectations increases in high school, so does the expectation to practice. The student is required to adequately prepare his/her music to the level of expectation expected by the teacher. It is up to the discretion of the director to reevaluate a student's placement at any time during the year based on

evidence that the student is not adequately prepared on their instrument for each rehearsal and performance.

# Activity Fee

All Mariachi Students

\$40.00

This fee covers:

- Mariachi t-shirt.
- Mariachi Supplies (i.e., pencils, extra music, strings, picks, valve oil, rosin, shoulder rests)
- Contest Fees such as FWISD Mariachi Extravaganza, Stockshow and Rodeo Invitational ect.

All students will pay an Activity Fee of \$40.00 and will be due at the end of the First Six Weeks.

**Should any financial requirement made by the Castleberry Mariachi create a hardship, please contact us so other options can be explored and discussed. We are more than happy to work with your situation. Our purpose is that we do not want to lose the opportunity for a child to be in Mariachi because he/she cannot afford it. Scholarships and payment plans are available upon request. Please notify the director as soon as possible in the event of a financial hardship.**

# School Instrument Usage Fee

**\$40**

School owned instruments may be available for rental for students who are unable to rent or purchase their own. Any student who uses a school owned instrument must pay the required usage fee. If a student does not rent from the school, he/she must furnish an instrument comparable to CISD instrument specifications, equipped with a name tag.

## Maintaining Your Instrument

It is imperative that the instrument and accessories you use in class be of top condition at every rehearsal and every performance. It is your responsibility to maintain your instrument and instrument accessories throughout the year.

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## Suggestions for Purchasing an Instrument

Purchasing a string instrument can be a very intimidating, yet very rewarding experience. We strongly encourage considering purchasing an instrument from a reputable instrument dealer. Below is a small guide of where to start and what to avoid.

**Do:** Tell your director you want to buy an instrument. We can and want to help!

**Don't:** Surprise your director with that "great deal" for \$100.00 you found on Ebay or Craigslist.

**Do:** Try out several instruments. Most instrument dealers will let you check one out.

**Don't:** Buy that shiny one you see on the shelf. Looks aren't always everything.

# Performance Uniforms

## Mariachi Los Leones (Performing Group)

Every student will be issued a full traje consisting of pieces listed below for boys and girls. Students will need to provide their Botines and black dress socks. No Exceptions. Trajes will be worn for all performances unless otherwise instructed by the director. Trajes and accessories must be worn properly. Hair accessories will be issued and must be worn uniformly.

Trajes must be well kept and hung regularly after each performance in order to maintain the quality of the uniform. Any uniform returned with damage including, tears, burns, or pungent odors will be charged the current replacement cost of the uniform.

Mariachi Los Leones Boys are issued:

- ☐ Jacket, Vest, Pants, Boots, Belt and Moño
- ☐ PANTS MUST BE HEMMED(Not Permanently).  
Do Not Cut!!!. Do Not Use Tape!!!!

Mariachi Los Leones Girls are issued:

- ☐ Jacket, Vest, Skirt, Boots, Belt, Moño, and Hair bows
- ☐ Skirts MUST BE HEMMED(Not Permanently).  
Do Not Cut!!!. Do Not Use Tape!!!!

All Mariachi students provide their own:

- ☐ Botines
- ☐ Black socks
- ☐ Makeup and accessories

\*All Girls: Hair and makeup must be uniform to the group. It is up to the sole discretion of the director regarding final decisions on makeup and hair design.

All Students will return their uniform at the end of the year.

# Castleberry Mariachi

## Acknowledgement of the CHS Way

As a CHS Mariachi, I understand my responsibilities for participating in Castleberry High School's Mariachi program. I also understand the consequences for violating any of the expectations outlined in this handbook.

As a student musician, I, \_\_\_\_\_ pledge to:

- Communicate my rehearsal/performance schedule well in advance to my parents and teachers for drop off and pick.
- Schedule my personal life so that it does not conflict with Mariachi expectations.
- Give my director notice well in advance of any commitments I have that conflict with the Mariachi schedule.
- Discuss issues of concern with my director, student leaders and parents before they become problems.
- Not only maintain academic eligibility but strive for academic excellence.
- Be the best I can be.
- Make a commitment to my Mariachi and directors to continually strive to contribute to the program and exercise responsible musicianship.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

As a parent/guardian, I, \_\_\_\_\_ pledge to:

- Grant permission for my daughter/son to participate in the Mariachi program.
- Stay informed about my daughter/son's Mariachi schedule to minimize conflicts between our family schedule and the music schedule.
- Support my daughter/son's decision to commit to the Mariachi by attending as many concerts, contests and special events as my schedule will permit.
- Work closely with all school personnel to assure an appropriate academic and musical experience for my daughter/son throughout her/his school career.
- Discuss issues of concern with my daughter/son and the director before they become problems.
- Assure that my daughter/son attends all rehearsals, contests, special events and follows all guidelines.
- Affirm that it is the responsibility of the director to determine student placement and performance expectations.
- Work cooperatively with directors, other parents, and school personnel to assure a wholesome and successful music program for the school.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent/Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name



# Fee Payment Methods

Please indicate which fees apply to you:



\$40.00 Activity Fee

\_\_\_\_\_ \$40.00 School Instrument Usage Fee

Please indicate how you intend to meet your financial obligation. (Check any that apply.)

\_\_\_\_\_ I will pay in full.

\_\_\_\_\_ I will pay in full but can't pay until (Date)\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I need to discuss a payment plan with my director.

\_\_\_\_\_ I need a financial waiver request form. (If you qualify for free/reduced lunch, you may qualify for a financial waiver for your fees.)

**Should any financial requirement made by the Castleberry Mariachi create a hardship, please contact us so other options can be explored and discussed. We are more than happy to work with your situation. Our purpose is that we do not want to lose the opportunity for a child to be in Mariachi because he/she cannot afford it. Scholarships and payment plans are available upon request. Please notify the director early.**