



Bobcat Choir Handbook

2024-2025

Dear Choir Families,

Welcome to the Benbrook Bobcat Choir 2024-2025 school year! We are excited to make music with your student this year and we welcome you on the journey.

This year in choir, we will be learning proper vocal technique, music literacy skills, rehearsal and performance etiquette, and more. It is our hope that each student will gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of music that will lay the foundation for a lifetime of the enjoyment of music and singing.

This handbook is designed to familiarize you with the policies, procedures, and expectations of the choir program. It contains all the basic information you will need as we begin our time making music together. It is the responsibility of each choir member to become familiar with the policies stated in this handbook. After reading the handbook, please electronically fill out and sign the linked forms. Your signature acknowledges your receipt and understanding of the policies contained in the handbook, code of conduct, and calendar. and serves as an agreement to abide by its contents.

We are looking forward to getting to know each new student this year, and are thrilled to welcome back our choir alums from previous years. Please feel free to reach out to us with any questions or concerns you may have.

Warmly,

Dr. Emily Sáenz, High School Director
emily.sáenz@fwisd.org
Office: 817-815-7149

Mr. Jacob Brown, Middle School Director
jacob.brown@fwisd.org
Office: 817-815-7168

Required Course Materials:

- Folder (provided)
- Pencil/highlighter (provided)
- Choir Uniform
- 110% good attitude and work ethic

Checking your FWISD email

- 1. Go to: <http://www.fwisd.org/myfwisd>
- 2. Login if not already
- 3. Click on Office 365
- 4. Click on the Outlook icon

Procedures for Students:

- Be in your seat with a folder and pencil when the bell rings. Be familiar with the BMHS tardy policy.
- Electronic devices are not permitted during the instructional period, unless notified by the director, per school policy. All electronics that are seen or heard during the instruction period will be collected.
- Raise your hand before speaking during rehearsals
- Students are expected to be an active part of rehearsal, both mentally and vocally. If you are unable to do this, the director must be notified BEFORE the bell rings. If you are unable to sing due to illness for more than one rehearsal, a doctor's note needs to be provided so the daily grade is not altered.
- No GUM, FOOD or DRINK allowed in the choir room, other than bottled water.

Evaluation:

- Class Participation
- Concert Attendance /Behavior
- Written/Vocal Assessments
- Common Summative Assessments
- Classroom Assignments

Grading Policy:

- Formative- 50% (Class participation, Rehearsal Etiquette, Materials Check)
This will be a combination of class participation, weekly written grades for music theory concepts and sight-reading skills, and small group performances of music learned. Students are expected to sing individually and in small groups.
- Summative-50% (Concerts/Tests, Projects/Performances, Formal Attire Check)
Major grades are counted twice. Major grades may include, but are not limited to: Before or after school rehearsals (as per the choir calendar), dress rehearsals, concerts, and written exams over theory skills learned in class.

CONCERT ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Because this program allows students to receive their fine arts credit/local elective credit for graduation, attendance in class and at required events is mandatory. Students that miss choir class or choir rehearsals and performances will see that their grade is affected. The choir grade make-up policy and late-work policy is in line with the district grading AR. Whenever an absence occurs, students have ONE WEEK from the date of absence to make up that grade. This is MORE than the district AR allows for makeup work. It is the student's responsibility to request a make-up assignment from Dr. Sáenz. Please consult the FWISD Student Handbook for grading guidelines and clarification. If a student misses a mandatory event (concert or rehearsal) for student illness, an email must be sent to the director BEFORE the event. **Unexcused absences will not be eligible for makeup.**

Unexcused absences would include:

- Lack of transportation
- Caring for younger siblings
- Work
- Family vacations
- Appointments (other than student illness)
- Non-BMHS athletic events

Make-Up Policy:

Missed Work Because of Absence: A student who is absent but turns work in by the teacher-designated due date, one week from the date of absence, will have an opportunity to redo or retest, if applicable. The Redo/Retake policy does not apply if a student does not submit work timely.

REDO ASSIGNMENT/RETAKE TEST

- Redo Assignment or Retake Test Board Policy allows a student who receives a failing grade on a test or assignment, except for semester exams, the opportunity to redo the assignment or retake the test. The student or parent must initiate the request according to the following parameters:
- The student and/or parent must request to redo an assignment or retake a test within five days from earlier of the date the assignment or test was returned to the student or entered into the student grading system.
- The student will be provided an opportunity for tutoring or re-teaching prior to retesting. This may occur during class time, before or after school, or at another time agreed upon by the teacher and student.
- A teacher may require the student to complete missed homework, test corrections, or other items as part of the re-teaching process.
- A student must redo the assignment or retake the test within five school days from the earlier of the date the assignment or test was returned to the student or the date the grade was entered into the student grading system.
- A teacher may provide longer than five school days if necessary.
- Assignments offered for redo or retaken tests may be different from the original assignment or test so long as the concepts/content assigned or tested are the same.

- Re-testing or redo assignment guidelines do not apply to grades received due to failure to adhere to the established late work guidelines approved by the principal and disseminated to students.
 - Any retests will be administered on the campus.
 - The grade the student receives on the redone assignment or retaken test will be no higher than a 70.
 - A failed semester exam cannot be retaken.
 - If more than 50% of the students in a class fail to demonstrate mastery on a summative assessment, except a benchmark, a teacher is encouraged to reteach and retest the class. The higher of the two grades will be recorded. A student who passed the original test can elect to retake the test. Reassessments should occur within five school days from the date the test is returned with feedback to the student.
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Goals:

- To cultivate a sense of identity, pride, teamwork, and improved self-image through participation in a successful performing ensemble.
- To recognize, understand, and apply structural elements of melody, harmony, rhythm, and form as a performer and a listener.
- To develop a sustained vocal technique, applicable across many genres of vocal music.
- To improve the use of expressive elements such as dynamics, phrasing, and tempo.
- To develop a sense of fulfillment, responsibility, and pride in quality performance.
- To expand interest and knowledge of repertoire, performances, and artistic achievement from a variety of countries, societies, and cultures.

UIL Concert and Sight-Reading Assessment:

Each year the Benbrook Bobcat Choir participates in the UIL Concert and Sight-Reading Assessment to evaluate the work we are accomplishing as a choir. This performance is our equivalent to the STAAR test. Due to recent changes in the UIL policy, students may perform in the assessment at the discretion of the director, regardless of their academic status. Students must show individual preparation and work ethic to participate in the UIL assessment. Only those whom the Director decides are musically ready will represent the choir in this assessment. If not chosen to participate in the UIL Concert and Sightreading Assessment, students will receive an assignment to complete in class to replace the UIL grade.

Eligibility

In order to participate in certain extra-curricular activities with the choir program (for example the All State Choir process), students must be academically eligible for the six weeks in which the activity occurs. To be eligible, a student must score a 71 or above for all on-level courses on their report card or progress report. If a student

receives a 70 or below in any one class, the student becomes ineligible. The best way to avoid confusion on this topic is for all students to pass all of their classes. Each member of our team is valued and important, we need everyone to be eligible to participate!

Bobcat Choir Code of Conduct:

Members of the Bobcat choir must abide by Fort Worth ISD's Student Code of Conduct for the 2023-2024 school year. Students will be held accountable for the behavior expectations and disciplinary consequences outlined in the Student Code of Conduct. The Student Code of Conduct governs all behavior at school, at school-sponsored and school-related activities, during on-line or other remote instruction, during school-related travel, or while traveling in a vehicle owned or operated by the District.

To read the FWISD Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Consequences, please visit the website below:

<https://www.fwisd.org/codeofconduct>

Uniform information:

****\$75 Due September 1st****

All choir members will have a uniform, which will be required for all performances. Students are responsible for making sure that their uniform looks professional, clean, and wrinkle free for all performances.

Short and Long-sleeved T-shirts: (covered by \$75) The Bobcat Choir short-sleeved t-shirt will be worn at casual gatherings throughout the year such as fundraising events, community service events, school games and activities within those categories. The long-sleeved shirt is for less casual performances or activities.

FORMAL CHOIR UNIFORMS (covered by \$75) are cleaned by the choir department and issued to your student. The uniform is worn at formal concerts and choir contests throughout the year. Most of the uniform is provided, however there are items in the formal uniform that are required for individual purchase. At the end of each school year, part of the \$60 will be used to launder the formal uniforms for the following school year. Here are the only items not covered by the fee:

MEN'S FORMAL UNIFORM

- **PROVIDED:** BLACK DRESS PANTS, BLACK VEST, BLACK JACKET, BLACK BOW TIE, WHITE SHIRT
- **MUST PURCHASE:** BLACK DRESS SHOES, BLACK SOCKS

WOMEN'S FORMAL UNIFORM

- **PROVIDED:** BLACK CHOIR DRESS
- **MUST PURCHASE:** BLACK CLOSED-TOED DRESS SHOES

Private Voice Lessons:

All interested students are encouraged to take private voice lessons. One of the most important factors in the development of a superior choir program is the development of each individual singer. Private lessons should be thought of as an investment in your child's musical education. Your student has the opportunity to study privately with a professional voice teacher here at Benbrook. Lessons are 25 minutes once a week, and are held during your student's class time. If interested, please sign and return the voice lesson form on our website.

Booster Club Organization:

The Benbrook Bobcat Choir has an incredible Choir Booster Club! Organizations such as these are essential to the success and promotion of our choir department. Booster Club membership forms can be found on the website. It is our hope that all choir families will join the Choir Booster Club, as it is essential to our success. We welcome parent involvement of all kinds! Reach out to Dr. Sáenz to find out how to volunteer. Booster Club Meetings occur on the first Monday of every month at 6PM in the choir room.

Metropolitan Opera Live in HD Broadcast:

The Benbrook Bobcat Choir is honored to be a 5 year partner with the Metropolitan Opera's Educational Department. BMHS students receive unparalleled access to the world class operas the Met produces each season from the comfort of our local Cinemark Theatre. Each student ticket costs \$7 which can be paid in cash or electronically. Please see below for Met Opera dates and shows for the 23-24 Season.

Theater: Cinemark at Ridgmar Mall, Fort Worth, TX

10/28 "Grounded" 6PM FREE **BMHS Night at the Opera**

12/17 "Tosca" 10AM FREE School Day Performance

01/29 "Aida" 6PM \$10 per ticket

Letter Jackets

Choral Department Point System 2024-2025

A high school student enrolled in a fine arts course must earn **10 points in a single school year** to letter. To eliminate the need for a system of point transfer and archival record keeping, lettering points **will not carryover from one year to the next**. Each year the student must begin anew in the accumulation of points. Students may receive no more than ONE Major award in all areas combined: academic, music, or athletic. Not one award per area throughout their four years in high school. Minor awards are given if a student has already received a major award previously.

Points will be awarded for the following: MUSIC

- 4 pts – TMEA Region Membership
- 3 pts – TMEA Area Membership
- 3 pts – TMEA All-State Ensemble Membership
- 4 pts – 1st Division on Class I Solo at UIL Region Solo & Ensemble Contest
- 2 pts – 1st Division on Class I Solo at FWISD Solo & Ensemble Contest
- 3 pts – 1st Division on Class I Ensemble at UIL Region Solo & Ensemble Contest 2 pts – FWISD District Ensemble
- 2 pt- Participation in the Musical Production
- 1 pt – 1st Division on Class I Ensemble at FWISD Solo & Ensemble Contest
- 1 pt – Yearlong participation in an additional school ensemble (apart from the parent school ensemble)
- 1 pt – Elected or appointed leadership position 1 pt – Elected or appointed leadership position

Additionally:

- A student must have prepared, rehearsed, attended and performed in required Band, Choir, Mariachi or Orchestra performances.
- A student must have demonstrated good leadership, citizenship, musical preparation and individual commitment as a performing member of their Band, Choir, Mariachi or Orchestra program.
- A student must be recommended for an award by the campus director/teacher and principal.

BOBCAT CHOIR CODE OF CONDUCT

Members of the Bobcat choir must abide by the rules of the **FWISD 2024-2025** Student Code of Conduct.

Please read and review the information found below and sign the acknowledgement form listed below to show your acceptance of the policies within. In this handbook and the attached FWISD code of conduct.

Students in leadership positions (Choir Officers, Section Leaders etc) may have their titles removed if they are found in violation of the Ft. Worth ISD Code of Conduct at the discretion of the Director.