

The Choirs of LD Bell

2013-2014 Guidebook
for Students & Parents

“If you cannot teach me to fly,
teach me to sing.”

J.M. Barrie, *Peter Pan*

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Preface

This Guidebook is designed to foster the success of the LD Bell Choir Department, inform the students and their parents, and address questions and concerns that may arise throughout the school year. Answers to most questions concerning procedures in our department can be found within this book and/or on our choir website at www.ldbellchoir.com.

We also encourage you to use our online management system CHARMS which monitors individual student fees, forms, and other information. A link to this online system can be found on the LD Bell Choir website or you may go directly to www.charmsmusic.com. Please visit this site today to confirm/add/correct your student's information (incoming students will be able to access their accounts by the first week of school).

Use the information below to log-in to the CHARMS system:

Student/Parent Log-In: ldbellhschoir

Password: Your Student's HEBISD ID Number*

*this password can be changed once you have logged in to your account.

The LD Bell Choir Department has established a strong tradition of excellence both on our campus, in our local community, across the state and nation. In an effort to provide students with every educational opportunity possible we maintain a very active choral program with many activities. We welcome you as part of our choir family and look forward to your involvement with the choir. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions or concerns that may arise throughout the year.

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Calendar of Events

A Calendar of Events has been included with this guidebook and is also available online at www.charmsoffice.com. Please review it for any potential conflicts and contact the choir office immediately if you have any questions or concerns. Any updates or changes to the calendar will be sent out via email and classroom notifications. All events will be regularly announced in class.

Program Membership

Participation in the LD Bell Choir Program is open to all students, regardless of musical ability or experience. Each student desiring to participate in choral program is evaluated for placement in the appropriate choral ensemble based upon demonstrated work ethic and present abilities. Auditions occur at the end of each school year to assist in tracking the student's musical development and to ensure appropriate ensemble placement. As members of the LD Bell Choir Program, students are expected to maintain high-levels of academic excellence, fully commit themselves to the pursuit of musical excellence, and maintain a mutual respect, appreciation and concern for their fellow choir members.

At Bell High School, it is considered that participation in a music ensemble is a privilege not a right. In order to protect the integrity of the LD Bell Choir Program and to create a positive learning environment for all students, consistent in class discipline problems, repeated placement in AEP, discipline referrals for fighting and other negative behaviors, will result in the loss of privileges within the LD Bell Choir Program. Other consequences for such behavior could include but are not limited to ensemble reassignment, suspension from

a performance or other choral activities, loss of private instruction scholarships and in extreme situations, administrative removal from the choral program.

Classroom Expectations

- Enter class in a calm and peaceful manner.
- Pick up your choir folder and pencil and be in your assigned seat before the tardy bell rings.
- Do not consume food, drink (except bottled water), or gum during rehearsal.
- Refrain from talking during rehearsal. Raise your hand to contribute or ask a question.
- Treat your peers, director, and your school with respect and always act with integrity.
- Remain actively engaged in rehearsal until dismissed by the director.
- Gum, Etc.: Your instrument (your voice) cannot function its best with gum or candy in your mouth.

Classroom Management Policy

1. Warning-student/teacher conference
2. Detention-parent/teacher phone conference
3. Referral to Office

*Any physical/verbal violence, major infraction of BHS or HEB ISD Policy, or refusal to cooperate in discipline procedures will result in an immediate referral to the office.

Rehearsal Expectations

To ensure the success of each ensemble, it is necessary for each member to positively contribute to each rehearsal. Members of the LD Bell Choir Department will be expected to demonstrate the following traits/skills during each rehearsal:

Positive Attitude: Come to the rehearsals knowing that our hard work does pay off. Set aside distractions and commit to accomplishing the musical goals set for the day's rehearsal. Be willing to try whatever is asked of you with an open mind and agreeable disposition.

Having a Pencil in Hand: Having your music and a pencil in your hands each day is absolutely necessary! Students will be expected to mark their music diligently and keep track of performance instructions in their scores.

Good Posture: During rehearsal, each chorister is responsible for displaying appropriate performance posture. Through improved body alignment, the singer is able to produce their best tone quality and lends a more professional appearance to the ensemble. With consistent practice, good posture will become a subconscious routine.

Concentration: Good choirs rehearse efficiently. To accomplish this goal, students must commit themselves to thinking about the rehearsal, and focus on the task at hand. When not engaged in performance, students should be aware of instructions given to other sections, be ready to sing when it is their turn, and positively contribute to their ensembles rehearsal. 100% attention, 100% effort!

Respect: A choir is a team. Displaying respect for your fellow choir members and your director is crucial to the development of this team. Listen when someone is talking. Treat others as you would like to be treated. Students who display proper rehearsal etiquette and meet the class performance expectations listed above will earn a daily skills assessment grade of 100. Points will be deducted from the weekly rehearsal grade each time a student does not demonstrate these skills.

L.D. BELL CHORAL TRADITION: It is important for an LD Bell Choir member to understand and appreciate the successful history of our choir program. This can be demonstrated through the display of proper attitude, consistent attendance, effective preparation, respect for others and an unrelenting pursuit of excellence. Each student should strive to maintain this tradition of excellence on a daily basis.

Choir Fee & Financial Information

A mandatory fee of \$40 must be paid by all students in the choral program. This fee will cover all recurring yearly fees (uniform maintenance, choir shirt, folder, pencil & music). Information concerning other possible expenses can be found later in this handbook. Failure to pay fees associated with participation in the LD Bell Choir Program can result in limited participation in special events and the student being placed on the HEB ISD fine list. It is our intention that finances should never be a barrier to a student's participation in the department; however, if no communication is made no assistance can be offered.

Fundraising Opportunities

All students will have the opportunity to participate in the choir fundraisers. Proceeds from these fundraisers go into either your trip account or the choir fund. **IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO TURN IN MONEY AND PRODUCT RETURNS ON TIME.** If you choose to participate in fund-raisers, you will be held financially accountable. All students receiving financial assistance are expected to participate in fundraising events.

Use of the BHS Choir Room and Fine Arts Facilities/Equipment

- Students may not eat, drink, or chew gum while in the N Hall, P Hall or the Choir Room.
- No horseplay in the hallways, auditorium, or choir room.
- Students are not allowed in the auditorium without teacher supervision.
- The directors' offices are NOT for student use. Students are not to borrow items, use the computers, sit at the desks or access materials without permission.
- Always ask permission before making use of the practice rooms and practice stereos and make sure that all equipment is returned to the condition in which you found it.
- Pianos are available for student use in the practice rooms with director permission. These instruments cost thousands of dollars and are quite expensive to maintain. Treat them with care.
- Phones may be used only with the permission of the directors

Choir Folders

Students will be responsible for maintaining a neat and organized music folder which will be checked on a regular basis for necessary materials and condition. Loss or damage occurring to assigned folders and materials will be the financial responsibility of the student.

The following items are expected to be available in each student's Choir Folder at all times:

- All music for the current concert season
- All classroom handouts
- Any sight-reading materials and handouts distributed during class.
- At least (1) Pencil & Highlighter (opt.)

Music

Throughout the year you will be issued music that belongs to the BHS choir department. Each piece of music will be checked out to students as would a library book. Just as you're expected to return textbooks to the school, we expect you to return each piece of music to the choir library. To avoid music fines, please return the music in good condition, when directed.

Participation & Attendance Policy

As students become more involved in academic and extracurricular activities, the ability to balance and organize their calendars becomes increasingly important. As a member of this organization, students will be expected to perform in class, at concerts, and attend occasional extra rehearsals and programs as scheduled by the directors. Students are given ample notice of scheduled events and are expected to arrive on time and appropriately uniformed for each event. It is the responsibility of the student to inform parents, coaches, sponsors, and other teachers of their activities and potential conflicts between program events. While great effort is made to coordinate program schedules, occasional conflicts do occur that cannot be avoided. It is only through communication that conflicts and confusion can be resolved. Never assume that an absence will be excused or that it is "OK" to simply not show up. If there is ever a question or concern about attendance, please contact the choir office as soon as possible so that we can discuss the best possible solution for the situation.

Rehearsal/Concert Attendance Policies

Because student performance and attendance is included as part of state mandated curriculum for this course, concerts and related rehearsals (see department calendar) are considered curricular events and thus, attendance is REQUIRED.

Each rehearsal and performance will be counted as an individual assessment. Unexcused absences (addressed below) or tardiness to rehearsals and concerts will result in a lowered performance grade. Points may also be deducted if a student arrives out of uniform or without appropriate materials for rehearsal.

Should any schedule changes be necessary, parents and students will be notified as soon as possible. Any conflicts that occur as a result of an emergency change in schedule will be addressed on an individual basis.

Absences

Excused absences from required program events include extreme personal illness (accompanied by absence from the regular school day), death in the family, family emergency, or another conflicting school sponsored activities that has cleared with the director or administrator prior to the event.

For an absence to be considered "excused," students must provide a note from either their doctor or parent upon returning to school explaining their absence. The presence of a note does not guarantee an "excuse" will be granted. In the case of an emergency, please notify the director that the student will be absent as soon as possible.

Unexcused absences include, but are not limited to: work, homework or private tutoring, a lack of transportation, baby-sitting, or any other conflicting events (gymnastics, softball, church, etc.) not sponsored by HEB I.S.D.

Late to Class Policy

Choir members are expected to arrive on time to each class, rehearsal, and concert. Students arriving after the beginning of a class or rehearsal are expected to enter quietly and join the rehearsal in progress. Consequences for tardies will be administered according to BHS discipline policy.

Eligibility

A commitment to academic excellence in all areas of education is the desire of both our school and this choral program. Assistance is available to all those who seek help. If a choir student desires help, but doesn't know where to go or what to do, please do not be afraid to ask us. We are here to help you and are prepared to go to great lengths to ensure each student experiences success. Communication is the key! Success for one is a success for us all.

To be eligible for participation in ANY extra-curricular activities, students must abide by the standards outlined by the State of Texas.

Events participation governed by UIL eligibility requirements:	Required events not subject to UIL eligibility rules:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UIL Contest • TMEA/Region V events (9-10 Honor Choir/Region Choir) • HEB ISD Solo Contest • Off-campus trips and concerts • Any concert to which admission is charged (Showtime!) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly scheduled rehearsals & sectionals • In class performance and rehearsals • All concerts to which admission is not charged

Eligibility is a major consideration when students audition for membership in varsity ensembles. Varsity choir members who are consistently ineligible risk being reassigned to a less demanding ensemble, enabling them to focus more of their time on academic studies

Grading Policy

Students will be assessed in accordance with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for High School Fine Arts and the LD Bell Choir Department Goals outlined in this handbook. Student grades will be calculated using the following model established by HEB ISD:

60% Ensemble Skills & Daily Assessments

- Written music theory assessments
- Material assessments (frequent choir music, folder, and pencil checks)
- Aural skills assessments (interval drills, etc)
- Rhythmic and melodic dictation
- Daily sight-reading exercises/assessments
- Musical performance assessments
- Daily rehearsal contributions - The student is 100% responsible for convincing the director that his/her participation is both positive and productive. This is observed through the student's contributions (material preparation, focus, effort, etc.) to rehearsal and interactions with others.

40% Major Performances & Assessments*

- Required choir concerts - Live performances are the best methods of evaluation in which the student can demonstrate knowledge of vocal training, learned music literature, and learned performance skills. Students will be also be assessed in accordance with their attendance, punctuality and performance and etiquette during major performances and rehearsals.
- Musical performance assessments - Students will perform selections of music from their concert repertoire as individuals and/or small groups.
- Sight-reading assessments - Students will demonstrate these skills as individuals and/or in small groups
- Written theory and aural skills assessments

Note: Because concert performance and attendance is an integral part of the state curriculum for fine arts, participation is mandatory. Any student missing a required concert, rehearsal, or event without being excused by the administration or director prior to the event, will receive a zero (0) for that particular assessment. Opportunities to recover credit are outlined below.

Makeup-Work

Make-work will be provided to students in keeping HEB ISD policy. It is the responsibility of the student to ask about any missed assignments when they return and discuss with the teacher the appropriate timeline for the work's completion. Any written/aural skills assessments or assignments missed because of an absence must be made up within (5) school days. Assessments not completed within this period will result in a zero. Performance assessments (singing quizzes) will be made up either before or after school. Students with unexcused absences from concerts, class, rehearsals, or other required activities will be given the opportunity to complete an alternate assignment, however the highest grade the student can receive is a 70. Make-up work will not be discussed during rehearsal.

Make-up Assignments for Excused Absences

For Absences from Rehearsals / Dress Rehearsals (Choose One Assignment)

1. Individual Rehearsal:

As the directors will not be available to lead make-up rehearsals with individual students, the student will be required to rehearse individually in one of the choir room practice rooms for forty-five minutes during lunch, before or after school. A director must be present in the choir room and the student should make the director aware of when the rehearsal is starting and ending. Students should complete an "Individual Rehearsal Report" available in the choir room and turn it in to the director.

2. Program Notes

Choose a piece your choir is currently performing and complete typed program notes using the guide found in the choir room. You must document at least three sources for your research.

For Absences from Performances (EXCUSED)

1. Live Performance Assessment & Review

Students must make an appointment to sing all required music for the directors after-school within a week of the missed performance to recover the performance portion of the grade AND students must attend an approved alternate concert and complete a "Performance Critique and Analysis" found in the choir room.

2. Composer Project

The student may compose a five paged, double-spaced, and typed research paper over a composer of the music he/she is currently studying in class. The student must get the composer approved by the director first. Three sources must be cited in a typewritten bibliography. One source MUST be a non-Internet source.

Extra Credit Opportunities

The choir directors of LD Bell would like to encourage students to attend other performances. As an incentive for expanding their musical experiences, a student will have the opportunity to replace any daily grade by completing the following:

1. Attend a school or local performance (approved by the directors)
2. Collect the program or ticket stub (with date listed) and
3. Complete a "Performance Critique and Analysis" (forms can be found in the choir room).

Uniforms

Uniforms contribute greatly to the confidence, performance, and appearance of our choirs. They foster unity within the choral ensemble and provide our ensembles with a polished and professional appearance. For this

reason, all members of the BHS Choir Department will be expected to adhere to the following uniform requirements. Uniform requirements vary by choir and should be read carefully. No exceptions will be made when discussing basic uniform components.

All students will be issued the following uniform pieces by the school at the beginning of the school year: In addition, all men will need to purchase a plain white tuxedo shirt. Orders for these shirts will be placed by the Booster Club through a local formal wear company during the first weeks of school. The cost will be approximately \$25.00.

Boys	Girls
Tuxedo Jacket Tuxedo Long Black Tie	Choir Dress: Black (A Cappella) or Blue (JV Women)
Tuxedo Pants Tuxedo Vest	

The LD Bell Choir WOMEN MUST adhere to the following guidelines for all concert performances:

1. Ladies wearing BLACK dresses must wear BLACK dress shoes*.
2. Ladies wearing NAVY BLUE dresses must wear either NAVY or BLACK dress shoes*.
3. Watches/bracelets are not allowed in performances as this can attract light and will take away from the uniformity of the group. Necklaces of any kind are not allowed unless provided by the choir department. Small studs or loop earrings & simple rings in keeping with the director's wishes are permitted.
4. All hair must be securely fastened out of the face. Headbands, barrettes, ponytails, half ponytails, up "dos" and clips are all acceptable as long as they match the student's natural hair color or dress. It is not acceptable for hair to be down or simply tucked behind the ears.

****Important note about footwear and shoes selection:** In addition to adhering to the color guidelines listed above, all dress shoes should have a closed toe with a secure heel. Absolutely NO flip-flops, tennis shoes, backless slides may be worn for performances. Dressy, solid color, heels, flats, pumps, etc. are all acceptable as long as they meet the guidelines listed above.

The LD Bell Choir MEN MUST adhere to the following guidelines for all concert performances:

1. Wear black socks and solid black dress shoes (no tennis shoes).
2. All facial hair must be neatly trimmed and maintained in accordance with HEB ISD Code of Conduct.
3. During performances, any loose hair must be secured neatly away from the student's face. Items used to secure the student's hair should be subtle and match either the student's uniform or hair color.
4. Watches/bracelets are not allowed in performances as this can attract light and will take away from the uniformity of the group. Earrings & other jewelry should be small, not draw attention to the individual, and in keeping with the director's vision for the group's appearance.

Students who do not comply with the required grooming regulations may see a reduction in their assessment grade for their lack of preparation and failing to appear in uniform. Students in serious breach of uniform guidelines may not be allowed to perform. Uniform infractions will be considered by the director on a individual basis.

Note: All uniforms parts will need to be dry-cleaned throughout the year to keep them in good condition. Hanging them up after each performance will extend the life of each cleaning and help preserve the uniform for future use. Any uniform needing to be altered to more accurately fit the students should be done in keeping with the LD Bell Choir Department guidelines. At not time during the alteration process should fabric be cut or damaged. Any changes to the uniform must be temporary and easily corrected. Damages occurring from the alteration of a uniform item will be the responsibility of the student.

Uniform Care and Replacement Fees

Prior to returning them to the choir department, students will need to have their uniforms professionally dry-cleaned. The dry-cleaned uniforms must be returned in the cleaning bag with the student's name and receipt attached.

All uniforms are due no later than 4:00 PM on Wednesday, April 30th.

It is the student's responsibility to see that the provided uniform stays in excellent condition. If the uniform is damaged beyond repair or is lost while checked out to the student, the student then becomes responsible for the entire cost of the damaged item(s). Any student having not returned their uniform by the deadline will be turned in to the office and added to the campus' "Year-End Fine List." Seniors on this list will not receive their diploma until their uniform and all fees have been paid. Juniors and sophomores will not be permitted to register for classes.

Uniform Part	Replacement Fee	
Choir Shirt	\$10 (\$12 for sizes > XL)	
Women's Formal Dresses	\$90.00	
Tux Jacket	\$65.00	Replacement Fee for Entire Uniform: \$135.00
Tux Pants	\$40.00	
Tie	\$10.00	
Vest	\$20.00	

Student Leadership

The development of leadership in students is a primary goal of the department. Officers are elected and/or appointed by the director to serve as student leaders for the Choral Department. Student leadership positions include: President, Vice-President, Student Director(s), Student Librarians (2), Social Chair, & Public Relations Chair.

Section leaders and classroom representatives will be elected/appointed in each choir to assist in leading the section musically during class and serve on our leadership team. A student may be removed from office by the director at any time as the result of unsatisfactory behavior or poor representation of the choral department.

Student Travel

The Bell High School Choir Department will occasionally engage in overnight travel for festivals and performances. Details concerning upcoming trips will be discussed early in each school year. Members of A Cappella & Bell System are expected to travel and participate. We need our entire team to be successful. All other members of the department are strongly encouraged to participate in these opportunities. The following guidelines will be observed for any and all travel off campus (local, national, or international):

- When traveling with the Bell Choir Department you are serving as a representative to the public of our choir, school, and district. Students will be expected to behave in a way that brings honor to our choir, school, and district.
- Payment schedules will be finalized early in the year. Payment deadlines are final and must be adhered to so that deadlines established by travel agencies, bus companies, etc. can be met. In almost all cases, trip payments are non-refundable as this money goes directly to tour companies, hotels, busses, etc. Student will be given ample fundraising opportunities to significantly reduce or eliminate parent's out-of-pocket costs.
- Consistent discipline problems in school (including multiple assignments to in-school suspension) may result in the loss of trip privileges. Any flagrant offense of school policy involving illegal substances, violence, or weapons will result in the loss of travel privileges.

Student Awards

There are many opportunities for students to earn group and individual awards in the choral department. Through their participation in LD Bell Choir Department choir students can earn Bell HS Letter Jackets. Customization of letter jackets is the financial responsibility of the student. HEB ISD only provides the student with the basic jacket and appropriate insignia. Jackets will be ordered each fall for those students that qualify. A detailed listing of how to earn a Choir Letter Jacket is outlined below.

Choir Letter Jacket Award Criterion:

- Students must actively participate as a member of the choral program for two trimesters (one full year) and demonstrated proper participation, attendance, and preparation for performances as required by the high school choral staff.
- The student has participated in all rehearsals, sectionals, UIL competitions, concert events and festivals as a vocalist in a performing ensemble unless excused by the high school choral staff.
- Letter jackets will be ordered the fall after the completion of the student's 1st year in choir.
- Students receiving letter jackets should indicate their intent to remain in the choral program through their senior year.

The Choirs of the LD Bell

At LD Bell High School, it is our belief that all students possess the ability to understand, perform, and appreciate the art known as choral music. For this reason, we offer a variety of opportunities in which our students are challenged and encouraged in their development as people and musicians. Criteria for placement include academic eligibility, musicianship, sight-reading, vocal quality, citizenship, and commitment to the BHS choir program. The descriptions below detail membership requirements and provide a brief summary of each ensemble's expectations and goals for the school year.

A Cappella - Established in 1956 as the premier choral ensemble of LD Bell High School, this elite mixed choir has a long tradition of excellence. Membership in this ensemble is limited to students in grades 11-12 and is granted only after a rigorous audition process based on musical performance, sight-reading ability, academic eligibility and citizenship. A Cappella performs at all BHS choir concerts, UIL contest, baccalaureate, and for other major events throughout the year. From this ensemble comes the Varsity Women's and Varsity Men's Choirs. These choirs perform at all BHS concerts, UIL Contest, and festival competitions. Auditions for membership are held at the end of the first trimester and at the conclusion of each school year.

JV Mixed - Auditioned at the end of the first trimester, this ensemble consists of both men and women in grades 10-12. Members will focus on the advancement of choral musicianship skills, improved vocal technique, and advanced sight-reading skills. Students in this ensemble are expected to be leaders both in and outside of the choral rehearsal, maintaining high levels of academic excellence and serve as outstanding examples of student leadership. Members of this ensemble perform both as a mixed ensemble and separately as the JV Women's and with the Varsity Men's Choirs. The JV Mixed Choir performs at all BHS choir concerts, for our feeder JH Campuses, as well as UIL and festival competitions.

Bel Canto - The treble ensemble is a course that focuses on the development of advanced choral musicianship skills, improved vocal technique, and superior sight-reading skills. Membership requirements for this ensemble require at least one year of experience in the BHS Choir Department. Students in this ensemble are expected to be leaders both in and outside of the choral rehearsal, maintaining high levels of academic excellence and serve as outstanding examples of student leadership.

JV Men - This is a non-auditioned, men's choir for students in grades 10-12. This year long course will work focus on the development of choral musicianship skills, improved vocal technique, and sight-reading skills necessary for success at the high school level. Members of this ensemble will frequently combine with the JV Women's Choir and with the Varsity Men's Choir for performances at BHS Concerts, UIL Contest, and at festival competitions.

Choralier Women - This is a non-auditioned, developmental treble choir for students in grades 10. This year long course will work focus on the development of choral musicianship skills, improved vocal technique, and sight-reading skills necessary for success at the high school level. Students in this ensemble are expected to maintain high levels of academic excellence and serve as outstanding examples of student leadership. Members of this ensemble will frequently combine with the JV Women's Choir for both concert and contest performances. Members of this ensemble will perform at all BHS Concerts, UIL Contest, and at festival competitions.

The Bell System - This ensemble is an auditioned group of students in grades 10-12 that specializes in popular music performances. This mixed show choir ensemble serves as the choral department's liaison to the community performing at various community events as well as all BHS choir concerts, festival contests and has its own spring production, entitled "Showtime!" As a member of this ensemble, students will develop crucial sight-singing skills and their ability to enliven a musical performance through movement. Students in The Bell System are also required to be enrolled in a major ensemble in order to participate in this select group.

** Criteria for placement include academic eligibility, musicianship, sight-reading, vocal quality, citizenship, and commitment to the BHS choir program. The number of positions available will be determined by the director prior to audition and will be filled at their discretion.

Voice Lessons

Through the HEB ISD Visual & Performing Arts Department we are proud to offer quality vocal instructors to teach voice lessons on our campus at a discounted rate both during class time and after school. We bring only degreed professionals on our campus to teach voice. The function of the voice teacher is important to the developing singer and can be very positive for the student's development or detrimental when an inappropriate teacher is employed. General information about this opportunity can be found below. More detailed information concerning lessons will be presented by the directors and voice teachers during the opening weeks of school. Please contact the office or visit our website at anytime for enrollment forms and/or information. Information concerning financial aid will be available at the start of the school year.

Purpose - Although students will be preparing music for various events, the purpose and focus of the private lessons is not to learn music, but on teaching proper vocal technique and training students to be stronger, more agile singers using various exercises and vocalizes. Students will be expected to learn the notes and rhythms outside of their lessons in their practice time. Tools such as practice and instruction CDs can be made to assist students in learning the music on their own. When students dedicate themselves to effective preparation, it allows the voice instructor to spend more time working on technique and performance related issues rather than pitches and rhythms. This creates an environment of respect and enables the students to progress at an accelerated rate and apply newly acquired skills to music currently being studied.

Voice Instructors - In addition to working with the students who are preparing for the All-State Choir audition process, instructors also help students prepare for other events such as the HEB ISD Solo and Ensemble Contest, collegiate music auditions (for seniors) and other performance opportunities that occur throughout the school year. Students enrolled in private voice study will also be featured in voice recitals hosted by LD Bell Choir Department and their private studio instructors.

Scheduling - For the student's convenience, voice lessons are offered as half-hour lessons once a week during his/her scheduled choir period. Lessons will also be offered before and after school. Lessons during the student's class period will be assigned on a first- come, first- served basis.

Other benefits for taking private voice lessons...

- Provides students with one-on-one attention, catering to their individual needs and talents
- Expansion of self-confidence and increased commitment to personal development
- Promotion of responsibility and self-discipline
- Creation of a well-rounded musical experience and performance opportunities within a variety of styles and settings.
- Creation of confident and capable solo singers who contribute to the creation of a strong, musically advanced choir.

Financial Information - The cost of private voice lessons is \$18.00 per half-hour lesson. The approximate monthly rate for lessons is \$72 (four lessons per month). Full monthly payments are due in advance on the first of each month. Monthly rates may vary depending on the actual length of the term and the number of lessons taken. Studio and lesson cancellation policies will be detail by the individual instructors prior to beginning instruction. Recital fees are in addition to the monthly rate for private instruction. It is very important that all students enrolled in private lessons be timely with all payments. Failure to do so will result in lessons being withheld until outstanding payments are made or removal from the studio.

If there is a financial need, there is some financial aid available, but it is limited. Students who are in need of financial aid will be considered on a first-come, first-served basis (in the order that they apply). Applications for financial aid must be picked up from Mrs. Antinone in the choir office.

NOTE: Members of Bell System and A Cappella are highly encouraged to study voice privately as a part of their commitment to being in a varsity group.

Terms & Conditions for Financial Aid

- Students receiving financial aid are expected to participate in all choir fundraisers.
- Need based financial assistance for voice lessons is available on a first come first served basis.
- All students receiving financial aid are expected to fully participate in all concerts, recitals and contests sponsored by the LD Bell Choir Department. This includes but is not limited to: Texas All-State Auditions, Honor Choir Clinic and Concerts, HEB ISD Solo and Ensemble Contest, and all voice studio recitals.
- If the student fails to fulfill his/her financial obligation each month, financial aid may be revoked and the student will be responsible for the full amount.

**Failing to meet these qualifications may result in the reduction or elimination of a student's financial aid award.

Additional Student Opportunities

Throughout the year, students will be provided the opportunity to compete for special honors and membership in select choral groups. These events require dedication and a commitment to hard work. Competition and challenges encourage growth both as a singer and an individual. These events are valuable learning tools for all of our students. All students wishing to participate in these events, must meet UIL Eligibility Guidelines.

9-10 Honor Choir Auditions* - All interested students will be responsible for learning three pieces which will be performed before judges and scored based on voice quality and musical preparation. Sectionals will be offered to assist with preparation for this competition. The competition is limited to students in grades 9 and 10. Results will be delivered to students on the following school day. Students selected to the Honor Choir will be involved in a clinic and concert. More information is on the BHS Choir calendar.

All-State Choir Auditions* - All students are encouraged to participate in the Texas Music Educators Association All-State Choir Auditions. These solo auditions are highly competitive and require intensive practice on the part of the student. Sectionals and time with the directors/voice teachers may be scheduled to assist with preparation for these events. In our region there are four auditions that lead to selection for the Texas All-State Choir. Selection to each choir is determined by the overall score earned during the audition, based upon vocal quality, musicianship and overall preparation. Sight-reading ability becomes a factor beginning round three. Choir directors and voice teachers (for those studying privately) are available to assist with preparation in this process.

HEB ISD Solo & Ensemble Competition* - Student will have the opportunity to perform a solo from a prescribed set of music for competition. Students are evaluated based on their musical preparation and the authenticity of their performance. Students wishing to participate are required to sing their prepared piece must participate in a preparatory recital a week prior to the actual contest. More detailed information will be distributed and posted online as each event approaches. Directors will be available by appointment to assist those students not currently enrolled in voice lessons.

*Student's Ensemble Fee is included in the \$40 choir fee. Student's will be responsible for all entry/accompanist fees for SOLO entries. Fees are non-refundable. Students unable to provide for their entry fee should contact the director as soon as possible to discuss alternative payment arrangements.

Note: A Cappella Choir members are required to compete in either the All-State auditions or the HEB ISD Solo & Ensemble Contest.

The Bell System

Policies and Procedures

The Bell System is a group of high school singers who serve as the L.D. Bell High School Choral Program liaison with the community and the Hurst-Euless-Bedford school district. Members of Bell System must adhere to the following policies in addition to the rest of the handbook. Being a member of Bell System is an honor and a privilege. Additional requirements are necessary for the success of the group. The Bell System Handbook is an additional document. This is handed out to all Bell System members.