

PERFORMING ORGANIZATIONS

Bella Voce: A non-varsity women's choir focusing on voice building, enhancement of individual music skills, and performance. This group is comprised of 9th-12th grade women. This choir meets 2nd period (9:40-10:30). They will participate at UIL Concert and Sight Reading Evaluation as a non-varsity treble choir. Rehearsals outside of class may occur when necessary.

Dominante: A men's choir focusing on voice building, enhancement of individual music skills, and performance. This group is comprised of 9th-12th grade men. This class meets 3rd period (10:35-11:25). They will combine with the Chorale men for UIL Concert and Sight Reading Evaluation as a varsity men's choir. Rehearsals with the Chorale men outside of class will be necessary since they meet in different class periods. These rehearsals will be scheduled on Monday evenings.

Bel Canto: A varsity women's choir focusing on performance. This group is comprised of 10th-12th grade women. This choir meets 7th period (2:15-3:05). They will combine with the Chorale women for UIL Concert and Sight Reading Evaluation as a varsity women's choir. Rehearsals with the Chorale women outside of class will be necessary since they meet in different class periods. These rehearsals will be scheduled on Monday evenings.

Broncho Legacy: Broncho Legacy is a select, auditioned ensemble comprised of students who are also members of Chorale. This group meets 4th period (11:30-12:20). Additionally, Broncho Legacy members serve as ambassadors for Odessa High as well as representatives of the OHS choir department.

Chorale: Chorale is a varsity level, auditioned mixed choir. It serves as the foundational choir of the entire OHS Choral Department. This choir focuses on outstanding corporate and individual music performance and individual musicianship. This group meets 6th period (1:20-2:10). Members are required to participate in the Region process and must maintain eligibility throughout the year. They will participate as a varsity mixed choir at UIL Concert and Sight Reading Evaluation. This group meets most Monday nights throughout the year.

MATERIALS

Choral Music and Folder – All students are issued a choir folder in which to store music. It is expected that each choir member will have his/her folder and appropriate materials in hand at every rehearsal. Failure to do so will be reflected in daily grades. Please do not borrow folders and/or music from another student. Lost, damaged, or defaced items must be reimbursed to the department per cost of the item(s).

Pencil – Each folder will be supplied with one pencil. Students should sharpen this pencil at the beginning of class if necessary. Pens are not acceptable.

GRADING SYSTEM

As a member of an OHS choir, grades will be earned based on personal accountability. Students who work hard and are committed on a daily basis will be successful! A choir member's six weeks grade will be an average of the following:

- I. ***Participation (Major Grade - 50%) – Students must be present at daily rehearsals to receive participation credit. Please see the section on attendance for more information.***
 - The student will be on task and focused during all rehearsals.
 - The student will have folder, music, pencils, and supplies.
 - The student will be prepared to sing his/her part successfully.
 - The student will mark music and take notes as needed.
 - The student must be present at a daily rehearsal to receive participation credit.
- II. ***Skills & Performance (Minor Grade - 45%) – Students will receive a grade for each performance during a grading period. Students will also be expected to improve individual music skills.***
 - Performances will be counted as an exam grade. The number of performances will be determined by the performance calendar
 - If no public performance occurs during a grading period, the performing grade will be based upon informal classroom performances determined by the director.
 - The student will be evaluated through recorded singing exams, individual singing exams, sight reading exams, and written exams.
 - The students will be evaluated on improvement of ensemble skills during daily rehearsals.
- III. ***Student Planner Grades (5%) – Each student must maintain a planner as a student at OHS. This portion of the grade will align with OHS guidelines for maintaining a planner.***

Parents are encouraged to check their student's progress and attendance online via the **Texas Connect Portal**. Setup is required through the registrar in the student's Corral office.

REHEARSAL/CONCERT ATTENDANCE

Punctual attendance is expected at all required rehearsals and performances. Participation in rehearsals and performances outside of class time is part of the curriculum of the Odessa High Choir Department; therefore, attendance at scheduled events is mandatory and the participation or lack thereof will be reflected in the student's grade. Concerts are NOT considered extra-curricular activities by the University Interscholastic League (UIL) or ECISD. We are a co-curricular class for which instructional standards (TEKS) are mandated by TEA and must be met. Please carefully read and adhere to the guidelines below:

Punctual attendance is required at all rehearsals and concerts. An unexcused absence will result in a zero which will significantly impact a student's average for the grading period and may result in a student's dismissal from his/her respective ensemble. If a student misses a rehearsal or concert due to a last-minute problem, their director should be contacted as soon as possible, preferably that same day. All communication regarding unanticipated absences from rehearsals or concerts must be made with the director within 24 hours. If a student knows prior to the rehearsal or concert that he/she will be tardy or absent due to an unavoidable conflict, an ABSENCE REQUEST FORM must be submitted which can be found on the choir website and on Google Classroom.

Excused absences for concerts and rehearsals outside of class time will be considered on an individual basis at the discretion of the directors. Conflicts with other OHS activities scheduled at the same time should be brought to the attention of their director and we will contact the OHS teacher, director, or coach in charge to seek an excused absence from the conflicting activity. These are handled on a case-by-case basis. UIL activities and competitions, according to school district policy, receive top priority. Students are not permitted to miss UIL activities and competitions/concerts of one organization for rehearsals, practices, or recreational activities (such as banquets) of another organization. It is the responsibility of the student to communicate a conflict ahead of time to their director so that we may help resolve a conflict if possible. Students must make arrangements to make up a missed rehearsal or concert in a timely manner. Failure to do so will result in a zero. ***VERY IMPORTANT: Since ample advance notice is given for concerts and extra rehearsals, a job will not be considered as an excused absence. Also, Driver's Education will not be considered as an excused absence for concert attendance.***

CONCERT ETIQUETTE

When attending OHS Choir concerts, all audience members are encouraged to follow some well-established standards for formal concert behavior.

- Refrain from talking during the performance.
- Remain seated for the entire concert if at all possible. If it is absolutely necessary to do so, move only between selections and exit at the nearest door.
- Wait to re-enter the auditorium until the performing group is finished.
- Applause is the only appropriate form of expressing appreciation. A good rule of thumb is to wait until the conductor lowers his or her hands to indicate the completion of the selection or work.
- Please eliminate all disruptions by removing small children who are crying or speaking loudly and refraining from using cell phones (even texting) during the performance.

ELIGIBILITY

All members of an OHS choir are expected to maintain academic eligibility throughout the entire school year. The majority of our activities require our students to be eligible; furthermore, a student's academic status is reflection of the entire program. Emphasis and attention will be given to academics. **Students who do not consistently maintain academic eligibility may be removed from their respective ensemble at the discretion of the director.** Any student needing help in any way is encouraged to communicate with Mrs. Storey or Mr. Rodgers immediately. We cannot help if you do not communicate.

As UIL sponsors, the directors have access to the student's current average in each class as they are posted by the teachers. The directors will be communicating with individual students concerning their grades and parents are encouraged to communicate with the directors to help each student achieve academic success.

Students involved in UIL activities (all music, athletics, academic, etc.) are allowed 13 total absences during a school year for UIL purposes. **OHS choir members should reserve 2 UIL absences for choir.** Students involved in multiple UIL organizations must communicate with their director AND THEIR COACHES/SPONSORS concerning their attendance status!

MONDAY NIGHT REHEARSALS

Monday evenings must be reserved and free of any conflict for all members of OHS Choir program for the second semester. All-Region practices will also occur on Mondays in the Fall Semester. Monday Night Rehearsals will be announced well in advance and schedules should be kept open in the second semester in order to attend. Students who are aware of a conflict in advance of a Monday Night Rehearsal should submit an Absence Request Form.

VERY IMPORTANT: DO NOT schedule activities (especially classes) or work on the evenings of rehearsals. The rehearsals are for the benefit of the entire choir department as we prepare for special performances and competitions. Students will be notified if a rehearsal is to be abbreviated or cancelled.

CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS

1. Always be early so you are on time for all rehearsals and performances.
2. Enter the room with a mature, energetic, and positive attitude.
3. Be responsible and professional. Always have your folder, music, and pencil.
4. Maintain respect for the choir facilities... Do not play *any* piano without permission from a director.
5. No food or drink (except bottled water) will be permitted.
6. No gum during rehearsals. *You cannot properly sing with gum in your mouth.*
7. Ask permission to enter the directors' offices. Please respect those areas.
8. No cell phone use (*even to check time*) during rehearsal. Please place them in the phone bag under your assigned number as you enter the room – this is not optional.
9. Respect the property and space of those around you.
10. Always give 100% of your effort and ability. Be committed to doing your best!
11. **Take pride** in the Odessa High Choir program. You are part of something very unique!

ABSENCES/TARDIES

ECISD and OHS campus policies will be followed concerning absences and tardies including the time-frame for make-up work and or consequences for infractions. Consistent attendance is integral for both academic success and the success of each choir in performance and competition. Performance opportunities will be at the discretion of the director should excessive absences impede a student's ability to contribute to the choir.

All students are expected to be in their place with their folder and pencil when the tardy bell rings. Class begins when the tardy bell rings! Students who need to use the restroom should do so BEFORE the tardy bell rings. Students not in the classroom when the tardy bell rings will be considered tardy. Students not in their place with their folders will receive a deduction in their weekly participation grade. At the conclusion of the class, students must stay in the classroom rather than the hallway until the dismissal bell rings.

CELL PHONES

When you use a cell phone, you are having a conversation with someone. No one would dare answer a cell phone during a rehearsal and start carrying on a conversation, because they understand how disrespectful that would be. Texting during a rehearsal is ALSO having a conversation. Doing this in a rehearsal will not be tolerated at any time.

We will strictly follow the OHS cell phone policy – if any choir director (regardless of who is teaching) observes a student using a cell phone during a rehearsal, that phone will immediately be confiscated and turned into the OHS bookkeeper (not returned at the end of class). There will be NO exceptions to this rule! Failure to turn over a cell phone on the first request will immediately result in a second request. Failure to turn over a cell phone after the second request will result in disciplinary action from a principal. **JUST DON'T TAKE OUT YOUR PHONE DURING REHEARSAL!**

UNIFORMS

OHS choir members will be issued a clean uniform to wear in most concerts and at all UIL and festival competitions. You are expected to treat the uniform with care and pride. **The cleaning of all uniforms will be handled by the Choir program at the end of the year.** The choir fee paid at the beginning of the year helps to cover this expense. Periodic cleaning and care of the uniform will be the responsibility of the student during the school year. At no time should the uniform be altered by cutting, sewing, stapling, iron-on hem tape (especially iron-on adhesives as they will ruin the garment!) etc. without prior permission from the directors.

Women

- Will be issued a black, floor length dress.
- Varsity Women will be issued a pearl necklace. No other necklaces are to be worn.
- Black closed-toed dress shoes (not sandals) are to be provided by the student.
- Groom hair appropriately and away from the face
- NO PERFUMES OR SCENTED SPRAYS!

Men

- Will be provided with a tuxedo package which includes a jacket, shirt, pants, long tie, vest, and a pair of black dress shoes.
- Solid black socks (no footies, white socks or bare legs)
- Groom hair appropriately
- NO AXE OR OTHER SCENTED SPRAYS!

STUDENT FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

Our goal as a choir department is to keep all student fees to a minimum. The following list contains most of the anticipated costs (mandatory and optional) that are associated with choir. Please note that all payments can be made by cash, check, money order, or by credit card. Checks should be made payable to **OHS Choir Booster Club**. Students will be shown the procedure for depositing money into the lock box in the Choir Room. All money turned into the OHS Choir should be deposited in the lock box and NOT “handed” to a choir director. Before depositing CASH in the lock box, all students are asked to get a receipt from a director. Directors/Booster Club are not responsible for “lost” cash payments if a receipt is not requested.

Chorale Assessment: (\$100.00) - This annual fee is to be paid by all **Chorale members**. It covers supplying general items such as folders and pencils, copying music exercises, the cleaning and hemming uniforms, and the Chorale polo. It will also cover the cost of their All-Region Entry Fee.

Due by September 1st

All Other Choirs Assessment: (\$50.00) - This annual fee is to be paid by **all choir members in 2nd, 3rd, and 7th periods**. It covers supplying general items such as folders and pencils, copying music exercises, and the cleaning and hemming uniforms.

Due by September 1st

All-Region Choir Fee: (\$15.00) – Participating in the All-Region process develops our students’ skills and work ethic. We strongly suggest this for all of our students. This fee pays for the entry into the contest. *This fee is included in the Chorale Assessment.*

The deadline to enter is September 17th. This fee must be paid before that date.

This fee is included in the Chorale Assessment.

UIL Solo & Ensemble Contest: (\$10.00 per event) - This payment covers the entry for students who choose to participate in this competition.

The deadline to enter is December 16th. This fee must be paid before that date.

OHS Choir T-Shirts: (\$20.00) – Support your choir by wearing this year’s OHS Choir T-Shirt. Return your t-shirt order form with your payment by September 1st.

Students facing financial challenges should speak privately with the directors to discuss options in meeting the obligations to the choir department.

FUNDRAISING

Choir members will have the opportunity and option to participate in AT LEAST four fundraisers during the school year. For several of the fundraisers, the profit from each student's sales will be credited to that student and applied toward expenses in choir. We encourage students in all grade levels to participate in the fundraisers to begin raising money for this year or future trips. It also can help off-set the cost of their choir fees. Students whose fees are not paid by September 1st will be required to fundraise to pay the fee.

PRIVATE VOICE LESSONS

Private voice lessons are strongly encouraged for any and all members of the OHS Choir program. These lessons will enhance and improve vocal and musical development. Please contact one of our private voice teachers directly if you are interested.

Kimberly Corman – 432.413.2622

Dr. Juan Hernandez – 857.265.6360

Kathy Lollar (West Texas Music Academy) – 432.413.7265

David Cox – 817.729.7282

Suzanne Medlen – 432.634.0295

If you need assistance selecting from these voice teachers, please complete the form in the packet. We are more than happy to guide you to the teacher that has openings in your student's class period.

COMMUNICATION

CUT TIME (emails) – Cut Time is an online management of communication, assessment, and financial records system designed for music organizations. On these systems you will be able to provide updates in your contact information, check your students' balances, and check the choir calendar. We will enter each student's contact information in class but please update that information if it changes.

To Access Cut Time for Parents

- Go to www.cutttime.net
- Select "Student/Parent Sign-Up" at the top of the screen
- Read the instructions and complete the registration form provided
- Our Group Name is "Odessa High School - Choir"
- Your position should be set to "Parent"
- Agree to the Terms and Commitments.
- Click the "Register Now" button.

We will make every effort to communicate information to students and parents. Please regularly check the calendar on our website and this handbook for reference.

FACEBOOK - For most events, we will post reminders on our Facebook page. Feel free to like our page. It can easily be found by searching for the OHS Choirs on Facebook.

TWITTER - We will also post reminders on our Twitter account. Follow us @OdessaHSChoir.

REMINDE - Many people prefer to receive text alerts for events. Both students and parents can sign up for these messages through Remind. To do so, please text the code **@ohschoirp** to **81010**. The students have the following codes for their classes but because Remind has set limits on the number of members we can have in each class, we ask that parents do not join the classes as we will send the same messages to parents.

Chorale - @bronchocho
Bel Canto - @ohbelcanto
Dominante - @dominante
Bella Voce - @ohsbellavo

WEBSITE – in an effort to communicate with parents in an easier and more efficient manner, we will post information on our website: www.odessahschoir.com. You can access forms, the calendar, and announcements from this site.

E-MAIL - Of course, you can always reach the directors with questions and concerns you may have by sending us an email through our school email. We will do our best to respond in a timely manner.

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Robert.Rodgers@ectorcountysd.org