

Barrington High School  
**CHORAL HANDBOOK**  
2023-2024

*Gracenotes*  
*Intermezzo*  
*Choraliers*  
*Bella Voce*  
*Chamber Choir*

*Empower Personal Excellence in Every Learner*

Brandon Pemberton  
DIRECTOR





This handbook has been written and developed for members of the Barrington High School choral program and their parents with the intent of communicating the standards, policies and expectations of the choir and of the Fine, Visual, and Performing Arts Department. Being a part of a performing ensemble is a tremendous responsibility. Self-discipline, commitment and passion for excellence are expected to help provide a rewarding and exciting experience.

This is going to be a fantastic year full of many exciting opportunities for all! There will be performances and many opportunities for students to grow as musicians. We are committed to maintaining a quality choral program, as well as increasing the membership and excitement surrounding the Barrington High School choirs. Take pride in this program. It is your hard work that will make it an excellent year!

All choir members and parents/guardians are asked to read this handbook and to sign and return the statement of commitment and the statement of financial responsibility to the director.

Barrington 220 was named one of the nation's "2020 Best Communities for Music Education." We are proud of the work we do here as we strive for excellence in music education. We strive to meet and exceed the national standards for music education. Our department, school, district and community believe that music is a vital part of a well-rounded education.

### **GOALS**

The goals of the music department are:

1. To help students develop their musical potential;
2. To foster growth in cooperative learning skills;
3. To encourage self-esteem through the pride of accomplishment;
4. To stimulate creativity;
5. To promote self-expression;
6. To broaden aesthetic appreciation, and
7. To help make music a source of enjoyment throughout life.

### **CLASSROOM RULES & EXPECTATIONS**

1. All school rules in the student handbook apply whether the choir is on or off campus.
2. Students will give 100% effort and participation at all times.
3. Students will show respect to the director, other students and school property. (Including the classroom, practice rooms, pianos, uniforms, music, and folders).
4. Students will be in their assigned seats with all materials (folder, pencil, iPad) when the bell rings.
5. No gum is allowed in the choir room or in practice rooms.
6. Students should not be in the choir room without the director's approval. Students should not store books, coats or any personal items in the choir room during the day or overnight without permission.
7. At the end of rehearsal students are dismissed by the director, not the bell. Folders should be returned to their assigned slots and there should be no trash left in the room.
8. Students may not play the baby grand piano in the choir classroom. Students may play the upright piano, when given permission.
9. Only students who take 8-straight classes may eat in the choir room during choir class periods. Do not bring food or drink (except water) into the choir room without permission.
10. Cell phones are not permitted during rehearsal unless we are using them for an instructional purpose.
11. Bags and personal items will be left at the front of the classroom during rehearsal, unless otherwise instructed.

## **COURSE FOCUS**

The primary focus of the choir program is to challenge students to become outstanding vocal musicians. Concerts are viewed as the culmination of preparation as well as the application of all of the concepts taught in class. Students are required to participate in all performances and will receive a grade for their participation. The musical literature selected and studied throughout the course of the year serves as the major tool through which many musical concepts are taught. The music selected will represent a wide variety of musical styles, historical time periods, musical/historical functions, and languages.

Additionally, there are many life skills that are gained through participation in a musical ensemble. Students will experience hard work, dedication, commitment, teamwork, collaboration, professionalism, poise, public speaking, performing, and time management skills that will serve them well in their future endeavors both within and outside of the field of music.

## **STUDENT LEADERSHIP**

Student leadership is an integral part of the choir experience at Barrington High School. Students are encouraged to accept positions of leadership that develop their skills of responsibility by acting as liaisons between the director and the choir while positively influencing the learning of others. Each choir may have the following positions:

1. **Class Representative** - The class representative is responsible for assisting the director with organization tasks. This is a student-elected position.

### Responsibilities include:

- Collecting and handing out paperwork/music
- Assisting with taking attendance
- Ensuring the classroom is clean and orderly at the end of the period (put away folders, lost and found items, etc)
- Taking lost and found items to the main office at the end of the week

2. **Spirit Leader(s)** - The spirit leader(s) are responsible for positive team building experiences. They will arrange for community building activities to be enjoyed within the class. Before a spirit activity is planned, it must first be reviewed and approved by Mr. Pemberton. Spirit activities are a privilege, not a right. This is a student-elected position.

3. **A Cappella Leaders** - The A Cappella leaders are responsible for working in collaboration with Mr. Pemberton to recruit and select members through an audition process, lead their rehearsals, communicate with members, and serve as liaisons between Mr. Pemberton and potential performance venues.

In addition to these choir-specific positions, the Choir Board will assist with the overall functioning and morale of the program. Your Choir Board for this year is:

Rees Davies - President

Kaylee Reynolds - Vice President

Cate Brashler - Secretary

Ally Szarek - Social Chair

Rachel Ward - Historian

### **PRIVATE VOICE LESSONS**

All students are encouraged to take private lessons in order to develop the musical concepts and techniques which can best be explored through individual training. Students are responsible for paying voice teachers directly. There will be several private voice teachers available through the choir department. Students taking private lessons should take this responsibility seriously. The directors will solicit feedback from voice teachers regarding an individual student's performance in the private studio.

1. Students may come in for lessons once a week during a study hall, lunch or music class period. Some students take lessons before or after school. Students are not permitted to take lessons during any other course.
2. The private teachers treat these rooms as professional studios; students should treat private lessons professionally as well.
3. Private teachers will explain their own studio expectations.

### **COMMUNICATION**

Communication between home and school is a necessity. Communication is done primarily through email and the weekly Friday Flash Newsletter, which is sent to emails submitted to the school through Infinite Campus. Each choir will also set up a secure texting group through the Remind app to communicate changes and reminders to students.

The Friday Flash newsletter gives families updates on important items in the choral department. Only the primary contact for each student listed in infinite campus is included in this email list by default; please contact Brandon Pemberton at [bpemberton@barrington220.org](mailto:bpemberton@barrington220.org) if you would like to change this or are experiencing issues receiving messages.

### **FUNDRAISING**

1. The purpose of fundraising is to earn money for activities the choir otherwise could not afford such as the banquet, tours, concert music, supplies, and collaborative experiences. Students are encouraged to take every opportunity to make the most of each fundraiser.
2. Some fundraising money will go into the general fund - money that benefits all choir students equally. Other funds will be put into individual student accounts based on how much that individual student has earned. Every student is offered the opportunity to participate in fundraising activities.
3. Each fundraiser offers different timelines and commitment levels as well as individual payout. Parents will be contacted through the Friday Flash as these events approach.

### **GRADING SCALE**

Students will be graded based on the following scale in accordance with the school grading policy:

A	90 - 100
B	80 - 89
C	70 - 79

D	60 - 69
F	0 - 59

### **SEMESTER GRADES AND FINAL EXAMS**

Semester grades are calculated by averaging the two quarter grades at 45% each and the final exam or summative experience at 10%. A written final exam that will review all the terms and concepts studied during the semester may be given.

### **EVALUATION FOR CHORAL ENSEMBLES**

#### **Ensemble Commitment**

Regular attendance and class participation are essential to the success of the choir. Concepts taught in class can often only be learned through rehearsal. Therefore, each daily rehearsal is worth 2 points. Students who are on time, prepared and diligent in rehearsal will receive 2 points per day. Students who are disruptive, ill-prepared or tardy will not receive their daily points. Daily points may be lost without warning. Students who are unable to sing due to illness will be expected to follow along during rehearsal to continue learning.

#### **Singing Tests and Written Assignments**

Singing assessments may include pitch and rhythmic accuracy, proper diction, dynamics, expression, memorization or all elements combined. Singing assessment will happen as frequently as necessary. They may occur as individual or group spot checks, with or without music and may be announced or unannounced.

Written assignments are also beneficial tools for choir. This may include but is not limited to musicianship workbooks, historical projects, reports, personal reflections and musical analysis.

#### **Performance**

Concerts demonstrate the understanding of the concepts taught in rehearsal. Therefore, a concert is equivalent to an exam in other academic courses. *Concert attendance is mandatory.*

Additional performance opportunities in which the students are expected to perform may arise throughout the year. Students will be advised of these performances in advance.

Choral performance is based on a large group of individuals working as one cohesive ensemble. Uniform concert attire promotes unity within the group. Therefore, it is important that students adhere to the prescribed dress code. Failure to adhere to concert attire will result in partial loss of concert points.

At concert time, reapply deodorant and limit hairspray, cologne and perfume. Jewelry and hair fasteners draw audience attention away from the whole performance; please leave these at home unless instructed otherwise. All should wear their hair away from their face.

Each quarter, major concert performances are worth 100 points. Proper performance outfit care, the pre-concert warm-up and the pre-concert rehearsals are also factored into this grade. Dress rehearsals are also mandatory.

Absences will only be excused in the case of extreme personal illness, family emergencies and death of a family member or loved one. All other absences must be documented with the student, parent and director *at least two weeks prior to the concert*. Documenting an absence does not guarantee the absence will be considered “excused.” Work and homework are never considered excuses for missing a concert. If a concert absence is excused, the student will be provided with a makeup assignment with a due date. If the assignment is not turned in on time, the student may not receive points for the performance.

### **Ensemble Attire**

Among other things, excellence on the stage includes quality musicianship, professionalism, and poise. Students in our curricular choir ensembles will be loaned uniform items that should be treated with care, cleaned, and returned at the end of the school year. Students who do not return their uniform will be charged through the district to replace the uniform.

**Bella Voce** - students will be loaned a black choir dress. Students must wear black character shoes or black flats with their dress. They will also receive a set of pearls to wear on the day of the concert.

**Gracenotes** - students will be loaned a black choir dress. Students must wear black character shoes or black flats with their dress. They will also receive a set of pearls to wear on the day of the concert.

**Chamber Choir** - Men will receive a tux jacket, tux pants, white vest, and bow tie. Students must provide their own white tux shirt and black dress shoes. Women will receive a choir dress. Women must provide a white slip to wear under their dress as well as black character shoes or flats. They will also receive a set of pearls to wear on the day of the concert.

**Choraliers** - Men will receive a red tie from BHS choir that must be returned at the end of the year. Students must provide a black dress shirt, black dress pants, black socks, and black dress shoes.

**Intermezzo** - students will be loaned a black choir dress. Students must wear black character shoes or black flats with their dress. They will also receive a set of pearls to wear on the day of the concert.



## **HONORS CREDIT - ONLY AVAILABLE FOR SOPHOMORE-SENIOR STUDENTS**

The Honors Credit option is intended to provide self-motivated, independent music students the opportunity to further develop their musicianship as well as to provide opportunities for scholarship and leadership. Students receiving Honors Credit will distinguish themselves by two criteria: Exemplary contributions to the ensemble through full-year participation, as well as additional duties and requirements outlined below. Honors Credit students are expected to demonstrate a consistent effort to develop their individual musical ability, as well as the ensembles in which they participate. Those students who are approved for Honors Credit commit to that standard for the entire year. Students that are in multiple choirs may take both courses for Honors credit or only one. If you take multiple choirs for honors credit, you will be expected to do double the requirements listed below.

Students choosing to take their class for Honors Credit will be graded by completing the requirements listed below. The director(s) may choose a different assignment for any given quarter for honors students to complete that enhances the learning experience for that concert cycle. If this is the case, students will be notified in advance.

All honors students must complete a minimum of three of the experiences listed below to earn their honors credit: (Six for students taking two choirs for honors credit).

- Take private voice lesson for at least one semester
- Serve as a Spotlight mentor
- Sing in the Madrigal program
- Sing in one of our a cappella groups
- Serve on the choir board
- Perform in the musical
- Audition for ILMEA Allstate Choir, Music Education, or Composition (required for Chamber choir students)
- Serve as a class representative
- Serve as a class spirit leader
- Serve as an A Cappella Leader
- Design a personalized musicianship development project with Mr. Pemberton
- Participate in Hope & Harmony Club
- See a performance that falls into one of these categories: classical choir or musical theater.

The BHS 23-24 Choral Handbook has been emailed to both guardians and students through Infinite Campus. It can also be found on Schoology and the BHS Choir webpage at [www.barringtonchoir.weebly.com](http://www.barringtonchoir.weebly.com). Please review the policies and confirm your understanding and involvement below.

## STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (Student's Name) have read the choir handbook and understand the rules and policies that apply to my participation in the choir program at Barrington High School. Furthermore, **I acknowledge all the dates on the calendar that apply to my performing group and I will participate with my greatest effort.** I realize if I do not meet the expectations stated clearly in this handbook it could be harmful to my own musical experience, as well as others, and will result in the lowering of my grade.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (student)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (parent/guardian)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Choir: \_\_\_\_\_ Honors? **Yes / No**  
(circle one)

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

I understand that I am financially responsible for all materials and supplies provided to me by the Barrington High School Fine Arts Department and choir program. Such items include (though are not limited to) choral music, folders, binders, books, robes, uniforms and sound equipment. Should I damage, destroy or not return any materials provided by Barrington High School, I will pay for the current replacement cost of that item. Furthermore, I will provide appropriate compensation for any shipping or otherwise significant costs incurred with the replacement of those materials.

*The most commonly neglected material is choral music. This year, music ranges from \$2.00 to \$5.00 per copy. Shipping costs will also be factored per piece of music. Your music folder costs approximately \$25.00 excluding the price of shipping. The BHS choral department spends thousands of dollars per year on new music, folders, uniforms, etc. It is your responsibility to treat these items with care.*

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (student)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (parent/guardian)