



RAIDER CHORAL DEPARTMENT HANDBOOK

2024-25

3000 WYLIE EAST DRIVE
WYLIE, TX 75098

In order for successful rehearsals to take place, all students must be prepared for class each and every day. Students should bring the following materials to class daily:

- ♪ **Reusable water bottle**
- ♪ **Binder with choral music**
- ♪ **Pencil and highlighter**
- ♪ **Chromebook**

Most costs of participating in choir are covered by the WEHS Choral Department's budget; however, participation in choir does require some financial commitment. To help offset these costs, a \$90 choir fee is due by August 23 and can be made payable to the Raider Area Choir Booster Club (RACBC). Fees may also be paid with debit or credit card through the choir website. This fee includes a t-shirt, uniform rental, choir binder, music, and a dry cleaning at the end of the year, and also helps to subsidize costs for trips, festivals, and social events. Students who do not pay the choir fee and who have not established a payment plan could forfeit participation in field trips or social events. Other costs associated with the WEHS Choirs are optional and are dependent on the student's participation in optional events.

All-State Choir	\$25
Solo & Ensemble	\$15/solo (includes accompanist fee), \$10/ensemble
Choir Trip	Approximately \$4000

Note: Finances should never affect a student's participation, progress, or potential in choir. In the event that finances become a concern, please contact the directors—arrangements can often be made in these situations.

We will be participating in a fall fundraiser to help with program needs. We expect that each student participates in the fundraiser, as the proceeds benefit every student and are used for things like music, travel, social events, and more. If a student or family decides to opt-out, they may do so by making a donation to the Raider Area Choir Booster Club (RACBC).

The 2025 spring trip will be to Central Europe. The cost per student and chaperone will be approximately \$4000. We will be passing out information on this trip in early fall.

ALL STUDENTS MUST BE PASSING CLASSES ON THE GIVEN DATE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE SPRING TRIP!

Note: If a student fails a class or is removed because of behavior problems or ineligibility after paying the trip cost, no refunds will be issued because monies will have already been sent to the travel company to pay for trip costs.

1. Be an ambassador for Wylie East High School. Always show kindness and respect to others.
2. For your safety, stay on the risers unless you have permission to leave them.
3. Respect the personal space and safety of others.
4. Participate in all class activities, monitor your tardiness, and care for your supplies. This includes cell phones, which should be off of the risers at all times.
5. **Make the most of every musical minute!**

Choir Room: We are fortunate to have brand new facilities for choirs at WEHS. Maintaining the choir room should be a top priority for our students. No food or drink (except water in a sealable container) is allowed in the choir room. Lunch will not be allowed to be eaten in the choir room.

Piano/Stereo: Students may use the piano and stereo with a director's permission before or after school. Please do not set any of your belongings (especially water) on top of the piano or stereo system.

Music: Just like textbooks, you must return all of music to us in good condition at the end of the semester. If you lose your music, or it is in poor condition upon return, you must pay the replacement cost. When marking in music, use pencil. This ensures that we will be able to use this music again.

Cell Phones: WEHS Choir holds a **zero-tolerance** policy on cell phones. If seen, the directors will take it up for the remainder of the class or turn it in to the office.

Practice Rooms: Priority for practice room use is given to those taking voice lessons, practicing All-State or Solo & Ensemble music, or taking sight-reading tests. Students may use these rooms with permission. You must check with a director to use a practice room and check out the key.

Outside Door:: WEHS Choir holds a **zero-tolerance** policy on letting students in through the new outside door. This is for the safety of our students and staff.

Student learning and musical achievement is the ultimate goal. Parents can be contacted any time that the directors feel that their involvement can improve the actions of the student in the choral classroom.

Step 1: The student has chosen to distress the classroom. The student will be asked to cease the stressing behavior. If the student needs time to stop the classroom activity and quietly reflect, this will be allowed.

Step 2: The student chooses to continue distressing the classroom and an office referral is needed to improve the learning environment. Administration and parent support is compulsory and contact will be made following the incident to set up a parent/teacher phone conference. Administration will decide whether further action should be taken to improve the future of student success in class. Any action that warrants a direct violation of student safety, disrespect to other students, or direct insubordination of authority will be considered an automatic Step 2.

Removal from choir will be considered when persistent behavior issues and incidences occur in choir class or at WEHS.

Daily Grade/Rehearsal Accountability/Assignments	40%
The student's daily grade consists of work done during the choral rehearsal. Each day is worth 20 points, making each week worth 100 points. Assignments such as sight-reading tests, memory checks, music analyses, and web-based assignments will be given at the discretion of the directors. Doing so allows assessment of the student at an individual level, rather than as a group.	
Concert Attendance	60%
Performance outside of the school day is a necessary component of performing in choirs. Attendance required for all concerts, sectionals, and outside rehearsals, as they are a form of assessment in choir. Performance dates are listed on the calendar of events, and other extra-curricular activity dates will be given to students with adequate notice. Absence from a concert will significantly reduce the student's grade. An excused absence will be awarded only on a case-by-case basis. Parents must contact us prior to the concert if there are any circumstances that keep the student from performing. Students are expected to be on time to all concerts, sectionals, and outside rehearsals. Concert grades are double-weighted. One grade is given for performance and the other is given for concert etiquette. Concert grades are figured with the following guidelines:	
<u>Concert Performance</u> Tardy (-20 points) Uniform Infractions (-50 points)	<u>Concert Etiquette</u> Talking/Gum on Stage (-30 points) Misbehavior Backstage/During Concert (-50 points)
<i>Note: If a student is ineligible for a concert, or has been granted an excused absence, they will be given an alternative assignment to replace the zero in the grade book.</i>	

Assignments may be done using computers and/or the Internet. Not every student has a computer with Internet in his/her home but are encouraged to use their Chromebooks at school. Use of recording equipment (audio/video) and photography will be part of the promotional and instructional process of choir. All choral students will be recorded and photographed.

Rehearsals; Unlike other academic classes, it is impossible to make up activities that occur during a choral rehearsal, thus attendance is imperative at all rehearsals, concerts, and extra-curricular activities. Excessive unexcused absences will have a negative effect on the student's grade.

Concerts: Attendance at any choral concert is required. Absences will only be excused in special situations, such as a medical/family emergency, religious holiday, or death in the family. Written documentation should be provided to the directors as soon as a problem arises and must occur *prior* to the event to be given a concert makeup opportunity. Lack of transportation or work do not constitute as an excuse for missing a concert.

Note: Non-school-sponsored events do not constitute an excused absence for any required choral event and will not be allowed a makeup.

Extra-Curricular Activities: Students will be given sufficient notice of any activities outside of the school day, including rehearsals, sectionals, and concerts. These activities are essential to the development of the choral program. As with concerts, an unexcused absence at an extra-curricular activity will lower the student's grade. The directors will make every effort to limit the time spent outside of the school day. Any conflicts, including appointments, athletics, other student organizations, etc. should be brought to the directors as soon as possible.

According to University Interscholastic League (UIL) rules and House Bill 72 (No Pass/No Play), a student must stay academically eligible in order to participate in an extra-curricular activity. Students are required to participate in all class rehearsals and performances where admission is not charged, regardless of eligibility.

Students who are **ineligible** will not be allowed to participate in the following:

- ♪ Any WEHS choral concert where admission is charged
- ♪ All-State Choir Auditions & Concerts
- ♪ Solo & Ensemble Contest
- ♪ Choir Field Trips (including Spring Trips)
- ♪ Any event where we leave campus by means of school transportation with the exception of UIL Concert and Sight-reading Contest

In order to receive a grade for these situations when ineligible, appropriate written assignments will be given. In addition to academic eligibility, all students participating in Wylie UIL activities are subject to random drug testing. Students must also be able to meet behavioral and musical expectations in order to perform and/or participate in activities and concerts.

To receive a WEHS Choir letter jacket, students must complete at least one year of satisfactory choir membership before they may order a letter jacket. Additionally, he/she must have participated in all required performances, concerts, contests, etc. Choir members must accumulate a total of **800 points** to earn a letter jacket, with **500 points** comprised from Campus, All-State, and/or Solo & Ensemble.

*Each choir student may be awarded only one letter jacket while a student in Wylie ISD, however he/she may letter in multiple activities. In order to qualify for a letter jacket, the letter jacket form must be submitted to a choir director by **February 9, 2024.***

The WEHS Performing Arts Graduation Cord is a pink cord honoring and recognizing students who engage in and compete in high-level performance events as required by a sequence of performing arts classes governed by UIL and VASE rules and requirements. Requirements for earning the cord are as follows:

- 8 consecutive semesters of Performing Arts, picking a sequence (Band, Choir, Theatre, Dance, Art) classes
- Must have fulfilled course performance requirements during each semester enrolled in the class and maintained eligibility for all semesters.
- Students have earned a B or higher for all semesters while taking the chosen class sequence.
- Students must remain in the program their entire senior year.
- Must maintain good standing and regular attendance and are not in violation of any UIL rules and requirements.
- Complete required service hours as determined by course guidelines or handbook. Service hours must come from pre-approved activities
- Student must obtain teacher approval. Course teacher must approve each student applicant to determine if the student has satisfied all requirements of course completion

- Students moving to Wylie ISD and enrolling in fine arts courses must still meet completion criteria as required in these guidelines. Directors for each course will determine student eligibility.

Uniforms will be issued at the beginning of the school year. (* Items indicated will be provided by student)

- Formal Treble:** Choir dress
*Black dress shoes (closed toe, up to 2" heels acceptable)
- Formal Tenor-Bass:** White tuxedo shirt, tuxedo jacket and pants
*Plain white t-shirt to be worn underneath, black socks, and black shoes
- Informal:** WEHS Choir t-shirt
*Blue jeans (must cover the entire leg, no holes) and closed-toed shoes
- Jewelry:** Large jewelry is not acceptable. Students may only wear studs in their ears. No dangling earrings, necklaces, hair bows, watches, or bracelets are allowed.
- Hair:** Hair is up and out of the face. Hair buns, braids, and ponytails are acceptable.

Tuxedo Shirts: Shirts should be washed after EVERY performance. No exceptions. If you have outgrown your shirt, let a director know as soon as possible.

Tuxedo Jacket & Pants: Jackets and pants should be hung up after EVERY performance. **DO NOT wash the jacket or pants.** These items can only be dry-cleaned and will be cleaned by the choral department at the end of the year. If you have outgrown your jacket or pants, please let a director know as soon as possible. Pants should hang to your ankles. If the waist is too tight, try to adjust the pants with the silver tab on the side before contacting a director.

NOTE ON HEMMING TUXEDO PANTS: If you have to hem your pants, take them to a dry cleaner that does alterations. Your pants have been marked where the pants should be hemmed. **DO NOT cut the pants, or you will have to replace them.** Typical hemming costs are \$5-\$8.

ALL ITEMS MUST BE RETURNED CLEANED AND IN GOOD CONDITION.

If a student fails to turn in a uniform, they will be charged for each item missing. You will be assessed a fine and will not advance to the next grade/graduate until the fine has been paid. Additionally, if a uniform has not been properly cleaned, they will be assessed a cleaning charge. Replacement costs are:

Tuxedo Pants	\$40.00	Tuxedo Jacket	\$80.00
Tuxedo Shirt	\$20.00	Cleaning Fee	\$10.00

REMEMBER: In order to sing in concerts, your uniform must be performance-ready (i.e., clean & pressed).

Dresses: Wash after EVERY performance. No exceptions. **DO NOT dry in the dryer.** Instead, hang it up to dry. If you have outgrown your dress, please let us know as soon as possible.

NOTE ON HEMMING CHOIR DRESSES: If you have to hem your dress, take them to a dry cleaner that does alterations. Your dress has been marked if the dress should be hemmed. **DO NOT cut the dress, or you will have to replace it.** If you have a question, please ASK!

ALL ITEMS MUST BE RETURNED CLEANED AND IN GOOD CONDITION.

If a student fails to turn in a uniform, they will be charged for each item missing. You will be assessed a fine and will not advance to the next grade until the fine has been paid. Additionally, if a uniform has not been properly cleaned, they will be assessed a cleaning charge. Replacement costs are:

Choir Dress	\$75.00	Cleaning Fee	\$10.00
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REMEMBER: In order to sing in concerts, your uniform must be performance-ready (i.e., clean & pressed).

Choir officers are selected by their classmates based on their leadership qualities, participation in, and service to the choir program. Choir officers are expected to aid the directors in maintaining high standards of behavior and choral singing and should thus be respected by the membership for their efforts. These individuals must maintain good academic records, be great leaders, have good behavior, and a positive attitude. *Being an officer is a privilege, not a right. The directors have the right to remove any officer from their position because of poor behavior, abuse of power, lack of motivation, etc.*

Solo & Ensemble: All students have the opportunity to take a memorized solo and/or ensemble to the WISD Vocal Festival for adjudication by a judge. This is held in February.

All-State Choir: All students have the opportunity to audition for placement in the TMEA All-State process. To audition, students must first attend rehearsals and audition with the directors and then must travel to the audition site on the designated audition day. Students will sing a blind audition (in front of a curtain) that is scored by five judges. All-State Choir is a prestigious, yet competitive choir that is well worth the work.

The following guidelines should be followed to ensure a pleasant concert experience for the performers and audience: Dress appropriately for the performance. Concerts are formal unless noted otherwise. Turn off all cellular phones during the performance. Food or drink is not allowed in the performance hall. Refrain from talking while the directors are talking or the choir is performing. Concerts are recorded and recording equipment can pick up the slightest whisper. Only enter or leave the seating area during applause. Do not take flash photographs while the group is singing.

Parent volunteers are always needed in the WEHS Choral Department! If you are interested in volunteering your time and becoming a member of *Raider Area Choir Booster Club*, our parent organization, please contact Kimberley, RACBC President, at k.m.drum@hotmail.com.

Supplementary music lessons are offered as a supplement to classroom instruction. Participation in these supplemental lessons is optional. All students will have access to supplemental music lessons. **Students must** be fully prepared for each lesson, follow guidelines for absences, provide documentation of any required practice time, supply method books and other materials, and meet the criteria for student participation. **Parents must** turn in monthly payments to the program on time, encourage the student to practice daily and sign weekly time cards, and provide reassurance and encouragement to the student regarding recitals, auditions, etc. *Lessons will be scheduled during the student's choir class, lunch hour, or before/after school. No lessons will be scheduled during academic classes. It will be the responsibility of the student to notify his/her supplementary instructor at least twenty-four hours in advance if a lesson is to be cancelled - unless, of course, a serious emergency arises. This courtesy is also the responsibility of the supplementary instructor if he/she must cancel a lesson. Excused absences will either be made up, or the necessary adjustments will be made for the following month's pledge. The music directors will aid the student in advising the private instructor of concerts, programs, holidays, etc., which would result in any interruption of the regularly scheduled lesson.* A payment of **\$25.00** per lesson should be pledged and a check for that amount made out to the **lesson teacher**. He/she will collect payment from student for services rendered each month and will track lesson attendance, payment, etc.

All information in this handbook was accurate at the time of printing of this document. All dates and times should be considered tentative until the directors give the final word. Please check the WEHS Choirs website for the latest information pertaining to the WEHS Choral Department.