

# Belton High School Choral Department

**Dedicated to Excellence and Integrity**

*"We Become What We Want To Be By Consistently Being What We Want To Become Each Day." ~Richard Scott*

*"There is no point where we can say, "This is enough." Always seek finer music, finer performance. Eventually this will change from a learning attitude to a joyful quest which will last throughout our lives."  
~Shinichi Suzuki*

*"There may be people that have more talent than you, but there's no excuse for anyone to work harder than you do."  
- Derek Jeter*

**I WAS BORN WITH  
MUSIC INSIDE ME. IT WAS A  
FORCE ALREADY WITHIN ME  
WHEN I ARRIVED ON THE SCENE.  
IT WAS A NECESSITY FOR ME-  
LIKE FOOD OR WATER.**

**- RAY CHARLES**

## 2016-2017 Choral Handbook

**Mr. Brian Stuck, Director**

## **Philosophy**

The BHS Choral Program is dedicated to providing educational opportunities for its students in the performing arts. All musical learning experiences will take place in a positive atmosphere, which promotes artistic, mental and social growth of the student. The program emphasizes the development of students, and not the final product. Ultimately students are to learn the joy of making music whether it is in sight-reading music or a performance in Carnegie Hall. Excellence in performance will be obtained when students sincerely contribute all of their energies to music making in rehearsals and performances.

## **Mission Statement - *Dedicated to Integrity***

The mission of the choral program is to teach students integrity. Students with integrity will give of their best at all times. They will be honest and reliable in their interactions with the teacher, other students and the music. The music we learn deserves all of the effort we can give it, and then it requires even more for the sake of performance. Integrity is the foundation of a good musician and of an honorable person.

## **Goals**

The Goals of the BHS Choral Music Department are to

- Foster musical and artistic excellence in an educational environment
- Foster the personal and social growth of choir members
- Develop individual vocal skill, auditory perception, and sight-reading
- Teach music literacy and promote life-long musicianship
- Develop an appreciation for classical and traditional music from the world's cultures
- Perform music spanning a variety of styles from the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> century
- Develop understanding and respect for others from different racial, religious, and ethnic backgrounds
- Develop an understanding of music in relation to history, culture, and the other arts
- Prepare students for vocations and avocations in choral music
- Contribute to the cultural life of the community

## **Choral Music Ensemble Membership Requirements**

### *Belton Singers*

Belton Singers is a small, highly select mixed ensemble. Admittance is determined by an audition. Members of Belton Singers must also be enrolled in Concert Choir. This ensemble will perform at all school concerts, the State Music festival, Solo and Small Ensemble Festival, and community events. This ensemble performs a variety of music and styles.

### *Bella Voce*

Bella Voce is a select women's chamber ensemble. Admittance is determined by an audition. This ensemble will perform at all school concerts, the State Music festival, Solo and Small Ensemble Festival, and community events. This ensemble performs a variety of music and styles.

### *Concert Choir*

The Concert Choir is a select mixed ensemble. Admittance is determined by an audition. This ensemble will perform at all school concerts and the State Music festival.

### *Women's and Men's Choir*

An audition is required for admittance to the women's and men's choir. These ensembles will perform at all school concerts and the State Music Festival.

### *Mixed Chorus*

The Mixed Chorus is a non-audition ensemble. This ensemble will perform at all school concerts.

## **Supply List**

Pencil for writing in music, Headphones, MacBook – everyday in class.

**Grading Policies** - The assessment procedure for all ensembles is based on three main elements.

1. **Rehearsal Skills** - Evaluation will be based on effective choir rehearsal skills. The student must have quality participation. Daily rehearsal grades will be determined by a student's attentiveness, posture (including standing when asked), vocal production, performance in sectionals, sight-reading, and effort. Daily rehearsal will be 30% of the total grade. Students will receive 5 points a day for demonstrating good rehearsal skills. Students will lose 1 point for tardiness (rehearsal starts at the bell), 1 point for gum chewing gum, 3 points for cell phone use, 2 points for not putting away music, 1-5 points for talking, and 1-5 points for lack of quality participation.
2. **Musical Skills** - Units of study will deal with the fundamentals of music reading, ear training, music history, and music appreciation. Graded assignments and tests will be given. The majority of these assignments and tests will be completed on Canvas using the student assigned MacBook. Music theory work will be 40% of the total grade. The final (5% of grade) is included in this category
3. **Performances** - Students will be required to attend all concerts, performances, competitions, and festivals relating to the ensemble of which they are a member. Missed performances without prior notice and approval by the director will result in lowering the quarter grade two full letter grades or 30%. Occasionally after school rehearsals may be necessary and they will be given half the weight of a concert. One-week notice in writing must be given and approved by the director in order to be excused from a performance. Please check the performance attendance policy to clarify what is and is not an excusable absence.

### **Performance Attendance**

Performances are mandatory. Any request for an exception must be submitted in writing and approved by the director one week in advance of the performance, except in emergencies (when the director should be notified by phone (816) 489-7500). Students are responsible for arriving at each performance on time and properly prepared. In the case of an excused absence an alternate written assignment will be given.

Excusable absences: personal illness, death in the family, another school activity or a special circumstance approved by the director.

Examples of unexcused absences: work conflicts, didn't have a ride, birthday, homework, vacation.

### **Classroom Procedure and Student Responsibilities**

- When the bell rings, each student will be in his or her assigned seat with all necessary materials (MacBook, headphones, pencil, choir folder) and **all unnecessary technology** put away and out of sight.
- Class will begin with vocal warm-ups. Vocal warm-ups are an important time in each rehearsal. This is when we focus on the fundamentals of singing so that we may improve both as a group and as individuals. Please respect the director by being attentive, following directions, not using technology, and not communicating with anyone else in the room at this time.
- Following warm-ups students will do a brief Music Theory Exercise on the MacBook.
- Talking during rehearsals should be kept to a minimum (this is worth repeating). When the Director is in front of the class, there is no talking. Even if the director is not working with your section directly you may not talk. The Director needs to be able to give his complete attention to the section he is working with. Often what is said to one section applies to the entire choir.
- Technology including computers, phones, mp3 players, e-readers should be out of sight during rehearsals.
- Students who are ill, or otherwise unable to actively participate in singing, must inform the Director at the **beginning** of class. Students unable to sing are expected to remain focused on the music during class.
- At the end of rehearsal, make sure your folder is returned to the cabinet.
- Class is dismissed by the Director not the bell.
- The defacement or destruction of school property will result in immediate disciplinary action.
- Be respectful and polite to all choir members and director at all times with 100% positive participation. Criticizing another student's voice or effort is not allowed.

## Music Theory Exercises

All classes will begin with Vocal Warm-ups follow by an exercise in Music Theory done using the school assigned MacBook. Students will enter the class, get folders from the cabinets, stand for Vocal Exercises, and then immediately open their MacBook to begin that day's exercise. Music Theory Exercises will be scored and returned on Canvas. This is the written portion of class, and students will be tested over the material covered. Absent students will complete the exercises at home.

### REHEARSAL SKILLS

1. Position 2 or 1 when singing (elbows off legs)
2. Always use music
3. When your section is not singing Be Quiet
4. Watch the Director
5. When in doubt - ask your neighbor (whisper)  
- then ask the director
6. Know your Part

### CLASS RULES

- 1) Be respectful to everyone in the class
- 2) Sing your best
- 3) Don't be disruptive
- 4) If you have to hide it, you shouldn't be using it
- 5) No gum or food in the choir room

## Technology Use and Misuse

Responsible use of technology is an important skill for students to learn. A general guideline for a mobile device is, "If you have to hide it, you shouldn't be using it." When the bell rings all devices should be put away, out of sight – pocket, backpack, purse (not under your leg). During rehearsal, cell phones and other devices may not be used, even if you are not singing. MacBooks will be used at times specified by the director for class work and performance. (Prohibited use during rehearsal will always result in loss of rehearsal points)

Per BSD District Policy - Cell phone use is prohibited in classrooms, restrooms, and locker rooms. No photos and/or videos may be taken at school without prior approval from teachers and/or administrators.

Cell Phone use will result in the following consequences: confiscation of device/student picks up from office, confiscation of device/student picks up from office/parent call, confiscation of device/parent picks up device from office, administrative office consequences.

## Discipline Procedure

Students who are being disruptive or hurtful will receive one warning or redirect. After that the following consequences will be applied: Loss of Rehearsal Skills Points, conference with teacher, recovery room, detention, phone conference with parents, office referral. Order of consequences is decided by the director.

## Tardies and Hall Passes

According to school policy, tardies are recorded by the teacher and dealt with by the office. A tardy will only be excused if a student has a pass from a teacher. A verbal excuse is not acceptable.

Hall passes are for **true emergencies** only. Please care for personal needs between classes. Do not leave the classroom without permission from the director. This applies to the nurse, restroom, locker, counselor and office. To use a hall pass students must fill out their planner and bring it to the teacher to sign (do not interrupt class). The student will then sign-out on the small clip-board and sign-in upon returning. Restroom use in our hall requires only signing out on the small clipboard after getting permission. Students may have four restroom passes a semester.

## **Teacher Detentions**

Detentions served with the director will be for 30 minutes starting when the student arrives. A detention form will be given to the student with the date, reason and place for student signature. Failure to serve a detention will result in an additional detention. Failure to serve detentions will result in an office referral. In a detention you must do homework or have something to read.

## **Choir Folders and Music Care**

School-owned folders and music become the responsibility of the students to whom they are assigned. Any loss or damage other than the normal wear and tear to music or a folder will need to be replaced at the student's expense. Students will be assigned a folder and music. Do not leave your folder or music unattended and always return it to the proper slot following rehearsal. Never fold or roll music. Marking in music is encouraged, but please do it lightly and only in pencil.

## **Section Leaders**

Students will be selected from Concert Choir, Bella Voce, and Women's Choir to be a section leader. Section leaders are responsible for taking roll, passing out music, leading warm-ups, leading sectionals, leading sight-singing, and motivating the group. The director will choose section leaders. The director reserves the right to remove or replace a section leader, and to also terminate the position in a choir.

## **Robe and Concert Dress Information**

Concert Choir, Men's, and Mixed Choir will be assigned robes at the beginning of the year. Robes will be kept in the middle school choir room and are not to be taken home. Students will be responsible for any loss of or damage done to a choir robe.

Under their choir robe, each student must wear the following:

- Women – dress attire with black dress shoes (no flip flops)
- Men – shirt with no collar, black dress pants, black dress shoes, black socks
- NO JEANS, TENNIS SHOES, OR WHITE SOCKS
- Students wearing inappropriate clothing will not be allowed to participate in the concert

Belton Singers and Bella Voce will purchase the concert uniform used for performances. This concert uniform will be worn at every performance, and will be kept by the student after the school year. If a student has earned money in any fundraisers, that money may be applied to the purchase of the uniform. An order form and sizing chart will be handed out in class. Uniforms will need to be hemmed to the appropriate length.

## **Eligibility**

The state and BHS have eligibility standards that effect vocal music students' participation in District Music Festival and All-District Choir. Students participating in select choirs must have received a passing grade in 7 of 8 classes first semester to be considered eligible. A student must also have made up attendance hours for these classes. An NC does not count as a class passed until attendance hours are served and the NC is removed. Students in Belton Singers, Concert Choir, and Bella Voce failing to meet this standard first semester must change to men's/women's choir second semester.

## **Random Student Drug Testing**

The Board of Education has instituted a process that "any 7-12<sup>th</sup> grade student who participates in MSHSAA activities – sanctioned extra- and co-curricular activities as well as clubs, teams, associations, and any student who wishes to obtain a parking permit at the school will agree to place their name in a "pool" from which an outside contracted agency will draw twenty-five students a month to be randomly tested." Students and parents who have not done so will need to sign the permission form, which is good through graduation. See the the form for more information.

## **District and State Music Festival**

In the spring of every year area High Schools come together in a State-sponsored music festival. The select choirs of our school will prepare a short program that demonstrates our best musical and performance abilities. The choirs will perform for a panel of adjudicators who will decide on a rating for the performing groups. Remember we do not base our lives on this rating, but it can be a very rewarding and educational experience for the choirs who do their absolute best. Parents are welcome to attend the choirs' performances at the festival.

Included at the District Festival is the opportunity for students to perform solos or small ensembles before an adjudicator and receive a rating and a valuable critique. Solos or ensembles that receive a "I" rating will then perform at the State Music Festival in Columbia for adjudicators along with students from across the state who received the "I" rating from their district. Parents are welcome to attend the performances. Please be aware that District Festival occurs during BSD's spring break this year.

Singing in an ensemble or performing a solo requires a lot of after-school work, but it is one of the most valuable and enjoyable experiences for a musician. When a student agrees to participate in an ensemble or a solo it is a commitment that must be followed through. The director will assist in placing interested students in small ensembles and selecting music for the festival.

A Sign-up Schedule for rehearsals times will be posted Monday morning of each week. Solo and ensembles may sign up for one time a week. An audition date for solos and ensembles will be held in February. Solos and ensembles that have made appropriate progress by the audition date will be allowed to perform at District Music Festival.

### **All-District and All-State Choir**

Students who are enrolled in the choral program at BHS are eligible to audition for the All-District Choir. If selected for the choir, the student will rehearse for one day at an area High School with a renowned conductor. The event will culminate that evening in a concert. Any Junior or Senior who makes the All-District Choir is eligible to audition for the All-State Choir. If selected to represent the district in the All-State Choir, the student will travel to the state music convention for a weekend of rehearsals with a renowned conductor, culminating in a concert. These auditions are tough and require much preparation on the part of the student, but the audition experience is valuable even if the student doesn't make the choir. Practice information is located at <https://sites.google.com/site/kcdistrictchoirs/>. Men who audition for All-District Choir, and do not make it, may be chosen by Mr. Stuck to be apart of the All-District Men's Honor Choir.

### **Lettering**

The BHS Choral Music Department lettering policy is designed to honor those students who excel in choir. Excelling in choir includes participating or auditioning for as many extra music activities as possible. Examples of these activities include All-District Choir, All-State Choir, the school musical, solo/ensemble festival, church/community choirs and additional performances or events that exceed what is required of choir as a class. Lettering points will accumulate from year to year so it is important for each student to keep a lettering system worksheet on file for each year they participate in choir. The LETTERING SYSTEM WORKSHEET for this school year will be distributed several weeks before the final choir concert. Lettering Worksheets will be reviewed for accuracy.

### **Choir Council**

The Choir Council is made up of 4 officers (President, Vice-President, Secretary and Publicity/Historian). Students interested in being an officer must be a Junior or Senior, a choir veteran, a member of Concert Choir and submit a written request to be considered for a specific office. The Choir Council will have monthly meetings and be responsible for choir spirit, helping with fundraisers, uniform checkout, advertising concerts, social activities, and communication with other student organizations.

### **Fall Musical**

Every fall the theatre department put on a musical. While it is a theatre production, choir students are encouraged to participate. Being a part of a musical increases a student's confidence, musicianship, and vocal performance. Choir students also earn letter points for auditioning and having a role on stage in the musical. Auditions and rehearsals take place after school. See Mrs. Babcock for more details.

### **Choir Office**

The Choir Office is off-limits to students unless a teacher is in the office. The telephone and computer in the choral office are not to be used by students unless given permission for class-related circumstances.

## **Communication tools for Choir**

Mr. Stuck's email - [bstuck@bsd124.org](mailto:bstuck@bsd124.org)

Mr. Stuck's voice mail – (816)-489-7500 ext. 7351

**Website** - <https://sites.google.com/site/beltonhighchoirs>

The website has information regarding the choir program as well as practice tracks for the different choirs. Music reading (Theory) exercises are linked there. Recordings of the choirs singing will be posted as well as recommended links for choral music. All-District Choir audition materials are also available.

**Twitter** - **@Choir\_BHS**

The twitter account for choir is for parents, students, teachers and anyone else interested in following the choir. Concert announcements will be made via twitter. Honors and achievements of the choirs and choir students will be posted as well. Mr. Stuck will also tweet choir links and topics he finds interesting.

**www.remind.com**

This tool is for choir students and their parents. It is a text/email application that allows you to receive notifications about upcoming events if you choose to sign up.

To sign up to receive notifications by:

- Text notification - text @(class code from below) to this number- 81010 or (573) 917-4724

Belton Singers- @singbhs

Women's Choir - @wcbhs

Concert Choir - @ccbhs

Men's Choir - @mcbhs

Bella Voce - @bellvoce

Mixed Choir - @mxbhs

- Email - send an email to (code from above)@mail.remind.com
  - example - for Bella Voce send email to : [bellvoce@mail.remind.com](mailto:bellvoce@mail.remind.com)

**bsd124.instructure.com**

Canvas is a district-approved, online course tool. Students will be required to access written assignments and tests on Canvas. Please notify Mr. Stuck if you are unable to access the material online.



## **2016-2017 Choir Concerts and Rehearsal Schedule**

**This schedule may change. When changes occur a new schedule will be handed out.**

### **School Concerts – required for all choirs**

Thursday, Oct. 20	Fall Concert -- BHS Forum, 7:00pm
Thursday, Dec. 15	Holiday Concert – BHS Forum, 7:00pm
Thursday, March 30	Pre-Festival Choir Concert – BHS Forum, 7:00pm
Wednesday, May 3	Pops Concert Dress Rehearsal – BHS Forum, 3:00-6:00pm Solos, Small groups, and Hosts only (no choirs)
Thursday, May 4	Pops Concert Dress Rehearsal – Forum, 3:00-6:00pm - All Choirs
Friday, May 5	Pops Concert -- BHS Forum, 7:00pm

### **MSHSAA Events – \* required for all audition choirs, + required for Belton Singers/Bella Voce**

Saturday, Oct. 1	All-District Choir Auditions – Oak Park HS, 8am-4pm
Saturday, Oct. 29	All State Auditions – Oak Park HS, 10am-12:30pm
Saturday, Jan. 21	KC Metro Honor Choir Festival - Staley HS (rehearsal Jan. 14, 7-9pm, LSNHS)
+Saturday, March 18	Solo/Small Ensemble District Fest.–Grain Valley HS, 8:00am-5:00pm ( <i>spring break</i> )
Friday, April 29	Solo/Small Ensemble State Festival – MU

### **Other Events**

Friday, Sept. 9	Belton Fall Festival Opening Ceremonies, Main Street 5:00pm (Belton Singers)
Saturday, Sept. 10	Renaissance Festival Performance – Belton Singers, Bella Voce
April 6-9	Chicago Heritage Music Festival – Belton Singers, Bella Voce (tentative)
Fri./Sat, April 21,22	Worlds of Fun Music Festival – Women’s Choir, Concert Choir (tentative)
Saturday, April 30	Choir Awards Banquet – 6pm, BHS Cafeteria
Tuesday, May 16	Graduation – Independence Events Center, 7:00pm (Senior Choir)

**Parents and students, if there are any questions regarding the choral program please don't hesitate to email me at [bstuck@bsd124.org](mailto:bstuck@bsd124.org) or call 816-489-7500 and leave a message.**

Sincerely, Mr. Stuck



# Choir Field Trip Permission Form and Emergency Medical Treatment

With my signature, I give permission for the following:

1. To allow my son, daughter to attend the field trip(s) named below.
2. To authorize emergency medical treatment for my son/daughter should it become necessary at any choir event.

**NAME OF STUDENT** \_\_\_\_\_

Field Trips - please check the applicable boxes to your choir

- ☐ All School Concerts at BSD Forum – Oct. 20, Dec. 15, March 30, May 5
- ☐ Renaissance Festival, Sat. Sept. 10, Bonner Springs, KS
- ☐ All-District Auditions, Sat. Oct. 1, Oak Park HS
- ☐ All-State Auditions, Sat. Oct. 29, Oak Park HS
- ☐ KC Metro Honor Choir Festival, Sat. Jan. 21, Staley HS
- ☐ Solo/Ensemble District Music Festival, Sat. March 19, Grain Valley HS
- ☐ State Music Festival, Fri. April 29, MU, Columbia

Name of Parent/Guardian \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact Number \_\_\_\_\_

Medical Problems:                      YES(explain below)                      NO

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Allergies:                                      YES(explain below)                                      NO

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**SIGNATURE of Parent/Guardian:**\_\_\_\_\_

Belton School District #124, Belton, MO

Important: Nether the school district nor the bus contactor will be responsible for the security of personal items taken onto or left on the bus.

# **Choral Department Handbook**

(<https://sites.google.com/site/beltonhighchoirs> or [bsd124.instructure.com](http://bsd124.instructure.com))

## ***Student/Parent Agreement and Citizenship Contract***

*2016-2017 School Year*

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***Choir Student's Name/Hour (please print)***

Students participating in the BHS Choir Program must maintain a record of "good citizenship" in all choir activities. Good citizenship is demonstrated by respect for school, community, and self. The BHS Choral Program has numerous events after school, at other schools, and in the community. When representing the Choral Program a student's character or conduct must reflect credit upon him/herself and/or his/her school in accord with the standards of good discipline. Failure to follow this rule will result in the removal of a student from a choir and/or the choral program.

### **Student Self-Management Agreement**

1. I understand it is my job to concentrate during rehearsals.
2. I understand there will be times when the director will be working with other sections and it is important for me to remain quiet, look at my part, and listen – because what is being taught may affect me as well.
3. If my neighbors attempt to engage me in conversation about things other than music, I will politely decline the invitation.
4. I will follow directions...the first time they are given. Positive and cooperative attitudes result in a fun and productive atmosphere. Don't ask why, just do it!
5. If I need to do something other than rehearse, such as take a "bio" break, I will do so with the least amount of disturbance possible.

We have read and understand all guidelines, rules and expectations set forth in the Belton High School Choral Handbook. We understand that participation in Choirs at Belton High School is directly connected to adherence to the Choral Handbook.

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*Parent Signature*

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*Student Signature*

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*Date*

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*Date*

**\*\*\*\*\*25 Points**

**Due August 19, 2016**

## TIPS FOR ACHIEVING SUCCESS IN CHOIR AT BHS

- ✓ Use your choir concert schedule to assist you while planning family and other social events.
- ✓ Use your choir concert schedule to assist you while planning your work schedule. Give your employer a copy of your concert schedule and then remind your employer at least two weeks in advance of your requests for time off.
- ✓ Keep your music and performance outfit organized and in good condition.
- ✓ The manner in which you wear your choral robe and outfit represents YOU, your school and community. PLEASE keep all parts of your attire CLEAN AND WRINKLE FREE

### Rehearsal/Practice Helps

- ✓ Know your music before taking a seat with the others that have prepared for rehearsal. Remember, YOU don't have the part until EVERYONE IN YOUR SECTION has the part.
- ✓ Be the first one to **STAND UP!** Really focus during warm-ups and listen to your voice.
- ✓ The choir will improve when you improve! You must practice regularly.
- ✓ Be on time! Punctuality is a very important virtue. Arriving to class early and having your materials is crucial to your success.
- ✓ Self Discipline – It's okay to have high standards, goals, self-confidence and the ability to keep your cool when all around you are losing theirs.

**Concert Etiquette** - Audience and Choir 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 choirs 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 disruptions by turning off pagers, cell phones, and removing small children who are crying or speaking loudly.

### Self Improvement in Music

- ✓ Private study is probably the quickest and easiest method of attaining personal improvement in your performance. See Mr. Stuck for more information.
- ✓ Participate in solo and small ensemble opportunities for District Music Festival and Community Events.
- ✓ Attend the All-District Choir and/or College and Professional Choral performances. This is a great way to recharge and give you the extra incentive to work a little harder.
- ✓ Audition for local, state or regional performing groups. Some examples would be the Kansas City Metro All-District Choir and other State and National Honor Choirs.
- ✓ Don't make excuses for your performance. ALWAYS BE PREPARED!
- ✓ Seek assistance from a respected student or from your director – I am here for you!
- ✓ One of the easiest things to do when the going gets tough is to give up. Bad idea! Anyone can quit. It takes a much stronger person to hang in and make things happen!