



# Bells ISD

## Panther Tracks

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Volume 7, Issue 1

September 2020

#### *From the Superintendent . . . .*

Just over eight months ago we began the year 2020, a fresh new decade filled with such promise. However, four to five months into this year most of us began to wish we could wipe the slate clean, chalk this year up to a bad dream, and turn the clock forward to 2021. Honestly, it is pretty easy to have those sentiments about a year filled with so many challenges—situations that most of us have never experienced and that have left us grasping for the playbook that would help us know the next move (or in the educational realm--the next decision) to make. Simply put, it has been a very long year! We have either been forced to cancel or significantly alter milestones, celebrations, and other usual events.

Locally, our school community has taken this situation- this pandemic, and we have embraced the paths of uncertainty and forged ahead with a spirit of commitment, enthusiasm, and hope. Since March, we have all been challenged with teaching and learning in such new and innovative ways. Every single individual in the school community has taken on new roles, adapted to instant change, and problem-solved for the greater good of

our students. Although we were not expecting such drastic changes to our educational system, the staff and students of Bells ISD stood united to finish out the 19-20 school year. The 2020 senior class was shortchanged in so many ways, but fortunately, we held an in-person graduation ceremony in late May. Despite their disappointment over one cancellation after another, this talented group of seniors stayed positive and looked for the silver lining in these circumstances. Honestly, I was amazed at their resilience and admired the maturity with which they handled not having so many "lasts."

Fast-forward to our new school year, as we find ourselves consistently amidst uncertainty. While we had hoped so much of this "different" would be behind us, we still find ourselves adapting to new rules and learning how to put our own personal wishes aside for the safety of other people in order to adjust to this public health crisis. Our new group of seniors, the Class of 2021, began this year amidst many restrictions, but they have respectfully accepted the current state of school and are making the best of this situation.

I want to applaud the wonderful community of individuals who have joined together to overcome daily challenges and practice extreme health measures to keep our school doors open. We do not know what tomorrow will bring, but we can certainly choose to enjoy each moment and celebrate the time we have together. Let's reflect on the achievements of 2020 and the ways we've adapted and moved forward, learning to savor every single day that we are in school and every activity, practice, game, and moment with friends. We still have plenty of time left in 2020 to turn our trials into triumphs if we choose to have a positive perspective and to tackle new challenges as a united school community.

As Bells Panthers, let's live out the PANTHER WAY and maintain high standards of EXCELLENCE through learning, working, serving and respecting every single day!

~Tricia Meek  
Superintendent

**LEARN  
WORK  
SERVE  
RESPECT**



**THE  
PANTHER  
WAY**

The administration team worked hard through the summer to create the 2020-21 Back to School Document. The purpose of this document is to outline the safety protocols and remote-learning requirements for the new school year. The entire document can be found on the district website under the “Back to School 2020 tab.” Please note this document may change as TEA guidelines are updated.

# Bells ISD



## 2020-21 Back to School Guidance Document

As many already know, Mrs. Ivers retired at the end of the 2019-2020 school year. We are all grateful for the many years she dedicated to serving the staff and students at Bells ISD. For those fortunate enough to know Mrs. Ivers, you will never forget her compassion and kindness to all. Before she finished up, Mrs. Ivers made a video introducing the new BES principal, Kerry Harlan. Even though this school year has challenges like none other before, Mrs. Harlan is off to a great start. She has met with teachers and staff and created a great plan for the campus. We are glad to have Mrs. Harlan as a member of the Panther family! Our BES students are still in good hands.



# Bells ISD Connected Learning

Our Connected Learning Site will be live soon. Both face-to-face and remote learners will be able to access this site for all of their classes. We are excited to connect and learn with all of our families during the 2020-2021 school year. GO PANTHERS!



In order to help with communication this school year, the district has created a new “Connected Learning” site. It can be found on the district website under the “Back to School 2020” tab at the top of the district page. This site has links to each campus and every Bells ISD teacher. Within the teachers’ individual sites, parents and students will find contact information, weekly lesson plans, and links to other learning documents or videos. This is designed to help our remote learners, but it can also be beneficial to face-to-face learners needing more assistance. The counselors for each campus also have their own site, and families can find links to information about character education, social-emotional learning, mental health, college entrance exams, and more. Make sure to check it out.



# Class of 2021

The current Bells ISD School Board members are ET Pettit, Matt Stephens, Kelly Lewis, Gary Payne, Charlie Matchett, Lonnie Carter, and Cole Kimberling. Thank you for your support and service to the students and staff.

**LEARN \* WORK \*  
SERVE \* RESPECT**



Congratulations to the BHS class of 2021 as they embark on their final year at Bells ISD. The senior parade was held on the morning of August 13th, and a big thanks goes out to our local police officers and volunteer fire fighters for leading the way. In keeping with the annual tradition, parents decorated the Senior lockers as a surprise to students on their first day back. We appreciate the parents working within the social distancing guidelines to pull this off and to keep the tradition alive. It is an outstanding group of Seniors, and they are going to lead the Panthers through another great year!



What happens if you are a teacher at Bells ISD and come out to a flat tire? No need to worry, we have students willing to help. Drake Stephens and Hogan Harris came to the rescue. They were happy to help change Mrs. Emory's tire. Don't let anyone tell you kids are no longer respectful. Bells ISD has many students modeling the "Serve & Respect" portion of our motto every day. To the parents of these young gentlemen, thank you for raising them to do the right thing.



2020-2021 Bells ISD  
Enrollment (PK-12)  
**875 Students**



## NATIONAL BOARD CERTIFICATION

Bells ISD is pleased to share that our district is partnering with the Region 10 Education Service Center to create a cohort of teachers to go through the National Board Certification process. National Board is one of the most strenuous and prestigious professional development programs in the country. It is considered the “gold star” by many, and only 1% of teachers nationwide are National Board certified.

There are several reasons why our teachers are choosing this training. First, a decade of research shows that students of Board-certified teachers learn more than their peers without Board-certified teachers. Second, Board Certification allows teachers to hone their practice, showcase their talent in the classroom, and demonstrate their dedication to their students and their profession. Third, schools with National Board Certified Teachers are characterized by better teacher morale and retention and increased community involvement.

We already feel our teachers at Bells ISD are some of the best in the state, but the National Board Certification process takes it to another level. We are proud of our teachers that are willing to step out of their comfort zone and take on this task.



## SBY GOLF TOURNAMENT

The Supporters of Bells Youth (SBY) organization is hosting the 4th annual Golf Scramble at Stone Creek Country Club in Sherman at 1:00 pm on Sunday, September 13th. It is a \$400 team entry fee (4-person teams), and the SBY will use all funds to support students in the Bells FFA program. They are even providing prizes. The top team will receive a cash prize of \$1,000, and the second place team will receive \$500. If you want to participate, contact Buck Spears at 903-821-9999. The SBY donates a tremendous amount of time and funds to help Bells students, so this is going to a great cause.

Bells ISD would like to introduce one of our newest employees. Brittnie Hodge was hired as a full-time nurse for the secondary campuses. Her main office is located on the PJH campus, but she will also serve the high school. This allows Nurse Deborah Williams to stay at the BES campus full time. We are thankful to have Mrs. Hodge as a part of Bells,



especially during this time of Covid-19. She is working hard to keep the Bells ISD students and staff safe.

# Academic Excellence



The Bells ISD Education Foundation was created in January of 2020 to reward academic excellence at Bells ISD. In the spring semester alone, this organization dispersed \$6,400 to students for exceptional scores in dual credit courses, ACT and SAT exams, Advanced Placement tests, and for earning an Associate's Degree while still in high school. The Foundation plans to continue offering academic incentives for the 2020-2021 school year, and donations are greatly appreciated. If you would like to give to this wonderful cause, you can make a check out to "Bells ISD Education Foundation" and mail it to 1550 Ole Ambrose Rd, Bells, TX 75414. The donation is tax deductible and all donors will be mailed a receipt from the administration office.

The most recent example of academic excellence at Bells ISD comes from the Advanced Placement scores. School was closed in mid-March 2020, but it did not keep the following students from earning a qualifying score on their AP exams taken in May:

### **AP Biology**

Walker Durham  
Annie Fallon  
Grace Marsh  
Brenna Williams

### **AP World History**

Walker Durham  
Grace Marsh  
Brenna Williams  
Jaidan Bates  
Olivia Pedigo

### **AP Literature**

Kayton Arnold  
McKenna Everheart  
Alexandra Foy  
Maegan Hewitt  
Landri Hicks  
Landon Nelson  
Gabriella Smith

The SAT, ACT, and PSAT will be offered at Bells High School on the dates listed below:

**SAT—September 23rd**

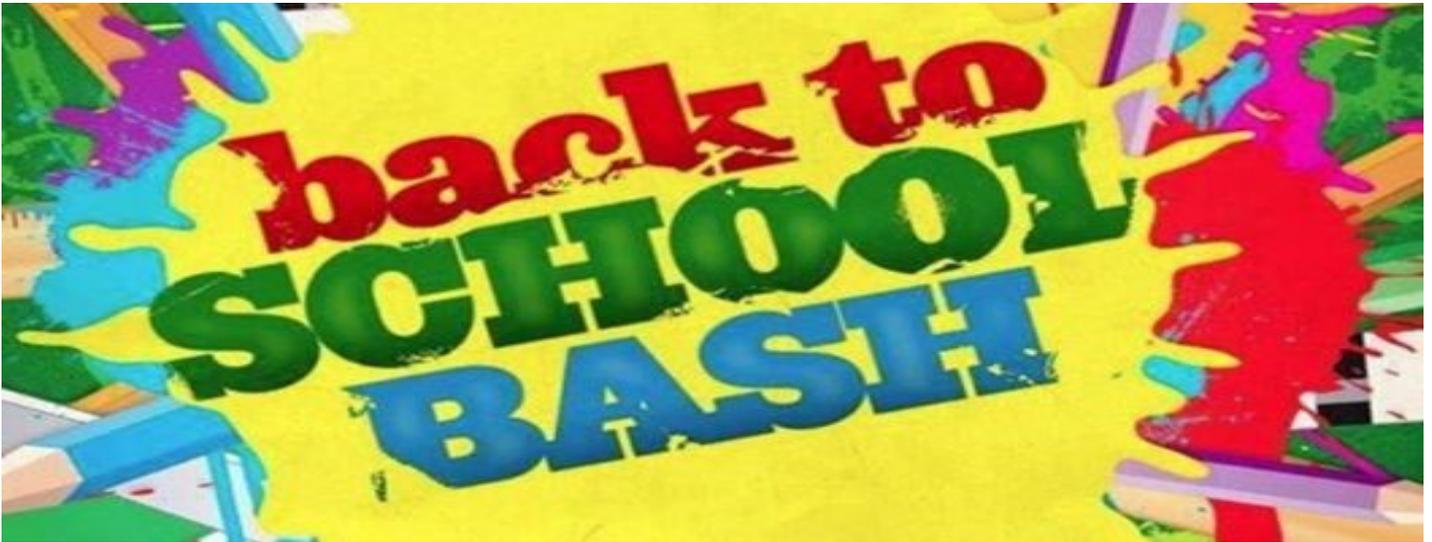
**ACT— October 6th**

**PSAT— October 1st**

Students can see the High School counselor, Ms. Branam, for details on registering for these exams. Her email is [karri.branam@bellsisd.net](mailto:karri.branam@bellsisd.net).

Each spring, the district actually pays for the ACT exam for all Juniors. This is to ensure all students have the opportunity to take a college-entrance exam.





The 9th annual Back2School Bash was held on August 8th from 10:00 am-12:00 noon. The event looked a little different this year due to Covid-19 safety protocols, but it was still a huge success. In the drive-through line, over \$5,700 worth of school supplies were handed out to over 200 students. Each student also received a “goodie-bag” and cotton-candy. Bells ISD is proud to partner with Bells First United Methodist Church each year, and we would like to say thank you to the many individuals and business that donated or volunteered to help.

Congratulations to Madelyn Wilhelm. She had the winning design for the 2020 BES campus shirt. As you can see, it is a sharp looking shirt.



The billboard on highway 82 looks great! Since the school year was cut short for our Senior Class of 2020, the district wanted to do something special for the students and parents. We will have a new posting later this semester, so stay tuned.!



# HOMECOMING WEEK

The 2020 Homecoming Court is listed below:

Landri Hicks  
 Cheznie Hale  
 Mia Moore  
 Lainie Snavelly  
 Tanner Carter  
 Chisum Priest  
 Carson Howard  
 Ben Stephens



Congratulations to the 2020 BHS Homecoming Queen, Landri Hicks, and the BHS Homecoming King, Tanner Carter. The entire court represented Bells ISD well.



As you can see pictured above, one of the themes for BES during homecoming week was "Cowboys and Aliens." There were a lot of sharp-dressed cowboys and cowgirls on campus, and Cruz Martinez was a cool three-eyed alien.



## UIL GUIDELINES

The University of Interscholastic League (UIL) implemented safety guidelines that schools must follow in response to Covid-19. UIL posted the entire document on their website under "Covid-19 Risk Mitigation Guidelines" for all to read. The major requirements are:

- All employees, parents, visitors and students ten years of age or older must wear face coverings or face shields upon entry to an area where UIL activities are being conducted.
- Required Screening before attending or participating in activities
- Schools should not allow seating in consecutive rows, and should block off seating to maintain a minimum six feet of distance between groups.
- Schools may allow spectators to attend games, contests, or events within a maximum 50% capacity limitation.

Bells ISD is working hard to follow these guidelines so that our students can continue to perform this school year. We hate that the 50% capacity rule may keep some panther fans from attending games, but we are striving for a system that is fair for all families. We want all parents and immediate family members to have the opportunity to watch a family member perform. Thank you for your patience and understanding as we sort through these new guidelines.

# PANTHER FOOTBALL

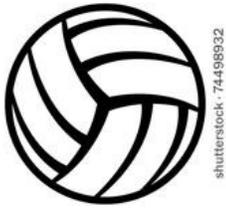


2020  **BELLS FOOTBALL**  
THE OTHER TEN

<b>14</b> AUG	<b>BONHAM</b> HERE - SCRIMMAGE   5:00 PM	<b>25</b> SEP	* <b>LEONARD</b> HERE   7:30 PM
<b>20</b> AUG	<b>WOLFE CITY</b> HERE - SCRIMMAGE   5:00 PM	<b>02</b> OCT	* <b>GUNTER</b> THERE   7:30 PM
<b>28</b> AUG	<b>WHITESBORO</b> THERE   7:30 PM	<b>09</b> OCT	* <b>BLUE RIDGE</b> HERE   7:30 PM
<b>04</b> SEP	<b>HOWE</b> HERE - HOMECOMING   7:30 PM	<b>16</b> OCT	* <b>LONE OAK</b> THERE   7:30 PM
<b>11</b> SEP	<b>VALLEY VIEW</b> HERE   7:30 PM	<b>23</b> OCT	* <b>S &amp; S</b> HERE - SENIOR NIGHT   7:30 PM
<b>18</b> SEP	<b>HOLLIDAY</b> THERE   7:30 PM	<b>30</b> OCT	* <b>WHITWRIGHT</b> THERE   7:30 PM

The Panther Football team is looking strong! The Panthers opened up the regular season with a convincing win over the Division I, 3A Whitesboro Bearcats by a score of 20-6. The Panthers then took on the Howe Bulldogs in week 2 and won big to move to 2-0 on the season. Next up is Valley View on September 11th. Everyone is excited to watch high school football and see our athletes in competition again.

UIL has handed down regulations that school districts must follow in order to play this season. The biggest requirements are that all fans must wear a face-covering and stadium capacity can be no more than 50%. Therefore, we are selling tickets in the high school and administration office each week. The district hates not allowing every Panther Fan into the game, but we must follow these guidelines if we want our student-athletes to have the opportunity to play.



# VOLLEYBALL

The Lady Panther Volleyball program has been working hard since August 3rd and is off to a good start. The Lady Panthers' current varsity record is 5-5. The JV(1) team is 5-5 and the JV(2) team is 5-3. District play began on September 8th, and the new district is made up of Bells, Gunter, Pottsboro, Blue Ridge, Howe, Bonham, and Whitewright. It will be a competitive group, and we know our girls will rise to the challenge. Make sure to come watch these girls play. Senior Night is on October 13th vs Howe.



## LADY PANTHERS

### 2020 VOLLEYBALL SCHEDULE

AUG 07	4:00 PM	S&S - SCRIMMAGE	HOME JV2/JV1/V
AUG 11	5:00 PM	TIOGA	AWAY JV2/JV1/V
AUG 14	4:30 PM	COLLINSVILLE	AWAY V/JV1
AUG 15	11:00 AM	TRENTON	HOME JV2/JV1/V
AUG 18	5:00 PM	CALLISBURG	AWAY JV2/JV1/V**
AUG 21	4:30 PM	CUMBY	HOME V/JV1/JV2
AUG 22	11:00 AM	VALLEY VIEW	HOME JV2/JV1/V
AUG 25	5:00 PM	TOM BEAN	HOME JV1/V
AUG 28	4:30 PM	ANNA	AWAY V/JV1/JV2**
SEP 01	5:00 PM	VAN ALSTYNE	AWAY JV2/JV1/V**
SEP 04	4:30 PM	COLLINSVILLE	HOME V/JV1 - HOCO
SEP 08	5:00 PM	*GUNTER	HOME JV2/JV1/V
SEP 11	4:30 PM	*POTTSBORO	HOME V/JV1
SEP 15	5:00 PM	*BLUE RIDGE	AWAY JV2/JV1/V
SEP 18	4:30 PM	*HOWE	AWAY V/JV1/JV2
SEP 22	5:00 PM	*BONHAM	HOME JV2/JV1/V
SEP 25	4:30 PM	*LEONARD	HOME V/JV1/JV2
SEP 29	5:00 PM	*WHITWRIGHT	AWAY JV2/JV1/V
OCT 02	4:30 PM	*GUNTER	AWAY V/JV1/JV2
OCT 06	5:00 PM	*POTTSBORO	AWAY JV1/V
OCT 09	4:30 PM	*BLUE RIDGE	HOME V/JV1/JV2
OCT 13	5:00 PM	*HOWE - SENIOR NIGHT	HOME JV2/JV1/V
OCT 16	4:30 PM	*BONHAM	AWAY V/JV1/JV2
OCT 20	5:00 PM	*LEONARD	AWAY JV2/JV1/V
OCT 23	4:30 PM	*WHITWRIGHT	HOME V/JV1/JV2

\*DISTRICT GAMES WILL BE PLAYED IN TWO GYMS AND GAMES WITH\*\*



HEAD COACH: LISA JOHNSON LISA.JOHNSON@BELLSISD.NET  
ASSISTANT COACH: KRISTINA STEPHENS



# CROSS COUNTRY

DATE	MEET	PLACE
Aug. 29	<i>Bells Practice Meet</i>	<i>Bells HS</i>
Sept. 4	S&S Ram Meet	S&S High School
Sept. 10	Tri Meet w/ Leonard & Blue Ridge	Bells High School
Sept. 23	Alvord	Alvord High School
Sept. 26	Denison	Denison High School
Oct. 1	Blue Ridge Tiger Trail	Blue Ridge High School
Oct. 13	District II 3A Junior High Meet	Bells High School
Oct. 14	Lindsay Meet (HS ONLY)	Lindsay High School
Oct 21	District II 3A Meet	Bells High School
Nov. 9	Regional Meet	TBA
Nov. 23	State Meet	Old Settlers Park Round Rock

The 2020-21 Marching Show  
Is titled,  
“AMERICAN SKETCHES”



We can't wait to see what our Panther Band has in store for this year's show. It appears the performance will be a tribute to our great nation, and band director, Jennifer Sewell, could not have picked a better topic for this year.

The mission statement for 2020-21 is, "We, the Bells High School Panther Band, strive to raise the bar through learning, growth, and dedication. The skills and friendships we develop make the band a unified family that displays our strength, character and commitment."

# PANTHER BAND

The Panthers are happy to welcome our new assistant band director, Richard Knabe. Mr. Knabe has a lot of experience and knowledge that will benefit the BHS and PJH students. He jumped right in and started teaching right away, and we are excited to see the students grow throughout this school year.



**Bells ISD****Administration Office**

1550 Ole Ambrose Rd.  
Bells, TX 75414  
903.965.3600

Superintendent  
Tricia Meek  
Assistant Superintendent  
Josh Weger  
Administrative Assistant  
Kristi Taraba  
Business Manager  
Marilyn Steger  
Business Admin Assistant  
Heather Waldrip

**Bells Elementary**

110 Scott Rd.  
Bells, TX 75414  
903.965.3601

Principal  
Kerry Harlan  
Assistant Principal  
Melissa Flyger  
Student Advisor  
Carla Norris  
Campus Secretary  
Stephanie Hinds

**Pritchard Junior High**

1510 Ole Ambrose Rd  
Bells, TX 75414  
903.965.3602

Principal  
Will Steger  
Counselor  
Kristi Stubbs  
Campus Secretary  
Cindy Moore

**Bells High School**

1500 Ole Ambrose Rd  
Bells, TX 75414  
903.965.3603

Principal  
Clay Rolan  
Counselor  
Karri Branam  
Campus Secretary  
Sharon Blount  
PEIMS Coordinator  
Lori Flores

***Other important dates for your calendar .....***

Monday (9/7) - Labor Day, no school for students or staff

Friday (9/18) - End of the first 6-weeks, there is a progress check that determines eligibility for extra curricular activities

Friday (10/9) - End of the 1st 9-weeks, report cards will go out on the following Wednesday

Monday (10/12) - Staff Development Day, no school for students

Friday (10/23) - Senior Night at the BHS football game, we will honor our Seniors involved in Fall activities

Wednesday (11/18) - Staff Development Day, no school for students

November 23-27 - Thanksgiving Break

December 8-11 - STAAR retake day for BHS students if needed

Friday (12/18) - Early Release and last day of the first semester