



# Memorial High School Vocal Music Show Choir Handbook 2014-15

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## Welcome

Congratulations! Whether a singer/dancer, a band or crew member, you are embarking on a very exciting journey like none other: a blend of athletics and music which creates a competitive form of entertainment using great grooves, visuals and lots of heart! This kind of thing requires a great deal of dedication especially to maintain the high level of excellence which Memorial Choirs traditionally achieve. This handbook will help guide you through the many aspects and characteristics that are unique to the show choir community. Please make sure you read and understand all of the information included to ensure a successful year. I am happy to answer any questions you might have and help along the way!

Best wishes,

Mark Lundin

Vocal Music Teacher

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## Opportunities

### Old Abe Show Choir (OASC)

The Old Abe Show Choir is the auditioned varsity show choir at Memorial and will be in its 25th season in '14-'15. Membership requires an advanced level of vocal proficiency, dance technique and high level of maturity. Most students are involved in multiple activities and take private lessons. OASC is offered as a curricular component to the school vocal music program. Additional rehearsals are Thursday evenings from 6:30-8:30 p.m. The competition season runs from January - March and typically includes 4-5 competitions. Members are required to attend vocal and choreography camps in August in addition to clinics in November and February.

### Eagle Show Choir (Eagle)

Eagle is the junior-varsity show choir at Memorial and is non-auditioned. The group is under the direction of Ms. Rachael McIlquham, ([mcilqura@uwec.edu](mailto:mcilqura@uwec.edu)). Currently, the group is all-female, open to grades 9-12 and serves as the "prep" to OASC. Rehearsals are Tuesday evenings from 6:30-8:30 and extra clinics are at the discretion of the director. The competition season runs from January - March and typically includes 3-4 competitions.

### Show Band

The back up combos for the show choirs include a rhythm section and horn line. The members are invited (but not required) to play in both ensembles. Rehearsals typically begin mid-September and run throughout the season. Members must commit to ALL performances.

### Crew

Each ensemble will have a small group of 4-6 members which assist with necessary costume or set changes. They will travel with the ensembles and rehearse as needed.

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## Season Overview (Actual dates may be TBD)

### June

- En Avant Dance Fundraiser (6/15, 6/16)
- Costume measuring

### August

- OASC Vocal Camp (Aug. 4-5; 9-noon)
- OASC Choreo Camp (Tentative: Aug. 18-22; 9am-9pm)
- Eagle Camp (TBD)
- The last day of Camp will include a parent show to share what the kids learned!

### September

- Weekly rehearsals begin: OASC Thursday nights, Eagle Tuesday nights
- Various fundraisers and events to kick-off the year
- Tech Team will meet to determine set and tech needs for the competition season

### November

- OASC: Chi-Hi Supershow Showcase, Nov. 8, 4 p.m. & 8 p.m.
- OASC: Clean-up Clinic (TBD)

### January

- OASC: Elementary School Tours
- Jan 17: Onalaska Classic
- Jan 24: Altoona Locopalooza

### February

- Feb 6-7: Winterfest! (All Hands On Deck)
- Feb 28: Monona Grove Silver Stage Invitational

### March

- Mar 7: Totino-Grace Spectacular

### April

- Middle School Tours (TBA)

### May

- Pops Concert and Banquets

\*\*Please see the parent expectations page for more detailed notes on how to get involved in these activities. We need your support in order for the organization to be successful.

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## Member expectations

All students and their parents will be required to sign a contract that outlines the responsibilities and expectations of the participant including guidelines for rehearsals and performances, general policies, costumes and behavior expectations. These will be covered in detail with the students and discussed at the parent meeting held at the beginning of the season.

Detailed expectations are below, but in a nutshell all members are expected to:

- Attend all rehearsals and performances
- Focus and always follow instructions of directors, captains, managers and section leaders.
- Practice often and with purpose - “Deliberate Practice”
- Maintain a positive attitude; be respectful and find compromise if necessary
- Make a concerted effort to attend conditioning activities and extra rehearsals
- Be an ambassador of Memorial High School; be friendly and courteous at all times
- Find ways to help others in need and SEEK HELP when necessary

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## Attendance

In show choir, everyone is a “starter.” In our program, we do not have subs. Absences result in loss of time and hurt the mutual trust among members. There is no way to make up a missed rehearsal experience.

Students will review the activity calendar and make note of any possible conflicts. I understand conflicts may arise. In that case, students will need to complete an absence form keeping in mind not all absences will be considered “excused.” See below for specifics.

- 1. Choreography Camp and cleaning clinics** - During the camps, we will focus primarily on choreography and transitional aspects of our competition show. At this time, all blocking and moving assignments are given; therefore, any absence during camp is extremely detrimental to the ensemble. Only under extreme circumstances will members be excused from any portion of camp. If this situation should arise, it is up to the student to draw up a plan, including a timeline with dance captains who will be involved in teaching the makeup. This will be signed by the student, parents and director IN ADVANCE of the camp.
- 2. School Attendance and Eligibility** - In the event a student is absent from school during the day, that student is expected to stay home and get better. Students must be in school all day in order to be eligible for an evening rehearsal or performance.
- 3. Rehearsal Attendance**
  - All absences (even if the student is gone from school) will require completion of the show choir absence form. This will be available on the web site or in the choir room. The form MUST be completed by the following rehearsal. UNTIL this form is complete, the student will NOT be eligible for performance or competition.
  - Absences will be marked excused or unexcused by the director.

- Excused absences generally only include illness or a family emergency. Work, social events, appointments and family visits are unexcused.
- An unexcused absence from rehearsal may result in suspension from a performance or competition. Two unexcused absences will result in a conference with the student and parent regarding dismissal from the group.
- Three tardies will be considered an unexcused absence.
- Prolonged illness/injury: If a student is unable to attend or participate in multiple rehearsals, the director will require an official memo from the parent and/or doctor explaining the illness and indicating a prognosis and treatment plan. Without this memo, the student will be unable to participate in any show choir activity.

#### **4. Competition/Performance Attendance**

- Everyone is expected to be at every competition and performance. No one will be excused except under extreme circumstances. Exceptions will be made for unexpected athletic playoff dates or college admission requirements.

**5. Rehearsal Attendance & Co-curricular Activities/Athletics** - Every effort will be made to allow participants to participate in multiple co-curricular activities. Students who have co-curricular conflicts will follow a 50/50 situation - sharing time evenly between both activities. When the activity has a conflicting game or meet, the student will participate in that game or meet.

**6. Competition/Performance Attendance & Co-curricular Activities/Athletics** - In most cases the student is required to perform with OASC. If there is an extreme conflict, the student and parent must have a conference with the director well in advance of the event to determine participation, knowing that blocking and solos may be affected.

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### **Behavior and Competition Etiquette**

The Memorial Vocal Music program takes great pride in its performances and are proud to represent Eau Claire Memorial High School both on and off the stage. Old Abe has earned a reputation of courteous, positive behavior. In order to maintain this tradition, students are expected to follow the code of conduct.

As I take this very seriously, any student who makes choices which negatively affect the group in performance or rehearsal will be subject to a conference with the director and parent to determine if the student is ready to participate in the show choir program.

- 1. In rehearsal** - Students are expected to stay quiet and focused unless invited to ask a question or respond. The director or captain may have a plan to work through before allowing questions. Students will remain positive and resolve conflict appropriately.
- 2. At the competition** - Students will not act in any way which draws undue negative attention. Students are expected to watch the other shows and get to know other participants during the day. Students are NOT allowed to hang out in the homeroom unless they are preparing for performance. Students must remain at the competition site all day. Please refrain from making any negative comments about any group or performance.

3. **Dress Code** - At performances AND in rehearsals, students must always follow the school dress code. At competitions, students are encouraged to wear team-wear but always in a classy way: please no saggy sweatpants or ripped clothing.
4. **Alcohol, Tobacco, Other Drugs** - All members must abide by the ECASD Athletic Code regarding the use of ATOD or other criminal activity. Since a code violation could lead to suspension for 25% of the season, continued membership is up for review. A code violation occurring during a show choir event may result in immediate dismissal.

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## Transportation

1. **Coach or School bus** - Students will ride together on a coach or school bus depending on destination. We will have two parent chaperones riding each bus to help assist with loading/unloading and also to serve as homeroom assistants at the competition. These will be determined toward the beginning of the competition season.
2. **Riding with parents** - Students who choose to ride with parents to or from a competition must inform the director in writing prior to departure. Students who leave with a parent must check in with a director or chaperone before leaving.
3. **Overnight Hotel Stays** - Certain competitions may require overnight stays. The Booster Organization will facilitate hotel arrangements and may secure some parent rooms at the reduced rate. Hotel room payment for students will be included into the transportation portion of the cost. Specifics on Hotel Stays will be distributed should the need arise.

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## Costume Care & Performance Accessories

Specific Costume Care instructions will be given once the costumes arrive. In general, costumes should be treated with respect and hung up on a hanger in a garment bag at all times. Individual pieces, including shoes, undergarments and any accessories (hats, props etc) should be clearly labeled with FULL NAMES in a spot easily identified by parents and crew members – not just the student. Any costume pieces left in the choir room, dressing rooms, auditorium etc. without prior approval of the Director may be charged a “finder’s fee” to be returned.

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## Financial Accountability

Please refer to the “Financial Accountability Agreement” for more detailed information. The MHS Choir Boosters organization serves to ensure smooth operation of the show choir program and that no student will be denied an opportunity.

The 2014-2015 show choir season investment is \$700 per student. This will include all fees, costumes, accessories and travel costs. Parents may pay \$700 at once or choose four installments of \$175. The student will not be able to perform if his/her account is not up to date. **Please make all payments to MHS Choir Boosters and send to Staci Bowe, 714 Richard Dr. 54701**

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## Parent Expectations

1. **Parent Involvement** - The show choir members need your support! We need all parents to be involved in fundraising, special events and of course as fans!
2. **Communication** - We will do our best to relay information via email and web site. If you have any questions or concerns, please call or email right away.
3. **Tuition Payments** - Please be prompt with your tuition payments. If you have concerns or are experiencing economic challenge, please contact Staci Bowe (715) 559-3322.
4. **Be a fan!** - At the competitions: Wear your team wear, sit in the first two rows and participate in cheering! Please refrain from gasping or distracting performers if something happens to go wrong during the show!
5. **Etiquette** - Parents will be held to a high standard as they represent Memorial HS with the kids. It is important that you stay positive in all comments throughout the day at competitions. Someone else is always listening and we want to be known as supportive to all groups. Negative comments will hurt everyone; if you blow out another person's candle, it only dims the light for everyone!

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## Private Lessons

Students are encouraged to study privately to extend their learning. Students who study privately will be ahead of the game and will also earn points toward a choir letter. If you are interested, please ask Mr. Lundin for a directory of private teachers in the area or check the bulletin board for opportunities.

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## A Final Note on Teamwork & Family

Please remember that we'd like to create a "family" among choirs where everyone works together. Each choir supports the other. The chaperones work together, the directors work together, and the kids need to work together to achieve a shared goal. We want to build an environment where we grow relationships and memories through teamwork. We want every choir to be the best they can be, and at the same time support others in the family so that they too can thrive. We expect that all performers, parents and fans will be respectful and supportive of all the choirs and members. Whether you are a singer/dancer, band member or on the crew, we must all work together as a family. We are so lucky to have such a positive activity where our students can participate in something they love and are so passionate about, where they can express themselves through song and dance, where they can build relationships and memories that will last a lifetime. Let's stay positive and work together!