

*O'Fallon Township High School Music Department*

**2018 – 2019**

**Great**

**Expectations**

**Show Choir**

**Handbook**

# **2018-2019 OTHS Show Choir Handbook**

OTHS show choir has been in existence since the early 1960s, having performed both locally and nationally, winning numerous awards in the process. These extracurricular choirs serve as the public ambassador for an extensive choral program at O'Fallon Township High School. It is the goal of the ensemble to provide the highest quality of vocal music and dance education for its members, while continuing to uphold its reputation as an excellent extracurricular performance ensemble. Most importantly, this group exists to create a sense of belonging amongst its members.

**GREAT EXPECTATIONS** is a selective and competitive mixed show choir that consists of freshmen – senior women and men. All members of Great Expectations will be expected to attend all rehearsals and performances, and should anticipate a high level of time and commitment to the group's success.

## **Rehearsal Schedule**

### **Weekly Rehearsals**

Rehearsals will take place on Mondays from 6:00PM – 9:00PM at the Milburn campus. On occasions where we do not have school no Monday, rehearsals will be on the Tuesday following.

### **Competitions and Additional Rehearsals**

Members should also expect to commit several additional days in the fall semester to marathon rehearsals, in addition to several weekends in February – March for the competition season. Extended or extra rehearsals might be added when the group has a visiting choreographer, or an upcoming performance or competition.

*Please refer to the detailed rehearsal schedule provided for specific dates.*

**It must also be noted that any student who wishes to participate as a singer/dancer in show choir must be enrolled in either Freshmen, Treble, Concert, or Chamber Choir for the 2018-2019 school year. No exceptions.**

## GUIDELINES

Each show choir member is responsible for these guidelines. In order to be successful, we must ensure that each and every student and parent are aware of my expectations, and the time commitment that is being asked of them. Students - be prepared to work hard. If after reviewing this handbook and its policies, you feel that you cannot fully commit yourself to this program; it is recommended that you reconsider your participation in show choir at this time.

If at any time any of these rules or expectations are not followed, a show choir member will be placed on probation and will not be permitted to participate in rehearsals or performances. Every member must be prepared to contribute equally to the program in order to ensure its success. They are expected to be on time, work hard, and be responsible for all show choir related items.

**ATTITUDE** is the key in making this experience successful for you. The experience you get while in show choir will be a direct reflection of the attitude and effort you put forth. A positive and optimistic attitude is not only expected but required by all members.

**RESPECT** from others is a reflection of the respect you give. Remember, we are a family, and a family is supportive of one another's efforts, both during and outside rehearsals. Be there for each other, and be aware of how each other is feeling. A group that respects one another will perform well on stage.

**COMMITMENT** is expected and required at every rehearsal and performance. Be sure that you are keeping track of the show choir schedule and *allocating your other time responsibly*. You must come prepared to work hard at every rehearsal, and if needed, work on material outside of rehearsals to ensure that rehearsal time is productive for the entire group. In addition, your participation in all show choir fundraising events will be required. Please see the attendance portion of the handbook for policies pertaining to absences, tardiness, etc. All absences must be turned into your director by the first day of rehearsal.

## ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

Each Friday, OTHS compiles a list of students who are not eligible to participate in extracurricular activities due to their poor academic standing. Students on this list are failing one or more of their classes and are not, under any circumstances, allowed to participate in show choir rehearsals and/or competitions the *following week*. It is imperative that students keep up with their school work and stay off this list.

ANY STUDENT WHO IS PLACED ON THIS LIST MORE THAN ONCE WILL BE REMOVED FROM THE GROUP.

## ATTENDANCE

**Please refer the separate show choir schedule for specific dates and times. In addition, please turn in the conflict form to your director no later than Tuesday, August 28th.**

1. Students will be allowed 2 excused absences at the discretion of the director. These absences must be placed on the conflict list provided in order to be considered excused. If a conflict comes up after the form is due, the director must know 10 days in advance, and it must be received in writing from a parent or guardian.
2. The students will receive 1 free pass to use for the year on any unexcused absence. This pass can be used without a 10 day notice and can be used with no questions asked. *There are certain dates, however, that will not be eligible for a free pass.*
3. Excused tardiness or absences due to a school- sponsored event or activity will always be considered. Prior verbal and written communication with the director is essential and mandatory under these circumstances.
4. Excused absence from school due to illness is also counted as an excused absence from show choir, and will not count towards your 2 excused absences. Emergencies are also considered and will not be counted towards your 2 excused absences. As stated before, communication with the director (phone call or email the day of the absence) is necessary to eliminate any misunderstandings.
5. UNEXCUSED TARDINESS OR ABSENCE WILL NOT BE TOLERATED. Six late arrivals will result in removal from the group. If you exceed your 2 allotted excused absences, or acquire 2 unexcused absences, it will also result in removal of the group.
6. Re-admittance into the group, following dismissal for attendance purposes, will be pending upon a conference between the director, student, and parent/guardian.

# COMPETITIONS

Competition days are an all-day, sometimes all weekend, commitment. We will travel by school bus and arrive early enough to locate our home room and begin set up and preparations. After we compete, we will stay and support the other show choirs in attendance. This includes the awards presentation and a possible finals performance. Please plan your day accordingly. We need ALL members to be present for the entirety of the day's events.

## Competition Guidelines:

1. The purpose of attending competitions is not only to compete, but to watch and support other show choirs. Therefore, you may not be in the homeroom at any time, other than to prepare for our show.
2. G.E. represents OTHS and the O'Fallon community AT ALL TIMES. You are expected to be organized, well mannered, well-groomed, and polite for the entire duration of the competition. Remember – you might be someone's first and last impression of the choir, the school, or the community. Make it count!
3. After we have competed in our first performance, students should report directly to the homeroom to reset all their garments for the next performance. Do not leave any costume pieces or accessories off the hanger or out of your garment bag. Any loss or damage of costumes pieces or accessories may result in removal from future performances or expensive replacement costs.
4. ALWAYS support other show choirs and their efforts. They have been working just as hard as all of you, and let's face it; nobody wants to be in the worst show choir. Speaking negatively about other choirs, students, parents, or judges, will not be tolerated at any time. Instead, choose to be supportive and kind towards others. This applies to both students and parents representing OTHS.

## PHYSICAL REQUIREMENT

Due to the high physical demands of show choir, every member of GE MUST have a current physical on file in order to participate in show choir. The physical must be turned in *to the school* by August 27. Any student without a current physical will not be allowed to participate until it is completed and turned in.

## PARTICIPATION COSTS

**Due to the rising costs of operating a highly competitive show choir program, costumes, music, equipment, travel, competition, hotel accommodations, and instruction expenses will be paid by the participants.** O’Fallon’s show choir fees continue to be on the lower end of the spectrum, and we will continue to provide quality experiences for your student at the lowest possible cost. ALL FEES ARE NON-REFUNDABLE. Students are responsible to pay for any additional items (leotard, extra pair of tights, food at competitions, etc.) that are not outlined below. Please note that while student participation is of the utmost importance, the show choir program simply cannot function without these fees, and they are a requirement to participate in show choir. Failure to make payments on time and without communicating to the director may result in probation or removal from rehearsals, performances, and/or competitions. *Any student with outstanding fees from the previous year will not be allowed to participate the following year until those fees have been paid.*

Recognizing that this is a considerable cost to any family, we will continue to work diligently to provide fundraising opportunities for all students to be able to offset the costs associated with G.E. **NO STUDENT WILL BE EXCLUDED FROM THE ACTIVITY FOR REASONS OF FINANCIAL HARDSHIP.** All financial matters will be handled with the highest level of discretion and confidentiality. **That being said, this does not in any way mean that a student may participate in show choir without paying the full fee.** The student and family must communicate a payment plan with the director prior to participation in any show choir related activity. The director is willing to work with you to make it possible for your student to participate in show choir while making sure the proper payments are being made in a timely manner.

**The O’Fallon Choral Risers Association (Choir Boosters) offers a scholarship opportunity to students in need. Applications will be available in mid-August. OCRA can award up to 75% of the total fee. The deposit must be paid prior to submitting the application. Once scholarship recipients are decided, the remaining balance of the fee must be paid in full before the scholarship money is awarded.**

Individual singer/dancer fees for GREAT EXPECTATIONS will come to a total of \$600.

The fees will be divided and dispersed among the following areas as indicated.

<b>EXPENSE</b>	<b>\$ AMOUNT</b>
Costumes	\$300
Shoes and Accessories	\$60
Transportation	\$40
Hotel	\$80
Fundraiser Tickets	\$100
T -shirt costs	\$20
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$600</b>

**PLEASE INCLUDE THE PAYMENT COUPONS PROVIDED IN  
THE CONTRACT WITH ALL SHOW CHOIR PAYMENTS.**

**Please note: OTHS SCHOOL ACTIVITY FEE**

*O'Fallon Township High School District # 203 charges a required \$150 activity fee to any student who participates in an extracurricular activity. This fee is in addition to the show choir fee, and is in no way related to the show choir program. This fee must be paid separately, and must be turned in to the school. As is school rule, a student cannot participate unless the fee is paid*

**FUNDRAISING**

Students will be provided opportunities to work or participate in several fundraisers that allow them to raise money. The money they raise will go towards their participation fees. In addition, the show choir program hosts several fundraisers throughout the year, in which proceeds go into the show choir activity account. The O'Town Showdown Show Choir

Invitational and Spring Sing are ways in which the show choir uses its talent to raise money for the program.

These fundraisers will not be possible without the help of both the students and their parents, and participation in them is expected.

Show choir members are required at all fundraising events.

**PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

Active parent participation is not only allowed, but highly encouraged! Show choir competitions are exciting events, and we would love to see any and all parents in attendance. If you have never been exposed to show choir, you are in for a treat!

We need as many of you there to cheer us on!

Parents will not only be called upon to attend performances or competitions, but also to volunteer their time to assist the show choir in other ways. It is REQUIRED that show choir parents contribute to at least two of our fundraising events. EVERY SHOW CHOIR PARENT MUST WORK AT LEAST ONE SHIFT AT THE O'TOWN SHOWDOWN. In addition to fundraising, parents will be needed to act as chaperones for our competition weekends. Student safety is of the utmost importance, and chaperones are needed to ensure the students are where they need to be when they are supposed to be there. The director will not allow students to travel to any competition without the necessary number of chaperones.

The more help we have, the more opportunities the students will have! We thank you deeply in advance for your help and involvement with the show choir program. We recognize that your time is valuable, and we appreciate your efforts.

**\*All policies and their administration are at the discretion of the directors with little to no exceptions. Please read this form in its entirety prior to completing and return the contract. If you have any questions or concerns about any of the guidelines listed in the handbook, please contact Mr. Price (618) 632-3507 Ext. 522 or [pricee@oths.us](mailto:pricee@oths.us) prior to committing to the show choir program.**