

**2009-2010**

**Wheaton Warrenville  
South High School**

# **Classics**

**Handbook**

Revised 5/11/09

**2009-2010 WWSHS  
Classics  
Handbook**

**The Classics** is a highly selective and competitive show choir that performs regularly throughout the community in addition to its competition schedule in the spring. This extracurricular choir serves as the public ambassador for an extensive choral program at Wheaton Warrenville South High School. The group has been in existence for over 25 years, having performed both locally and nationally and won numerous awards during its tenure at the school. **The Classics** show choir strives to provide the highest quality of music and dance education for its members, while continuing to uphold its reputation as a fine performing ensemble.

**The Classics** is a mixed choral ensemble that will consist of Freshman - Senior girls and boys. Freshmen selected to be members of the 2009-2010 **Classics** will serve in an "apprenticeship" role. They will keep the same schedule as the rest of the singer/dancers including all rehearsals, performances, and trips. They will perform at all community events (Cabaret, Hubble Showcase, Cream of Wheaton, etc.), but might not perform in the full show at competitions unless they need to fill in for one of the sophomore, junior, or senior members of the group who might be missing (due to conflict, illness, attendance violation, etc.). Instead, they will use the competitions as an opportunity to travel, learn, and help the group from behind the scenes in preparation for their latter three years in the choir.

During the 2009-2010 school year, the group will rehearse for two and a half hours every Monday and Thursday evening (see schedule). Last year, **The Classics** were quite successful in their competitive efforts, and we anticipate the same to be true in the upcoming season. Our competition schedule will be challenging and take us to a number of great competitions in the Midwest. Perhaps the most notable competition appearance will be at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual WWS Choral Invitational, held on March 12-13, 2010.

Each year, the student members of **The Classics** have the opportunity to work with some of the best show production experts in the country. Not only does this allow them to maximize their performing potential, it gives them great insight into the workings of the professional performing world. While the group keeps a very tight and strict schedule, its members have a lot of fun along the way, building friendships and memories that will last a lifetime.

## General Guidelines

The show choir season lasts throughout the school year beginning with the Retreat in August and ending in April after the Cabaret Benefit Night. The dates listed below are some of the most important dates for the choir this year. Attendance at all rehearsals and performances is required with very few exceptions. Though we make efforts to work around student schedules, attendance at the performances and rehearsals listed below is mandatory to be a member of the group.

|                |          |               |                   |                         |
|----------------|----------|---------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| August 2-4     | Sun-Tues | TBA           | Retreat           | East Troy, WI           |
| October 12     | Monday   | 5-9 PM        | Rehearsal/Clinic  | Choir Room              |
| January 2      | Saturday | TBA           | Workshop          | Waubonsie Valley HS     |
| January 7      | Thursday | 8:00 PM       | Preview/Reception | Auditorium              |
| January 15-17  | Fri-Sun  | TBA           | Competition       | Mt. Zion *              |
| January 22-24  | Fri-Sun  | TBA           | Competition       | TBA *                   |
| February 5-7   | Fri-Sun  | TBA           | Competition       | TBA *                   |
| February 19-21 | Fri-Sun  | TBA           | Competition       | TBA *                   |
| March 5-6      | Fri-Sat  | TBA           | Competition       | Arlington Heights, IL * |
| March 12-13    | Fri-Sat  | TBA           | Competition       | WWS Choral Invite       |
| April 18       | Saturday | 3:00-10:30 PM | Cabaret           | WWSHS                   |

If you have any conflicts with these dates, please bring them to the attention of Mr. Burlace prior to the dance callback. Depending upon what you will miss, you *may* still be eligible for participation in the group (at the discretion of the directing staff).

*\*Competition dates and locations are subject to change pending contest availability and administrative approval.\**

**Attitude** is the key in making this experience successful for you. What you get out of your participation is a product of the attitude you bring and the effort you exert, and has an impact on those around you.

**Respect** from others is a reflection of what you give. Support one another in all efforts, both during and outside of performances. In a group, you are only as good as the person next to you.

**Commitment** occurs in EVERY rehearsal and performance. Please see the **Attendance** section of the handbook for policies pertaining to absences, tardies, etc. Again, potential absences from major rehearsals and performances (see above) should be cleared prior to the student's participation in the dance callback.

**Prepare** for each and every rehearsal. In order to be at your best, you will need to work on individual issues with the material outside of rehearsal to ensure that all time spent with the group is as productive as it can be.

Each student is responsible for these established guidelines. If, after reviewing these policies, you feel you cannot commit to the program, it is recommended that you not participate at this time.

## **Attendance**

1. Students will be allowed 2 excused absences at the discretion of the director. These absences must be requested in writing by the student or parent 2 weeks prior to the absence.
2. The students will receive 1 free pass to use for the year on any other unexcused absence. This pass can be used without a 2 week notice and can be used with no questions asked. Due to the importance of students being at ALL rehearsals during the week prior to each performance and competition, blackout dates shown on the calendar (see attached) will apply. You will not be allowed to use your pass during these blackout dates. Any student who misses a black-out date due to their free pass will forfeit the opportunity to perform at the group's next outing. In that case, the apprentices will be selected to fill the spot(s). Any members who have used their pass and have a 2<sup>nd</sup> unexcused absence will be removed from the group and be permanently replaced by the apprentices.
3. Excused tardiness or absences due to a school-sponsored event will always be considered. Prior communication with the directing staff is essential in these cases.
4. Excused absence from school due to illness is also an excused absence from show choir and will not count towards your allotted absences. Again, communication with the directing staff (phone call or e-mail the day of the absence) will help to alleviate potential misunderstandings.
5. Unexcused tardiness will not be tolerated. Three late arrivals will result in removal from the group.
6. Re-admittance into the group, following dismissal for attendance purposes, will be pending upon a conference between the director, student and the parents.

## **Performance Etiquette/Costumes/Appearance Standards**

Each performance is important and is to be the very best experience our audience can have. Be excited and physically involved. Be artistic, expressive, and worth watching and hearing every time you are on stage. No performance is any more or less important than any other. Because of that, students should tend to their appearance (hair, makeup, and uniforms) in the same way every time they are in front of an audience so that our looks will not in any way take away from the audience's focus on our performance. (The directing staff will clearly communicate any exceptions to this policy.)

Members are responsible for ALL costume pieces purchased and assigned. Garments and accessories must be cleaned and complete for EACH performance. You will not perform if this condition is not met. All assigned jewelry and garments shall be worn appropriately for performances, and no unassigned jewelry or clothing will be permitted. Students should be clean shaven (guys: **NO** facial hair with the exception of eyebrows and eyelashes). Hair should be worn out of the face (girls: half up with full-bodied curls), and girls should wear stage-appropriate makeup.

## Costs

Due to the rising costs of operating a highly competitive show choir program (the annual wear and tear of garments and the custom nature of the clothing worn by each student, custom music arrangements, nationally-renown clinicians, etc.), all costume, music, equipment, travel, competition, and prop expenses will be paid in full by the participants. Total student fees are nonrefundable and will not exceed \$1335 payable as follows:

|             |                        |
|-------------|------------------------|
| May 26      | \$500 (non-refundable) |
| August 2    | \$400                  |
| October 5   | \$250                  |
| November 16 | \$185                  |

The \$1335 fee will be divided and dispersed among the following areas as indicated:

|                      |       |
|----------------------|-------|
| Retreat/Travel       | \$585 |
| Costumes             | \$550 |
| Music/Equipment      | \$125 |
| Competitions/Clinics | \$75  |

Recognizing that this is a considerable cost to any family, we will continue to work diligently to provide fundraising opportunities for students to be able to offset the costs associated with the Classics. *As is established policy, no student will be excluded from the activity for reasons of financial hardship.*

## Competitions

Competition days usually consist of an all day commitment. We will travel together by bus and arrive early enough for set up and preparation. After our competition, we will stay and support the other show choirs in attendance. This will include the awards presentation and possibly a performance in the evening finals. Please plan your day accordingly. We need all members to effectively participate in these events. Some general guidelines for competitions:

1. We attend competitions to watch other groups in addition to performing ourselves. Therefore, the homeroom will be locked when not in use preparing for our show.
2. **The Classics** represent WWSHS and the community at all times, not just during the performance. Please be organized, well-mannered, well-groomed, and polite for the duration of the contest.
3. After we have completed our preliminary performance, the student members will go directly to the homeroom and reset all garments for the next performance. Do not leave any articles of clothing misplaced or off of a hanger outside of your garment bag. Any loss of garments could result in removal from future performances and/or expensive replacement costs.
4. Support other groups and their efforts. Remember: no student wants to be in the world's *worst* show choir. Please be respectful of all performances. Do not speak negatively about choirs, students, schools, parents, judges, etc. Rather, choose to celebrate the accomplishments of others. (This applies to both students AND adults representing WWSHS!)

## Travel Guidelines

As we prepare for our travels, keep in mind the purpose of each trip. Making music of the highest caliber is our first priority. We represent our communities and state as musical ambassadors. As such, we carry great responsibility, both individually and collectively. We are called upon to demonstrate for the duration of our travels the very best in personal behavior, integrity, group/team attitude, and, of course, musicality, which is, in turn, representative of the highest standards. By behaving responsibly and mindfully, by planning ahead, and having some basic guidelines, we will all have a GREAT experience. Some specific guidelines:

1. Be early to the bus so that we may depart on time. We will not move until all are accounted for. *To be early is to be on time; to be on time is to be late.* A cardinal rule of touring is that you NEVER keep the group waiting.
2. Our bus time is best used to rest the voice, visit with your neighbor, read, watch a video, and relax. Please avoid shouting and generally trying to be heard over the ambient din of the bus.
3. Please remember that the bus is our home on the road for the tour, and that each member will be responsible to take care of his/her belongings, space and any trash. We are guests on the bus and must treat the vehicle and our space accordingly.
4. Attire for traveling is to be neat and clean. The staff will be clear as to when a uniformed appearance is necessary. Otherwise, assume dress is "business casual" (no jeans, t-shirts, etc.) while we are together representing the group in public.
5. You must be quiet in public spaces such as hotels, meeting rooms, convention centers, etc. Please respect the space of other travelers, and of anyone else sharing a room, bus, plane, restaurant, etc.
6. **THERE IS A ZERO TOLERANCE RULE FOR ANY ILLEGAL SUBSTANCE.** No tobacco, alcohol, or drugs! Any person who violates this rule will be sent home at their expense, and be prosecuted to the fullest extent of school conduct code and the law. While there will be directors and chaperones present throughout a trip, it is expected that parents send their children on tour only after discussing responsible choices and behaviors. Parents accept full liability for injuries, accidents, and events brought about by the behaviors and actions of their child.
7. The director makes all room assignments in advance. No changes will be made unless initiated by the director. Each evening, curfew will be established by the director as dictated by the hotel and our evening activities. For your safety and for the integrity of the choir, curfew means to be in your room for the night. Students are NOT allowed in rooms of the opposite gender at any time! After curfew, questions such as "May I go to the vending machines?" or "May I go to \_\_\_'s room?", etc. will be answered simply, "No." Any disturbance in hotels or public areas which in any way compromises our roles as musical ambassadors for WW South and the District 200 community will not be tolerated.
8. All expenses incurred on the trip (meals, etc.) not covered by the school or choir program are

the responsibility of the participants.

In general, *be where you are supposed to be, when you are supposed to be there, doing what you are supposed to do, in the way you are supposed to do it.*

### **Summer Camps**

Summer camp information (Showchoir Camps of America, Rising Stars, etc.) is available from the director, and all choir members are expected to take advantage of these opportunities. Although these camps are not included in your fees for the year, it is highly recommended to take advantage of any opportunities available to you that will help to improve your performing skills.

### **Leadership Positions**

**The Classics** are so successful due mostly to the ownership that the student members and their parents take in leading the group. Whenever possible, students will be given responsibility for aspects of the experience within their control (i.e. Dance Captains, Social Chairs, Section Leaders, etc.) While this is certainly not an exhaustive listing of that which needs to be done, it gives a good indication of some of the ways that students can be involved in the choir's leadership. Some of these roles are voted upon; others will be appointed by the director.

In addition to the aforementioned student leadership positions, there will be many opportunities for parents to become involved with **The Classics** to help coordinate other volunteer activities, head committees, and provide valuable assistance throughout the course of the year. Most of the parent positions are filled on a volunteer basis, and opportunities will be available in many of the following categories as well as several others not mentioned here:

|              |                    |               |
|--------------|--------------------|---------------|
| Invitational | Retreat            | Wardrobe      |
| Fundraising  | Spirit/Fan Support | Props and Set |
| Chaperoning  | Banquet            |               |

Remember: our success is contingent upon your participation in the operation of the group. Please feel free to volunteer for the committees as much as is possible. Thank you in advance for your help!

*All policies and their administration are at the discretion of the director with no exceptions. If you have any questions or concerns about the above guidelines, please free to contact Mr. Burlace (630-784-7285 or [jburlace@cusd200.org](mailto:jburlace@cusd200.org)) before committing to the show choir program.*