

# JEFFERSON HIGH SCHOOL SHOW CHOIR HANDBOOK 2023-2024

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**Welcome to the Jefferson Show Choir Family! We are so excited to have you join our team for the 2023-2024 season. Through membership in Jefferson Show Choir, students gain self-discipline, leadership abilities, communication skills, and above all, friendships and memories to last a lifetime! Students will be expected to:**

- Accept responsibility for your education, actions, and responsibilities.
- Communicate effectively with the directors, parents, classmates, and other coaches, teachers, directors.
- Build and exhibit self-discipline.
- Contribute to the group and the learning process, not detract from it.

## IMPORTANT REMINDERS

- ★ All singer/dancers **MUST** be enrolled in one of the curricular choirs at Jefferson High School. Band and Tech Crew members are strongly encouraged to be enrolled in a curricular band, orchestra or choir.
  - All students who attain membership in show choir are expected to represent their school, families, and community in a positive manner at all times, both on the performing stage and off.
  - All members, regardless of position on stage or off, must possess poise, citizenship, and positive attitude.
- ★ *The audition does not end* when a student is selected for membership in the group.
  - Each rehearsal and/or performance is a chance to improve skills and to work in a team environment with others toward the same goal.
  - Students *are not guaranteed a place on the performing stage* simply by passing the audition, but by earning that position through hard work and dedication in rehearsal.
- ★ ALL decisions regarding blocking, performing status, solos, etc. will be made by the directors based on observation and professional opinion.
  - These are very difficult decisions for the directors to make. Students are expected to carry themselves with professionalism and maturity regarding these decisions. Please remember that all decisions made are for the good of the team.
- ★ Not everyone will necessarily be in every song—this is for various reasons:
  - Some positions will be shared due to students missing competitions.
  - We have more Sopranos and Altos in relation to Tenors and Basses.
  - We may have students in swing positions—this means that they will not always be on stage—but they should be prepared to go into any position on stage at a moment’s notice. This helps prevent wasted time re-blocking for absences.

**Parents (not only singer/dancer parents, but also band and tech crew parents) we need your help in the following areas:**

- Help your *student(s)* to communicate effectively with the directors.
- We will call on you to help chaperone, provide food or a venue for social events, etc.
- Volunteer for events – Concerts, the Cavalier Classic, and the Concert Choir Dinner/Variety Show.
- Assist your student(s) in their fundraising efforts.
- JHS Booster Club representation.

## Schedule & Attendance:

Please refer to the master calendar on [www.JeffersonChoirs.com](http://www.JeffersonChoirs.com) for a complete list of practices, concerts, competitions, etc. The most current version is also attached.

This is a team activity, and each individual person is *extremely* important to the success of the whole team. Students **MUST** do everything in their power to attend choreography retreats, all after school and evening rehearsals, and *every* performance.

Students should be able to participate in as many high school activities as they desire, *as long as they can maintain their academic grades and perform at an acceptable standard in each activity*. This means adhering to all attendance, rehearsal, and performance policies for each activity.

Knowing that it is sometimes not possible to be at everything, the key to this is always COMMUNICATION. Please let us know right away if you are concerned about scheduling or know of dates that you will have to compromise with another team, etc.

Please immediately make note of important dates as a family (see the attached calendar). CHOREOGRAPHY DAYS and COMPETITIONS are not the time to schedule vacations, appointments, etc. The team is counting on you!

### ★ ATTENDANCE EXPECTATIONS

- **Attendance will be taken by the directors or student secretary at each rehearsal/event.** All rehearsals, meetings, events, performances, and competitions are mandatory unless excused by the director **prior** to the event.
- Students are expected to be **ON TIME for all rehearsals, departure times, and meetings.** TWO “tardies” will count as ONE unexcused absence.
- In case of a “fast transfer” from another school sponsored sport/activity to show choir, packing a dinner or having food delivered to eat on the go may be required. If you will be late due to that activity, make sure to give your directors at least 24 hours notice.
- Competitions and Performances should not be missed. In an activity that is so TEAM-BASED, it is IMPERATIVE that we have all members (singer/dancer, instrumentalists, and crew) present for competitions and performances. If a judge sees a “hole” in our blocking due to missing members, this affects every member of the group, can potentially affect our overall score, and ultimately our placing in the competition.
- A team-based ensemble requires 100% commitment, 100% of the time, which means planning ahead, balancing a busy schedule, and making sacrifices on occasion.

## ★ ABSENCE POLICIES

- **Excused Absences:** Acceptable reasons to miss an event are: severe illness, death in the family, mandatory academic events, and previously discussed **JHS activity** responsibilities (football, volleyball, band, etc.)
  - Excused absences **MUST** be communicated at least 24 hours before the start time of the event that will be missed.
  - For an absence to be pre-approved, you **MUST** receive written confirmation from one of the directors.
  - *Please be prepared to present adequate documentation of the reason for your absence.*
- **Unexcused Absences:** Unexcused absences include: work, "I forgot," oversleeping, **ANY outside-of-school activity** (club sports, dance, cheer, private lessons, etc.), non-serious illness, social events, transportation issues, homework, and ANYTHING else that is not pre approved.
  - If you do not receive written confirmation from a director, your absence is considered unexcused.
  - It is your responsibility to coordinate rides to and from rehearsals. Transportation issues will **NEVER** be considered excused.
- **Attendance Repercussions:**
  - Performers must be present for the final rehearsal before a performance and/or competition. **IF YOU DON'T REHEARSE, YOU DON'T PERFORM.**
  - First unexcused absence means you will likely be blocked out of the material missed or removed from the number rehearsed during your absence.
  - Second unexcused absence means you will sit out *completely* from the next performance/competition (you are still expected to travel with and support the team - but you cannot perform).
  - Third unexcused absence will result in removal from the team.

## Grades & Behavior:

When you are a part of Jefferson Choirs, you are representing something much bigger than yourself. It is important for us to be a class act. Any behavior or choice that harms that will not be tolerated and could result in removal from the next performance or ultimately, the rest of the season.

## ★ ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

- It is Sioux Falls School District policy that students must pass four classes each semester to participate in activities and athletics the following semester.
- Grades will be checked periodically by the directors to identify students who are falling behind.
- Directors, students, and parents may agree that an academic contract may be necessary should grades become a problem. Parents are strongly encouraged to set stricter guidelines on grades and participation at home. The directors will support these family driven policies when we are made aware of them.

## ★ BEHAVIOR ELIGIBILITY

- **Activity Violations:** Use of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, vaping, or ANY other illicit substance is not allowed, and will result in an activity violation.
  - Any activity violation results in sitting out or being removed from the team (depending on the violation). If you wouldn't do something in front of a principal, teacher, or SRO - DON'T DO IT.
  - If it is too hard to abstain from the use of any illicit substances, you should seek professional help.
- **Social Media:** Negative postings on social media about any individuals in the department, or about other teams and schools, will NOT be tolerated and will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Always be kind. When you post something negative, it reflects on all of us, and we will not tolerate it. Be a good human – BE KIND– treat everyone with respect.

## Expected Etiquette:

As a part of Jefferson Choirs, you are representing something larger than yourself. The directors have a very high level of respect for you, your time, and your talent. In return, we expect you to have respect for the directors and *our* time, rehearsals, costumes, critique judges, clinicians, and anyone else who comes in contact with our program.

### ★ REHEARSAL ETIQUETTE

- How we practice is how we perform.
  - Leave the drama at the door
  - Come prepared to work, and ready to go no less than 10 minutes prior to call time. When we have accomplished our goals for the practice, we will go home... that can take as much or as little time as necessary.
- Ask questions at appropriate times, and make sure they are not being answered in the instructions that are being given.
  - WAIT to ask questions until you have heard the instructions, observed the leader doing what has been instructed, observed a peer doing what has been instructed, and attempted to do what has been instructed.
  - Please respect each other's time—your question can be addressed at a later time—perhaps during a Q&A opportunity, sectional, break out dance session, or during a break.
  - Enlist the help of a dance captain or section leader during a break to clarify what you are struggling with.
- Respect student leaders during sectionals and choreography review sessions.
  - It is important for us to be able to work efficiently and effectively in student-led scenarios such as sectionals and in small group choreography review sessions.
  - One of the hardest things is to lead a group of your peers. Please be respectful on both sides of the coin: leaders and team members.
- While cleaning choreography, be patient, be flexible, and be prepared to make changes. Understand that the final call regarding choreography lies with the director.
  - We all remember choreography differently. If there is a question about choreography, the dance captains, choreographers and directors will address the issue—this may mean that you will need to learn a new way to do the movement (different from what you may think was taught.)
  - It is not appropriate to argue a choreography point during the middle of a rehearsal, it is appropriate to discuss it privately with a director and/or dance captain during a break.
  - We count together as a TEAM—if you are asked to do a sequence on count, the group is expected to count out loud together as a team.
- Professionalism is expected at all times.
  - Help your team to be prepared—if your neighbor is not focused or talking, etc. when the leader is ready to begin or working through a section, be a solution, not a cause of the problem.
  - When you are working with a director, section leader, dance captain, choreographer, a guest—clinician, someone work-shopping with you, a judge, etc. please thank them—please be enthusiastic learners (even if it is 56<sup>th</sup> time you are going over the same four measures...) – please be patient.

## ★ COSTUME ETIQUETTE

- Show choir costumes are very expensive and can be very fragile. Some items are owned by JHS, some are rented or borrowed from other schools. Some items (such as shoes and undergarments) you will purchase and keep at the end of the season. Proper garment care **MUST** be followed.
- **Once a member changes into their performance costume, they should NOT be seen in common areas (lunch room, auditorium, etc.) unless approved by directors or chaperones.**
- **NEVER EAT in Costume. The only acceptable beverage when in costume is water.**
- Students are responsible for making sure their garments return to school after EACH show. **ALL outfits must be properly tagged, including shoes!**
- Take care of your belongings, and your team—there is a \$5.00 return charge for each “lost” item that makes it to the directors.

## ★ GROOMING/APPEARANCE ETIQUETTE

- Since appearance is a critical portion of our scoring in a competition setting, group members are expected to conform somewhat to the established “norm” of the show choir world. Any dramatic change in appearance, such as hairstyle/color should be cleared by a director prior to the change.
- Show choir hair can often be a point of tension. If a director or parent volunteer asks you to fix your hair or do something to create a more uniform look, please do it without argument or complaint. Again, this is for the uniformity of the team and can have an impact on the judges scores.
- **Please respect your peers and directors by keeping up with good hygiene (TAKE A SHOWER, BRUSH YOUR TEETH and USE DEODORANT!). Show choir is a very active sport – you will sweat! Do your part to help make it a pleasant-smelling environment for all of us.**

## ★ HOMEROOM ETIQUETTE

- Homerooms are meant for getting ready & storing “stuff” NOT for hanging out.
  - You will be asked to clear out of the homeroom and relocate to the commons/food area, performance area, or spill over area when not getting dressed for the stage. Go forth and make new friends from other schools!
- No food in the homeroom—this includes candy, pop, etc. etc.
- NO GLITTER in homerooms.
- Our homerooms (and the entire competition venue) are a place for us to be POSITIVE, TEAM-PLAYERS—who are gracious not only when things go our way, but also when they don’t.
- Respect in hallways and around neighboring rooms is also important.

## ★ BUS ETIQUETTE

- Students are expected to ensure that all items they are responsible for are loaded on the appropriate bus.
- Make sure all tech needs and costume elements are properly loaded on the bus/trailer.
- Do not load the top portion of the bus until the director or designee has given approval.
- No singing on the bus. Save your voices and rest!
- No hairspray or glitter on the bus.
- No perfume or body spray on the bus.
- Clean up after yourselves.
- No couples together on the bus.
- All items must be unloaded and checked in along with your costume check in. All items must be put away in their proper storage location.

## ★ CELL PHONE ETIQUETTE

- Love the ones you are with!
- During rehearsal, cell phones will be placed in your designated show-choir folder slot at the beginning of rehearsal. PLEASE SILENCE YOUR PHONE.
- Cell phones may be used during a break from rehearsal, on the bus, and in the homeroom at a competition.
- For awaited phone calls and other special circumstances, cell phones may be kept with the student during rehearsal. Please talk to a director, and those situations will be approved on a case by case basis.
- SILENCE ALL CELL PHONES AND WATCHES and do not have cell phones on your person during rehearsal, choreography sessions, performances, meetings, etc. in other words: Keep it in your backpack/purse or folder slot - not in your pants pocket or other nooks & crannies.
- Cell phones may be used in the following situations:
  - During a **break @** rehearsal, sectionals, retreat; on the bus, in the homeroom at a competition.
  - Special circumstances approved by the directors on a case-by-case basis.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

### Canceling Practice/Performance/Competition:

If school is canceled due to weather, practice is also canceled that day. If there is a late start, we will practice that evening. Please monitor your email and Remind notifications in the event of inclement weather.

### Leadership Opportunities:

Through our weekly and daily activities, we will be incorporating growing our leadership skills. This will include opportunities to demonstrate these skills informally and formally. Some opportunities that may be an option for you:

#### Singer/Dancer Specific:

- Dance captain: selected by directors/choreographers, this role assists with the blocking, choreography, teaching missing material, and leading physical warm ups.
- Section leader: selected by directors, this role leads practice time sectionals, works on section specific vocals, and helps with attendance when needed.
- Secretary: voted on by the group, this role takes daily attendance, collects and accounts for money as needed, assists directors/parents with organizing costumes, music, supplies, etc.
- Social chair: voted on by the group, this role organizes monthly social activities.

#### Band Specific:

- Band student director: selected by directors, this role assists with leading warm ups, attendance of band members, coordinating loading and unloading of band equipment and ensuring all items for the band are accounted for prior to departing for competitions.

#### Tech Crew specific:

- Crew leader: selected by directors and parent crew, this role assists the directors in coordinating all tech-specific needs for the show choir shows including things such as: costume racks, props, boxes, costume changing needs, microphone needs, costumes, load in & load out.

#### Middle School Feeder Show Choir Helpers TBD:

- Choreographers: appointed by directors, these students work together to assist in choreographing for GMMS and MMS show choirs (other schools as needed). Teach the choreography at the retreat and attend additional rehearsals as needed to clean the show. If requested by MS directors, this could be a longer commitment, not just a "one and done" rehearsal.



### **Teamwork:**

We need **every** student, senior through freshman, to do their fair share of outside practicing, loading, unloading, storing, assembling, sweeping, and whatever else needs to be done. We take notice of slackers! Risers **MUST** be set up and ready to go **PRIOR** to the start of rehearsal (if applicable.) **NOBODY** is too good for a little manual labor.

We hope each member will take pride and ownership in our equipment and materials and of our facility. No food or drink (except water bottles) is permitted during rehearsal unless approved by the directors. At the end of rehearsal trash must be cleaned up, folders, costumes, instruments, supplies stored and/or put away. Everyone will stay until this is completed.

### **Communication:**

Communication is **KEY** to our success. We will do everything in our power to communicate in a timely manner to you.

- [www.JeffersonChoirs.com](http://www.JeffersonChoirs.com)
- Email – please check your email regularly and read to the bottom. Sometimes these will come directly from a director, sometimes these will come through Charms.
- Remind – we will utilize the app, Remind, for group texting. Codes will be shared as soon as we have access to them in July.
- Charms – Most communication regarding fundraising and events will come through Charms.
- Facebook - @sfjeffersonchoirs
- Instagram - @sfjeffersonchoirs
- Twitter - @jeffersonchoirs

### **Charms:**

If you have not already done so, please set up your account on CHARMS. We use this system for communication, fees, fundraising, and more!

To set up CHARMS, visit:

<https://www.charmsoffice.com/charms/parents.asp?username=SFJeffersonChoirs>

(additional instructions can be found at [www.jeffersonchoirs.com](http://www.jeffersonchoirs.com))

## **Fundraising and Expenses:**

Fundraising is a necessary part of the teamwork required of being in show choir. Each student is given a fundraising target and you are expected to do everything you can to meet that goal... We ask that those goals be met by the time we begin competing/performing in mid-January.

The actual costs per singer/dancer for a competitive season is well over \$800. The actual cost for tech/band is around \$300 each. These costs include music arrangements, choreography, costuming & costume supplies, alterations, sets/props, competition entry fees, copyright fees, clinicians and transportation.

We anticipate the school budget covering approximately half of these costs. For this reason, we have factored the fundraising targets as follows:

- Singer/Dancers are asked to meet a \$400/person goal.
- Band/Tech Crew members are asked to meet a \$200/person goal.

We will do everything we can to be competitive regionally, while trying to keep our costs reasonable for you. Some families may wish to just write a check – that is welcomed!

We try to offer at least one fundraiser a month during the fall and early winter months. Please watch your emails for details as they arise. An anticipated fundraising calendar is attached to this packet.

### **PERSONAL EXPENSE ITEMS NOT COVERED BY FUNDRAISING DOLLARS:**

- TEAM JACKET – uniform for travel days will be used for at least 2 more years (approx. \$65)
- REHEARSAL SHIRTS – uniform during rehearsals that are not in costume (\$15-20)
- PERFORMANCE SHOES – maximum cost of \$75
- MAKEUP & HAIR NEEDS (\$25-50 female, \$10-15 male)
- UNDERGARMENTS (\$120-150 female, \$40-50 male)

**This is the “Other duties as assigned” statement...** While we know it appears that we have covered every possible scenario and situation... we assure you that is not the case ;) Things will come up—our game plan is to be flexible and deal with things as they come.

## Jefferson Show Choir Commitment Form

Due by June 3, 2023

**Students, please check each box below to indicate your understanding of each statement.**

- I am enrolled in a curricular choir (Mixed Chorus, Chorale, or Concert Choir) for the 23-24 school year.
- I understand that solo choices and blocking placements are chosen at the discretion of the Directors and Choreographers, and I will act professionally if I do not get my desired solo/blocking.
- I will be at ALL choreography days, rehearsals, and performances/competitions.
- I will provide 24 hours notice and sufficient documentation for an absence to be considered excused.
- I know that unexcused absences will result in losing blocking spots, sitting out of a competition, or removal from the team.
- I will remain academically eligible to participate in Show Choir.
- I will **NOT** smoke, drink, vape, or be involved with *any* illicit substances that could result in an activity violation.
- I will sign up for Charms.
- I will meet my fundraising goal through various fundraisers, writing a check to the choir department, or by credit/debit card through Charms.
- I have received and have read the Jefferson High School Show Choir Handbook and I understand and accept responsibility for my actions - knowing that certain choices may affect my ability to be on the team - and I will do my best to follow the guidelines set forth in the handbook.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student PRINTED name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student SIGNED name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian PRINTED name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian SIGNED name

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Date