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CONTACT INFORMATION
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Staff Accompanist & Vocal Coach

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Resident Artists

Mr. Brian Stinar — Lead Voice Instructor, Opera Scenes Director
Email: Brian_Stinar@dpsk12.org
Phone: 720-234-8375
Office: Room 019 (near Vocal rooms)
Ms. Marlena Moore - Voice Instructor
Email: mhmooremusic@gmail.com
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Office: Room 018 (studio in large vocal room)

Ms. Amy Maples - Voice Instructor
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Phone: 423-309-1830
Office: Room 146A (near the Montview entrance)

Communications:

Communications to students and families is primarily done via email through volunteer communications coordinators, directors and resident artists, and through information on the vocal website. Please do not contact the directors and resident artists via cell phone unless you have been given approval to do so. Many students do communicate via text with their vocal teachers.

It is your responsibility to provide email contacts for your student, and you are welcome to include all appropriate student, parents and guardian emails. If you change your email address, please notify the communications coordinator for your student’s choir.

This information will be included in our departmental roster which will be sent out electronically to all vocal families. All contact information is to remain confidential and to be used only for school and departmental purposes. Also, check the vocal website regularly for departmental updates.
DENVER SCHOOL OF THE ART’S PHILOSOPHY

• We will provide each student with an equal opportunity to pursue his/her artistic endeavor in a safe, accepting, and nurturing environment. Students will not be discriminated against with regards to the following criteria: race, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, or physical limitations.

• We consider our school and our department as a place where the continuing process of learning occurs. Students are viewed as “artists-in-training” and are therefore bound to make mistakes along their journey. We do not subscribe to creating “stars” or “divas,” but rather to develop team players, problem-solvers and contributing artists. The concept of Vocal Music being a vehicle in which students learn these lifelong skills is crucial towards achieving success for all, i.e., students, parents, teachers, and the community.

• It is understood that not all Vocal Music Majors will pursue a career in the Arts, but it is our aim that all Vocal Music Majors will be lifelong advocates for the Arts through one or more of the following paths:

   A. Professional Artists (Singers, performers, directors, composers, teachers, etc.);
   B. Avocational Artists (Participation in community choirs, church choirs, theater organizations, vocal or instrumental lessons, etc.);
   C. Audience of Artists (Attending and supporting arts organizations, working behind-the-scenes as a volunteer or as a paid consultant for Arts organizations, working in the music industry, etc.).

• There is a competitive nature among performing artists, which can be a healthy factor in developing standards of excellence on the individual and group level. It is important to note that competition from within is always desirable and you should use your personal strengths and weaknesses as benchmarks for personal artistic success. Music competitions (solo or choral) where one person or group receives “1st place” can be unrealistic and misleading. These situations can lead to a false understanding of the artistic world as it currently exists and they can devalue the intrinsic rewards of continuously refining the process of the artistic journey.
DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

Students accepted as Majors into the Vocal Music Department are placed into a choir which meets daily for approximately ninety minutes. As part of their major, students study music theory, sight-singing, rhythm-reading, and choreography to songs when appropriate. Students work with local, state, and national guest artists in performance and/or in the classroom. Non-majors at the middle school level also have an opportunity to explore their vocal talents in an elective focused on vocal technique, music literacy, or musical theater.

Majors

**Treble Choir (Mr. Robert Styron, Director):** Our beginning middle school choir consists of in the 6th & 7th grades. Students will receive an intense training in vocal (solo & choral) technique, music fundamentals, and choral repertoire. The choir will sing music at the intermediate level.

**Allegro Voce (Mr. Scott Shively, Director):** Our intermediate majors, comprised of singers in the 7th-9th grades. This choir is considered the training choir for the High School Vocal Music program. Repertoire is selected from an intermediate to advanced SATB level. Students also receive training in vocal (both solo & choral) techniques, music theory and ear training.

**Bellissima (Mr. Scott Shively, Director):** Our premier women’s choir known as Bellissima (Italian word meaning ‘very beautiful,’ is comprised of singers in 9th-11th grades who perform advanced SSA and SSAA choral music.

**Chorale (Mr. Robert Styron, Director):** This elite mixed ensemble is comprised of girls in 11th and 12th grades, and boys in 10th-12th grades. The choir sings advanced SATB (& divisi) choral repertoire.

In addition to choral activities, high school students are expected to take private voice lessons. MS students participate in quarterly Solo Days during class while HS students participate in weekly performance classes. Upperclassmen also have the opportunity to sing solos in quarterly Master Classes and/or Senior Recitals. All HS students are required to study on campus with a DSA Resident Artist in Voice.

Electives

**8th Grade Vocal Elective:** This elective for non-vocal majors focuses on building vocal technique, ensemble singing and incorporates history of jazz and musical theater. This group will perform at DSA concerts periodically. There is no audition required for this choir.

**8th Grade Musical Theater:** This class explores the history and elements of American musical theater, along with the fundamentals of singing, dancing, and acting in a non-competitive workshop atmosphere. Students have the opportunity to perform an original musical at the end of the semester.

**4Squared (4²):** High School elective, this 16-voice women’s group performs a demanding repertoire of pop, Broadway and jazz music with special staging or choreography. It is open by audition to all DSA high school girls in early April. They perform at vocal music concerts, off-campus gigs, or special events.

**Vocal Jazz Ensemble (VJE):** Vocal jazz ensemble focuses on both solo and ensemble singing including vocal improvisation, lead-sheet reading, and transposition. It is open by audition to all DSA high school boys and girls in early April. They perform at vocal music concerts, off-campus gigs and jazz festivals.
CALENDAR

The Vocal Music Department maintains a calendar on the department web site. There is also a main DSA calendar listing some department events, as well as school-wide events. Please adhere to it strictly.

Events are notated with abbreviations to help understand your specific commitments. They are as follows:

- **MS** = Middle School
- **HS** = High School
- **TC** = Treble Choir
- **CH** = Chorale
- **BE** = Bellissima
- **VM** = Vocal Music
- **AV** = Allegro Voce
- **4^2** = 4Squared
- **VJE** = Vocal Jazz Ensemble

Please note that changes, additions, and deletions from this calendar may occur. Every effort will be given to communicate these changes thru email or the website. Please check the website on the Vocal Music page frequently.

**IMPORTANT REMINDERS!**

1. **Most performance dates and assignment deadlines are final; however, due to uncontrollable circumstances they are subject to change. Every effort will be made to notify you of any changes and why.**

2. **It is crucial that both parents and students clear your calendars for these important DSA sanctioned events. Please plan ahead in order to avoid conflicts.**

3. **Efforts are made to plan activities so they do not conflict with important religious holidays and other events.**

4. **If you have a conflict with a calendar date, please communicate that conflict to the appropriate instructor once you have explored every possible solution.**

5. **Be aware that grade consequences are inevitable due to calendar conflicts, even if those conflicts are communicated in advance.**
What is a VAMP?
If you have a student in the Vocal Music Department, you are a VAMP.

VAMPS support the Vocal Music department by giving their time to make the wheels of the department turn. Some parents step forward and head committees or projects and all parents/guardians are welcome to help in any way they can. Since we have so many creative students, we know that there are creative parents/guardians out there too.

VAMP Committees:
Committees are listed on the website. Please volunteer to chair one of these important committees, if not this year next year. No parent should have to chair a committee more than one year. If being a committee chair is not your area of comfort, please help the committee chairs when needed. Your volunteer hours are expected and crucial in making a public school like DSA function as well it does.

When are VAMPS meetings?
VAMPS meetings are held four times a year and generally held on a Tuesday of each quarter from 6:00-7:00 p.m. in one of the VM classrooms and are open to all parents. Please refer to the website for specific meeting dates under the VAMPS link. This time is primarily a planning time for fundraisers, events, concerts, etc. If you need to speak with the faculty about a personal or academic issue, kindly make a separate appointment. Faculty may or may not be present at VAMP meetings.

What do VAMPS specifically do?
VAMPS provide support for the Directors’ vision of the vocal program, and make life easier for Directors, guest artists and students by donating time, skills, money, food and materials. Opportunities exist to:

- Coordinate supporting activities at concerts
- Coordinate student dinners for rehearsals and shows if necessary
- Monitor backstage hallways and dressing rooms
- Coordinate and run concessions during concerts
- Serve as ushers at concerts
- Coordinate and run new student auditions
- Design posters and programs for concerts
- Coordinate fund-raising activities
- Plan travel for the choirs
- Coordinate communication via emails and website
- Organize the annual awards banquet
- Help with general maintenance and repair of classrooms
STUDENT OFFICERS

The new officers are elected and/or appointed at the beginning of the school year. This group of students is very important in handling specific assigned duties, assisting the Directors with important tasks, working with VAMPS and giving the students a voice in departmental decisions.

Responsibilities:

| Link between the director and the choir | Setup student mailboxes at start of year |
| Morale leader and team building        | Electronic attendance                   |
| Start class when director is not present | Assist with filing music                |
| Spokesperson for choir or department  | Give grades for music checks            |
| Checking in frequently with section leaders | Create fine & replacement list for music |
| Communicating to MS choirs and officers | Collect checks & make deposit slips     |
| Pre-concert & post-concert stage manager | Keep accurate records of debts          |
| Link between the other MS or HS choir  | Update/submit vocal photos to website   |
| Listen to your classmates             | Maintain display case in the hallway    |
| Taking notes and making lists         | File music and/or retrieve music & collect from section leaders |
| Advertising DSA events to the community | Keep an accurate history of events (website archive) |
FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Voice Lessons for High School Students:
All high school students are required to take private vocal instruction with a qualified voice teacher. Students must take at least 14 lessons (Fall) and 16 (Spring) of at least 30-minute sessions per semester; however, 45-60 minute lessons are more effective. Lessons may not be weekly depending on the calendar of events. Lessons will be provided on campus at a rate of **$55.00 per hour**. Shorter lessons will be at a prorated price.

Voice lesson fees are to be paid directly to the private vocal instructor, instead of through the department. Payment schedules shall be worked out between parents and voice instructors. Students who miss lessons without prior communication will still be obligated to pay for the lesson. Makeup lessons may be negotiated with the instructor, but not necessarily expected.

If payments are not made on time, instructors will cease lessons temporarily until payment is received or an alternate financial plan is determined. Please communicate any financial problems to the voice instructor, as well as the directors. Scholarships and grants are offered based on merit and need. Please complete the application in this handbook and return to the directors for their consideration.

Choir Outfit Fees: (new students, students changing choirs or new size requirements)
Students are responsible for purchasing choral outfits. Every attempt is made to use each outfit for multiple years, but not always the case. Some items are purchased through the department; however, some items must be purchased on your own. In addition to this outfit, students are expected to shop individually for other accessories such as shoes, accents, coats, hosiery, or pants.
DRESS CODE FOR CHOIRS AND INDIVIDUAL PERFORMANCES

Treble Choir: (all items purchased on your own, unless noted otherwise)
- Black pants and black belt
- Short-sleeved buttoned shirt (ordered through the department with DSA logo; approx. $20)
- Black socks & formal closed-toe black dress shoes (boys) or character shoes/flats (girls)

Allegro Voce: (all items purchased on your own)
- Girls:
  - Black dress or black blouse & black skirt (knee length)
  - Black leggings and formal closed-toe black shoes.
  - Heel no more than 2-inches.
  - Red accessory (belt, sash, etc.)
- Boys:
  - Black dress shirt, formal black pants, black belt, red tie
  - Black socks & formal black dress shoes

Bellissima: (all items purchased on your own)
- Black Mandolin dress (purchase online through Stage Accents)
- Pearl Necklace and Earrings (purchase online through Stage Accents)
- Formal closed-toe black shoes & heel no more than 2-inches

Chorale: (all items purchased on your own, unless noted otherwise)
- Girls:
  - Black Mandolin dress (purchase online through Stage Accents)
  - Purple accessory (provided through the department)
  - Formal closed-toe black shoes. Heel no more than 2-inches
- Boys:
  - White dress shirt (regular collar, no wing tipped collar, can be tuxedo style)
  - Formal black pants, black tuxedo jacket
  - Black socks and formal black dress shoes
  - Purple tie and pocket square (loaned by department)

Vocal Jazz Ensemble
Hip, snazzy, contemporary black & white casual dress attire. With unified accent colors to be determined collectively before each concert. All purchased on your own.

4Squared (4²): 
All black outfit of your choice with colorful clothing accessory to match the silk flower accessory provided by the dept. Closed-toe black performances shoes. All purchased on your own.

**Enforcement:** It is expected that all students follow this dress code for all performances. Student could potentially receive only half-credit for a concert or event if the student violates the dress code and you may not be permitted to perform. Students are expected to stay in full uniform at all times when in public. Ties and accessories are to remain intact. This includes intermission and after the concert while greeting friends and family in the lobby.
PROFESSIONAL ATTIRE

If students are performing, they are expected to dress in professional clothing and attire for the following occasions:

1. Auditions (All students)
2. Juries (All students)
3. Studio & Master classes (HS)
4. Solo days (MS)
5. Music convocations (MS & HS)

**Enforcement:** It is expected that all students follow this dress code for the above occasions. Student could potentially receive only half-credit for an event if the student violates the dress code.

The following professional attire guidelines **must** be observed:

**Girls:**
1. Dress or Skirt & Blouse
2. Skirt or Dress must at least have hem at knee-length or lower
3. No exposed shoulders or midriffs
4. No tight clothing or spandex material
5. No hats

**Boys:**
1. Dress Pants and dark belt
2. Collared Shirt & Tie, Turtleneck sweater or banded collared shirt
3. Dark dress shoes and dark socks
4. Dress jacket optional, yet encouraged
5. No baggy pants or exposed underwear
6. No hats

**ALL STUDENTS**
Shoes:
1. No sandals, open-toed or open-heeled shoes
2. Heels should have a maximum 2-inch heel
3. Polished shoes

Hair:
1. Pulled back away from face
2. No un-natural dyed hair (pink, green, etc.); bleached hair is OK
3. Natural hair colored accessories OK, no bright colors
4. Neutral-colored barrettes, hair ties OK, no sparkles

Jewelry:
1. Watches or bracelets are not permissible, unless they are hidden by clothing
2. Stud earrings are permitted; no other style of earring allowed
3. No other jewelry, including facial piercing, tongue piercing or exposed tattoos
4. Small rings are permissible

Makeup:
1. No glitter makeup
2. Discreet and sensible stage makeup is expected for girls and boys (depending on venue, time of day, and lighting)
FUNDRAISERS

For any successful performing arts organization to function, money is always needed. “To whom much is given, much is also required,” is an appropriate adage for serious students of singing. Financial obligations can be stressful, but also a long-term investment in your singing life.

All students and parents are expected to participate in fundraisers. Some fundraisers are specifically targeted for specific items such as:

- Financial Aid for free/reduced lunch students
- Travel
- Materials or equipment

Fees collected at registration help to pay for music and supplies, transportation, and more.

Guest artists are funded through the DSA Friend’s Foundation and their Fill the Gap program. Please review our director’s take on this program, and donate in any amount you can comfortably give one time, or through a monthly donation. All donations are tax deductible.

Student Accounts
During a trip year, each student going on a trip has an individual account which is a record of all financial transactions with the department. Please note that these accounts are solely designated for department travel. Money raised through fundraisers earmarked for individual accounts is considered department funds. If the student leaves for any reason, these funds are rolled into the general department account. Vocal Music Student accounts are not savings account, but rather a record of department fundraising dollars.

Our volunteer Parent Treasurer will be keeping records of student accounts; periodic reports of student balances will be issued for your convenience either by email or USPS mail. Always make your checks payable to DSA Vocal with the student name written in the memo line.
CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS

One of our goals here at the DSA is to train you as professional singers and artists, whether you pursue a career in the arts or not. To maintain the standards of excellence we all desire, the following expectations must be observed.

**Professionalism**
1. Enter the classroom and/or performance space in a mature, respectful manner at all times.
2. Be courteous and respectful to your peers, teachers, substitutes, guest artists and administrators.
3. Food, candy, gum and liquids (with exception to water bottles) are **prohibited** in the Vocal Music rooms unless approved by instructor (lunch rehearsals are the exception.)
4. A negative attitude is not a constructive attitude; leave your negativity outside the door so that we may focus on the work at hand.
5. Punctuality is a mindset we all need to observe. Since we do not have school bells, it is important that you are always aware of start times. (See tardy policy under “Attendance”)
6. Please be respectful of our school, concert hall and equipment by keeping all areas clean and safe from vandalism or theft. Report any suspicious and criminal behavior. It is the right thing to do.
7. Bathroom breaks are only allowed in extreme emergencies. Please take care of all personal issues before or after class.

**Work Ethic**
1. Be prepared for every rehearsal by bringing appropriate singing materials: pencils, music notebook, staff paper, theory book, and water bottle.
2. You are expected to be in your assigned seat when class begins and focused on the warming-up process. Warm-ups are a key part of the singing experience.
3. If we split into sectionals, you are expected to go directly to that assigned rehearsal space and to heed your leader’s instructions.
4. Be an example to your peers; give more than what you think you can give!
5. You are being watched all the time by outside observers, guest artists, and school and district officials. It is necessary that you maintain integrity and professionalism at all times.
6. **It is ultimately the student’s responsibility to make up work** missed from an absence and to learn your choral and solo parts. **We work on choral parts in class, but you should consult your section leader and/or director if you are having extreme difficulty.**

**Classroom etiquette**
1. All electronic devices must be out of sight and out of reach, unless directed by the teacher to use for classroom purposes. They must be in an OFF position so as not to disturb the rehearsal. If used without permission or if they make a sound, they will be confiscated and will be released ONLY to the parent/guardian.
2. Raise your hand if you would like to speak.
3. Keep your room clean; always look back at your area before you leave the room in case you might be tempted to forget something.
4. A Lost-and-Found box will be in clear sight in case you might have misplaced a personal item.
5. Makeup and personal grooming is prohibited while class is in session. After the first warning, items will be confiscated and not returned.
6. No public display of affection between students including hand-holding, touching, grooming, massaging, kissing, etc.
DISCIPLINE

Discipline is essential in maintaining structure, control and order in any artistic field. Students will be held accountable for their behavior, attitude, and work ethic while enrolled in the Vocal Music Department.

Students are responsible for their own attitude and self-control. Our expectations and requirements:

1. Students are not responsible for disciplining other students. Student leaders may assist the director or substitute teacher by setting a good example and/or reporting students who are a disruption during rehearsals.
2. Avoid talking during rehearsal...especially while a teacher, guest artist, or student is talking.
3. Avoid talking or making distracting noises/gestures while other singers are performing.
4. Sit with good, attentive posture whenever singing or while being an audience member during a vocal performance or master class.
5. No one leaves class during rehearsals, unless there is an extreme emergency. This is how professional musicians work.

Vocal instructors may deal with disciplinary matters in different ways. Be aware that infractions may affect your grade by point deductions as well as more severe consequences.

Disruptions include, though may not be limited to the following:

1. Talking excessively to other classmates while the teacher is instructing
2. Making unnecessary noises while rehearsal is in progress
3. Walking freely around the room during rehearsal
4. Throwing objects across the room
5. Falling asleep or obvious daydreaming
6. Doing homework from other classes
7. Personal grooming
8. Electronic devices in class
9. Public displays of affection

The following sequence will be followed when necessary:

1. Teacher redirects behavior and corrects it.
2. Teacher conferences with student in hall or after class.
3. Teacher phones home with concern.
4. Teacher fills out referral and submits to Student Advisor.
5. Student Advisor conferences with student and calls parent.
6. Student Advisor conferences with student and parent.
7. Behavior contract is designed.
8. Suspension.
ATTENDANCE POLICY

DSA School Attendance Policy

DSA students will be allowed five excused absences for the entire school year per DPS policy. Parent/guardian must call the attendance line before 10am on the day of the absence. Once a student has exhausted their 5 excused absences the counselors and the Dean of Students will contact students to have documentation provided for future absences. For each excused absence or school activity absence, students will be permitted two days (48 hours) to complete and submit course work.

Vocal Music Attendance Policy

• School day absences: If a student is to be absent for any reason (except for school excursions or activities), it is imperative that the parent or guardian call the attendance line (720-424-1846) or bring a note to the Attendance Secretary in the Main office. If your child is out of school for more than one day, you must contact your director as to the reason for the absence.
• If a student is absent during a school day for any reason, the Vocal Music Dept. will grant two grace absences per grading quarter with no penalty to the quarter grade. This also refers to excused absences such as funerals, weddings, college trips, field trips, illnesses, etc. Choosing not to come to class will result in a truancy referral.
• Makeup work for absences: If a student goes beyond the two-day grace period, makeup work can be turned in to the instructor. Makeup work must be turned in before the end of the grading quarter in which the absences were incurred. Excused or unexcused absences are not recorded in the instructor’s attendance book…only absences. Refer to the section of the handbook on Makeup work for more information.
• Tardy Policy: Punctuality is essential for maintaining a quality vocal program. Being on time means being in your seat with materials ready. If you are tardy (without a written pass from the office or a teacher/administrator), you can automatically lose up to 50% off your daily participation grade. Verbal excuses are not accepted. Instructors will periodically call parents of chronic late students.
• Final Week before Concert: Rehearsals during the final week before a concert or gig are heavily weighted in points. If a sudden illness or an emergency arises, please communicate directly to your conductor, however, it is imperative that students are in attendance due to important nature of these rehearsals.

Performances or Special Rehearsals

There should be NO conflicts for rehearsals or performances as per school policy and contract. Missing a performance or special rehearsal is an automatic “F” for that event and could potentially place you on Arts probation for the semester. Student will receive a grade no higher than a “C” for that grading quarter. NOTE: No partial performances, i.e. if a performance is more than one night and you miss one, you miss them all (Pops/Broadway Bound).

Every attempt to adhere to the school and departmental calendar must be made for our performing group to function. Some mandatory rehearsals and performances may be added over the course of the year.

If some unforeseen conflict arises such as a serious illness or a death in the family, you will still be required to complete an alternative assignment. If an emergency arises, please inform your instructor immediately by phone, not the next day or through a third party. Students are expected to adjust their schedules for added or emergency rehearsals. Every effort will be made to give advanced notice of these rehearsals or performances.

All department rehearsals and performances outside of class are mandatory. Grades are based on attendance, punctuality, and professional participation. Email or phone communication in advance about absences and tardies must go to your direct major teacher. Despite early notification, students may receive partial, yet not full credit, for these special rehearsals.

IMPORTANT NOTICE:

As per district and school policy, you must attend school for at least half a day on the day of evening performances or events (this means 2 full 90-minute blocks.) If you do not follow this guideline, you may not be eligible to perform that evening.
MAKEUP WORK

Makeup work for SCHOOL DAY Absences
This is only necessary (however, not required) for absences beyond the 2-day grace period and only partial credit will be given. Please do the following:

- Write a 1-page typed report (per daily absence) on the subject of your choice related to Vocal Music. You must cite your sources and the content must be in your own words. Some topics for this report might include the following: concert review, a biography on one of your favorite composers or performers, a short research paper on a subject related to vocal music (vocal health, vocal science, careers in music, etc.)

Students are responsible for obtaining information about missed classwork or assignments due to a school absence by using the following steps:

1. Email the instructor on the day of your absence
2. Consult with a trusted classmate
3. According to district policy, please makeup any missed up work within 48 hours

Makeup work for Performances or Special rehearsals
**(ONLY FOR SERIOUS ILLNESS OR DEATH IN FAMILY)**

Documentation required

Serious illnesses, family crises, and family deaths are unfortunate and real. Makeup assignments are not meant to be a punishment, but rather an opportunity to maintain your grade in Vocal Music. A typed 10-page term paper on a subject to be approved by the Director is required in case an emergency arises.

This report should cite your sources and must be in your own words. Downloaded Internet sites will not be accepted as your own work. You have 2-weeks after the missed rehearsal or performance to complete this work or to make arrangements with the Director. The paper MUST be completed before the end of the grading period, in order to receive credit for that missed event.

Please be aware of the school policy on plagiarism. Un-cited sources or suspected plagiarized written work could result in failure, suspension and/or other disciplinary actions.

Makeup work missing a special rehearsal or performance WILL NOT be allowed for any reason other than documented serious illness (with doctor’s note) or an unfortunate death in the family.

Do not miss rehearsals or performances!!
This is why you are here!!
GRADING POLICIES (High School)

Each student’s grade will be configured on a continuous semester grade book. Grading categories will be assigned either a “process” or “product” grade.

**Process = 45%**
- Daily Professionalism, Assessments, Senior Recitals, Music Theory Assignments & Quizzes, Concert/Recital Attendance, Performance Class and Voice Lesson Progress

**Product = 45%**
- Tests, Written Work, Projects, Music Theory Exams, Concerts

**Product (Final) = 10% (located at the bottom of the Parent Portal Screen)**
- Musicianship & Singing Jury (end of semester)

**HS Grading Scale:**
- 97-100% = A+
- 93-96% = A
- 90-92% = A-
- 87-89% = B+
- 83-86% = B
- 80-82% = B-
- 77-79% = C+
- 73-76% = C
- 70-72% = C-
- 67-69% = D+
- 60-62% = D
- 0-59% = F

Daily points will be given at each rehearsal. This grade is based on attendance, punctuality, materials and professionalism. The semester grade is the grade that stays on your transcript and subsequently determines your semester and cumulative GPA. It is also the grade that determines possible Arts or Academic probation status. The following illustrates a guideline of how Vocal Music students are graded. The weighting of each category may vary and are subject to change at the discretion of the Directors.

**HS Grading Categories**

1. **Ensemble (Process & Product)**
   a. Periodic preparation checks (required classroom materials)
   b. Professionalism: Positive attitude, punctuality, noted improvement, and teamwork
   c. Special rehearsals, festivals and performances

2. **Applied Voice (Process & Product)**
   a. Voice lesson progress
   b. Master classes & Studio Classes (performance & attendance)

3. **Written Assignments (Product)**
   a. Concert evaluation
   b. Reflective essays
   c. Worksheets or miscellaneous assignments
   d. Song Analysis assignments
   e. Self-evaluations
   f. Song translations
   g. Repertoire lists

4. **Musicianship (Process & Product)**
   a. Part Checks
   b. Music Theory
   c. Aural Skills
   d. Sight singing

5. **Final or Mid-Semester Exam (Product)**
   a. Voice Jury (double-weighted)
   b. Musicianship Assessment
   c. Written exams
GRADING POLICIES (Middle School)

Each student’s grade will be configured on a continuous semester grade book. Grading categories will be assigned either a “process” or “product” grade.

Process = 45%
- Daily Professionalism, Assessments, Concert/Recital Attendance, Music Theory Assignments and Quizzes, Solo Days

Product = 45%
- Tests, Written Work, Projects, Music Theory Exams, Concerts

Product (Final) = 10% (located at the bottom of the Parent Portal Screen)
- Musicianship & Singing Jury (end of semester)

MS Grading Scale
- 90-100% = A
- 80-89% = B
- 70-79% = C
- 60-69% = D
- 0 – 59% = F

MS Grading Categories
1. Ensemble Singing
   - a. Periodic preparation checks (music, pencil, notebook, water, handbook, journal)
   - b. Part checks (quarterly)
   - c. Attitude and Participation in class
   - d. Attendance and Punctuality
   - e. Special rehearsals, festivals and performances
   - f. Professionalism and teamwork

2. Music Theory
   - a. Worksheets, exercises
   - b. Homework
   - c. Aural assessments (scales, triads, dictation)
   - d. Sight-reading (melodic & rhythmic)

3. Written Assignments
   - a. Reflective Essays
   - b. Concert Evaluation
   - c. Power-points or Prezi

4. Solo Days
   - a. Professionalism – introduction, attire, accompanist relationship, feedback
   - b. Musicality – dynamics, phrasing, vocal expression
   - c. Vocal Technique – breath support, tone quality, diction
   - d. Stage Presence – gestures, facial, acting choices, use of stage

5. Final or Mid-Semester Exam
   - a. Musicianship Assessment (written or oral)
   - b. Voice jury
   - c. Written exams
HOMEWORK

The Vocal Music Department requires some homework of its students for 3-reasons:
1. Students receive double credit (10 credits) for their major, versus 5-credits for academic classes and minors
2. Homework gives more objectivity in grading
3. The work assigned is enriching and healthy for a developing artist

Homework in Vocal Music could be one or more of the following categories:
1. Daily Vocal Practice (choral music, vocal technique, diagramming rhythms, writing solfege in choral music, listening to other soloists or choirs)
2. Reflective Essays and Concert Evaluations
3. Parental signature forms
4. Music theory assignments
5. Music vocabulary
6. Miscellaneous items

NOTE - Written assignments may not be submitted via e-mail. You must turn in written assignments at the beginning of class on the due date, otherwise, it is considered late. They will be collected by the choir secretary.

The policy is that homework has deadlines; those deadlines must be observed. If homework is turned in late, the grade will be lowered by 10% for each day late. Homework will NOT BE ACCEPTED after one week late, with an exception for excused absences related to serious illness or an unfortunate death in family.

Website – we do not make it a practice of posting daily homework on the website. There are some due dates published on the calendar. Vocal music is rehearsal and performance based, rather than academic-based on daily written assignments.

If you are absent, it is solely the student’s responsibility to find out what work was missed. You will be given until the next day upon your return to complete the assigned work. Since due dates are given in advance for most written assignments, there are no exceptions for lateness. If you know that you will be gone on a school trip or family obligation, turn in your assignment early!!

SPECIAL NOTE
It is DOUBTFUL and practically IMPOSSIBLE that a student could receive an A for the grading term if no written work is turned in for that grading period.
CONCERT ATTENDANCE (On-campus events)

The following mandatory concert attendance for DSA Concerts includes these events:

a. Pops Show
b. Broadway Bound
c. Senior Recitals – minimum of 2 for MS and 3 for HS
d. Resident Artist Recitals
e. Opera Scenes
f. Other special Events

You will be required to check in with the Box Office or a designated officer.

We expect students to attend other events in order to build the community spirit and support of our department, but the following events are for optional attendance (yet strongly encouraged):

a. Fall Concerts
b. Additional Senior Recitals
c. Farewell Concert
d. Other special events

DSA Events cannot be used for your Concert Evaluation assignments – see below.

CONCERT EVALUATION GUIDELINES (Off-campus events)

Please adhere to the following guidelines when preparing your Concert Evaluation.

**NOTE: Students should see concerts up to 2-months prior to due date of evaluation.**

A. Concert venues
   1. Choral Concert at a high school, collegiate, community or professional venues.
   2. Classical Solo recital at a collegiate, community or professional venue.
   3. Musical Theater or Opera productions at a community or professional venue.
   4. Community choirs: Rocky Mountain Children’s Choir, Colorado Children’s Chorale, The Colorado Choir, Ars Nova, Kantorei, St. Martin’s Singers, etc.)
   5. Vocal Jazz Concerts at a high school, collegiate, community of professional venue.

B. Guidelines
   1. Performances must be Vocal Music-related and at least 45 minutes in length!! Instrumental concerts are valuable to hear, but do NOT fulfill the requirements of this assignment.
   2. Performances must be live, NOT recorded. CD and vocal concerts on television are valuable, but do not meet the criteria for this assignment.
   3. You must attend a variety of concerts; in other words, do not turn in all evaluations from musical theater performances or high school choral concerts. Vary your genre choices.
   4. It is recommended that you take notes on your program at the concert if possible, in order to keep your recollections accurate.
   5. You cannot perform in the concert in which you are evaluating.
   6. DSA events are not allowed. This would include the school musical, senior recitals, vocal concerts, etc. Only off-campus concerts may be used for this assignment. Please see the Vocal Music bulletin boards for concert announcements, or google concerts/recitals at local schools, colleges, universities, or professional venues.
C. **Concert Evaluation form**

Please download the form and handwrite legibly. Forms may also be typed. Give evidence in your writing – specific examples of what you heard. You may use the back of the form also.

1. **Concepts to mention in your evaluation:**
   a. **Tone & Sound**
      i. Balance (between different vocalists, choral sections, or instrumentalists)
      ii. Blend
      iii. Breath technique
      iv. Diction
      v. Intonation
      vi. Posture
      vii. Projection
      viii. Vowel Unification
   b. **Notes & Rhythm**
      i. Note accuracy
      ii. Rhythmic accuracy and execution
      iii. Tempo
   c. **Musicality**
      i. Dynamics
      ii. Interpretation and style
      iii. Phrasing

2. **Late papers will be knocked down a full letter grade (10%) for every day late.** Plan ahead as to when you will be attending your concerts.

3. **Avoid general terms such as the following: good, bad, ok, sort of, like, etc.** Use descriptive and specific terms in your critique; do not give a summary of the show plot, etc.

4. **Attach some form of physical evidence of the concert (program, ticket stub, or autograph from director or performer if there is no program available.)**

5. **Choose your concert well in advance of the due date, as the deadline will sneak up on you.**

6. **Excused extensions for due dates will NOT be given to students.**
REFLECTIVE ESSAYS

It is important to develop a reflective practice as young musical artists. You get to think about what you have learned over the course of a semester. Reflective essays are a powerful self-assessment tool for both the student and instructor. They will assist you in thinking back over your semester and analyze areas of growth and areas you can improve. You will be called upon to write reflective essays throughout your educational career and to instill a sense of reflective practice in any career you choose.

Writing your essay will help you synthesize what you have learned and help you develop clarity in understanding your overall role in vocal music and how it connects with curricular knowledge. Critical thinking will help you grow and also help the directors gain insight into their student’s growth and state of mind.

Requirements
Minimum of 500 - 600 words. Word count must be listed in heading (see example below)
Double-spaced typed essay focusing on the following topics:
1) Your strengths as a musician and student
2) Your weaknesses and your strategies for improvement as a musician and student
3) Discussion of your role and contribution to the vocal music department during the semester
4) Concepts or techniques you have learned over the semester from instructors or peers:
   a. Choral music and musical concepts
   b. Solo performance techniques
   c. Music theory
   d. Music vocabulary
   e. Leadership skills
   f. Musical and performance experiences (school and community)
   g. Senior recitals and other concerts you attended

Topics that may help guide your reflection:
1. How I personally deal with vocal stress
2. My personal goals related to my vocal growth
3. My obstacles/challenges in reaching my vocal or artistic goals
4. Strengths and weaknesses of my choir and personal commitments towards improvement
5. How I compare myself to this time last year
6. Things I like about my voice
7. Things I like about someone else’s voice
8. How does music make a difference in my life?
9. What is my passion and why
10. Genres of music in which I don’t know much about but have researched
11. Where I see myself in 10-years
12. Why I am at DSA
13. What frightens me the most about being a singer?
14. Who I most admire in the music world and why
15. Who I most admire at DSA and why

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MASTER CLASSES & PERFORMANCE CLASSES (HS)

Master classes and Performance classes are where HS VM majors in Chorale & Bellissima can sing a solo in a performance setting and receive immediate feedback from a clinician, or resident artist. This is part of your applied voice grade. The clinician is there to give you performance tips related to your singing and your performance techniques. All studio and master classes will be scheduled during after school hours.

Performance Classes (formerly titled studio classes; taught by resident artists)
All Chorale & Bellissima students will sing at a performance class once a quarter. They will receive a short clinic with one of our resident artists. These classes are held during the Vocal class period on a Friday.

Master Classes (taught by collegiate or one-time visiting artist)
Students will participate in master classes during the 2nd and 4th quarter which are scheduled outside of the school day (6pm). Juniors and seniors are required to sing at Master Classes during 2nd and 4th quarter. All Chorale & Bellissima students are required to attend one Master Class evening session per quarter.

Students singing in performance classes and master classes are required to dress appropriately for this occasion. Please refer to the page on Professional Attire. Master classes will be held in the Vocal room. Please refer to the Vocal Music department calendar and bulletin board for singer schedules and dates for performance classes.

HS students will be assigned to sing at these classes in advance and must have their voice teacher’s approval of their repertoire selection. The purpose of these sessions is to give you additional feedback on your current vocal repertoire as well as performance practice. If your assigned time poses a conflict for you, please mutually agree upon a swapped time with another student.

Parents are welcome to attend Master Classes & Performance Classes. Please check in at the main office during the school day.
SOLO DAYS

Solo Days (Allegro Voce & Treble Choir)
Treble Choir & Allegro Voce students participate in scheduled quarterly solo days. Students are required to prepare a new solo every quarter and sing it for class. Any genre of music is acceptable, however, students are encouraged to step outside of their comfort zone and perform a variety of styles (musical theater, classical, jazz, pop, etc.) Students will be assessed on vocal technique, presentation, preparation, and professionalism.

NOTE: NO a cappella singing for solo day (or juries).

Parents are welcome to attend solo days. Please check in at the main office for a visitor’s badge during the school day. Ask your child when they are scheduled for the quarter. Students are required to bring sheet music in advance or to provide their own student or adult accompanist. The class, as well as the instructor will offer some immediate verbal feedback on the singer’s performance.

Parents are also encouraged to purchase a solo repertoire book from their local music store. Several classical and musical theater books are specifically designed for young or junior singers and include appropriate repertoire that appeal to their age.

Students should keep a running repertoire list of songs they hear during solo days. This will help them become familiar with a variety of repertoire, styles, and composers. It may also provide future repertoire ideas.
Solo Day Tips and Performance Expectations

**Preparation**
- Sheet music is neatly and clearly presented
- Copies are double-sided and in page order (can be taped back-to-back, but not stapled)
- Choose appropriate songs: difficulty, length (2-3 minutes), text, key

**Dress**
- Put your best foot forward! Dress up for a special occasion!
- Don’t show shoulders, toes, knees, or tummy
- Take off your glasses, coats, scarves, gloves—unless they are a part of your character

**Accompianist**
- Instructions should only include repeats, changes, or tempo
- Always THANK your accompanist, no matter how well your performance went in your opinion.
- Be in charge of YOUR tempo.

**Greeting**
- Be formal; this is a formal occasion. Say “Good Morning” or “Good Evening”
- Smile
- Enunciate and project ALL of your words
- Don’t apologize for being sick and learn to sing through it (unless you are terribly ill and you should stay home and call in)
- Bow to applause; thank the audience with your eyes
- Practice your brief intro. Be the expert on your song. Know the composer, lyricist, and performer. If it’s from a show or a movie, let us know.

**Performance**
- Stay in character throughout even when there are musical interludes
- Maintain character until the last chord sounds
- Smile and bow. Don’t judge your performance verbally or non-verbally after your performance is finished.
- Have fun and seize the moment!

**Audience**
- Eyes and ears on the performer
- Send nonverbal encouragement by smiling and nodding
- Write down titles for your own repertoire list
- It is okay to enjoy the performance with laughter and smiles; know not to go overboard so that you distract the performer
- Don’t talk, whisper, or slouch during someone’s performance, even if it’s positive comments
- Clap enthusiastically and avoid screaming or yelling. Everyone deserves acknowledgement from their peers.
- If you offer comments, keep them POSITIVE, CONSTRUCTIVE, AND SPECIFIC!
- Take notes about repertoire that you really liked or qualities of other singers that you would like to emulate.
Voice juries take place at the end of the grading period. They are for all VM majors, however sometimes they vary between MS and HS. Juries are defined as a jury or group of experts who listen and critique a solo singer. It is an opportunity to monitor a student’s vocal progress as well as to give important feedback to that student regarding strengths and weaknesses.

**High School**: Two or three selections from your assigned solo repertoire will be heard. You must show improvement from your semester of voice lessons and be fully prepared on all three songs. These will be performed in front of the voice faculty and peers.

**Middle School**: Students are asked to prepare one solo of their choice. These will be performed in front of class. MS students are required to sing one prepared song which can be from a previous solo day, but not from a previous jury. Any genre is allowed, as long as the song will help demonstrate proper vocal technique, range, and expressive qualities.

**Students are expected to bring the following to their jury:**

- **Professional attire** (see handbook under *Professional Attire* for specific requirements)
- **Photocopied music** given in advance to your accompanist. Music should be back-to-back copies to avoid multiple page turns (scotch tape is allowed, but no staples). If music is only 2 pages, do not photocopy back-to-back, but rather place the pages side by side.
- **HS only** - One typed translation of foreign language song/s:
  - **Word-for-word**: each foreign word translated into English
  - **Poetic**: a translation in poetic form to give the underlining meaning of the lyrics
- **HS only** - Comprehensive repertoire list of all songs studied under formal private instruction (sample format included on website)
- **Introductions**: Prepared 30-second verbal introduction of song(s) with information about the composer, song, style, translation, larger work (opera, musical, song cycle)

**Musicianship Assessment**
All students will be assessed in their musicianship skills of melodic sight singing, rhythm reading, scales, triads/inversions, intervals and seventh chords.

**Musicianship Waivers**
Musicianship waivers may be given to students who meet the criteria designed by the Vocal Faculty. Students will receive only one waiver per school year. If you receive a waiver, then you are excused from your musicianship jury for that semester. Criteria may include 85% or better on your All State Choir audition results.
VOICE LESSONS (HS)

Students in grades 9-12 are expected to take private voice instruction. The purpose of these lessons is to teach specific vocal technique and solo repertoire in a rigorous one-on-one setting.

Because of the developing physical and emotional nature of 6th-8th graders, individual lessons are not required for MS students. However, Resident Artists are for hire if they have availability in their schedules. MS students are also encouraged, yet not required to study with a voice coach in order to build their solo repertoire.

In our efforts to align our standards and expectations with other arts-focused schools and collegiate environments around the country, we have recruited and retained several world-class resident artists who will serve the department as our primary teachers and experts in vocal instruction. We require all HS vocal music majors to study on campus with one of these artists as their private voice instructor.

HS students in voice lessons are responsible for learning 3 songs each semester. The solo repertoire requirement includes the following:

1. One Classical song or operatic aria in a foreign language
2. One English or American art song, aria or folk song
   
   Note: For the spring semester of junior and senior year only, students may substitute a musical theater or jazz piece according to the student’s primary focus
3. One Musical Theater, Jazz or other song approved by your teacher

All songs are to be agreed upon by teacher and student, although the teacher’s expertise is to be strongly considered in this matter. Students will stay with the assigned repertoire throughout the semester in order to prepare them for their jury. Students are allowed to study more than 3 songs, but must fulfill the repertoire requirements for the semester voice jury.

IMPORTANT:
The student has the primary responsibility in accurately learning and memorizing their repertoire by the end of the semester.

Teachers are here to teach proper technique, stylistic choices, and performance tips. They are not meant to pound out your notes and rhythms. Do that on your own or hire a pianist. Record your lessons and bring a pencil and organized music notebook to your lessons.
The Pops Show is one of our major concerts involving the entire department. Our original format were themed shows based on style, decade, or niche. In 2015, we modified our shows to include more contemporary music of the current generation. HS students in Bellissima & Chorale are asked to form small vocal groups (6-10 students) along with some assigned guitarists. They can create an original song, or choose to cover a famous pop song from any decade or genre. Students will be given curricular time to work on their piece. There will be weekly progress checks with the directors, where the students will receive appropriate feedback regarding musical or staging choices.

Many tech rehearsals are scheduled as we get closer to performance, so plan your schedule well in advance. These rehearsals will roughly run 1-2 weeks prior to opening night. The VM Department will do its best in giving you 3-weeks’ notice for any emergency rehearsals that are needed.

**Pops Show History**

- 1997 — *Sing the Body Electric (Songs of the 70s)*
- 1998 — *Popular Songs of the USO: The WWII Era*
- 1999 — *Cinemagic: Music from the Movies*
- 2000 — *American Pop Forever*
- 2001 — *Blast to Broadway*
- 2002 — *Melodies of Motown*
- 2003 — *And the Envelope Please... Tony, Grammy, and Oscar-winning songs*
- 2004 — *Sentimental Journey: Songs from the Big Band Era.*
- 2005 — *The British Invasion*
- 2006 — *Red, Hot, & Blue Skies: Songs from the Tin Pan Alley*
- 2007 — *Toppin’ the Charts: #1 Hits from the Decades*
- 2009 — *From Suave to Mod: Hit Vocal groups of the 50s & 60s*
- 2010 — *Magical Kingdoms: Songs from Walt Disney Productions*
- 2011 — *Solid Gold: An 80’s Retrospective*
- 2012 — *Motown II*
- 2013 — *Love Will Keep Us Together: Best of the 1970s*
- 2014 — *Grammy Award winning songs*
- 2015 — *Student’s Choice*
- 2016 — *Student’s Choice II*
- 2017 — *Students’ Choice III*

**Extra-curricular Solo/Small Group Auditions for Pops Show**

Besides curricular group numbers, auditioned solos and small groups are an integral part of the Pops Show. Initiative, creativity, and teamwork are necessary in successful auditions. Students may audition for one solo and one group number OR two group numbers. Students may **not** audition for two solos. Appropriate professional dress (see *Professional Attire*) should be observed, as well as professional demeanor maintained, even if it is an after-school audition.

Criteria for judging solos at auditions will be based on **some or all** of the following:

1. Quality, originality, and preparation
2. Variety of tempo, style, and mood
3. Inclusion of a variety of students

Students may audition up to 2 songs: either 2 collaborative songs or 1 solo & 1 collaboration. Students may be permitted to be a supporting dancer, vocalist or instrumentalist in additional groups.
Practice is the key to skill refinement and confident performance. Vocal music students are **required and expected** to practice daily. The more you practice, the better you will sing, and the better musician you will become.

Good singing does not happen overnight. Learning new techniques and repertoire may take weeks, months, or years to successfully acquire. The voice is just as unique as any other instrument, but since it is housed within our body, it is subject to many changes and conditions, especially for the growing adolescent and teenager. Consistent, healthy repetition of technique is **vital** towards progress.

Patience, of course, is a big factor in any young singer’s journey, but with perseverance, results are amazing. Students are expected to practice daily in a designated space where they can rehearse vocal exercises and repertoire. At least 30-60 minutes per day is recommended.

Here are some practical tips that will ensure productive practice sessions:

1. Schedule a practice time everyday (free period, after school or evening).
2. Find a quiet place where you can practice without interruption.
3. Gather all materials you need before you start practicing (music, pencil, water, metronome, tape recorder, and keyboard).
4. Set goals for your practice sessions (difficult rhythmic or melodic phrases, dynamics, acting, memorization, etc.).
5. Set a time limit and stick with it. Frequency of vocal practice is preferred over quantity of time.
6. Practice at a slow tempo, so that you will aim for better accuracy.
7. Fix your mistakes rather than practice your mistakes. Mark your music with highlighters or pictures.
8. Record yourself onto a tape recorder and listen to it.
9. Recognize that some days will be better than others.
10. If you are ill, you can mentally practice by silently acting your song or writing out planned gestures or facial expressions.
11. Memorize text away from rhythm.
12. Diagram solfege and rhythm when learning a song.
13. Break apart your song by text, rhythm, and melody.
14. Write in acting choices and gestures within sections of music or specific phrases
15. Practice in front of a mirror.
16. Practice in front of a friend or family member.
EXCURSIONS & TRIPS

All DSA Vocal Music majors and parents will be asked to sign an excursion permit at registration so that individual excursion permission slips will not have to be issued multiple times throughout the school year. Bellissima & Chorale have been traveling together on a major trip every 2 years. Please plan your finances in advance in advance.

A valuable element of the learning experience is going on excursions and taking trips locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. Here is a brief history of our travel in the past:

- 1997 – St. Louis, Missouri (MS & HS)
- 1998 – Los Angeles, California (MS & HS)
- 2001 – New York City, New York (HS); Gunnison & Crested Butte, Colorado (MS)
- 2003 – Honolulu, Hawaii (HS); Cripple Creek & Colorado Springs, Colorado (MS)
- 2005 – Vail & Grand Junction, Colorado (MS)
- 2006 – Miami, Florida and San Juan, Puerto Rico (HS)
- 2010 – San Francisco, California (HS)
- 2012 – Colorado Springs (MS); Boston (HS)
- 2014 – Washington D.C. (HS)
- 2016 – Honolulu, Hawaii (HS)
- 2018 – San Juan and Ponce, Puerto Rico (HS)

CMEA (Colorado Music Educators Association) Conference

The directors often submit recordings of DSA choirs to be considered for acceptance as a performing choir at this prestigious annual conference of Colorado music educators. It is held annually in late January at the Broadmoor Hotel in Colorado Springs. Students have the opportunity to attend other choral performances and clinics, as well as perform at a state level.

Student expectations for excursions

 ✓ All students in these ensembles are EXPECTED to attend these excursions. As a performing member of an elite ensemble at an Arts School, it is essential that all voices are present in order to represent DSA and the Music Department in the best way possible.
 ✓ All VM majors will follow all regulations set forth by director while traveling with performance groups.
 ✓ Students will be sent home, at their parents’ expense, if found with alcohol, drugs, or weapons. They will also be suspended from school according to DPS policy.
 ✓ Students are restricted from acquiring piercings or tattoos on school trips during their free time
 ✓ Students are expected to stay in groups of 3 or more when away from the group
VOICE CARE

This section will go into some detail regarding voice care. Seek advice from a qualified voice teacher, speech therapist or doctor for more specific information.

Examples of Vocal Abuse
1. Coughing
2. Throat-clearing
3. Grunting
4. Prolonged talking
5. Talking with excessive laryngeal tension
6. Smoking cigarettes or marijuana
7. Alcohol intake dehydrates system and lowers hearing threshold
8. Speaking or singing in smoky environments
9. Abusive speaking or singing during menstruation
10. Inadequate breath support
11. Abusive laughter
12. Talking in noisy environments
13. Yelling in anger or at sporting events or concerts
14. Inappropriate high pitch sounds
15. Inappropriate low pitch sounds
16. Excessive habitual loudness
17. Abusive singing
18. Excessive speaking during upper respiratory infections

Good Tips for your Voice (adapted from Florence B. Blager, Ph.D. of the Denver Center for the Performing Arts)
1. Inhale before you start to talk and exhale while you talk.
2. If you run out of breath while talking or singing, don’t talk or sing to the end of your breath – take a quick inhale and then continue.
3. Practice your daily talking with good breath technique – as if you were a performer and this were your script.
4. When you feel hoarse, limit your talking.
5. Don’t clear your throat – sip water and swallow instead.
6. Drink lots of water throughout the day and evening.
7. If your voice is hoarse for more than six weeks, seek medical advice. Do not take advice from other singers.
8. Eat a well-balanced diet
9. Avoid beverages with caffeine for hydration purposes
10. Get plenty of rest and exercise
11. Avoid sharing food or drinks with friends
Writing Tips for Classroom Assignments

1. Read the question or the writing prompt closely. Think about what, exactly, you are supposed to write in your answer. As you write, glance back at the question and make sure you are staying on topic.

2. Your writing should be lively and formal. In other words, do not use slang or abbreviations. Do use exciting and colorful words and specific details.

3. Make sure you use paragraphs to separate your main ideas and make it easy for the reader to follow your thinking.

4. Vary the length of your sentences. Using commas and semicolons correctly will help you do this. Be careful not to write run-on sentences or sentence fragments.

5. Do not use a pronoun (he, she, it) without first telling the reader to whom or what you are referring.

6. Be careful to capitalize the first letter of each sentence, and all proper nouns, (especially names and places), for books, movies and other major works of art: italicize (or underline if writing by hand), and capitalize every major word. Short stories and poems are placed in quotation marks.

7. Make sure your subject and verb agree in number.

8. Apostrophes are used to indicate possession or to be used in contractions, and are not to be placed before an “s“ when forming a plural noun.

9. Following are some very common usage and spelling mistakes. Make sure you are clear on the correct word to use.

   - accept/except
   - its/it’s
   - there, their, and they’re
   - to/too/two
   - less/fewer
   - then/than
   - you’re/your
   - who/whom
   - who/that
   - weather/whether
   - piece/peace
   - effect/affect
   - a lot is correct; alot is not
   - b/c and w/o should not be used in place of because and without
   - should have, would have, and could have are right
     Should of, would of, could of are incorrect.

10. Use linking words to demonstrate the complexity of your thinking and to produce a flowing effect in your writing. Examples: because, also, furthermore, consequently, therefore, and for example. (Commas and semicolons are often required to incorporate these words.)
The Vocal Music Department handbook has been prepared for your information and understanding of policies, philosophies and practices. Please read it carefully. Upon completion of your review of the online handbook, sign the statement below, and return it to your Director by the due date. A copy of this acknowledgement appears at the back of the handbook for your records.

I, ________________________(student), I have received a copy of the Vocal Music Department online handbook which outlines the philosophy, rules and expectations of the Department, as well as my responsibilities as a student

I, ________________________(parent), I have received a copy of the Vocal Music online handbook which outlines the philosophy, rules and expectations of the Department, as well as my responsibilities as a parent of a student in the Denver School of the Arts Vocal Music Department.

We have familiarized ourselves with the contents of this handbook. By our signatures below, we acknowledge, understand, accept and agree to comply with the information contained in the Vocal Music Department handbook.

__________________________________
Choir

__________________________________  ______________________________________
Student Signature                Parent/Guardian Signature

__________________________________  ______________________________________
Date                Date

FAILURE TO RETURN THIS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT WILL NOT RELIEVE A STUDENT OR THE PARENT(s)/GUARDIAN(s) OF THE STUDENT FROM RESPONSIBILITY FOR KNOWLEDGE OF THE CONTENTS OF THE RULES AND WILL NOT EXCUSE NON-COMPLIANCE BY THE STUDENT WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THE RULES.

********************************************************************
For Department use only:
Date Received: ____________________