



Greetings!

Let me be the first to welcome you to the Robert C. Byrd High School Show Choir Program. By virtue of your student being selected as a member of Vocal Intensity, you are now a member of the Booster Organization.

Our show choir has won various awards and accolades throughout the state of West Virginia, and is regularly featured on social media, as well as the local newspaper and news stations. Our choral program has a rich history as one of the finest choral programs, not only in our county, but in the state, and we need your help in growing this tradition.

Throughout this choral handbook you will discover what it takes to be a part of our program. This handbook contains expectations and procedures, and has other resources for you to use throughout the year. All information in this handbook (and more!) can be found on our website at RCBchoirs.com.

We are excited for a new year and hope that you will get involved in the choir family experience. This is truly one of the few activities for high school-aged students in which parents, siblings, and families can come right alongside the students in producing the end product of our performances. So don't delay, get involved with the choir program today and help us make this year a great success!

Best Wishes,

Mady J. McNemar, Director

Aimee Williams, Booster President

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I. Contact Information

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Booster Vice-President: Lisa Williams
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II. Mission Statement

Our mission is to foster learning to its highest potential while providing diverse and challenging educational experiences that academically, socially, and emotionally shape our students into independent and productive members of society. In addition to providing these experiences, we are committed to creating a safe and nurturing environment for all students.

III. Expectations

- You are expected to **ATTEND** all rehearsals and performances.
 - If you are ill, you must contact the director via e-mail and provide a parent or doctor note.
 - If a death occurs in your circle of family and friends, a parent note or e-mail is required to miss rehearsal for any services.
 - If a religious service is taking place, a parent note or e-mail is required to miss rehearsal or performance.
- You are expected to **TAKE RESPONSIBILITY** for your actions and commitment to this program.
- You are expected to **BE RESPECTFUL** of all people at all times. There is never an excuse to be disrespectful to others, even if you feel wronged in some way.
- You are expected to **BE PREPARED**: for class, rehearsal, performances, trips, etc.
- You are expected to **GO WITH THE FLOW**. Life isn't always going to go the way we want it to, so we will regroup, plan, and move forward when we need to.

- You are expected to **NEVER GIVE UP**. It's not always easy. Ask for help, stay positive, and never give up!

IV. **Communication**

There are several ways to stay informed about upcoming meetings, rehearsals, performances, and events. Please take advantage of these opportunities so you are never out-of-the-loop:

- Join the Facebook page: "Vocal Intensity (RCB Show Choir)"
- Remind App: Text @vinews to the number 81010.
- Look out for regular e-mails sent from RCBsings@gmail.com!
- Check out our website and bookmark it! -> www.rcbchoirs.com
- Check us out on Instagram:
 - Instagram: @rcb.vocal_intensity

V. **Grading Policy**

Because this is a performance-based class, very few written assignments will be given (However, they do exist.). A student's grade will be largely-based on their responsibility as a member of their respective ensemble. Students' punctuality and preparedness for rehearsals and class affect their grade. Supporting these expectations at home will help your child find success and stability in rehearsal.

Typical Gradebook Assignments

- Weekly Rehearsal Grade: 100 points
- Performances: 100 points (50 points participation, 50 points self-reflection assignment)
- Sight-singing assignments: 30 points (10 points for pitch accuracy, 10 points for intonation, 10 points for correct syllable)
- Choreography Camp: 100 points
- Pass-Off Checks: 25 points (A pass-off is when you perform a section of music, vocal choreo/ both, to measure knowledge and understanding.)

VI. **Rehearsal Expectations**

- ALL students are required to attend all rehearsals, unless a prior arrangement is made due to another more pressing school-related event.
- Students will coordinate their schedule with other extracurricular activities to prioritize all activities equally.
- Rehearsals are held on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3:30-5:30. Some evening rehearsals will take place at the beginning of Fall semester. Tues/Thurs rehearsals typically begin at the end of marching season.

- No horseplay, chasing, or goofing off will be tolerated at any rehearsal. With everyone's safety in mind, the students caught in a situation such as this may be written up on a disciplinary form.
- Rehearsals are closed to parents, family, friends, alumni, and community members unless prior approval is given from the director. This includes anyone who is NOT a member of the rehearsing ensemble, or is on staff (i.e. director, accompanist, stage crew, band, etc.).
- Cell phones are not permitted during rehearsal, but can be used during breaks. Please contact the director during rehearsal hours should you need your child in the case of an emergency. If a student is caught with a cell phone out during class or rehearsal, their phone will be taken and they will receive a grade cut.

Cell phone out during rehearsal = -10 points from weekly rehearsal grade

- A student will not be permitted to sit out for every bellyache, bump, bruise, or sprain. If you are unable to participate due to injury, you need a doctor's note (and should receive medical attention, anyway). Parents may send ibuprofen with their child, should they need it. If you are unable to handle the physical rigor required for this ensemble, consider this before you audition. If you do sit out during a rehearsal, you will not be permitted to sit on your cell phone while your peers continue with rehearsal.
- Students may only take a bathroom or water break when one is granted from the director. If you are not participating in a particular song/activity/etc., you must sit in the first few rows of the auditorium and support your ensemble, or perform with the ensemble in the wings (if you are a swing). **Students must remain engaged in the rehearsal.**
- Attire for dance rehearsals is as follows: black shorts or pants, nude dance tights (if shorts are inappropriately short), character shoes or a designated rehearsal shoe, and the designated rehearsal shirt. Hair must be worn OUT of the face.

Student not in regulation rehearsal attire = -10 points from weekly rehearsal grade

VII. Financial Guidelines and Fundraising

Show choir requires fees for costumes, choreography, music, props, backdrops, awards, etc. The show choir boosters will facilitate several fundraisers that will help you individually, as well as help maintain our general fund to make large purchases for the program.

There are two types of fundraiser:

- General: goes to the general fund of the booster account
- Individual: goes to your costuming and choreography fees

Participation in general fundraisers is required for every student. If a student is unable to attend a particular fundraiser, a parent or other family member may participate on their behalf. General fundraisers keep the cost of show choir low, so even if you pay off your account, those fundraisers we do still affect your child. Participation is KEY, especially this year.

Every student and parent/ guardian is required to participate in the VocalFest Show Choir Invitational. We host several groups on our campus. It is a huge endeavor and everyone's attendance is required to make it a continued success.

Individual fundraisers are not required, but your student will not receive credit if they do not participate in an individual fundraising event.

Your fee for show choir includes competition costuming and choreography. Students chosen to participate in show choir agree to assume all financial responsibilities necessary for participation. Payments are NON-REFUNDABLE. Every student selected for the show choir will be responsible for paying (in full) the show choir fee.

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| Costuming Fee: | \$300.00 |
| Choreography Camp Fee: | \$150.00 |
| <u>Overnight Hotel Stay (OH):</u> | <u>\$25.00</u> |
| TOTAL: | \$475.00 |

VIII. **Competitions and Trips**

- All students must participate in EVERY* competition, as chosen by the director. Failure to participate in a competition will result in a zero and you may risk being removed from the ensemble. (*Note: Students will not be punished for being a member of other school-related extracurricular activities, but every concession must be made to attend a competition. Communication between the parents, student, director and coaches must take place to make every schedule work as efficiently as possible.)
- All students are required to ride the bus to every competition. Students may not provide their own transportation to a competition or off-campus event, unless prior approval is given by 1) administration and 2) the director.
- If any student wishes to ride home with a parent (ONLY A PARENT/ LEGAL GUARDIAN), the parent must sign out the student with a director in the homeroom after awards.
- Students are required to wear their competition season t-shirt, black pants, and clean sneakers to all competitions. Please be comfortable, but look neat and clean. (This includes a shower and deodorant before you arrive to the school.)
- When students are not preparing for warm-up, eating in the cafeteria, or competing in solo competition, they must go to the auditorium and watch other groups compete. While we are there to compete, we also attend to learn and support other choirs.
- Every representative of Robert C. Byrd High School (students, parents, and staff) will compose themselves with professionalism, maturity, and poise. Show choir members and parents will demonstrate good sportsmanship, promote a positive spirit, and display a genuine concern for others. If the director finds that you are not promoting these positive behaviors you will receive counseling by the director and risk not performing at the next competition.
- If you have been “benched” by the director and are not permitted to perform at a competition, you are still required to attend all rehearsals that week, as well as work back stage at that competition.
- Hair should be well-maintained. Guys should not have hair that is long enough to cover their ears or eyebrows. If you do have long hair, you must wear it neatly pulled back and out of your face.

- All girls will use the purchased and prescribed make-up, as selected by the directors. An appropriate amount should be used to look your best under the very bright stage lights (The lights can wash you out and make you look “sickly.”).
- Finger nails should be neat, short, and have no color nail polish. A french manicure, or another color *designated by the director*, is acceptable.
- It is not suggested that students wear glasses during a performance, as they could fly off your face while dancing. Please invest in a secure and discreet strap for your glasses if contacts are not an option for you at this time.
- When we travel via bus, friends may sit together, but not romantic couples.
- When staying overnight in a hotel, boys will stay with boys and girls will stay with girls. Each room will be monitored throughout the night by parent chaperones and all students will be “sealed” in their rooms using a printed adhesive label. If the seal is broken and an emergency was not reported, those students may be sent home, face disciplinary action, and may be removed from the ensemble.
- No public displays of affection or blanket sharing will be tolerated, this includes sitting on laps, canoodling, snuggle time, etc.
- If you wish to ride home from ANY event with a parent/ guardian (Not a friend, boyfriend/ girlfriend, etc.), you must provide a written note or e-mail (text is not sufficient) from the parent/ guardian to Ms. McNemar no later than the Friday before the event. You must be an approved volunteer driver if driving a child other than your own.
- Students will not be released to parents until all homerooms and buses are cleaned and the trailer is completely loaded or unloaded. Please do not ask to leave until the director, a member of our staff, or the head chaperone says everyone is dismissed.

Sportsmanship Guidelines

- Any parent or student that shares or posts a negative (intention is irrelevant) remark about the RCB Show Choir or any other show choir/ensemble, may face disciplinary action or removal from the program. In the case of a parent, your actions may result in the revokal of your chaperone and volunteer privileges at ALL sanctioned events. We are a team, and that team includes every adult. As adults, it is our job to set an example of good sportsmanship for our children.
- Parents should only be concerned with the affairs of his/her own child. Do not meddle in the affairs of other parents or students, unless that student is in potential danger. This especially includes any financial matters for an individual student account. Those matters are only the concern of the director, booster treasurer, and RCB administration.
- Please refrain from using social media as a “sounding board” in regards to decisions made by the director, or by any level of authority either at school or in the show choir community. This includes (but is not limited to): a decision made by the director that may affect your child, an adjudicator decision at a show choir competition, a decision made by an administrator at our school, etc. This is not a solution to an issue you may have, but rather adds to the issue. If you have a concern, please address it with the director in a professional and timely manner.
- Be supportive of all show choirs. There will be times when you may not agree with the judging of a competition, but you should only express those opinions in private. If you are wearing the

Byrd High name, whether you are a student or parent, you must maintain a positive spirit of sportsmanship. Those kids in the competing groups work just as hard as we do, and show choir is a very subjectively-judged activity. No matter what, we continue to work hard and put our best foot forward.

IX. Costuming & Equipment

- Each student is responsible for the care of their own costume.
- Costumes will be stored at school for the duration of competition season.
- The costuming chairperson and committee are responsible for the upkeep of each costume, in terms of unexpected repairs and cleaning.
- No student is permitted to eat or drink anything other than water in their costume.
- Students are in charge of the organization and care of all equipment used for the show.
- Students may be held financially responsible if they are found guilty of damaging any costumes or equipment.
- Equipment will be hauled to and from performances in our equipment trailer. A parent or other volunteer from the Booster Organization is needed to pull this trailer. We will apply \$75 to your child's account each time you pull the trailer.

X. Booster Organization

- The purpose of the Booster Organization is to raise funds for, and offer support to, the show choir program at Robert C. Byrd High School. The Booster Organization works closely with the director to help meet the needs of every student.
- Any parent or legal guardian of a current show choir member is considered an active Booster Organization member.
- Booster meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month, with exceptions made for holidays, etc.
- All rules and regulations upheld by the Booster Organization can be found in the bylaws for said organizations, which can be acquired from the director or any booster officer.