

Daniel Hand High School Show Choir



Dear VIBE Parents/Guardians and Students,

Congratulations on being a part of VIBE! We look forward to another outstanding year. Your student is now enrolled in VIBE, VIBE band, or Crew. Students in the choir and band receive academic credit from DHHS. By virtue of your student being selected for VIBE choir, band, or crew, you are now a member of the VIBE Show Choir Supporters Parent Organization. This information packet is designed to outline the expectations and hopefully answer some of the questions you may have. Feel free to contact me with questions or concerns at Soja.Ronald@Madisonps.org

Thank you!
Ron Soja

NEW TO VIBE?

VIBE is DHHS's competitive show choir and one of only a few of its kind in Connecticut. VIBE is made up of the choir (singers/dancers), the student band, the student crew, and the parents and other community adults who help them make the magic happen. VIBE is a class for the choir/band and a commitment for students AND parents. VIBE relies upon parents to staff events and to devote time/energy/money to support the season. **Family participation / volunteer support is mandatory throughout the season and the program is not possible without a high level of fundraising support.** VIBE parents also travel locally to cheer on the kids at the New England competitions. The season kicks off in August with the first of two intense choreography sessions for the choir students. Students rehearse every weekday through the fall. The show premieres at the DHHS Cabaret in January, a ticketed event with solos from VIBE members, which is also a major fundraiser for the group. The competition season starts immediately after the Cabaret, with competitions on many Saturdays throughout late winter. There is one bigger travel trip per year (outside of New England), sometimes coordinated with the choral, band, and orchestra programs, and is an additional cost. The season closes with an End of Year concert at DHHS and a celebratory banquet at the Woodwinds where each senior is personally honored with students, friends, and family members of all years in attendance. It is truly amazing to watch the growth of each individual student and the group as a whole during the season. **You are in for a spectacular time! Questions?** Contact Mr. Soja if it is a specific VIBE class question. The names and contacts of the season's VIBE Show Choir Supporters board members will be shared at the beginning of each season. The parent and family facebook group is also a great way to connect with other parents and get information.

CREATIVE STAFF

Director: Ron Soja
Stage Manager: Tim Lunn
Set/Logistics: Tim Lunn
Costume Advisor: Lyn Lunn
Choreographers: Sam Mulligan, Nikki Mele, and April James
Show Design/Music: Joshua Greene

VIBE SHOW CHOIR SUPPORTERS PARENT ORGANIZATION

VIBE could not function without the support and dedication of the parents. Contact Mr. Soja to learn how to become involved. You can also reach the parent volunteers at vibecabaret@gmail.com.

COMMUNICATION

PARENTS

- The VIBE Show Choir Supporters Parent Organization will send periodic emails with important asks and/or to share information
- Mr. Soja will send weekly emails regarding student needs and expectations and updates
- VIBE Parents/Families 2026-2027 Facebook group: join this for real-time communication, sharing photos of events, etc. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/vibefam20262027>

STUDENTS

- Students will receive posts on Google Classroom from Mr Soja as well as live updates in class
- Students have a closed facebook group for their own group communication/support

PARTICIPATION FEES AND FUNDS

- *VIBE Show Choir Supporters* is a 501(c)(3), accepts tax-deductible donations and handles all of our monetary transactions.
- The annual budget for a show choir production and competition season of this magnitude is approximately \$160,000.
- This budget includes costs for music arrangements, choreography, costumes, competition fees, travel/bussing, stage sets, custodial fees, lighting, etc.
- This budget breaks down to approximately \$2,200 per student (depending on number of students).
- The school supports some competition fees (about \$2,000). The remainder (approximately \$158,000) must be raised yearly by the VIBE Show Choir Supporters Parent Organization.
- One small part of our budget is met by annual dues (participation fees) from all students.
 - **There is a mandatory VIBE participation fee each season. The participation fee is paid through the website at dhhsvibe.com. This fee supports all aspects of the VIBE production season.**
 - Additional costs (not included in dues):
 - Special trips (Heart of America or similar travel competition outside of New England)
 - Certain costume items (underclothing, shoes, up to approximately \$100).
 - Team jackets, tshirts, gear for students and supporters (optional, costs vary)
 - Banquet tickets (approximately \$40 each, optional)
 - Competitions: students may bring food or purchase food from the host schools during competitions. Tickets for spectators range from \$15-30.
- More than 95% of show choirs charge their students dues of over \$1,500 per year. We have chosen to keep dues low and to offset the student costs through fundraising.
- Funds for specific cases of financial hardship are available on a *limited basis* each year. Applications for financial assistance are time-sensitive and information within is held in strict confidence between DHHS Administration and VIBE Supporters Executive Board. Parents/guardians requesting financial assistance will be notified in a timely manner as to the amount available.

GENERAL FUNDRAISING

- Car Washes: Fall and Spring, Madison Service Station
- Direct Solicitation of Local Businesses: October-November
- Local restaurant support fundraisers
- Cabaret Ad Sales: October-November
- Season/Cabaret Sponsorship Drive: October-November

- Cabaret: early January
- Season Finale Concert: Spring
- At any time a person may make a donation to VIBE by visiting the website and entering credit card information www.dhhsvibe.com
- Please note that DHHS Music Boosters does its own fundraising (pot pies, mattress sale, citrus fruit). The Music Booster funding supports all music programs at the school WITHOUT specific VIBE support. Please continue to support Music Boosters in addition to VIBE-specific fundraising efforts.

REHEARSALS

CHOIR

- Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays 2-3 pm
- Tuesdays 7 - 9 pm

BAND

- Wednesdays, Fridays 2-3 pm

For Choir and Band, Show Choir is a class where students receive academic credit.

- Students must be present at all classes Monday and Wednesday - Friday from 2-3.
- Athletes may leave at 2:50 if there is a conflict.
- Just like any other class, a student **must have a parent use infinite campus for an early dismissal** if they need to leave earlier than 2:45. Unexcused absences will count as regular class skips and result in school referrals and possible replacement.

CREW

- TBD in the fall

CHOREOGRAPHY

We only work with our choreographers a few times a year. Attendance at these trainings is mandatory. Please check the Important Season Dates at dhhsvibe.com for choreography sessions in August and October.

CELEBRATIONS

We hold a banquet each May at the Woodwinds. Please check Important Season Dates at dhhsvibe.com.

PERFORMANCES & COMPETITIONS

STUDENT ATTENDANCE IS MANDATORY. Families, please plan to attend and cheer! Please check Important Season Dates at dhhsvibe.com. Here are general dates:

January 9 & 10 DHHS Cabaret (our biggest fundraiser)
 January 30 - Tantasqua Show Choir Spectacular, Fiskdale, MA
 February 6 - Central MA Show Choir Festival, Dudley, MA
 February 27 - New England Show Choir Classic, Somerset, MA
 March 6 - Flamingo Festival Leominster, MA
 Feb/March Out of State Travel
 March 23 DHHS Season Finale Concert

PERFORMANCE ETIQUETTE/COSTUMES/APPEARANCE STANDARDS

Most of each student's uniform is purchased through the VIBE Show Choir Supporters and used again in future shows. Most years, each student is asked to purchase a small part of their uniform that they will keep at the end of the school year.

No performance is any more or less important than any other. Because of that, students should tend to their appearance (hair, makeup, and uniforms) in the same way ***every time*** they are in front of an audience so that our looks will not in any way take away from the audience's focus on our performance. (The directing staff will clearly communicate any exceptions to this policy.)

Members are responsible for ALL costume pieces purchased and assigned. Garments and accessories must be **cleaned and complete** for EACH performance. You will not perform if this condition is not met. All assigned jewelry and garments shall be worn appropriately for performances, and no unassigned jewelry or clothing will be permitted. Hair should be worn out of the face and girls should wear stage-appropriate makeup.

VIBE's cost for costumes is more than \$500 per student. Students should take care of costumes, following all laundering requirements from the costume advisor, and should plan to return all costume pieces at the end of the season when requested by Mr. Soja.

NO DROP RULE

Decisions about choir membership are made to create balanced musical ensembles. We discourage students from dropping the chosen ensemble once the school year has begun. A one-on-one meeting with the director will be conducted with a student if he/she wishes to drop from the class. **Also, please note that non-profit laws prohibit us from refunding any donations or fees paid to the program.**

COMPETITIONS

Competition days usually consist of an all-day (and sometimes even an all-weekend) commitment. We will travel together by bus and arrive early enough for set up and preparation. This will include the awards presentation and possibly a performance in the evening finals. Before and after our performance, we will support the other show choirs in attendance. Please plan your day accordingly. Some general guidelines for competitions:

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

GRADING AND PARTICIPATION

Students will be graded as outlined in the Madison Public Schools Curriculum. In addition to formal assessments, students will be assessed at each rehearsal on participation, effort, and responsibility. Students are expected to treat each rehearsal like the performance and give 100%. Each student will be given a responsibility grade which includes being on time, bringing music (with a pencil), and bringing their entire uniform to dress rehearsals and performances. ***The responsibility grade will count as 10% of the trimester grade and will have a direct impact on a student's performance eligibility.***

VIBE CULTURE

VIBE maintains a strict zero-tolerance policy regarding hate speech, bullying, and threats. We are committed to fostering a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment for every student in the show choir community.

TRAVEL GUIDELINES

All school rules apply. Please refer to the Daniel Hand Parent/Student Handbook.

Students and families must read this handbook CAREFULLY. Please complete the online signatures for parents and students indicating that the student and family have read and agree to the obligations stated.

**COMPLETE THE ONLINE REGISTRATION at dhhsvibe.com TO CONFIRM RECEIPT
AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE EXPECTATIONS AND OBLIGATIONS**