

West High School Vocal Music

3505 West Locust Street

Davenport, Iowa 52804

563-386-5500 ext. 525

Wednesday, April 6, 2011

Dear West High Students and Parents,

Greetings from the West High School Choral Department! We are happy that you are considering joining the vocal music community here at West (or continuing to be a part of it)! Since you have this letter, you have obviously shown interest in our show choir program. The following is important information you need to know.

Auditions for This Just In! and West Connection will be Tuesday, April 12 (vocal) and Thursday, April 14 (choreography). Davenport West **This Just In** is our preparatory show choir. This show choir is available to any student in ninth through twelfth grade, and preps them to hopefully continue in **West Connection**, our varsity show choir. West Connection is comprised of students in grades 10-12. Both show choirs are auditioned groups.

Some of you may not be acquainted with show choir and all that is involved. This Just In and West Connection meet during the school day for **2 terms (half of the year)**. **They do not meet as a class all year!** In order to sign up for show choir, your student must also be signed up and audition for a year-long choir course (Chorale or Concert Choir for grades 9-12).

We have heard some concerns about fitting all of this into students' schedules. We don't want this to deter any student from participating in vocal music! Students can be in both instrumental and vocal music as well as show choir. Many students currently participate in all three areas. **The administration here at West High School strongly believes that students should not have to choose between activities, and should be able to participate in all areas of interest. We are fully committed to making each student's schedule work.**

During the first semester of the year, show choir meets during the school day. Once we approach competition season (January-March), the groups usually rehearse once a week after school. Occasionally more than one practice is needed, and students will be informed well in advance of these cases. Because of limited rehearsal time, these rehearsals are mandatory. "Competition season" generally consists of 4-5 Saturday competitions. Both West show choirs travel together and support each other at these competitions. They are a wonderful learning experience in that they see other groups, get feedback from professionals, learn to work as a team, and communicate their message to audiences.

Because we do not get any financial support from the school district for show choir, we ask that every student pay a fee. This is standard for any show choir in the country. We try to keep fees to a minimum. We do not yet have fees set for next year. This year the fee for This Just In! was \$300, and the fee for West connection was \$575. Students have several fundraising opportunities to help defray this expense. Any student/family may also work out an appropriate payment schedule with the Vocal Music Boosters. *It is not the policy of West High School to exclude students from participation due to lack of funds.* We only ask that these fees be paid in full by December 31. These fees cover such things as costumes, professional choreography, musical arrangements, competition fees, chartered buses, props, show choir camp, and t-shirts.

There may be additional costs such as shoes, tights, make-up, hair pieces and proper undergarments. Some returning members already own these things, which is why those costs are not included in the general fee.

The West Vocal Music Boosters is a parent organization that helps support the vocal music program at West through volunteer work and additional funding. As a show choir parent, you'll be asked to volunteer to work at some events we host like our competition, Great River. We consider all vocal music parents to be members of the Vocal Music Boosters. It is important that everyone comes together and does their part so we can give your students the quality music experiences that we know they deserve.

If your student is selected to be in This Just In! or West Connection, please plan to attend an informational meeting at West that will be held in May. At this meeting we will go over everything you need to know about show choir – fees, volunteering, costumes, etc. We will keep everyone posted on this date.

We hope this information is helpful to you, and we encourage all students to audition for this group! Attached is an information/permission form that *must* be returned by Tuesday, April 12. If you have any other questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact one of us!

Sincerely,

Rosalie Dunnegan
Director of Choral Activities
dunneganr@davenportschools.org

Tyler Finley
Associate Director of Choral Activities
finleyt@davenportschools.org

Davenport West Show Choir Permission Form

Name_____

Address_____

City_____, IA Zip Code_____

Phone_____ Parent E-mail_____

Parent(s) Name(s)_____

I have read the attached information letter about show choir at West High School. I give permission for my son/daughter to audition for This Just In/West Connection. We understand the commitment and if my child is selected for the group, we will abide by the policies and expectations put forth in this letter.

Parent Signature:_____ Date_____

Student Signature:_____ Date_____

** Please detach and return this form to Mrs. Dunnegan or Mr. Finley during your show choir audition.*