



JCB High School Drama Club



*Parent/Student
Handbook
2007-2008*

Welcome to the JCB High School Drama Club! With a new production beginning, there are many exciting times and challenges waiting. This handbook is a quick reference of information, including a great deal of information and details required for you and your student as you embark on your Drama Club journey. Hopefully you will find it to be a useful tool and reference it often.

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DRAMA CLUB PRODUCTIONS

JCB Drama Club typically puts on two productions per year:

The Fall Production Play

The fall production is usually a comedy or drama, where the students can showcase their acting talents. The fall production is usually announced in the spring and the students have the opportunity to read the script and practice for their auditions during the summer. Auditions are usually held the first week of school in September and the show is the first or second weekend in November. Although on a smaller scale than the spring musical, the fall play requires as much practice time and dedication as the musical.

Parent volunteers are integral to making this show happen.

The Spring Musical

After the fall play is complete, the spring musical is announced. Auditions are generally (however not always) the week after Thanksgiving vacation. Students are given audition materials by the director as soon as the show choice is announced. The spring musical is a much grander production, requiring a wide variety of vocal, acting and dance talent. Every student wishing to participate is welcome. No student is turned away. There are many roles necessary to present a production such as a musical. Although the lead roles are important, voices and characters in supporting roles, such as chorus and dance ensembles are essential. No musical can be performed by only a few. There is also a greater need for students to support the production on stage/technical crew and, as musicians, in the pit orchestra.

AUDITIONS and GETTING STARTED

Auditions for the fall play are usually the first week of school in September. Auditions for the musical are typically right after Thanksgiving vacation, however, could occur anytime in November. Audition packets can be obtained after each show is announced, from the Drama Club director, Mr. Brian Logee. The best advice for auditions is to be prepared!

PREPARING FOR AN AUDITION

Know your material! Have your script and music memorized. Practice in front of a mirror, in front of friends and your parents. "Tips and Tricks for Auditions" are available from the director. In addition, there are often workshops scheduled at school geared to help student preparation, as well as opportunities to practice vocally with an accompanist. Some students even enroll in vocal and dance lessons. Encourage your student to take advantage of every opportunity to prepare.

CASTING SELECTION by COMMITTEE

Selection for cast roles is determined by a committee of directors, usually including the show director, producer, choreographer, and musical director.

AUDITION DAY

This day is probably the most stressful day of the process. Make sure you get enough rest the night before and eat well. Nerves can cause headaches and upset stomachs so make sure you take care of yourself, first and foremost.

It's normal to be nervous, but remember the casting committee is made up of teachers you are familiar with... Relax!!!

You must sell yourself on stage! Try to overcome your nervousness and come out of your shell. You need to move about the stage, and PERFORM! Make the committee SEE the character in you.

REMEMBER !

Remember that people considered your competition are also your peers. Be respectful. Don't gloat if you have a great audition. Be happy, but be humble... it goes a long way when working with others.

ORIENTATION

Once the cast list has been posted, the process of show production begins. It, typically, begins with an orientation meeting for cast members. Often, there is a kick-off dinner meeting which includes all cast members and, at least, one parent, stage/technical crew, as well as the pit orchestra for the spring musical.

REHEARSALS

Shortly after auditions and casting, rehearsals begin. ALL students will be given a schedule. Look at the schedule carefully! Leads, be prepared to rehearse almost daily and chorus and ensemble member rehearsal schedules vary initially. As the production grows closer, rehearsals will be longer and involve everyone. Whenever possible, please avoid making appointments during rehearsal times. The whole cast is working together and when members are absent it makes it difficult for everyone involved.

Stage/Technical crew members will begin rehearsals about a month into production process. They will receive the same schedule as cast members. Again, please read the schedule carefully and know when you are needed to report for rehearsal. Ask if you have questions!

Pit orchestra members will be given a separate schedule by the instrumental music director. They will initially practice separately from the cast. As the production draws near, the pit will begin to practice with the performers.

DRESS REHEARSAL

Dress rehearsal week is a very busy week. Cast members need to be prepared with their make-up, costumes, and shoes, and must have their parts memorized. Rehearsals this week are until DONE! Please do not schedule work or appointments during this week if possible!

All cast, crew and pit must be available this week. Parents should be prepared to pick up their students late. Do not assume they will be done by 6 pm. In addition, parent volunteers are needed to chaperone and supervise during this week, as well as provide snacks and water. Volunteer needs are explained in further detail within this handbook and parents are encouraged to sign up to help.

NEWSLETTER

A weekly newsletter is produced to keep cast, crew, pit and parents informed regarding important information, needs and deadlines. This newsletter is given out at the weekly cast/crew meeting... and every student will receive one. Parents, look for the newsletter every week and always feel free to ask questions. If your student does not receive a newsletter, for some reason, ask the director or producer for a copy.

SHOW PRODUCTION/OPPORTUNITIES TO HELP

It takes a team to make a theatrical or musical production happen. The team includes directors, producer, case members, stage/technical crew, pit orchestra and parent volunteers. Parent volunteers are an essential part of the Drama program. Without our volunteers we would not be able to offer the excellent productions for which Phoenix is known, such as costumes, sets, parties and events associated. There are many opportunities and parents are asked to volunteer any way they can. If every parent signs up to help, everyone gets an opportunity to see their child perform and, in addition, provide the kind of support their child and the production needs. Commitment to working together is what makes our theater family ... and, ultimately, a successful show.

SHOW PRODUCTION OVERVIEW LIST

Here is an overview of the details that must be attended to before and during performance time, who, typically handles the task and what volunteer opportunities are available. Many of the referenced forms, along with further details are included at the end of this handbook.

- ✱ *DINNER TRADITIONS* - Putting together a play is a lot of hard work... with no exception at JCB High School. We do, however, have a longstanding tradition of teamwork, coupled with team bonding and just plain fun. Prior to each musical, there is a kick-off dinner for the parents and students to welcome new families and re-acquaint with seasoned families. This dinner is the beginning of a long couple of months, leading to a great production. Many things will be shared that night, and hopefully, this booklet of information will help afterward when the dinner is over and questions arise. In addition, there is sometimes a late rehearsal dinner organized during dress rehearsal week as a way of connecting and sharing a community meal. Volunteers are always needed to help make these events happen.
- ✱ *SET CONSTRUCTION*- Director, theater arts class, parent volunteers. Typically the set is constructed over one or two weekends very early on in the production process. Anyone is welcome and many hands make light work. Parents who have building knowledge and are capable with tools are highly encouraged to participate.
- ✱ *SHOW SHIRTS* – Producer. A show t-shirt is produced for every show. The producer will ask students to come down and sign a template which is incorporated into the back of the t-shirt. Students wear these shirts often, between casting and performance. It's a form of advertisement as well as an opportunity for development of theater community identity.
- ✱ *POSTERS*- Producer. A poster is developed for each show. Students and parents are asked to assist in putting posters up in the community, and in surrounding area businesses and work places. A set of posters is held so that one can be provided to each student as a memento of involvement and students typically sign each others posters at the cast party.

- * *TICKETS/PARENT PASSES* - Producer ; A ticket order form will be passed out to students and/or be available at all schools. Tickets can be ordered in advance. In addition, parents can order a parent pass, which allows them to attend two shows at a reduction in price. Because parent volunteers are needed during performance times, each parent is asked to reserve one performance time to volunteer within needed volunteer areas.

- * *SHOW PROGRAM* - Producer/Chorus Booster Club/Volunteers. A show program is developed for each show, and is more extensive for the musical. It includes a synopsis of the show, student bios, business advertisements, parent ads and one liner wishes to students, patron listings, and other pertinent information. Funds raised through the show program benefit the Chorus Booster Club which financially supports many aspects of show production - such as specialized, costuming, props, help with set construction materials, and other show production needs. Forms are provided with deadlines for submission.
 - Student Bios/Who's Who: The producer will ask each student to fill out a Who's Who for the program - including students in the cast, stage/technical crew and pit orchestra. Please alert your student to pay attention to deadlines and fill out this form.
 - One Liners: Parents and friends have an opportunity to submit what are called one liners, short messages to their student, other students, or even adult volunteers, at a minimal cost.
 - Parent Ads: Parents, friends and family have an opportunity to submit a more extensive ad - a quarter, half or full page - including photos, if they wish, for a much lower cost than businesses advertising.
 - Patrons: Another ad revenue line comes from community patrons, who may simply pay a small fee to become listed as a patron supporting the production.
 - Business Ads: Volunteers are needed to assist in collecting business ads. Forms are typically sent out to previous advertisers, but parents and family members are also encouraged to approach those they know who run local businesses.

- * *COSTUMES*- Costume chairperson/Committee volunteers. Help is needed with coordinating costume needs, sewing, mending, hemming, embellishing, finding, organizing, and laundering the costumes. The Drama Club/Chorus Boosters maintain a closet of costume inventory which supports much of the costuming need. Many volunteer hands make the work easier. Sewing is not always a necessary skill to help with costumes. Costume needs are explained in further detail at the kick-off and as show production progresses. In addition, volunteers are needed to assist with costumes backstage during dress rehearsals and performance times.

- * *MAKE-UP/HAIR*- Volunteers. Stage make-up is an essential part of production. In addition, often volunteers are needed for dress rehearsals and performance dates, backstage, to help students with the right hairstyle for an era or to assist in applying make-up backstage. Information is provided regarding make-up and hairstyling needs as production progresses. Guidelines will be included at the kickoff dinner.

- * *PROPS* – Director/Volunteers. A list is provided and a committee of parents is needed to search for and possibly design and create certain props for each production. A relatively small inventory of frequently needed props is maintained through the Drama Club. The perfect item can often be found right in someone's garage, attic or basement. If you cannot commit to working constantly on this committee, updated lists are often sent home regarding remaining prop needs. You might just have the right item or know someone who does. In addition, some creative parents volunteer to create the perfect item while working from home.
- * *PUBLICITY* - Producer/Volunteers In addition to posters and show shirts, volunteers are needed to write newspaper articles, take photos, and submit TV and radio ads and public service announcements, as well as get the announcement to all schools, up on school marquees, and to personally invite others to attend the show.
- * *FOOD* – Volunteers. Students are encouraged to bring a snack and/or drink to regular rehearsals. During late rehearsals dress rehearsal week and during performances, parents are asked to donate water and drinks, as well as snacks, such as pretzels, crackers, cheese, sandwiches, cookies, chips, vegetables and fruits. A sign up sheet is made available so parents can sign up for specific dates, in order to make sure that students have what they need to get through grueling final production weeks. A volunteer to coordinate this element is greatly needed for every production.
- * *CONCESSIONS* – Volunteers. In order to help offset the cost of production, as well as support the Chorus Booster Scholarship Fund and general fund, concessions are made available during performances. Help is needed in setting up, selling and cleaning up. One parent per night will be needed to be in charge of the stand and cash box during each performance, and numerous volunteers are needed at the concession stand during intermissions.
- * *BACKSTAGEASSISTANCE/SUPERVISION* – Volunteers. Parent volunteers are an absolute necessity to assist and supervise in the theater arts room, backstage, both during dress rehearsal week and performance times. This not only provides for student safety, but behind the scenes support when unexpected issues arise, which is critical. Please look for and sign up for backstage shifts. Volunteering in this area also provides an up-close experience in supporting and getting to know students and other parents.
- * *SALES/RAFFLES* – Volunteers. A variety of traditions accompany show production, such as show mugs and videos, available for sale as a gift for cast members during performances. In addition, the Chorus Booster Club runs general fund fundraisers and raffles, which require sales volunteers.

- * *FLOWERS/GIFTS* - A local florist is invited in to set up during each performance, so that parents have the opportunity to purchase bouquets and/or single flowers as traditional gifts for cast members. In addition, it is theater tradition and etiquette, although not required, for individual students/families to consider purchase of flowers for directors, accompanist, and even fellow students and volunteers as a recognition and thank-you for all their efforts and production success. It is, also, common practice for students, with the help of the producer, to organize the purchase of specialized gifts for the directors, given on the last performance night. Students may be asked to contribute a nominal fee towards the purchase of these cast-to-director gifts.

- * *THEATER FAMILY TRADITION* - During dress rehearsal week the cast and volunteers are very busy. They stay late in the evening and perform for their fellow students at previews during school hours. After Friday night's performance, the whole cast, crew, pit as well as involved volunteers often all go out together to a specified restaurant location. This is an on your own event and transportation is not provided. Many of the students and parents do participate and car pool together. If your student is interested in going along and does not have a ride, please try to help them make arrangements to be included.

- * *SET STRIKE* – Volunteers. After the last performance, the cast, crew, and pit are required to help with set strike, which involves the disassembly and tearing down of the set, putting all items related to the production away, cleaning the theater arts room and cleaning the stage. PARENTS ARE NEEDED to help.

- * *CAST PARTY* – Volunteers. The cast party will begin after the set strike is complete. Parent volunteers, including cast party coordinators, are needed to help plan, set up, supervise and clean up after the cast party. The party is held on school premises and usually a DJ is available, as well as food and drinks. The cast party is for the cast, crew, pit, and parent volunteers ONLY. Although we would love to celebrate with other friends, boyfriends, girlfriends, neighbors and siblings will not be allowed to attend. This is a very late night, so parents are asked to please make arrangements for younger siblings. No younger siblings will be allowed to participate in the party, even if they help with set strike.

A permission slip is required for students to attend the cast party. Students will be required to stay at the cast party as specified on the permission slip and will not be allowed to wander outdoors or disappear during the cast party. Students will be expected to stay until the party is over unless the permission slip note is received, indicating what time they may leave, with who and how they may leave, including who will be picking them up. If a student requests to leave the party before the specified end time or specifications on the permission slip, parents will be called to ask permission to allow them to leave, as well as alert them that a student is on their way. Safety is our main concern.