



Bloomington High School South
1965 South Walnut Street
Bloomington, Indiana 47401-6598

Gwen Witten Upchurch, Director
(812) 330-7714

January, 2008

Dear Parents of Prospective Sounds of South Members:

We are delighted that your son or daughter is interested in auditioning for Sounds of South! SOS is a nationally honored choir under the direction of Gwen Witten Upchurch, with a 50+ year tradition of excellence at Bloomington High School South. However, Sounds of South is much more than a high school choir class, it is a group of talented and highly motivated students, who along with their parents, are committed to the success of the group.

Sounds of South is a performance-oriented choir and there are certain commitments of time and money of which you and your student should be aware.

Auditions will be held after school on March 3 starting at 2:30 p.m. If that time will not work for you due to prior commitments, contact Ms. Witten Upchurch to schedule an audition during the school day on March 3 or 4. Jackson Creek students will audition at the middle school during their choir class on March 3. The list of new Sounds of South members for the 2008–2009 school year will be posted on March 7 at 2:30 p.m.

If your student is selected, there will be a mandatory parent/student meeting on Thursday, March 20 at 7:00 p.m. in the choir room.

Rehearsals and Performances

Sounds of South is a class that students attend during the school day for all three trimesters. Most rehearsing takes place during that time; however, members are required to attend rehearsals and performances outside of the school day. A detailed schedule listing all performances and rehearsals is published at the beginning of each school year. Extra rehearsals not listed on the schedule are rare and will be announced well in advance. (General information is provided at right.)

SOS members participate in a wide variety of activities in addition to their academic work and Sounds of South, including sports teams, student council, cheerleading, Science Olympiad, National Honor Society, and others. Ms. Witten Upchurch is very
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Time Commitments

SOS Camp

June 30–July 4, 2008 (leads only)
July 7–11, 2007 (everyone)
1:00–9:00 p.m. @ BHSS
Attendance is mandatory.

Fall Musical

One or two evening rehearsals each week from beginning of school through last performance in early November.

Winter Concert

Mid-December.

Elementary School Holiday Performance

During the school day in mid-December.

Additional Holiday Performances

Varies depending on demand.

Fine Arts Night at BHSS

Weeknight in February.

ISSMA Solo & Ensemble

Two Saturdays in January/
February.

ISSMA Choir Contest

Two Saturdays in April/May.

Spring Trip

Three or four days in April.

Spring Concert

Mid-May.

Finale!

Late May.

BHSS Graduation

May 30, 2008.

understanding and encouraging of SOS members who participate in these other activities. She does her very best to accommodate schedule conflicts. In return, she expects members to do their best to make SOS a high priority and plan accordingly.

Competitions and Travel

Sounds of South members participate in ISSMA solo and ensemble competitions. All members are assigned to at least one large ensemble and many choose to perform a solo. SOS also participates in ISSMA choir competition in the Spring. Sounds of South also takes a trip in the Spring where they usually participate in an invitational festival and/or competition. In recent years, we have traveled to New York City, Montreal, St. Louis, Washington D.C., Myrtle Beach, Orlando, and Chicago.

Finances

While the MCCSC provides funds for class room instruction, Sounds of South as an organization must cover all costs associated with our fall musical and concerts, SOS attire, travel, and Chris Miller's salary for his work as an accompanist and stage director throughout the year. We have established several streams of income, including membership fees, ticket sales, and our program book fundraiser to cover our yearly expenses. The financial support we raise is very important to the success of Sounds of South!

Important: No student will ever be excluded for financial reasons. Need-based scholarships toward membership fees are available and are made possible by generous donations from the community. If you need financial assistance with membership fees, please contact our treasurer Sher Sallee at 339-7544.

To keep costs low for parents, Sounds of South holds one major fundraising activity each year—the Program Book. We are very proud of this book, which not only contains advertisements, but showcases the group's accomplishments, provides formal and informal photographs of the members, and honors our graduating seniors. All SOS members, including those on scholarship, are expected to solicit a specified amount in ads and donations from local businesses and others each year.

Parent Involvement

This group is not just for students. We encourage all of our member's parents to get involved by serving on one or more of our committees. It's a great way to be involved in your student's life and your help is crucial to our continued success.

If you would like more information about Sounds of South or have questions, feel free to contact SOS parents Anne Fuson at 331-8253 or Jill Goodmon at 824-8174.

Costs for SOS Members

Fees for 2008–2009

\$450 total, payable in three installments of \$150 each:

- May 22, 2008 (senior banquet)
- July 7, 2008 (first day of camp)
- Approx. September 11, 2008 (BHSS open house)

SOS Attire

No cost to students for formal attire; except shoes. Guys need black dress shoes; ladies need tan character shoes. Black SOS hoodie will be provided at no cost.

Musical Costume

Students are responsible for their own costumes, unless instructed otherwise. This can run from a few dollars to \$100 or more depending on the show and character.

Solo & Ensemble Fees

Varies depending on the number of ensembles or solos in which student participates. Ranges from \$5 to \$10 per event.

Spring Trip

No cost to students. Only money for incidentals and some meals will be needed.

Fundraising

Program Book

Each student is required to solicit at least \$700 in ad sales or donations.