

March 5, 2009

TO: Board of Education

FROM: High School and Middle School Music Department and Dr. Joni Swanson

RE: Revisions to the HS/MS Handbook regarding grading and attendance at music events

Included below is the co-curricular music attendance policy with the requested revisions. This is the attendance policy only, which is requested to be included in the HS and MS student handbooks in 2009-2010.

The former document which was referred to as the music department handbook, will now be referred to as the music department performance course syllabus. That document will be distributed in class to students and will include the attendance policy along with other, more comprehensive information necessary for the students and their parents. That document will be available for perusal by the administration at a later date. Mr. Scherer's understanding from the outcome of the last Curriculum/Policy Committee meeting on Feb. 23rd, is that the syllabus does not need further review of the curriculum and policy committee. However, he will submit the document to the High School and Middle School Principals for their consideration and input for any revision.

CO-CURRICULAR MUSIC ACTIVITY ATTENDANCE POLICY

CO-CURRICULAR MUSIC ACTIVITIES: This information applies to music courses as co-curricular performance courses. Co-curricular activities occur outside of the regular class period, and are considered a class project and an objective of the particular curricular offering. Therefore, co-curricular activities are vital to the successful completion of the curricular course. Since rehearsals and performances are an extension of and vital to the curricular program, participation in all scheduled rehearsals and performances is required.

In the event that an unavoidable conflict occurs with a performance, please follow this procedure. The director must be notified in writing as soon as the student learns of the conflict. That notification must be the attached form (found on the next page) from a parent stating the nature of the conflict. This note must be received by the director no less than one week before the conflict. This gives the director a chance to make changes and adjustments in the ensemble before the performance, if necessary. **Valid reasons for an excused absence include:** confining illness, death in the family, or a religious holiday. Performance conflicts that are the result of a decision made by the student or their parent(s) after the distribution of the fine arts calendar on the first day of school, cannot be considered excused. Extraordinary circumstances that could be excused would be described as the result of circumstances beyond the control of the student or their parents, such as a family wedding, mandatory college visitation, or other circumstances which cause reasonable concern to the parent for the safety or health of the student. Unexcused Absences are those with parent knowledge, but which are not caused by illness or a personal or family emergency (e.g.: disciplinary suspension, or a choice not to attend). In case of an unforeseen absence (sickness or death in the family) a parent note must be submitted upon the student's return to school. In an emergency situation, a phone call is necessary. Note: work, vacations, and family outings are not acceptable excuses for missing a scheduled rehearsal or performance.

The reason for this carefully thought out policy, is that every performing student has an effect on the other performers in the ensemble. A successful performance for all of the members of an ensemble is much more likely when all of the members are present. There is no student in an ensemble that doesn't affect the other performers around them. Please think of performances as a final exam after a long unit of study in class. Also think of the performances in front of an audience as the reward for all of the hard work that takes place in the rehearsal room.

For excused and unexcused absences, a make-up opportunity is provided. The student must contact the teacher and complete the make-up work in the time-frame described in the Middle School and High School handbooks, in reference to making up missed work. Make-up grades for excused absence can earn up to full credit. Make-up grades for un-excused absences can earn up to 90% of full credit. Make-up performances are graded using a performance rubric.

The above information and the accompanying form is available from your Director, on the director's web site, or can be copied from the syllabus distributed on the first day of school.

New Middle School Choir Director, Geneseo Middle School – 309.945.0533

Tony Hernandez, Geneseo High School / Geneseo Middle School – 309.945.0320

Stephen LaCroix, Geneseo High School – 309.945.0319

Steven Scherer, Geneseo High School – 309.945.0321

John Versluis, Geneseo Middle School – 309.945.0534

