



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

Gwen Witten Upchurch, Director
(812) 330-7714

Spring 2020

Dear Parents of Prospective Sounds of South Members:

We are delighted that your son or daughter is interested in joining Sounds of South! SOS is a nationally honored choir under the direction of Gwen Witten Upchurch, with a rich 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.

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 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. 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 performance trip in the spring to participate in an invitational festival and/or competition. In past years, we have traveled to New York City, Montreal, St. Louis, Washington D.C., Myrtle Beach, Orlando, Chicago, and Gatlinburg.

2020-21 Time Commitments

SOS Camp

June 29 – July 3 (principals)
July 6 – 10 (everyone) 1:00–
9:00 p.m. @ BHSS
Attendance is mandatory.

Fall Musical

Monday and Wednesday evening
rehearsals each week from
beginning of school through last
performance in late October

Winter Concert

December

Elementary School

Holiday Performance

December, during the school
day

Additional Holiday Performances

Varies depending on demand

ISSMA Solo & Ensemble

February

Fine Arts Night at BHSS

Weeknight in March/April

ISSMA Choir Contest

Two Saturdays in May

Spring Trip

Three or four days in spring

Spring Concert

Mid May

Finale!

Late May

BHSS Graduation

Late May

Finances

The financial support we raise is very important to the success of Sounds of South! While MCCSC provides funds for class room instruction, Sounds of South as an organization must cover its operating expenses including Chris Miller's salary for his work as an accompanist and stage director throughout the year, SOS formal attire, the spring trip, and costs associated with our fall musical. We have established three streams of income to cover these expenses: membership fees, our program book fundraiser, and musical ticket sales. Each of these funds is maintained and accounted for separately to cover designated expenses.

Membership fees cover SOS general operating expenses. 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 SOS Treasurer Betty Schermer at bschermer@bluemarble.net. *No student will ever be excluded for financial reasons.*

The program book fundraiser covers the group's travel expenses and other expenditures from time to time as approved by the Board. 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 need-based scholarship, are expected to solicit the specified amount in ads and donations 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 Gwen Witten or SOS Communications Coordinator Katie Paulin at 812-219-5808 or at soundsofsouthbhss@gmail.com.

Costs for SOS Members

Membership Fees for 2020-21

\$500. Payable in three installments July 1, Sept. 1, and Nov. 1. Need-based scholarships are available and will be discussed at the new member/parent meeting.

SOS Attire

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

Musical Costume

Students may be responsible for providing items or payment for costumes. 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. \$15 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 raise at least \$750 in ad sales or donations. This is in addition to membership fees.