

BIG SKY HIGH SCHOOL DRAMA DEPARTMENT

DANCE & MOVEMENT FOR THEATRE



STUDENT HANDBOOK

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BIG SKY HIGH SCHOOL DRAMA

Take the elective classes with *enthusiasm* and *desire* to learn all that you can.

The curricular offerings for the BSHS Drama Department are as follows:

Drama I: Open to any student of any grade level enrolled at Big Sky High School

Drama II: By consent of instructor and audition interview – grades 10 -12

Drama III: By audition only – primarily in grades 11 -12.

Drama III/IV: By audition only – students in grades 12 who have completed Drama II and III.

Technical Theatre: By consent of instructor – students should have completed and passed Drama I to be enrolled in this course. Course is for students primarily in grades 11-12 but open to any grade level upon consent.

Film Studies: By consent of instructor - students should have completed and passed Drama I to be enrolled in this course. Primarily for students in 11-12 grade but open to grade 10 upon consent.

Movement for the Theatre: Open to any student of any grade level enrolled at Big Sky High School

IB Drama: Standard Level and High Level – Two-year program beginning Junior Year.
Prerequisite – Drama I

See the Instructor for more information on any of the above listed classes

Extra-Curricular Program:

School Plays: By audition only – extra-curricular, generally the elite students dedicated to drama and performing. Open to all grade levels. Any student enrolled at Big Sky High School may audition for the plays or technical positions. Although not a requirement, it is often helpful for students who wish to participate in all school productions to have completed Drama I.

Thespians: By Membership only. Members of this extra-curricular, elite troupe have earned the right to be honored as Thespians through points earned working on upper level class performances and outside of class activities. This program is offered to any student enrolled at Big Sky High School who has completed the requirements to earn membership into the Big Sky High School International Thespian Honor Society of Troupe 3090.

Travel Opportunities: Each year there may be opportunities for students to go on special trips arranged through the Drama Department. Students who wish to be able go on these trips must be academically eligible, able to pay all fees/funds before the trip begins, and approved by the Drama Instructor to go on the trip. Trips may include Spokane – day trip, New York –week long trip, and Nebraska to attend the International Thespian Festival – summer trip.

Tech Work Opportunities: Throughout the year there may be opportunities for students to work for the school or MCT in technical positions. In some cases, there may even be a stipend available.



BIG SKY HIGH SCHOOL DRAMA

STUDENT EVALUATION

Grading Policy

Drama is unique to the curriculum in that it is a performance-based organization. Students involved in upper level Drama classes must understand that each performance and rehearsal must be considered a necessary part of the class curriculum and will be treated as such. It is the philosophy of the department that each student is responsible not only to him or herself, but is responsible to the organization and to other students for participation in performances.

The following areas will be used for grading purposes with a percentage of the student's grade assigned to each area:

I. Daily Participation and Attendance (35%): Daily "in class" work will consist of tech theatre vocabulary, theatre safety review, design and manager studies, note taking, reading of plays, theatre cleaning and repair, and building and painting sets, as well as any other production work that needs to be completed that day. Students have the opportunity to earn up to ten points per class meeting as follows:

- | | |
|---|-------------|
| A – on time to class in assigned seats when bell rings, prepared to learn, actively positive and responding quickly to instructions.
Dressed appropriately for dance and movement being done that day (shoes, hair tied back etc.) | 9-10 points |
| B – on time to class in assigned seats when bell rings, prepared to learn, basically positive, listening, and responding to instructions, dressed for movement. | 8-7 points |
| C – late to class, neutral, talkative, barely participating
responding occasionally to instructions | 6-5 points |
| D/F – late to class, basically negative, disruptive, or unsafe,
ignoring instructions and distractive to the class | 4-0 points |

Movement for Theatre In class work: Students may be working in one the following areas during class time reviewing and creating dances, warming up/stretching/conditioning, viewing dance videos, and listing/selecting dance music.

As individuals, we each need to be responsible for self-discipline. This requires *Integrity*. Essentially this means: Doing the right thing even when we don't feel like it

Students who are consistently being unsafe and or not participating, thus earning 0 points on weekly basis will be asked to leave the class permanently as they are disruptive to student's education and putting students enrolled in the class at risk.



BIG SKY HIGH SCHOOL

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Attendance Policy

Tardies: Students are tardy if they are not in their assigned seat when the bell rings. Each student will be allowed three (free) tardies per semester that will not affect your grade. For each additional tardy within a semester, five points will be deducted from your Daily Participation grades. Students who are consistently tardy will be referred to the office.

School-Sponsored Absences: No loss of daily participation points. Student must inform the classroom teacher in advance that they will be missing class due to a school-sponsored activity. Students must make up any assigned written work within one week of the absence or the student will receive a “0” on the assignment.

Excused Absences: The first three class absences within a semester will not affect your grade. For each additional class absence, you will receive a zero for your daily participation grade. Make up work may be assigned for any rehearsal missed due to excused absences. It is the student’s responsibility to ask for missed assignments.

Performance Absences: Absences from performances may be excused by the instructor in the event of serious illness or family emergency. School activities conflicting may also be excused **if arranged IN ADVANCE** between the instructors involved. A written note must verify excused absences or phone call from a parent/ guardian or school affiliated coach. Excused absences must be made up using materials assigned by the instructor within two weeks of the missed performance. The student is responsible for getting the assignment from the instructor. A percentage grade will be awarded based upon the results of that material. The student may also take the option of making up time in service to the drama department. One night’s performance usually consists of 4 hours of time spent working on the production. Students may come in on work-days or after school hours to make up the time. This work will usually consist technical/preparation work for the upcoming production. Material/Time not completed within the state two-week time period and unexcused absences will result in the percentage grade of “0” for that event (letter grade of F).

Unexcused Absences, Suspensions, or Truancy: The student will receive a “0” for daily participation grade or for any other graded activity missed during the absence. This cannot be made up unless otherwise indicated by the school office.

Class and Performance Attire: - Color for shows is Basic Black. Costuming will be kept as simple as possible or provided for you. Performers are expected to wear the costumes assigned performances. During class rehearsal periods **students should wear clothes they can work in without fear of clothing falling off and exposing underclothing or constricting movement. Students should be able work both in bare foot or in dance shoes (tennis shoes will work fine) Long hair should be tied back.**

On Performance nights – students will be expected to wear hair and clothing styles in the manner expected for the performance piece



BIG SKY HIGH SCHOOL DRAMA

STUDENT EVALUATION / GRADING

II. Performances (35%): Attendance at Performances is required. Performance attendance is considered to equal a major exam. Each student satisfactorily participating in a performance by arriving on time signing in, wearing the proper performance attire, being ready by the company meeting time and warm up and completing their assigned jobs will be awarded the percentage grade of 100% for that event. Students will be notified of all performance dates at least one month before that performance or sooner, if possible. Students in upper level drama classes are required to attend the Montana State Thespian Festival at the University of Montana.

Each infraction (i.e., tardiness, improper performance behavior, etc.) lowers the student's grade.

It is strongly recommended that student avoid being absent from any performance.

See notes above for performance absences.

Please set aside the evenings you are scheduled to perform.

We need you and expect you to be there.

- **Students will be expected to learn class dances as well as opening and closing numbers.**
- **Students will be expected to be at all dress rehearsals which may take place after school.**
- **Students have the opportunity to create/dance and showcase their own dances in the final dance concert.**

III. Tests/Written Work/Final Performances (30%): Student will be required to participate in discussions and pass choreography memorization tests. Students may be required to submit written evaluations of a dance performance. Students will be expected to complete all assignments and turn in assignment on time.

All written work, assignments, and performance-based work, must be completed and turned in one week prior to the end of each semester. No assignments will be accepted after that date.

- **Students are required to have Permission slips signed by parents and turned into the instructor prior to working on productions. See back of this handout.**

Note: If any requirement should cause a financial hardship, see the instructor. **Lack of funds/equipment or not being able to get off from work/activities will not be accepted as an excuse for not participating in fulfilling this requirement.** If you have a problem with an assignment, see the instructor immediately so that arrangements may be made for you to fulfill this requirement. **One cannot study movement for the theatre effectively without the experience participating as part of a dance performance piece in front of a live audience.**

Students will be instructed on proper etiquette, and will be required to be a good audience during all class presentations. Students will be instructed on proper performance production protocol.

- **Students will learn and be expected to learn and use correct dance/movement terms.**
- **Students will be expected to stand still and be quiet and listening when the dance instructor/choreographer is giving instruction.**
- **Students are required to dress out and participate each day the class meets.**
- **Students will be expected to be positive and supportive to others (no meanness)**



BIG SKY HIGH SCHOOL DRAMA

STUDENT EVALUATION / GRADING cont.

Movement for Theatre Students may also have opportunities to take field trips to MCT and UM Drama Department. Field trips will follow Big Sky High School field trip policies.

Being rude, sleeping, reading, working on other assignments, etc, will result in 0 points for work completed in that class period and 0 points for work assigned during class.

A failure for the semester will result when a student does not carry through with their major requirements, completing their written work, and or performance work. Your grade per quarter will be broken down into the following categories: 1/3 performance work, 1/3 written work and tests, 1/3 attendance and daily work. Your performance work will be considered in each of these areas. For example, attending class but sleeping does not count for being in class and working. Your semester grade will be figured from the total number of points available for the entire semester.

Each class period you will work on a movement/dance assignment that will earn points toward a daily work grade. If you are not in class you cannot be graded. Due to the nature of this class, construction time cannot be made up. Once the work is completed or the period is over, it is over. Time cannot start again when it is convenient for you to be in class. It is the same as if you were on a basketball team. If you didn't get to play in the game, the game is not made up or played over when you can be there. **Generally, we are always on a very tight schedule and projects must be completed on schedule.**

As Movement for Theatre is one of the arts, not only is it important that the work be well done, but also that it be presented in a creative and skillful manner. Much of the student's grade will depend on how well he/she can use his/her creative ability.

Remember to receive an A you must:

- 1. Complete the class requirements.**
- 2. Present your work in a creative and skillful manner.**
- 3. BE and WORK in class.**

Extra Credit may be earned when a student has completed all of the class assignments. If one is Completing all class assignments, a student should not need to do extra credit. Saturday work days will count as extra credit if needed. **Students are given every opportunity to succeed and earn an A in Movement for Theatre. The student is responsible for the grade he/she earns and work he/she completes.**

DANCE PERFORMANCE

The class performance dates will be announced at the start of the class for each year.



BIG SKY HIGH SCHOOL

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DRAMA AWARDS & LETTER AWARD REQUIREMENTS

Because of the great amount of time and effort exerted by many Big Sky Drama students in their theatre activities, a letter award is given to afford these students due recognition and incentive.

In order to letter in drama, one school year, a student must achieve 10 or 100 hours working in the theatre at Big Sky High School. Lettering points/hours are only earned through play productions open to the Big Sky Student body. (In other words, one cannot letter for class production work or work done in other theatres outside of Big Sky High School.)

Points/hours are achieved through participating in various activities in the theatre including such things as lead roles, stage management, thespian officer duties, etc. All points/hours are based on the recommendations from the International Thespian Honor Society. One point is equal to 10 hours of work in the theatre.

Points will be kept posted by the thespian officers and students will be notified if they have lettered before the end of the year award ceremony. Students may check their lettering points at any time.

Students may also earn the right to become members of the **International Thespian Society**. The International Thespian Society is an honorary society for high school theatre students and has troupes in more than 3,900 North American schools. ITS has inducted more than two million members since its founding in 1929. This society includes many famous actors such as Tom Hanks and Goldie Hawn.

The International Thespian Society is supported by the Educational Theatre Association. The Educational Theatre Association and its International Thespian Society branch have been working since 1929 to honor excellence among students of theatre and support the work of theatre educators. Originally focused on theatre in high schools, EdTA has in recent years broadened the scope of its mission to embrace the concept of theatre as an instrument of lifelong learning and has expanded its membership to include students and teachers in middle schools, and college students preparing for careers in theatre education. You may find out more information about both of these organizations through their website at EdTA.org.

Drama/Thespian Honor Cords

Drama students who have become thespians who have a high GPA and have fulfilled the following requirements will be awarded Blue and Gold Thespian Honor cords to wear during the graduation ceremony. Requirements for these cords include the following:

- Thespian member in good standing i.e. dues paid and attending meetings. (please check to see that you have all your fees paid by June 1st)
- Earned Varsity Letter
- Earned 40 or more Thespian Points
- Held Thespian Office
- High G.P.A. Approved by Senior Councilor

Performance Endorsement Students may earn this endorsement by completing the requirements listed in the endorsement handbook found in the Big Sky High School counseling office.



BIG SKY HIGH SCHOOL

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School Policies

Cell Phone Policy: According to the Big Sky High Student Handbook, student possession and use of cellular phones on school grounds is a privilege. School authorities reserve the right to restrict the use of cell phones during school hours.

High school students may use cell phones on campus before school begins, during the lunch period, and after the instructional day. They must be kept out of sight and turned off during the instructional day including passing time between classes.

During performances, students will not be allowed to have cell phones on stage or back stage. Lock boxes will be provided for valuable items such as phones, iPod, wallets, etc.

Dress Code: According to the Big Sky High School Student Handbook, students are expected to wear clothing that does not distract from the learning environment.

The drama instructor will inform students of the specific dress code when students are traveling or going on special trips. It is expected that this dress code is followed. No holes in jeans/pants will be allowed to be worn when traveling as drama group with Big Sky HS.

ALL OTHER SCHOOL POLICIES APPLY (See Student Handbook)

General Classroom Rules

- 1. Be on time. Be on time to class, rehearsals, and for evening show call time.**
Being on time includes being ready to go to work. Please be respectful of time, we work together and being late slows everyone down.
- 2. No hats or dark glasses are to be worn during class.**
- 3. All electronic devices one listens to must be stored away during class time. No students should have any headphones/ear buds plugged into their ears at any time.**
- 4. Cell phones must be kept in backpacks/ purses left by the door. Cell phones are not allowed to be out or in use during class. (i.e. no texting during class time)**
- 5. No gum, pop, coffee, food or candy is to be in the classroom or stage during class/rehearsal time.**
Water bottles only. Please spit out your gum on your way in the room.

Each student enrolled in Drama department classes will have a detailed list of rules and expectations along with course requirements and guidelines in their classroom folders/binders.

DUE TO FERPA Laws - Under no circumstances are students allowed to film any students work in the classroom without instructor permission. No student is allowed to use any personal hand-held recording device at any time during class.



BIG SKY HIGH SCHOOL DRAMA

We acknowledge that we read and understood the expectations specified in the Big Sky High School Drama Department Handbook. We will comply with its contents.

DATE DUE: Please return this completed form

Assignment value - worth 200pts

Please note – no grades will be appointed to the student until this form is turned in.

DRAMA STUDENTS PRINTED NAME: _____

Student Signature and Date Parent(s)/Guardian Signature and Date

Emergency Information

1. Student's Name _____

2. Parent(s)/Guardian Name _____

3. Please put the number where you are most easily reached first.

Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____ Work Phone _____

4. Address _____

5. Students Birth date _____
Month Day Year

6. Medical Information: allergies, diabetic, etc...

In case of illness or serious injury, I give medical authorities permission to treat my son or daughter.

Date _____ Signature _____

Printed name of Parent or Guardian _____

HOW TO MAKE UP EXCUSED ABSENCES

Absences happen. Often, they are excused. However, in a performance class, *even an excused absence must be made up somehow*. All drama classes at Big Sky High School are performance classes.

It is always your responsibility to check with me to see what you missed. I will not track you down.

- If you miss an in-class rehearsal day, it will be up to you to arrange a time to meet with your partner if you are working on a scene to make up the rehearsal; for a monologue, you will need to come in before school, at lunch, or after school to put in the time you missed.
- If you miss an in-class performance day, you will need to set up a time with me to make it up **outside of class**.
- If you have missed **any other day in class**, you can make up the ten daily participation points by picking up copies of Dramatics Magazine articles from me or by visiting www.playbill.com or by reading an article in Dance Magazine – all articles must be approved by the instructor.
- Read an interview or an article. If you choose a news article from Playbill, it must be longer than five paragraphs. **You must site the article so that I can find it! If you do not follow, the format below you will not receive credit for your work!**
- Bring me a paragraph summary of the article (**at least** five sentences) detailing the most important points of the article **and** one sentence connecting the information you read to a concept we have covered in class. (If your absence takes place early in the semester, hypothesize: tell me what you think it might possibly do with the information gained in a beginning/intermediate/advanced Drama class.)
- You may choose to present your paragraph in one of the following ways:
 1. Site the article Title, who wrote it, and where it is found. Word-processes your paragraph in a clear thought-out format. Make sure you include quotes and responses to what the point the quote is making in your paragraph summary.
Or
 2. Print out your article; highlight what is interesting to you and what you are going to respond to. Add the article in a Drama specific journal with your hand-written notes on the side and your hand-written summery paragraph at the bottom of the article.
- **The paragraph will be due in class on the third day following your absence. (So, if you are absent on a Monday, you will have two in class days to get it turned in. Thus, it would be due Friday – this gives you 4 days to complete the work.)**

Big Sky High School Drama Students fit the IB Learner Profile.

