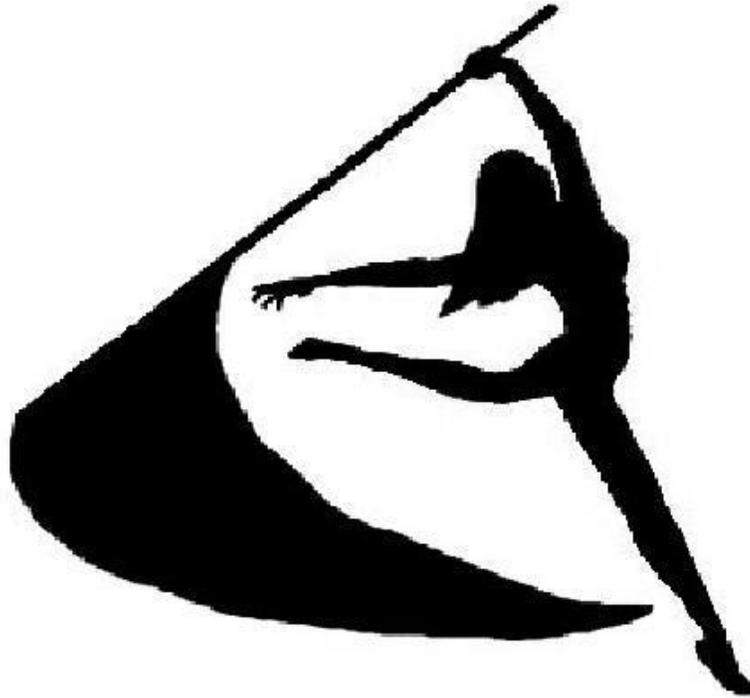


Middletown High School
Visual Ensemble



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Philosophy:

The goal of the Middletown High School Visual Ensemble (MVE) is to provide students with a continued performance experience through the exposure to the winter color guard activity. This endeavor will strive to be both educational and enjoyable for the members of the winter color guard and the audience. The students will be introduced/continue to strengthen basic skills in the color guard activity as well as provide a basic dance education, experience in a performance setting and strengthen team building skills. The ensemble also encourages and produces a team leadership program that empowers students to lead an organization of their peers through positive support and guidance. Ultimately, through these experiences the students will have an added exposure to other cultural and artistic mediums that surround them in their community and activity.

Ensemble Description:

The Middletown HS Visual Ensemble will be open to all Middletown High School students who are interested and open to learning the art of color guard. **NO EXPERIENCE IS NECESSARY IN ORDER TO PARTICIPATE** however, roles within the organization will be discussed and assigned accordingly based on experience and ability. The goal of the instructional staff is to challenge and educate each member while still maintaining excellence for the group as a whole. An open mind, positive attitude and willingness to work hard are all factors one must have in order to be successful not only as a member, but for the group. Elements that comprise a winter color guard include:

- Basic elements of dance and body fundamentals
- Flag
- Rifle
- Saber
- Performer aspects

Attendance

Each member of the Visual Ensemble will BE EXPECTED to attend all rehearsals and performances including Atlantic Coast Championships in Wildwood, NJ. Failure to attend rehearsals may result in the exclusion from performance opportunities, and possible removal from the group. Absences from rehearsals will only be excused with the direct permission of the Director of Guard, Nicholas Tavares **PRIOR** to the rehearsals being missed (the earlier, the better). Sending notice in with another student that you will not be attending **WILL NOT** be considered an excused absence. While we understand that students are involved with other organizations and clubs, it is the students responsibility to communicate/manage their involvement to make priorities. While we understand that we are affiliated with Middletown High School, and school is the primary focus, members MUST manage their time appropriately to ensure that school work DOES NOT become an excuse to miss rehearsals. "I have a big project due tomorrow" will not be a valid excuse as "big projects" are often assigned by teachers in sufficient amounts of time to complete.

Except for extenuating circumstances, excuses submitted after an absence will not be excused. If you know that you are going to be absent, you must let Nick know either by email or a phone call/text messages.

In order to ensure that we have full participation in rehearsals and performances, we have established the following list of attendance requirements.

- Attached is a schedule of the season. All attendance requirements are based on the expectation that you will commit to these dates at this time. **In other words, if something else “comes up”, you are already committed to your performing ensemble.** This schedule is by no means etched in stone; you must have the flexibility to make necessary changes. You will always have adequate and up to date information as it unfolds.
- Please note and always remember that your attendance at all rehearsals and performances is necessary and critical to our success as a performance unit.
- If you have anything on your schedule that may conflict with the rehearsal schedule, it is the responsibility of the individual performer to discuss it with the director **BEFORE** you commit to the activity.
- Emergency situations that arise throughout the season will be dealt with on an individual basis with the member and the director.

Behavior:

The Appoquinimink Code of Conduct is in effect at all times. This includes at rehearsals, competitions, and bus rides to and from performances. A copy of the Code of Conduct is maintained in the Director’s office should any student or parent need to reference specific items.

Remember, in and out of uniform, you represent the best that the Appoquinimink School District, and specifically, the Middletown High School music program has to offer. Be sure to conduct yourselves in a manner that is becoming of a young professional. Many students have worked hard to established the music program and the privileges bestowed upon it (traveling to compete, weekend functions, support, etc), always respect their hard work by being a “model student.”

Requirements/Expectations

1. BE PUNCTUAL!! “To be early is to be on time, to be on time is to be late, and to be late is not to be.” The set practice time is when rehearsals BEGIN. Arrive at the school before this scheduled time to allow you to:
 - Get your equipment
 - Assist in getting out the “floor”
 - Beginning a preliminary stretch
 - “Practicing” equipment work
2. Being prepared mentally to learn work, movement, “teching” and performing.
3. Practice individually on your own time (before practice, on off days, etc). Practice is what you do on your own time; Rehearsal is a time for everyone to work together.

4. Come prepared to rehearse
 - All Black practice clothes that allow you to move (sweat pants cut off below the knee, tights, tank tops, etc.) This is an important aspect of movement and dance, so that we can see the lines your body makes. The ankle **MUST BE SEEN** at all time. HAIR must be pulled back and out of your face (either in a pony tail, a bun, etc.)
 - Equipment
 - Gloves (if needed)
 - Water and Nutritious Snacks (especially on camp days). Some ideas for snacks would be sandwiches, trail mixes (nuts provide a ton of energy), granola bars/snack bars, Gatorade/other high performance drinks (you will lose water and salt when you are active and sweating—important to restore when you are active).

5. Behave appropriately at all rehearsals and performances. Remember, you not only represent yourself at rehearsals and performances, but you represent your school and the MHS Music department! At the director's discretion, inappropriate behavior may lead to dismissal from the ensemble.

6. Attendance at all rehearsals and performances is mandatory! Exceptions would include...severe illnesses (which could be contagious), family emergency, etc. Please refer to the "Attendance" section of this packet.

7. Maintain the minimum grade point average for eligibility. Manage time efficiently so that school work and the winter color guard do not conflict. (Do not wait until the night a project is due and make the choice to skip rehearsals to complete it). **HOMEWORK IS NOT, NOR WILL IT BE AN EXCUSE TO MISS REHEARSALS!! PLEASE UNDERSTAND**—your staff strives for excellence in this activity **AND** academically. We also require that members of the MVE step into their role of "becoming an adult" and taking care of their responsibilities on and off the floor. Anything less is unacceptable.

8. Practice teamwork and good sportsmanship at all times:
 - Try your best at every practice and during performances; to learn from your mistakes, accept constructive criticism, and not get angry with yourself or others for making a mistake.
 - Pay attention to, and respect all instructors
 - Accept roles and performance opportunities assigned ("there are no small parts just small actors")
 - Be positive and encourage fellow winter guard members, other Middletown units (drum line, jazz band) and above all else...support the competition!
 - Take pride in our team, regardless of score or placement.

9. Work hard to create and perform a fantastic show for the audience!

Uniforms and Equipment:

Uniforms, flags, props and other equipment are all an integral part of the program as it provides mood, creates a character and uniformed look to the ensemble. At all times, all of the mentioned items SHOULD BE and WILL BE handled with great care as they are purchased for the individual performer. These items are property of the Middletown Music Boosters and uniforms can cost anywhere from \$85-130 and flags are handmade/sewn by a crew of dedicated booster parents/parents of alumni.

Students will be issued their uniform as they become available from our uniform company, and proper care and washing instructions will be delegated at the time of distribution. Students and parent/guardian will sign a "Uniform Contract" before receiving their uniform. EATING AND DRINKING (except water) IN UNIFORM IS STRICTLY FORBIDDEN!

Costs:

Students involved in any indoor activity (guard, jazz, or drumline) will pay a \$50 participation fee. This fee goes to helping offset the various costs incurred by all of the activities (fees, transportation, etc.) over the course of the season.

All Middletown High School Visual Ensemble members will pay a \$75 uniform/equipment fee which will go towards production costs of the show. Which could include (but not limited to) flag fabric, paint for the floor, materials for prop construction, etc.

Our Championships are a 4-day event held in Wildwood, NJ and will be a separate cost. This will be detailed in another handout.

There will be items that the member will be able to purchase through the Middletown Boosters at a future point in the season. Items are available at the best cost available, and are property of the performer to use in future season with the Middletown High School Color Guard. These items could include:

- Flag Bags (all equipment must be stored in the members own flag bag)
- Gloves **
- Body Tight (all performers will need to purchase this item)
- OFFICIAL "Middletown High School Color Guard" track jackets and pants **

**--not a required item

Undergarments may need to be purchased by the individual performer to compete the uniformed look. Wal-Mart and Target have a wide variety of performance undergarments/body shapers at VERY reasonable prices.

The student may use Booster Accounts/Fund Raising Opportunities to pay for these items they may need

Fundraising and Trips:

By participating in the winter programs at Middletown High School, students have the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of performances. Some of the costs associated with these performances involve travel and expenses beyond the normal scope of the units operating budget (mainly Wildwood—All Chapter Championships). In order to participate in these events, students may be asked to help raise funds for **THEIR** portion of the costs. However, ***at not time*** will a student be required to participate in a fundraiser, but these opportunities are designed and developed to help the student keep the cost of this activity down to a minimum. If a student decides not to participate in a fundraiser, that student will need to find alternative means for contributing toward their trip costs.

Parent Support and Responsibilities:

The participation of your student in this program will hopefully prove to be not only rewarding for your child but for you, the parent and guardian as well. Please help us in establishing the proper attitude, showing support for what your child is doing by attending performances of the ensemble, and encouraging your child to practice on their own time.

The Band Booster organization is another great way to get involved with your child's activity. We will need help chaperoning, moving equipment, pinning and sewing, etc. More information will follow.

Most of all, we welcome parent support as a "cheering section" when we perform. Parents are always welcome and encouraged to come at the end of rehearsals to watch a run through of the show. We are proud of what our students accomplish and we know that you will be also!

If at any point you have a concern about any aspect of the program please communicate directly with the Director of Guard via email at NLtav@aol.com or 302-229-4659 or the Director of Bands Brian.Endlein@appo.k12.de.us .

Middletown HS Indoor Drumline, Colorguard, and Jazz Band Contract

In order to insure that we have full participation in rehearsals and performances, we, the MHS Instrumental Staff, have established the following list of attendance requirements.

- Attached is a schedule of your appropriate group as of the date listed. All attendance requirements are based on the expectation that you will commit to these dates at this time. In other words, if something else comes up, you are already committed to your performing ensemble.
- Keeping in mind that everyone in guard, drumline and jazz band is a “varsity starter” (there are no reserves or substitutes) your attendance at all rehearsals and performances is necessary and critical to our success.
- Once the season begins, attendance is mandatory at all functions.
 - If you have an unexcused absence from rehearsal during the week, you will not perform in the performance that week.
 - If you have a second unexcused absence from a rehearsal, you will be dismissed from your performing group.
 - An unexcused absence from a performance may result in your dismissal from your performing group at the discretion of the director and Mr. Endlein.
 - For student leaders, 1 unexcused absence from rehearsal will result in loss of student leader status.
 - For the parents: While we recognize the importance of discipline, we would ask that you do not punish your child by not allowing them to attend a practice or a performance. Doing so punishes the entire group and hurts the group’s chances for success. We would request that you please choose disciplinary measures that limit the punishment to your child only. A practice missed because of punishment will have to be considered unexcused and may result in your child’s dismissal from the group. We ask that you please take this into consideration before allowing your child to join this activity.
- If you have anything on your schedule that may conflict with the rehearsal schedule, please discuss it with the director(s) BEFORE you commit to the indoor activity.
- Emergency situations that arise will be dealt with on an individual basis by the appropriate staff.
- Signatures are required for participation. **ONE** copy of this form **PER GROUP** is to be returned to Mr. Endlein by 11/25/14. Failure to do so will result in your dismissal from your respective group.

(please detach at dotted line)

PLEASE LIST GROUP THIS CONTRACT IS FOR HERE _____

We have read AND understand the requirements as put forth in the above document. Furthermore, we understand that membership in these ensembles is a commitment and a privilege. Please detach and return to Mr. Endlein by 11/25/14.

Student Name

Student Signature

Parent Name

Parent Signature

Date