Dear Parents/Guardians & Students:

 The 2019 Detroit Lakes Public Schools fall musical is *Mamma Mia*!Many of you are familiar with the wonderful story of *Mamma Mia!*, but for anyone who isn’t, a brief synopsis follows -

**SYNOPSIS:**

*Mamma Mia!* is the happy, feel-good story of Donna, an independent hotelier who lives in the Greek Islands. Donna is preparing for her daughter’s wedding with the help of two dear, life-long friends who also happen to be former band mates. Meanwhile, her daughter Sophie, the spirited bride, has a plan! She secretly invites three men from her mother’s past in hope of meeting her real father and having him escort her down the aisle on her big day! This sun-shiny, uplifting story is told using the hit songs by the popular 1970’s super group sensation ABBA!

**AUDITION AGES, PERFORMANCE DATES, SET STRIKE:**

Auditions for *Mamma Mia!* will be open to students in grades 7 through 12. Production dates for the show are October 31, November 2, November 3 (Matinee – 3:00 p.m.), November 7 and either November 9 or November 10, depending on when the football game is scheduled. All evening performances are scheduled for 7:30 p.m. (Although rare, some performance dates are subject to change dependent on the athletic competition activity schedule.) Set tear down/set strike is scheduled for Sunday, November 11. Cast members are expected to be in attendance on that day, with at least one parent, or they are expected to find someone to replace them at set strike!

**WHAT DO I NEED TO DO FOR AUDITIONS\*:**

\*THERE ARE THREE COMPONENTS TO YOUR AUDITION – SINGING, ACTING & DANCING. ALL THREE COMPONONETS MUST BE COMPLETED FOR A STUDENT TO BE CONSIDERED ELIGIBLE AS A POTENTIAL CAST MEMBER FOR *MAMMA MIA!*

\*There will be many dance practice sessions offered throughout the week of auditions! Students may choose to attend as many or, as few of the dance practice sessions as they want to attend. It is recommended, however, that they attend enough of the offered dance practice sessions to learn the two short dance sections adequately for auditions. One dance is an individual dance and one dance is a partner dance. Again, the dance practice sessions are being offered to help any/all students auditioning for the musical prepare for the dance audition that will be held on Saturday, September 7th at 1:00 p.m. Students will audition for dance in groups of 4 or 5 students on stage at the Detroit Lakes Middle School. Dance auditions are closed to the public. A detailed dance practice schedule can be found on our *MAMMA MIA!* website.

\*Students are asked to select a piece of music and scene cutting to prepare for their after school, evening or Saturday audition. When you choose to do your music and scene cutting audition is up to you because you sign up for the audition date and time with the Director, Kathryn Larson and the Assistant Director, Mark Everson. The scene cutting and the music do not need to be memorized; however, the better a student knows the material, the smoother the audition usually goes! PLEASE DO YOUR BEST TO BE THOROUGHLY PREPARED. Search for performances of the songs on You-tube so you can hear different examples of the songs being performed! Listen to them very carefully – they can be extremely helpful!

**AUDITION MATERIALS:**

All audition resource materials can be found on our website at [www.dlhsmammamia.weebly.com](http://www.dlhsmarypoppins.weebly.com). Audition signups must be done on our website at [www.dlhsmammamia.weebly.com](http://www.dlhsmarypoppins.weebly.com). (PLEASE NOTE: AFTERNOON AUDITIONS ARE HELD AT THE HIGH SCHOOL CHOIR ROOM. EVENING AUDITIONS ARE HELD AT THE MIDDLE SCHOOL CHOIR ROOM. ALL DANCE PRACTICES AND DANCE AUDITIONS ARE AT THE MIDDLE SCHOOL IN THE GEORGE SIMSON AUDITORIUM.) Please bring your music, scene cutting and **COMPLETED** audition form to your audition. Music, scene cuttings, and audition forms can be downloaded and printed at [www.dlhsmammamia.weebly.com](http://www.dlhsmarypoppins.weebly.com). (We will also provide audition forms at auditions if needed.) Please be on time and be patient with the audition process. The directors want to be sure that each student is given his/her “fair amount” of time and his/her “fair share” of attention so that he/she may give the best audition possible. **This means that the auditions may run behind and you may have to wait past your allotted time. We will do everything within our power for you to be seen as soon as possible.**

 \*Auditions:

Auditions will be held at the following times at the following places.\

Tuesday, September 3rd – 4:30 – 6:00 – Singing/Acting Auditions – DLHS

Tuesday, September 3rd – 4:30 – 6:00 – Dance Audition Practice – DLMS

Tuesday, September 3rd – 7:00 – 9:15 – Singing/Acting Auditions – DLMS

Tuesday, September 3rd – 7:00 – 9:15 – Dance Audition Practice – DLMS

Wednesday, September 4th – 4:00 – 6:45 – Singing/Acting Auditions – DLHS

Thursday, September 5th – 4:30 – 6:00 – Singing/Acting Auditions – DLHS

Thursday, September 5th – 4:30 – 6:00 – Dance Audition Practice – DLMS

Thursday, September 5th – 7:00 – 9:15 – Singing/Acting Auditions – DLMS

Thursday, September 5th – 7:00 – 9:15 – Dance Audition Practice – DLMS

Friday, September 6th – 4:00 – 6:00 – Singing/Acting Auditions – DLHS

Friday, September 6th – 4:00 – 6:00 – Dance Audition Practice – DLMS

Friday, September 6th – 7:00 – 8:30 – Singing/Acting Auditions – DLMS

Friday, September 6th – 7:00 – 8:30 – Dance Audition Practice – DLMS

Friday, September 6th – 8:30 – 9:00 – Dance Auditions ONLY for Students who cannot be at Dance Auditions on Saturday, September 8th

Saturday, September 7th –10:00 – Noon – Singing/Acting Auditions – DLMS

Saturday, September 7th – 10:00 – Noon – Dance Audition Practice – DLMS

Saturday, September 7th – 1:00 – 2:00 – Dance Auditions – DLMS

Saturday, September 7th – 2:00 until we are finished – Callbacks – DLMS

**CAST LIST:**

The cast list will be posted on our musical website by 8:00 p.m. on Sunday, September 8th. We will also post the cast list at DLHS on the Music Wing Doors and the Main Entrance Doors by 8:00 p.m. on Sunday, September 8th.

**IF YOU ARE SELECTED AS A CAST MEMBER:**

Rehearsals for the musical will begin on Monday, September 9th at 7:00 p.m. in the George Simson Auditorium, DL Middle School. All cast members must be present. Cast members will read through the script. Schedules and the scene breakdown of the show MAMMA MIA! will be available on our website at [www.dlhsmammamia.com](http://www.dlhsmarypoppins.com). The schedule will be reviewed that night for new musical cast members. New schedules will be provided on our website. It is very important that you are at your scheduled rehearsals and that you are on time and ready to practice. YOU MUST BE AT REHEARSALS FOR WHICH YOU ARE SCHEDULED! Students will be allowed three absences. After three absences actors will have their roles in scenes reduced. This is a strict policy that we will adhere to! Please be prepared to let us know about all of your conflicts in advance. We will ask you about your conflicts when you audition. Anytime you miss a rehearsal, it will be considered an absence, even if you are ill! It does not matter why you are missing, if you are missing a rehearsal, it is an absence. We will do our very best to not schedule you for a rehearsal when you have a conflict. That is why it is so very, very important for you to list all of your conflicts at your audition! Please be very detailed when you list your conflicts!

**FLEXIBILITY:**

We NEED your understanding and flexibility during rehearsals. There are times when the scenes listed on the schedule may not receive as much attention as the directors allocated. This is usually because there is another scene that needs a great deal more attention than first anticipated. (For example, perhaps the scene just wasn’t as prepared as it could have been or should have been!) The more prepared students are and the more attentive they are during rehearsals the better things may go. However, in order to make sure that students are using their time productively, even when they are sitting and waiting for their scene, we would ask that your student bring books and homework to practice nightly and use this opportunity to work on their studies. Students’ education remains our top priority.

**WHITE CARD ACTIVITY FEES:**

Middle school and high school students in the cast must purchase activity/white cards. This is done at your own school office. NO STUDENT MAY PARTICIPATE WITHOUT AN ACTIVITY/ WHITE CARD. Please take care of your White Card as soon as possible as you are not allowed to rehearse without a White Card! The DLHS White Card cost is - $80.00 per activity & the DLMS White Card cost is $50.00 per activity. There is a cap of $370.00 per family on White Card Activity expense per year. If the White Card activity fee is a financial hardship, please speak to Mr. Rob Nielson, Activities Director (847-4491) – DLHS students or Mr. Justin Hegg (847-9228) – DLMS students. FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS ONLY: If you are behind credits, this makes you ineligible to participate in the musical. If you wish to be considered eligible, you must go through the petition process. Please see Mr. Rob Nielson, Activities Director, to obtain the proper paperwork. You may audition for the show, but your eligibility will be a factor in determining if you may participate in the fall musical.

**IMPORTANT DATES:**

As the production dates near, cast members will be asked to give more of their time for rehearsals. There will be rehearsals over MEA weekend on October 17th 18th and 19th, during the day and the evening. **We would ask that, if at all possible, family trips and events be scheduled outside of MEA and the two weeks prior to the first performance**. We realize that there are times when this is not possible and unforeseen things happen. Please let Mrs. Larson know as soon as possible about any conflicts over this time. She can be reached at 218-847-4491 Ext. 2540 or by email at klarson@detlakes.k12.mn.us. In addition, there may be other performance times that could potentially occur during the school day that could be considered comparable to a “short” extracurricular athletic schedule. Once the dates have been confirmed with administration, they will be communicated with parents and students.

**REHEARSAL SCHEDULE:**

Please know that we are so excited and happy that you - your son/daughter want(s) to be a part of the musical family! Please be aware that because many of our students are in multiple activities we must rehearse in the evenings and on Saturdays in order to accommodate these diverse schedules. Being a member of the musical cast does require a significant time commitment. Cast and crewmembers are expected to be extremely conscientious and responsible and manage their time wisely. This expectation applies first and foremost to your (student’s) academics! As mentioned earlier in this letter, school is always our first priority and we expect it to be our students’ first priority!

Some questions for students to consider when auditioning for the musical:

Can you handle pressure fairly well?

Can you sustain your energy fairly consistently?

Do you enjoy being active?

How is your attention span?

Can you be respectful and quiet?

Can you complete your homework and maintain your grades when you are very engaged in multiple activities?

With proper time management, you will find that the musical experience is an incredibly awesome, rewarding experience – one that you will never, ever forget! Just ask some former cast members – they will tell you how amazing it is!

**PARENT VOLUNTEERS:**

We highly encourage parents/guardians to join us as volunteers. There is a space on the audition form where parents can designate their areas of interest. If parents are not sure what their specific areas of interest are, but are willing to help out, they can indicate their general interest with a phone number or email address. We will contact parents that are interested in helping with the production. We are in need of help in all areas of the show! If your student is selected for the cast, parents/guardians may be contacted to help with the production. Even an hour or two is helpful. (For example, costume work can often be done at home.)

In addition, this year we are asking students to sign up for areas in which they might have interest. Students will be supervised and instruction will be given on how to do things such as make props, paint and do set construction. Please know that student safety is ALWAYS our first priority. Generally set crews work on Saturdays (around the rehearsal schedule) and on Sunday afternoons, as well as Wednesday evenings. We expect students to fulfill their church obligations so Wednesday nights will be reserved for older students. We also expect students to maintain their grades and keep up with their homework – school studies come before anything else!

We are looking forward to your student’s participation in this musical. It is a wonderful experience for all of us - students and adults alike.

 Sincerely,

 Kathryn Larson, Director

 Mark Everson, Assistant Director