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THE CREATION OF CHOREOGRAPHY FOR
DISNEY'S HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL

by
JOHN GREER

THESIS PAPER SUBMITTED
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

MASTER OF FINE ARTS
IN
THEATRE ARTS

MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY
MANKATO, MINNESOTA

July 2023

DATE: July 17, 2023

The thesis paper has been examined and approved by the following members of the student's committee.

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ABSTRACT

Greer, John, M.F.A. The creation of choreography for Disney's High School Musical
Mankato: Minnesota State University, Mankato, 2023

This document is a thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the Master of Fine Arts degree in musical theatre. It is a detailed account of author John Greer's artistic process of creating the choreography for *Disney's High School Musical* as a part of Minnesota State University, Mankato's mainstage theatre season in the fall of 2022. The thesis chronicles the choreographer's artistic process from pre-production through performance in five chapters: a preproduction analysis, an historical and critical perspective, a rehearsal journal, a post-production analysis and a process development analysis. Appendices and works cited are included.

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CHAPTER 1

EARLY PRODUCTION ANALYSIS

Disney's High School Musical the stage version, will be produced by Minnesota State University, Mankato in the Fall of 2022. Matthew Caron is the director, Nicholas Wayne is music director, John David Paul is the scenic designer, David McCarl is the costume designer, Steven Smith is the lighting designer, Joshua Zietse is technical director, sound design is by George E. Grubb, and Jenna M. Atherton is the production stage manager. The choreographer and author of this thesis, John Greer, is a third year Master of Fine Arts candidate and this production fulfills the thesis requirement for the MFA program at Minnesota State University, Mankato.

Disney's High School Musical is a simple love story but is so successful because it touches on age-old themes—adolescent love, peer pressure against the quest to honor the true authentic self, and rivalry between women. The movie debuted in 2006 on Disney Channel Original Movie (DCOM) and was the beginning of the franchise Disney developed for this American musical television film. The development of the film was created by Disney network executives due to the success from musical episodes from Disney television series of *Even Stevens* (2000-2003) and *That's So Raven* (2003-2007).

In actuality, the writer Peter Barsocchini wrote the screen play in 2004 for his daughter Gabriella and her friends. He wanted to write something which his daughter

could watch on the Disney Channel since at the time, he was working on two R-rated screen plays. He submitted the screen play and within several weeks received a call from Disney. Disney submitted the play to several directors. One was Kenny Ortega, a director/choreographer, who loved it. Barsocchini felt the script was a good sign since it was his first draft. He stated, "It was a sign right then that something good might happen since people liked it so much" (WGA West 2:35-2:38). He also stated, "Disney didn't know what they had, nobody really knew..." (WGA West 2:48-2:51).

Disney's High School Musical interestingly has a theme of individuality in tension with peers while the main events-the game, the intellectual contest, and the play all rest on both individual strengths and the successful team work. The two leads, Troy (played by Hunter Conrad) and Gabriella, (played by Sara Potvin), meet at a holiday lodge and find themselves singing together a karaoke song entitled "Start of Something New." The attraction is clear and audience members identify with this terrifying yet exciting sentiment of first love.

After this romantic moment, the two leads meet again, but at Troy's high school where Gabriella has transferred. Both are surprised to rediscover each other and the story begins to reveal hurdles these two characters must overcome. Troy's identity is an athlete, the jock of the basketball team where his father is the coach and Gabriella is a brainiac in academics. Both of their backgrounds are opposites and it reveals a plot similar to another musical entitled *Grease*.

One of the most cited psychologists when it comes to developmental stages of adolescence, Erik Erickson, argued that,

To achieve a sense of identity, adolescents go through a progressive state of evaluating and defining who they have become during their childhood and who they would like to become in the anticipated future. A well-formulated identity is also a balance of how adolescents perceive themselves, how they believe others perceive them, and what they believe others expect of them. Identity development involves experimenting with various personalities and roles in a deliberate effort to find an identity that fits, whereby undesirable roles are discarded (Magner & Hill 917).

The characters all wrestled with their identity in the normal high school world of cliques, rivalries, pressures by parents, by peers, and their difficult job of finding their authentic voice.

The screenwriter, Barsocchini established the movie on his daughter Gabriella and the circle of friends she associated herself with during this time. He used the subject which conflicted teenagers along with what adults face in society: Do you conform to your place within groups that align to your thoughts and beliefs, or do you escape and listen your heart? This conflict is carried throughout the show for the leads as well as various other characters. Troy is thinking about Gabriella and the school musical and that he might enjoy singing in addition to basketball. He is late for basketball practice and is reminded to “keep his head in the game” for the big championship. Basketball practice turns into the number “Get’cha Your head in The Game” which reveals his conflict of basketball and his feelings for Gabriella. It is a character song which

describes a character and gives an audience an understanding of what a character is feeling.

Here is where the conflict of conformity is revealed through the various other leads and characters. Chaos erupts in the cafeteria in the number “Stick to the Status Quo.” The number is what is known as an “11 o’clock number” in musical theatre. It is usually a solo, but can be a production number. Normally, it is done at the end of a show since Broadway shows began around 8:30 p.m. and ended close to 11 p.m. In this case, the finale of Act One does this to the audience with the shake-up of the “Status Quo” in the high school. The number is done to tie up loose ends or offer some kind of revelation. In this case, the production number reveals the shake-up of the status quo at the school and closes Act One. “Stick to the Status Quo” is also the inciting incident that upsets the “status quo” and is the name of the scene. It impacts in a positive way as the scene unfolds to reveal the underlying conflict characters hid in order to conform. Coming up with an “11 o’clock number” for each individual couple, Troy and Gabriella, Sharpay and Ryan, would not have been practical. “Stick to the Status Quo” solves the problem of expressing a revelation shared by both the couples and cast. The scene provides the audience with a fun, upbeat, ensemble number to carry the audience through the remainder of the show. In this number, Zeke one of the jocks played (by Garmunee Phillips) discloses he likes to bake. Martha Cox a brainiac (played by Maddy Pool) reveals she likes to do hip hop. Ripper one of the skater dudes (played by Davis Jensen) admits he likes to play the cello. These characters are given the courage to reveal these passions when it is discovered Troy receives a callback for the school musical. The

characters feel if Troy goes outside his clique, they are also capable. In other words, being free from labels to discover your own identity and asserting that existence is determined by these individuals. It is also a key exposition to what the show is about which is social awareness. The situations in this scene encourage compassion, tolerance and promote empathic understandings of diversity. It is an effective avenue to expose diverse points of view and present them through musical theatre.

Troy is the protagonist in *Disney's High School Musical* and his point of view is followed by individuals who relate to his position. It is his journey that becomes interesting as it identifies with obstacles in everyday life. In the beginning of Act Two, Gabriella and Troy are on the rooftop of the horticulture club. For Troy, it is a safe haven away from the hurdles of high school. One of these hurdles is living inauthentic to oneself. In Troy's case, it is trying to conform to expectations set for him and please those who set them. For Troy the desire to belong to a particular group and the need for acceptance is a behavior trait. Psychologist Kendra Cherry states, "The need to belong, also known as belongingness, refers to a human emotional need to affiliate with and be accepted by members of a group" (Cherry 1).

Troy's father opposes the idea Troy could be a part of the school musical, and be captain of the basketball team. In Troy's mind, his identity is threatened by his father and peers who try to persuade him that he can only be the "basketball boy." Troy replies, "My parent's friends are always saying, Your son is the basketball guy. You must be so proud. Sometimes I don't want to be the basketball guy I just want to be, you know, me" (52).

As the scene advanced, Gabriella explained, “I saw the way you treated Kelsi at the audition yesterday. Do your friends know that guy?” (52). Troy continued by saying, “Are you kidding? To them, I’m “the playmaker dude” (52). It is the idea and constraining image of “the basketball guy” Troy is attempting to escape and expand outside his social circle. It would allow him to take part in both basketball and the school musical. He wants to define himself, not be defined by all the people around him.

When Troy’s father protests the idea of him being in the school musical he is disrupting gender norms of masculinity. Sociologist Cislighi and Heise discuss, “Gender norms are socially and culturally mediated principles that govern the expected behavior of women, men, girls, and boys in a society” (Cislighi, Heise 407). The anxiety Troy is experiencing concerning basketball, the play, and going against his father is known as “male gender role stress.” Dr. Matthew Tull, a psychologist at the University of Toledo explains, “Men experiencing gender role stress are more likely to experience anxiety, depression...” and he continues to state, “...men who fear violating gender role norms may be less likely to talk about or express their emotions...” (Tull 4). Troy exhibits all these traits until he discloses his feelings to Gabriella.

In the meantime, the jocks and brainiacs forged a plan to break Troy and Gabriella up for the good of the whole. While Chad (played by Joaquin Warren) sees Troy slowly distancing himself from the team, Taylor (played by Emerald Clark) discovers that Gabriella is also absorbed with the school musical and not the Scholastic Decathlon team. Both Chad and Taylor scheme to dissolve the relationship. Chad plots an intervention for Troy, who, unaware that Gabriella and

the Scholastic Decathlon team hear his conversation, Troy informs the basketball team that the school musical is not important, that he'll forget about callbacks and focus 100% on their upcoming game. Gabriella hears the entire conversation.

Here the plot structure continues since Troy understands he and Gabriella were set up. Sharpay (played by Maddy Morgan) is the antagonist in *High School Musical*. As the antagonist, Sharpay is the character who opposes anything Troy has which involves Gabriella. Sharpay also feels Gabriella is trying to take Troy away and take her place in the school play. Sharpay persuades Ms. Darbus to change the audition to compete with the school decathlon and basketball championship games at the same time. The character of Sharpay is an individual who is tied to her perception of who she is in the high school hierarchy. Sharpay had every lead in the play since kindergarten and is the most popular girl in East High School. She is accustomed to getting her way and normally “speaks her mind.” Sharpay reveals, “I’m not just talking about my role in the play, Ryan. I’m talking about my role in like...the school. I’m not a jock, I’m not a brainiac...but you know what, I’m the star, that’s my role. And if they take it away from me, who am I?” (72). In reality, she is really insecure and lonely which explains her attitude to bully others to bolster her confidence. Without being the star of the musical, in her mind she has no identity outside of this role in the school.

The finale of *Disney’s High School Musical* covers the spectrum of human emotion and energy through two songs which are “Breaking Free” and “We’re All in This Together.” “Breaking Free” concerns the stereotypes and expectations other people have for you and allow you to seek your own dreams and passions. “We’re All in This

Together” involve celebrating diversity and unity among each other. All the main characters wrap up their plots. The ending is poignant where the lead characters and cast learn how to be true to oneself which is not the social hierarchy of the high school. Learning these lessons can be bittersweet, heartbreaking or devastating. The audience relates to these emotions because an audience is human and may have experienced these same lessons on some level. *Disney’s High School Musical* employs a dance party ending. Examples of recent musicals which use this type of ending are *Mamma Mia*, *Hairspray*, and *Shrek*. It provides the audience with a feel-good outcome.

Another theme which emerges outside of the conflict of conformity theme is the “queen bee syndrome.” In 1973, the department of psychology at the University of Michigan defined the queen bee syndrome. According to Imthiyaz the syndrome describes “a woman in a position of authority in a male dominated environment who treats subordinates more critically if they are female” (Imthiyaz 4). Symptoms of the queen bee syndrome are: “arrogance and narcissism due to overly heightened self-esteem, selfishness, being aggressive, manipulative, bullying or having sociopathic tendencies” (BBC 5) all pertain to Sharpay’s character. She feels threatened by Gabriella and resorts to tactics of this syndrome to protect her self-image as the most popular girl at school.

Adolescence is a difficult transition period for individuals who want to belong and fit in, in order to feel accepted. Girls as well as boys tend to form groups which adhere to characteristics of attractiveness or popularity to find approval. Today, mainstream media has provided portrayals of many queen bee syndromes. As Imthiyaz argues, “Characters in pop-culture entertainment such as *Mean Girls* and *High School Musical* offer stock

character versions of the queen bee, otherwise the mean popular girl. Fictional portrayals of queen bees depict beautiful girls with positions of high social status like a head cheerleader or prom queen” (Imthiyaz 7).

This statement is an accurate description of Sharpay. It is interesting how Imthiyaz used *Disney's High School Musical* to describe a queen bee character to support an analysis of Sharpay's character. Imthiyaz also referenced the TV series *Gossip Girl* from 2007. She stated, “You can't make people love you, but you can make them fear you” (Imthiyaz, 8) which is exactly what Sharpay tries to do to anyone who went against her and does not fit into her idea of the hierarchy of high school.

The style of dance for *Disney's High School Musical* is used for videos, promotionals, television shows, concerts, and current films which has recently developed. This type of movement style is not musical theatre dance. Musical theatre dance is a description used in the history of Broadway musicals. It relies heavily on ballet, tap, and jazz with the target on musical interpretation. Since this stage version was conceived from the movie musical, the same type of movement is needed for the dance numbers in the show. As choreographer, the main focus is to make various groups of performers look good together and help extend out the story. The opening number contain, cheerleaders, principals, and an ensemble. The complete opening scene goes from one setting of the high school, to a ski lodge, and back to the high school. The one consistent element which will help as choreographer is that the main movement numbers are all in the time signature of 4/4 which means each measure receives four counts. It is easy to work in this time signature since it is so even. The choreography will be in the dance

style of the Disney Channel movie. The dance style is known as commercial dance which does not have the constraints of musical theatre dance which adheres to combinations of ballet, tap, and jazz.

The “Getcha Head in the Game” number requires basketballs. Since the music is again in the time signature of 4/4, it will allow the cast members in this number to feel the downbeat for the counts. The challenge will be to use the basketballs in the choreography keeping it simple enough for the dancers to maintain control. The cast members will need to sing at the same time, so movement created will need to allow for correct breathing to sustain phrases in the lyrics. One move of dance will be borrowed from the movie. It is the move where the jocks roll the basketball across the chest with one hand and catch it in the same hand. (*High School Musical* 16:24-16:25).

The “Auditions” number is musical theatre dance which is movement based on ballet, tap, jazz, and used to focus on musical interpretation. The music lends itself to singing and movement, rather than full out dance movement. I feel and see the movement as a group piece which allows for a show choir look. What I mean by this is that the movement is somewhat contained, but with moving sections within the ensemble. The ending of the song changes to a 2/2 time signature. In effect, this change alters the rhythm to be more Latin sounding. The movement I envision requires more energy to match the time signature along with the lyrics. An online video is referenced for the choreography (Yoson 0:00-3:10).

Sharpay and Ryan’s duet “What I’ve Been looking for,” which is an “I want” song requires “over the top” musical theatre dance. This song reveals what a character is

looking for or wants which in this case, are the leads in the musical. It should be somewhat silly movement between the two principles which contributes to the type of characters they portray in the show. Sharpay and Ryan depicts an over-the-top quality, bold, and a bit too much in their characters. It should be performed as a parody of show tunes or as a clever parody of Broadway style movement. As Ms. Darbus discloses, "...very slick, very polished. You might want to work on some...oh, I don't know...some warmth?" (35).

As I reviewed the "Cellular Fusion" number, it reminded me of a number from *Bye Bye Birdie* called the "Telephone Hour." The members talk to each other on the phone from various places in their house. In the stage version of *Disney's High School Musical*, the number has the cast members talking on cell phones. The music has a great driving bass sound in various sections. I do not see the music lending itself to any great movement. Since the characters are talking on cell phones, they are all in various settings such as the mall, in their house, or any place the character might be with a cell phone. For this number, I had an idea to use lighting to create a very different visual effect. I saw a complete blackout and the use of specials in lighting when each character is using their cell phone. When the ensemble is talking, all specials are brought up on each member. During the music interludes, the driving bass music lends to a psychedelic feel. As choreographer I see lights splashing on the set while the specials are up on the singers in the number. The lighting will give the number a very different look than any other number in the show. The ending will have Sharpay and Ryan come onstage in specials to

the center as they say their lines which leads into the “Status Quo” number to finish Act One.

In the finale of Act One, the “Status Quo” number is all about high energy dancing and movement with all the various cliques represented in the cafeteria. The number is very large and incorporates cafeteria tables. This is where I will need to use movement that is not demanding but allows the entire cast to move in different sections at the same time. The shape of the tables and chairs will affect the movement; this is a concern for me. I will keep this in mind when creating the movement in order to adapt to what is available to use for the scene. I will reference the style of choreography depicted in the Disney Channel movie *Disney’s High School Musical*.

Act Two is a much easier Act for movement. “The Wildcat Cheer” reprise is performed by the cheerleaders and is a repeat of the opening sequence the cheerleaders do in Act One. The “Boom Box Rehearsal” with Sharpay and Ryan is just a small segment of music which again lends itself to a parody of musical theatre dance. The first big dance number in Act Two is “We’re All in This Together,” when all the cliques decide to help Troy and Gabriella make it to the audition for the musical. The choreography is a repeat from Act One with small changes which are needed for the scene. The small changes are in movement. The music changes for the chorus in tempo and lyrics which allows for new contemporary movement. “Bop to the Top” is the next dance number and is performed during the scene which split into three scenes on stage. The movement is a parody of musical theatre dance that involves Sharpay and Ryan in their callback number for the school musical. It engages comic theatre dance to

accompany the lyrics of the song. The choreography parallels their character traits which are comical, over-the-top, and cheesy.

I saw a chance to showcase more experienced dancers in the cast for the “Breaking Free” number. It is a ballad between Troy and Gabriella and the lyrics explain how they both feel about escaping their roles established by their cliques. I plan to use the more experienced dancers in a segment of the music as backup dancers to add a nice visual behind Troy and Gabriella. The remainder of the number involves the entire cast coming together to join in this acceptance of breaking free from the expectations of peer groups to become what everyone should feel free to do as an individual. The movement is small and close to the body since the entire cast is on stage for this number. I want to add a picturesque look with the entire cast as a ending for the number. I envision the cast members in individual poses which reflect how those in that age bracket would pose for pictures in a high school yearbook. The look would all come together in a large group pose at the end of the number. The finale of Act Two is the “We’re All In This Together” reprise. It is again, a repeat of the choreography from Act One, but there are added sections to incorporate the various cliques which move around on the set. The number requires a big finish for the entire cast. Once this finale is done, the entire cast moves into the “Megamix” number which is just a big rehash of all the numbers of the show to give another big finish. It requires high energy and exciting movement for the “Bop to the Top” section that is new choreography for the cast. The dance for this section was in the style of the movie *Disney’s High School Musical*. An online video was also referenced for choreography (GigglesFairy16 1:48-2:27).

I am grateful for the opportunity to choreograph this show as my MFA Thesis. It will be a challenge since this type of movement known as commercial dance is somewhat new to me as a choreographer. I will strive to be a leader and collaborate in this position on the production team. I look forward to beginning the process of rehearsal with the cast and crew of *Disney's High School Musical*.

CHAPTER II

HISTORICAL AND CRITICAL PERSPECTIVE

On January 20, 2006, the Disney Channel Original Movie (DCOM) network released – *Disney's High School Musical* (HSM). The following year *High School Musical 2* premiered and a year after *High School Musical 3: Senior Year!* was produced. HSM changed the impact of the modern TV movie musical. It paved the way for the successful TV show series *Glee* (2009), the follow-up movie musical series of *Smash* (2012), and more recently *Pitch Perfect* (2012). The popularity of TV movie musicals is a subgenre of film shows of the same context which are part of a broader family, specifically the stage musical. Film stage shows can be further divided into screen musicals and TV musicals. The purpose of this chapter is to examine the historical impact of HSM. Further, this chapter is aimed at examining the beginning of musical theatre, its evolution, and how it relates to *Disney's High School Musical*.

In order to understand how Disney made such an impact with HSM, it is important to understand the historical lineage of the musical and its key elements, such as dialogue, lyrics, and music. Disney had knowledge of and employed on these elements to create a familiar, successful structure for HSM. Furthermore, Disney employed modern-day marketing strategies, media, and technology to elevate the genre of the musical to a new level with HSM that made it hugely appealing to today's global

audience. The section that follows will first discuss the historical development of the musical and its key elements along with an analysis of how HSM utilized these historical elements. And finally, the chapter will address Disney's innovative use of modern-day resources that elevated the film's popularity.

History of the Musical

Musical theatre became an American theatre form with the appearance of minstrelsy. The most popular form in the middle nineteenth century was the minstrel show which was a crude, substandard show of song, dance, and comedy. According to theatre historian Christopher Smith, "It was more important for what it did for the American theatre than the entertainment of the show" (Smith 48). It was popular since it depicted a romantic, sentimental idealistic view of plantation life which never existed through songs and skits. Minstrelsy was about the impersonation of the Black community and manners by White men in Black face. It matured out of the time when slavery was the norm in certain regions of the country and was an issue in society. These impersonations were very racist caricatures of Black persons to entertain White audiences. Brent Staples in his article argues, "This debased depiction of blackness underwrote a white supremacist impulse that metastasized into every aspect of American life" (Staples 3). While HSM is not thematically at all like minstrelsy, the basic framework of elements of the minstrel show were opening with a chorus along with comedy, song, and dance which are all part of *Disney's High School Musical*.

According to Knapp, Morris, and Wolf, “The Minstrel program opened with a chorus...then followed with a series of jokes, interspersed with ballads, comic songs, and dance” (Knapp, Morris, Wolf 75). HSM opens with a large chorus which involves the entire cast in three locations, the high school, a ski lodge, and back to the high school with the entire cast in song and dance. HSM then employs song and dance throughout the production interspersed with comedy elements. These elements were all the basic format of the Minstrel show. Knapp, Morris, and Wolf continue to state, “American minstrelsy was the most influential and long-lived musical-theatrical development and no form of popular entertainment created in the United States since the early nineteenth century has been untouched by it” (Knapp, Morris, Wolf 66).

The next iteration of musical theatre was vaudeville which began in 1865 by a former minstrel showman named Tony Pastor. He opened a theatre for entertainment which contained variety acts in the first act like the minstrel show. He relied more on his social policy than on the theatrical innovation. He removed objectional and suggestive items from performance material. He directed his entertainment to women and children. He catered to families which contained a policy of no drinking, smoking, or vulgarity. Vaudeville became the golden age in theatre which contained, “...nearly two thousand theatres featuring weekly programs of nine acts to the bill” (Kislan 32).

Vaudeville developed out of the decline of minstrelsy. The decline was due to the minstrel show becoming more extravagant by containing more entertainers than the smaller shows of the earlier years. The public became discontent with the stereotypical romanticized view of the southern plantation due to the forced reality of the

Reconstruction period. Reconstruction was an attempt to benefit freed slaves in ways that would usher them in as full participants in our democracy. It failed, due to the work of the Klu Klux Klan and others who would not, could not, feel that Blacks were equal. Not until the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, or even into the present, laws and realities for Blacks would change but people's appetites for toe-tapping, uplifting, and stirring stories told through music and dance would endure.

The basic format of vaudeville follows how a musical theatre production normally is written. Vaudeville followed a nine-act bill with the following sequence to it. The first act opened the show which could be a song and dance turn. It was something to make a good impression and set the audience. The number two position was more entertaining and really prepared the audience for the show. In the number three spot, the show had been properly started and must build to the finish. Here a good comedy or drama sketch would be placed on the bill which wakens the interest and holds the audience. After the number three spot this position must have a "name" to it in order for the audience to expect still better things and build up the interest for the act that follows. The fifth position on the bill must be another big name or act in order to be a hit with the audience. This act was next to intermission so, it closed Act One as we know it today. Vaudeville felt it should leave the audience with something to talk about.

After intermission, the number six act on the bill must not let down the audience and carefully build up tension of interest. It might be a good comedy act with the intention of getting the audience back in the seats without too many interruptions. The next act, number seven would be a full stage act with a big name. Following this act,

number eight was next to closing and it was normally a comedy hit of the show. It was an act the audience would have been waiting to see. Normally, it was a man or woman with a solo which is now known as the 11'oclock number. The act which closed the nine-act bill of vaudeville was something pleasing to the audience, something showy to send the audience home pleased. Today, it would be the finale of the musical theatre production (Knapp, Morris, Wolf 78).

The basic format of acts on the vaudeville circuit parallels how HSM flows in the storytelling of the show. HSM opens at the beginning of the show with the hint of the love story between Troy and Gabriella. The topic makes a good impression and sets the tone of the show with the audience. As HSM musical continues, it builds on this story and prepares the audience for the show. HSM continues to reveal through various storytelling, song and dance which furthers the plot and keeps the interest of the audience building with the show. The action continues in this sequence until the finale of Act One which is the "Status Quo" production number. It reveals the shakeup of the status quo hierarchy of the high school and leaves the audience with something to think or talk about. The same as the act in vaudeville next to intermission which was done to make a splendid send off with the audience (Knapp, Morris, Wolf 78).

The beginning of Act Two opens with a nice, simple duet with Troy and Gabriella which settles the audience back into the seats and continues the interest of the show. From here in HSM, the plot continues with more storytelling through dialogue, song and dance which was the basic format vaudeville used to keep the audience interested. HSM

ends with a large song and dance finale which sends the audience off pleased with how all the characters wrap up the resolutions revealed in the show (Knapp, Morris, Wolf, 78).

The decline of vaudeville came about due to the Great Depression in America. The stars of vaudeville deserted for Hollywood and *Variety* an entertainment paper no longer depicted it on the front page. Other outside forces contributed to the decline such as talking pictures, radio, and night clubs. Due to the Depression, the public learned to do without unnecessary habits such as the theatre (Kislan 54).

Musical Theatre was to begin a new direction with an American composer by the name of Jerome Kern. Mr. Kern worked to change the format of the American musical play. He believed “an art form meant to be performed on a stage by actors who employ the elements of dramatic literature are joined with song to reflect aspects of human life” (Kislan 110). Mr. Kern developed the format for the book musical with collaborators Guy Bolton, and P.G. Wodehouse at the Princess Theatre in New York. At this theatre, the composition for the book musical was to become the groundwork Rodgers and Hammerstein would later use. Kern along with his collaborators developed a new concept. The concept was “since the new songs were carrying their own responsibilities regarding the dramatic action, their effectiveness depended not just on the melody, but on how well they told their part of the story” (Flinn 143). In other words, music and dance were not just inserted into a show for their component which was the standard format up to that time, but engaged to further the story of the show.

Here is the beginning of the book musical as it is known today. The book musical combines the elements of dialogue, lyrics, song, and dance. These elements are

all embodied by characters, situations, and plot. Out of these elements Kern was to establish the first book musical which was *Showboat* in 1927. He collaborated with Oscar Hammerstein II in this new creation. Both gentlemen according to Ewen “...agreed to make all the musical and dramatic elements of a book show evolve organically from the spirit of the novel” (Ewen 112). The show offered many memorable songs which up until this time, musical plays could sustain a hit or long run of a show solely on the strength of a one hit tune.

In the book musical, songs were connected to characters which furthered the plot and were structured in a new form of music called the AABA. In his book, Ewen stated, “The form means the A’s represent two opening verse sections, a bridge (B), which is a transition to the final (A) verse. Each section is comprised of eight bars or measures. The formula can be explained as such 1. A (verse) for 8 bars, 2. A (verse) for 8 bars, 3. B (bridge) for 8 bars, and 4. A (verse) for 8 bars” (Ewen 125). It allowed the listener to return to the original melody and help in recognizing and retaining the tune of the song.

The elements of the book musical which are dialogue, lyrics, song, and dance established by Mr. Kern are all employed in the storytelling of HSM. HSM is heavy with dialogue. The characters speak to each other in a realistic manner and there is an emphasis on character. Each character is real and relatable to teen audiences. First love, high school peer cliques, looking for an authentic self are all entertaining to those going through these issues or those remembering nostalgically their own struggles. There is a background story to the characters which connect them to other characters. The music, lyrics, and dance drive the characters, situations, and the plot. As stated earlier, music,

and dance are not just inserted into HSM for their component of entertainment, but have a job in the storytelling. All these elements work together to focus on the story and around the central plot of HSM which is do you conform to your place within groups that align to your thoughts and beliefs, or do you escape and listen to your heart? There are numerous subplots and the stories of these subplots all have a beginning, middle, and end in the production of HSM. These elements Mr. Kern established define what is the American book musical. When these elements are utilized creatively, artistically, and balanced together as they are in HSM, they work together to tell an effective story.

Disney's Capitalization on Musical Theatre Formula and Modern-Day Marketing

Screen and TV musicals are the continuation of a long evolution of stage musicals. The musical during its history and evolution has always remained attuned to current trend, audiences, and profit generation. Disney took the musical theatre formula and made animated films aimed at children and families. Here is where Disney realized it could take the success from musical episodes on various Disney television series and branch into the stage musical. What is odd is that the musical theatre formula Disney exported to animated films in the 1930s was returned to Broadway by Disney. The success Disney found from transferring animated shows into Broadway musicals would lead it into another direction which was the made-for-TV musical. Disney would become the new era of history to Broadway and the soon to be realized *Disney's High School Musical*.

A new name came onto Broadway and it was Disney. “Broadway’s biggest moneymaker in 1994 was *Disney’s Beauty and The Beast* the first stage product from Walt Disney Productions” according to Kenrick (Kenrick 4). Disney renovated the New Amsterdam Theatre where the production was performed, and built a Disney hotel up the street. The next Disney show was the *Lion King* (1997) which was adapted from the animated film just like *Beauty and The Beast*. Disney produced souvenirs for both shows which were sold like never before for any Broadway show. John Kenrick explained “Afterall if the British wrote the book on auxiliary entertainment marketing the folks at Disney had long since built the library” (Kenrick 7). These musicals became known as Corporate Musicals and the era of this product came on Broadway. A corporate musical according to John Kendrick “is built, produced, and managed by multi-functional entertainment corporations like Disney” (Kenrick 10).

Disney understood what the market was all about and it was musicals which catered to a younger audience. All the musicals being produced by the now new Disney Theatrical Productions were aimed at kids. The one exception was the musical *Aida* (2000). The move into stage musicals was risky for Disney, but it was looking to expand what it offered and solidify the brand. What Disney was learning at this point was leading up to producing musicals made-for-TV. Disney revamped Broadway with musicals the brand was producing and realized another market could be successful. Why not try a made-for-TV musical from the success of musical episodes Disney had produced with current series shows. Once it received the script for HSM from Peter Barsocchini a new era was to begin. Disney had success on Broadway with stage

musicals and it realized a new avenue could be made with showcasing *Disney's High School Musical* as a made-for-TV musical.

The movie musical all but waned out in the 1980s and 1990s until Disney's revitalization. The waning was due to the apathy of the audience. There were still some movie musicals which stood out during this time, but it was due to the stars. Movie musicals such as *Footloose* (1984) with Kevin Bacon, *Evita* (1996) with Madonna, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* (1999) with Donny Osmond, and *Newsies* (1992) with Christian Bale. However, Disney continued to be successful in this area according to Ashley Sklack, "Disney Classics increased in production numbers starting in 1980 and especially into the nineties. Almost all of the classics that are enjoyed and remembered today and most of the Disney Princesses were born out of this era" (Sklack 6). Disney had a solid empire on the movie musical from the beginning with *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* in 1937. Through the reputation and the empire of Disney, audiences came to the movies to see a Disney musical and anticipated it being just as good as all the previous musicals. These musicals catered to younger audiences. Disney recognized the power of the teen audience with early success as with *Even Stevens* and *That's So Raven* on the Disney Channel. Both of these television series contained musical episodes and Disney saw a market for this type of entertainment. When Disney produced the made-for-TV *Disney's High School Musical* in 2006 and *Camp Rock* in 2008 the audience base was there for this new genre. What made these shows so popular and caused a phenomenon was due to the teen audience. Sklack

explains, “Pre-teens and teens alike went crazy for a singing Zac Efron in *High School Musical* and the Jonas brothers in *Camp Rock*” (Sklack 8).

Another item which made these TV movie musicals popular was the availability. An audience did not have to pay to watch the musicals. Anyone could just tune into the Disney Channel and enjoy the movie. If anyone missed it, the channel would repeat the show later on.

What is interesting is how Disney capitalized on the sensation of *Disney’s High School Musical*. “Disney franchise provided a flexible new model in the creation and exploitation of brands targeting young people who access the media in increasingly diverse ways” (Lustyik 240). In other words, Disney heavily marketed HSM and its spinoff. Disney’s new type of model created a global success of the franchise.

The anomaly of *Disney’s High School Musical* initiated the rejuvenation of movie musicals in the recent era. Romano in his article explains,

The year 2007 alone saw a string of popular movie musicals capitalizing on the moment, like *Hairspray*, and *Sweeny Todd*” (2019 28). “This trend has continued into the 2010s with an ongoing lineup of regular movie musicals from *Les Miserables* and *Into the Woods* to the upcoming Spielberg-directed *West Side Story* remake (28) All of these shows were a ripple affect from the impact of *Disney’s High School Musical*. HSM made it all right again to enjoy musicals which led to this new comeback of the movie musical.

A strategy Disney used was the customization of *Disney’s High School Musical*. Once Disney realized the success of HSM, it strategized to connect this achievement with

new audiences around the world. Here is where Disney took HSM to a new height.

According to Lustyik,

In order to expand and connect with children in key markets, Disney decided to produce several country-specific versions of *High School Musical* in partnerships with local media production companies” (Lustyik 31). Lustyik further explains, “In the end, three *High School Musical* movies were released in Latin America-Mexico, Brazil, and Argentina along with China. Each involved local cast, local setting, music and language and was released in the movie theatres and T.V. (Lustyik 31)

Based on the success Disney had with HSM here in the U.S., it went global and broadcast the impact to other countries. Disney continued to build on the height and success of this musical in every way possible.

One of the main markets Disney seized upon was the younger audience. Bickford in his article stated, “With the growing consumer power of teens, tweens, and even younger children, this niche group represents a powerful force in popular music today” (Bickford 417). Sorensen states, “The term tweens is a marketing term usually used to indicate children age 8-12, an age-group thought of as being “in-between” children and teenagers” (Sorensen 177). Disney had targeted this group as it deemed it profitable. It is how Disney made such an impact with producing *Disney’s High School Musical* and promoting it globally.

The phenomenon of *Disney’s High School Musical* is due to Disney’s world-wide campaign and expertise of how technology can reach various regions and audiences.

Disney ensured what they discovered in the U.S. would reach beyond the local

environment. Carla Power in her *Time Magazine* article stated, “They’ve understood that TV is a way to get into people’s heads and that the Internet is a way to enrich that, and that cinema is a place to add to that excitement” (Power 6). Globalization was how Disney made the impact around the world of HSM from the original made-for-tv production in 2006. Disney has definitely made the world a bit smaller by the universal campaign of *Disney’s High School Musical*.

From the early seeds of musical theatre that began through minstrelsy in the late 1800s, the musical has evolved through decades of changes in American history. Those changes the musical addressed concerned aspects of society. Disney seemed always knowledgeable to these changes especially, concerning children and families. Once Disney moved the musical theatre formula from animation to Broadway, Disney then brought it to the made-for-TV musical. *Disney’s High School Musical* has continued to evolve from the earliest beginnings at the turn of the century. It has a rich history connected to social and cultural change. The musical has been able to stay attuned to these developments. A new era which Disney helped create is arguably, *High School Musical’s* impact toward modern musicals. The success of *Disney’s High School Musical* has helped escort a new phase of appreciation for the musical theatre.

CHAPTER III

JOURNAL

8/22/22 Show Research and Prepping for Auditions

Today was auditions for *Disney's High School Musical*. I looked forward to who would be attending and to see if there are some great auditions. I have in mind certain individuals for specific roles, but I am eager to see if anyone will surprise the production team outside of the majors and minors in the department. Since the show is dance heavy, and I am the choreographer, I am most interested to see if I have any truly trained dancers who will audition. The audition process is always exciting, especially if someone new is discovered. It may be hearing someone sing or dance which gives a new creative idea or thought to unpack in the process.

To prepare for this show, I read the script and went through the piano score of the music. I viewed the made-for-TV musical production of *Disney's High School Musical* to get an idea of how the show looked visually and the style of movement. The production has never been one I had an interest to see in person or watch on TV. The production had been done with several high school and community theatres in my previous area of residence, but it was something I did not take an interest in attending. Suddenly, I found myself on the production staff of *Disney's High School Musical* at the university level and I wanted to discover what made this show work.

I read the script from a new perspective and reviewed the music written for Act One and Act Two. In my process of the production, after I read the script and went through the piano score I began to utilize my own conceptions toward choreography depending on the genre. The style of dance for this show is what is known as commercial dance. It is used in commercials, publicizing of products, videos, and concerts. I researched the style by watching the Disney show of the musical as well as watching the sequel *High School Musical 2* and saw how the dance style encompassed different forms and dance techniques of jazz.

My next approach was to listen to the music of the production and follow the music score at the same time. Between reading the script, listening, and following the musical score, I analyzed how a musical scene is to be used to extend the plot or character of the production. I met with the director and musical director to go through the entire script and score. This process helped me to discover if there was a vision the director had for the show or desires for any musical scene. I discussed with the music director if there was possible movement outside of the major dance numbers. These conversations allowed me to find if the director or musical director have concepts outside of what I thought as choreographer. The collaboration allowed me to sense I am on the same page as the director and musical director toward producing a successful production.

I visualize or feel what movement for a particular musical scene or song might be according to what the music dictated to me. I have trained in ballet, tap, jazz, musical theatre dance, folk dance, ballroom, and have all these genres to pull from according to the style of a show. I continued to revisit the DVD of the production several times and

watched the style of movement. Revisiting the DVD helped in getting the feel of the movement into my body and keep the style in my mind.

On the day of auditions, I knew there were various levels of experience in dance. I had choreographed a high energy combination for the dance audition. I hoped it would aid the auditionees in learning the choreography and add to their energy level. I kept the dance combination as simple as I could, but still gave enough movement to show high spirit to the movement. I selected a section of music which was upbeat and fun for the auditionees to move. It actually helped bring out characterization for the auditionees to add to the dance combination. It was nice to see how the auditionees were reacting to the music and movement by adding their own characterization. Fortunately, the music selected along with the choreography allowed everyone to have a strong audition. Once the dance audition was completed, my job was to use what the auditionees showed. I would build off of that and use it to the best of their ability to showcase in the dance numbers.

8/28/22 First rehearsal

I ran into a major issue two days before this rehearsal. I became seriously ill and the illness affected me greatly in energy and thinking toward choreography. I have been unable to stand, move or come up with ideas for choreography. I have been in bed listening to the music and trying to visualize movement and write it down. I decided to reference a video found online to help me with this rehearsal. I have always stayed away from doing this since I do not want to be influenced. The rehearsal schedule had been

difficult to get established. I thought if I delayed my rehearsal week it would put a major upset into the rehearsal schedule. The entire process would have to be reworked. I am sure it could have been done, but I decided against it. It was a mistake and affected me greatly toward my work as choreographer and my process.

My sickness was evident, but I masked and kept to the rehearsal schedule. This evening I started a large dance section of the show called the “Megamix.” The piece is done after the show is completed and is a rehash of all musical dance sections of the show. I had the entire evening to complete the “Megamix” and I knew it would take the entire rehearsal time due to the length of the song. I taught sections of the choreography which will be completed when the full dance numbers are finished later in the rehearsal process. I found keeping the focus of forty-one cast members during a rehearsal can be a daunting task. I had not worked with such a large group in a musical. The cast includes a group of high school students and the attention span and focus can be short for individuals and these students had even shorter attention spans. I discovered I had to use a bit of basic psychology to handle the focus and energy of such a large group. I was firm, but supportive and used a lot of encouragement to keep everyone engaged during the rehearsal. I also noticed there were individuals who were nervous, and this can manifest in various ways. As I kept giving support and encouragement the focus and energy seemed more controllable. I set the movement for each review section of each number in the “Megamix,” but the basketball section will need to be timed since the balls are being thrown from offstage. I do not know if it will work; I will just have to see

when all the crew is on stage in the wings and see if the timing of throwing the balls can be accomplished.

The “Bop to the Top” section is somewhat tricky for the cast in this number. It requires close and fast movement, but I believe what I have given will be able to be done by the cast. I have used everyday gestures and pedestrian movement as much as possible. This type of movement is clapping, pointing in a direction, high-fiving someone, movement which an individual may do every day in some aspect. This section of the “Bop to the Top” slowed down rehearsal due to the movement and formations of the choreography. When I am working with various levels of experience, I must provide ways of explaining movement so it can be understood by individuals with less training. For this section, I discovered using the lyrics to associate movement helped quite a bit instead of showing the movement and counting it. I completed all of the numbers in the “Megamix” except the last two sections. I will have to return to this music section later in the rehearsal process. I told the cast that sections of the movement I taught tonight were part of the larger production numbers in the show. The movement will be repeated when those larger song and dance scenes are set. The “Magamix” finale is just a rehash of short sections of each song of the show so, please remember the choreography as it will be repeated in the show. I had the production stage manager take videos of the work to put on a Microsoft Teams site for the cast to review. I hoped this would help the cast members to review.

8/29/22 Another Large Cast Rehearsal Night

Today I rehearsed “Breaking Free” and “We’re All in This Together.” Both of these songs and scenes require the entire cast onstage. Since the set is not yet completed, I showed the cast where certain groups may be blocked according to the taped ground plan on the stage for the set. Once the set is complete, it will allow the space to open up more when the cast is blocked on the different levels of the set. I decided to use the more experienced dancers in the “Breaking Free” song and finish it by bringing the entire cast together on stage to complete the scene. I was very happy with what I had envisioned in my mind which the featured dancers were able to bring out in the movement. I was interested to see how the visual of the movement of the featured dancers would look behind the two principals who were singing the song. I felt the featured dancers gave a pleasant impression to the audience behind the principal singers in the scene. Sometimes what I see in my mind and put down on paper does not always work when setting the movement. In this instance, the dancers involved were able to execute the choreography and work together with the singers in the number. I was able to complete this entire segment.

I moved on to “We’re All in This Together”. The movement for this section is not intricate, but I used what I felt the lyrics inspired for movement. The physicality of the action was small which fit the lyrics and the cast could move together crisp and clean with synchronized steps. The cast was in close proximity with partners and had to keep

the spacing on stage. Here again I used a lot of pedestrian movement the cast could relate with their bodies and associate with the lyrics of the song. The cast learned both musical sections in the allotted rehearsal schedule and I could tell they felt good with it. It is a great feeling of accomplishment to finish these rehearsals on time and know the cast felt confident about what they had done.

Something I observed in rehearsal tonight was that not everyone was singing. Everyone had music rehearsals that started the first week of school on all the songs in the show. I informed the cast knowing the lyrics will help since a lot of the choreography is set to what is being sung. The production stage manager continued to film and put the numbers on the Microsoft Team site for the cast to review. I reminded the cast to watch these videos for future rehearsals.

8/30/22 Another Large Rehearsal

At this point in rehearsals, I asked the director if I could have two dance captains to help me with the cast. Two dance majors are cast in the show, and I knew their level of training would greatly assist when working with such a large group. My illness was still greatly affecting me and having these two dancers would aid with the rehearsal process. I had the entire cast again for “We’re All In This Together” which is in Act Two. The previous night was the reprise number which is the shorter version of “We’re All In This Together” later in Act Two. The cast had learned the majority of the movement the previous evening so I just had to choreograph the principals into the number with their dialogue and with groups of cast members with formations. The cast

was able to remember what was set the night before for most of the choreography. I had to review the movement again to refresh their memories which was fine.

I reminded the cast the production stage manager records the choreography when completed to post online for the cast to review. Since the majority of the choreography was learned in the previous evenings' rehearsal, it allowed the time needed to insert the principles in the new sections and work with them. I was able to complete these sections, but I was not sure if the groups of cast members (or cliques as they are known in the show such as the brainiacs, cheerleaders, or skater dudes) would be able to pick up the group formations in the movement, but it was accomplished. Since the cast already knew most of the choreography from the evening before, I sensed it gave them more confidence in the rehearsal tonight. The spacing was a bit of an issue in rehearsal. Since the set is not completed, the cast did not quite see how they would all fit onto the stage. It all looked a bit crowded, but I know once the set is built it will clear up the space and add to the scene. Again tonight, I noticed the cast had not been working on the lyrics of the song and the SATB sections. SATB means soprano, alto, tenor, and bass vocal parts. I heard sections of the song not being sung since I used the taped music for the show, but I switched to a video I found online to use. The video contained lyrics sung by singers, which helped with vocal backup and choreography. I reminded the cast to review lyrics which would help with the choreography and to watch the videos posted on the Team site for practice. Something I discovered tonight in my process was how the two new dance captains helped in the rehearsal. I had not used dance captains in previous productions here at Minnesota State University, Mankato. I also had not had such a large cast before

as well as being ill during the rehearsal process. The dance captains took it upon themselves to work on sections and with individuals, which was a great help to me due to my waning energy level.

8/31/22 Tough Rehearsal

Today I had three musical sections to set and finish. The first section was called “Auditions.” Due to being sick which affects me greatly, I referenced a video online for this section. I do not reference videos, but my illness depletes energy, thought, and movement during the day for me. I try to rest in order to be ready for rehearsal each evening. I relied a lot on the dance captains during the rehearsal tonight. The beginning of the evening involved the majority of the high school students with a few undergraduates mixed in for the number. I had a difficult time keeping the focus of the group and retaining the choreography. I did finish the rehearsal, but barely. I was not happy with how the movement turned out. Due to the lack of focus and disengagement at times of the high school students, I could not get the movement how I wanted it. I was running out of rehearsal time for this scene so, I pushed through to finish it. I know it was not completely clear to some of the cast members due to this time crunch. I could come back to it later in the rehearsal process to clean it and fix it. It should not have taken as long as it did, but the attention span of the high school students was an issue. The high school students were not accustomed to moving and learning lyrics with movement at this pace at the university level. I did observe and learn something with this rehearsal which helped to resolve it. There were undergraduate students who were

helping the high school students and related well with them. I asked those undergraduates if they could continue to work with the high school students since their presence seemed to help engage and focus the younger cast members when I needed it. I will continue to use these undergraduates throughout the rehearsal process to assist with the high school students. I feel the undergraduates are closer to the age of the high school students and this benefits the relationship in listening and focusing. The dance captains also assisted, but they are not in this number. Using the undergraduates who are to help with the high school students is a great discovery and learning process for me at this point. The next rehearsal was “What I have been looking for” with the characters of Sharpay and Ryan. This rehearsal went very smoothly since both individuals are seasoned and can move easily. I was able to complete the rehearsal very quickly and each individual loved the dance routine. The number is an “I want” song which reveals what a character wants and, in this case, both characters want the lead in the school musical. The movement was over-the-top quality movement and parody of Broadway style movement. We then went right into the “Boom Box Rehearsal” piece for both of them, which is very short. It did not require much movement and this helped me since being sick greatly drained my energy level each rehearsal. Again, both individuals learned the choreography very quickly and the rehearsal was done early. The movement was again somewhat silly, which contributes to the two characters the actors portray in the musical. It was easy for the actors Maddy Morgan and Jacob Hein to really relate to the choreography. The last two dance sections made up for the first rehearsal which was frustrating to me. It is always good to work with seasoned performers.

9/1/22 Another Large Cast Rehearsal

This rehearsal had the entire cast for the finale of Act One which is the “Stick to the Status Quo.” I only gave myself two hours to complete the rehearsal and that was a mistake. I should have requested the entire evening for the number. The finale is long and has intricate sections to choreograph together. I also had tables and chairs to incorporate into the choreography. What I observed from the cast who had to work with the tables and chairs is how it complicated the movement for them. When working with a prop or set piece it can change the way you think and feel with movement. With the various levels of experience in this cast, adding additional items such as a prop or working with a set piece added another layer to remember along with the lyrics, movement, and timing. I wanted round tables with round seats attached around the table. I was informed by the technical director it was not possible and there were tables which could be used which were oval in shape. As for the chairs, those were still questionable to what would be used. I decided I could work with whatever was presented to me and adapt any choreography to it. I found I had to simplify the movement I envisioned in order to lessen the stress. I saw it added to those cast members who were working with the tables and pretending to use chairs. I also found I sometimes had to micromanage groups in the ensemble since they would not come up with improv lines and small movement on their own. Doing this took time away from me completing the number. I did get just over half the finale completed, but will have to return to it to finish it. It was a long, complicated rehearsal that incorporated levels of the set.

The set was another issue since it was not completed and I had to explain to parts of the cast where they might be when the set is finished. The set issue complicated the spacing since I was not able place cast members where they would be during the choreography. Overall, the part I did choreographed did not look too bad, so hopefully I can finish the remainder with the cast at a later rehearsal. I was able to finish the first half of the scene and production number up to the point where the number goes into what I call controlled chaos with the entire cast. My biggest worry is for the cast to remember what was set in rehearsal tonight. Working with so many levels of movement experience I saw those who are able to pick up the choreography quickly and others who had difficulty with the same movement. Focus was an issue with such a large cast. To resolve some of the issues of focus, I relied on the dance captains to work with individual groups or to answer questions on movement. The biggest challenge for me was controlling forty-one cast members who were not professionally paid actors. I am aware it is a learning environment and not a paid show, but there was too much play and talk for me. I am fine with having a good time, but I sometimes have a difficult time trying to talk over an entire cast when I am working with a few individuals. If it continues to occur, I may stop rehearsal and ask for input from the cast. What are their expectations for rehearsal? If it is to complete it, then there needs to be less play and more focus to get through the rehearsal.

The rehearsal time went longer than expected and I ran over my time a bit into the next rehearsal. I had the principal characters of Sharpay and Ryan next for the "Bop to the Top" number. I knew they would be able to grasp the choreography fairly quickly.

The rehearsal for this segment was done promptly and I finished it on time with the two individuals. I was happy with what was accomplished with the musical number and how they made it look. I enjoy how these two actors allow their character's personalities to come out in the duet. Both individuals liked the dance and felt great about it. The movement fit both of their characters which is over-the-top, and comical. Both principals found the movement easy to do and enjoyed playing with the choreography on their characters.

9/2/22 The Opening Number

Today I had the entire cast for the opening of the show with the "Start Of Something New." The cast had learned most of the choreography in the "Megamix" number so, I knew they should be able to pick up the remainder of the section quickly. I had to add more group maneuvering into and out of the number, but the cast picked it up and I was able to complete the routine. What makes this opening number a bit tricky is that it goes from one setting which is at the beginning of the school year with the entire cast, to a ski resort for New Year's Eve, and back to the school setting. Since this is the opening of the show, I feel it will set the tone for the audience with how clean and crisp the action needs to be with everyone. It was important for me to set movement which I knew everyone could do, but yet make it look interesting and clean. I had everyone on stage for the number and with partners. The physicality of the choreography for the cast in the song I tried to match to the words. I thought if I did it in this manner it would allow the movement to be retained faster by how the cast members related the

choreography to the lyrics. It seemed to work, but again it will become cleaner as the rehearsal process continues. As I had previously done in other rehearsals with a large group, I used pedestrian movement which is everyday gestures an individual might do. I associated the choreography with the lyrics to help relate the movement with the song. I next had the “Wildcat Cheer” with the cheerleaders. The pom poms had arrived, but they were not quite as full as I had anticipated, but they still worked and looked good from the audience. The cheerleaders learned the cheer quickly and finished it. I used motions with simple arm movements that cheerleaders use in emphasizing words of a cheer song. Fortunately, there were two individuals who had been cheerleaders and their experience added to the look of the choreography. The final rehearsal was the basketball number with the jocks for “Get’cha Head In The Game.” I did have basketballs for the dance section to work with which was very important. I had the choreography for the balls and needed to see if the jocks could handle what I wanted done which was to keep the basketballs under control at the same time. I set choreography which I felt was simple enough for the group and still be able to use the basketballs as props in the number. The song is in 4/4 time which allowed the cast members to feel the downbeat with the basketballs for each count. The movement was kept to a minimum for the jocks to keep the basketballs under control. I also allowed for periods of standing in formation which would allow for the cast members to sing and breath correctly during the song. I was very surprised how the group picked up the design of the movement. I was able to finish working with the jocks and the step patterns were handled well with the basketballs. The number should smooth out more as they learn the lyrics of the song and coordinate it with

the movement. I learned two of the jocks are music majors which helped them in counting and knowing music. Both individuals had not played basketball, but the music training enabled them to concentrate more on how they handled the balls. When someone is trained musically, using a set piece or prop and choreographing the movement to the downbeat of the music may be easier for the individual.

I found out today I had slight pneumonia in my lungs. I have been put on strong antibiotics and plan to rest in bed over this Memorial weekend. Since I have been pushing myself in these rehearsals with my illness, it has become aggravated. I was able to get through the rehearsal tonight, but I need to rest. The blocking rehearsals will begin next week with the director. Hopefully, I will be a bit healthier for rehearsals when we start back.

9/5/22 Return to the Megamix

Today I was able to use the first hour- and- a- half to complete the “Megamix” number. The director allowed me the extra time to complete it. This rehearsal process seemed to go fairly smooth. Again, I relied on the dance captains to work with cast members or groups to assist me during the rehearsal as I finished the scene. As I am discovering during the process, having three dance captains is very helpful. I was able to use another individual who was allowed to be part dance captain and also assist with music. I have not used dance captains before in shows I have choreographed here at Minnesota State University, Mankato. I have also not had a cast this large to set choreography on either so, it is a good learning experience for me. I keep reminding

myself on this learning point. Due to my waning energy level from sickness, these individuals I have learned are a great help. I have learned a great lesson for future productions. The completed part of the “Megamix” the cast was able to remember fairly well from a previous rehearsal. The movement will continue to become cleaner as the movement sets into the bodies of the cast as rehearsals continue. The remainder of the rehearsal was just running the number for memory, spacing, and getting the feel of the movement into the cast. As I go along, I also inquire if anyone has any questions concerning the choreography. I want to make sure it is understood and for the cast to have a positive learning experience. If I see an issue in movement or a cast member who does not seem to understand what I was trying to convey I ask if they have a suggestion to help. I am always open to any suggestions. Working with such a large cast, I cannot see everything which is again why I continue to ask if there are any questions or concerns. I remind myself the dance captains are a great assistance in this area and a super resource in seeing anything I might miss.

After I finished my part of rehearsal tonight to complete the “Megamix”, the director, Matthew Caron began blocking rehearsals. I stayed to observe and to discuss any transitions in and out of production numbers. When Caron reached the blocking for scene eight in the act, I explained my idea again for the lighting in this number which is the “Cellular Fusion” segment. There are certain spots where the actors are to “hit” on stage for the “specials” which is a spotlight to hit them in certain points of the music. Caron and I had discussed this number in a previous meeting before rehearsal started since I did not really see any dance movement to it. I thought using lighting to highlight

the actors when they are talking on cellphones would give a different look and feel to this section. The director liked the idea when we first discussed it and also added additional blocking to the scene tonight which gave more of a visual affect overall to the number. It will have to be seen how the lighting will turn out since any tech is yet to be done in rehearsals.

9/7/22 First Run of the Show

Today was a run through of Act One which was rough, but it was completed. I was able to see what the cast could remember of the dance numbers. Every production number requiring movement needed attention. I reminded myself the repetitions of rehearsal will enable the flow of each musical section to become implemented into the cast. I will inquire if I am able to have a night of cleaning for choreography to fine tune sections. It may be needed if the continued rehearsals do not smooth out choreography or sections of movement with the cast. The ending of Act One which is the "Status Quo" number is still not complete. I plan to finish the scene in rehearsal tomorrow. I now have chairs for this number. The chairs are plastic, and I am discovering the cast who work with these set pieces are having difficulty. The set pieces of tables and chairs still seem to pose a challenge to some of the cast members. I may have to streamline some of the movement again for it to be a bit cleaner and crisper. I will continue to watch this number and have the dance captains work with those groups who use those set pieces. After more thought on this issue, when I finish the number tomorrow I will change some of the movement to accommodate using the plastic chairs in an easier manner. The main

issue I see is coordinating some of the movement with the choreography with the chairs. The chairs are to be turned into the table and turned out several times during the choreography for this section. From watching rehearsal tonight, I decided I will only have the cast members move the chair around once to face the audience to help with this one-time movement. Overall, I feel it was not too bad for a first run through even though it is not finished.

The end of Act One encompassed the entire cast and was an ambitious production to set. There are so many levels of experience of dance in the cast. I tried to keep the action simple with pedestrian movement to keep it clean. I believe as the rehearsals continue this decision to keep the action simple will allow the movement to clean itself up. I am observing a bit more stability and confidence in the movement from the cast due to using everyday gestures and movement as choreography.

Another number in Act One, The "Getcha Head In The Game" with the basketballs, is still challenging with coordinating the basketballs, movement, and singing, but I see improvement in sections of the number each time it is performed. The main concern with this section is for the cast to become more familiar working with a prop, singing, and moving at the same time. It continues to appear not easy for actors who have little to no experience in working with a prop and especially those cast members who have never played basketball. I took into consideration of the skill set of each cast member when working the physicality of this song. It was important to keep it simple in order for the jocks who are in the number to feel confident and feel good with everything required which is singing, moving, and using the basketballs. As a choreographer,

anytime using a prop or set piece depending on the level of experience of the cast member(s), I try to keep it simple. In this fashion, it allows the cast member to focus on the performance of the movement with confidence. The cast member(s) are not just trying to get through the movement without worrying about messing it up with the added prop or set piece.

9/9/22 Working of Act One

Today was a rough run thru of Act One. I was able to finish the “Status Quo” at the end of Act One, but the cast did not have it completely set in their mind and body. I have found this a really difficult number due to the length of it, changing in tempos, going from various cliques in the cast, and then back to a full cast in continual movement with song. There are so many levels of experience in the cast and I feel as well as observe frustration at times with cast members. I am relying a lot on the dance captains in rehearsal to work with individuals and sections to help. I find myself questioning whether I need to still streamline movement. I do believe from experience on working on other productions as the cast continues with full run rehearsals it will get into their bodies and it will resolve itself. We will return to it when we start the full runs of the show. The biggest concern for me on the finale is the tables. There are three large tables which need to be moved on stage for the scene. The timing is very important to get them set in order for the movement to begin correctly. I know with more rehearsals the timing will become easier for those cast members moving the tables to get them set.

Enough of the set was complete which allowed the director to block more levels for the cast in scenes. Setting more levels helped with the picture presented on stage in the large numbers due to the tremendous cast size. It also allowed more space on the stage area. The cast liked being on the various levels on the set. The dance captains are a tremendous assistance. I saw them working with various groups and individuals on movement which enabled me to be in the audience to watch the musical scenes for the overall look. I am glad I have the assistance of these dance captains. They are able to see a problem on stage which I may not be able to see. They are great to just fix these items on their own and continue on with the number. I have made a note to myself if I ever work on a large production again with such a large cast, use dance captain(s) if possible.

9/11/22 First Entire Run of Show

Today was a stumble through of the entire show. I know the director as well as myself wanted to work through the show to get a semblance of where the show is at this point. It went better than I thought it would go with the cast. I was surprised with all the levels of experience how the show is pulling together. I am observing how slowly the confidence and stability of the cast in the movement is starting to flow in the show. I felt the cast was beginning to feel the continuity a bit more with this complete run. At this point, once the choreography is set the cast just needs to run the show and numbers for cleaning if needed, spacing, and memory. I have observed the director, as he blocked the show during his rehearsals. One of my goals it to continue on and become a

director/choreographer. Caron has a level of patience with such a large cast and is able to tolerate more talking with the noise when he is working with individuals on a scene. It seemed to be difficult due to the massive talking which occurred on set when he was working, but he took it all calmly. His approach was very easy-going, but he may not have felt that inside. I always observe directors to see how they work and handle situations. I try to learn and take something from a director's rehearsal which may benefit me down the road in some aspect. After observing the run of the show tonight, I asked the dance captains to work with the various individuals and small groups to review and clean sections. Nothing major is occurring, but spacing in the large production numbers is not staying the same at moments. It may be due to not again having everyone for rehearsal. One item for me which has seemed to lose efficiency for the cast is there is always someone absent for various reasons during rehearsal. The entire cast has not been together once at this point in the large production numbers. It seems to be a handicap since someone is always without a partner in the production numbers of "Status Quo", and "We're All In This Together." I believe this is why the spacing in these sections are not being held for the cast. The key is to stay positive and continue with the run of the show in rehearsals which is something that can be controlled.

9/12/22 Starting and Stopping

Today was a start and stop of Act One. I was thankful the director allowed me extra time in rehearsal to work on areas of choreography which needed cleaning again. It was frustrating when I see the same areas not being reviewed or practiced and time is

wasted repeating the work. Every dance section required cleaning and I know that is what rehearsal is for, but I can tell when individuals have not practiced or reviewed choreography. I did see a few cast members had taken the time to check the site and review the movement. I was grateful for those who had taken the responsibility to watch the videos. I worked to clean the opening number which involved three scenes in one. The cast goes from the high school, to a ski lodge, and back to the high school to finish the scene. The entire cast comes onstage together to sing and move to “It’s the Start of Something New” and everyone has a partner. I choreographed the movement to coincide with the lyrics of the song to help in remembering the choreography. As I watched the opening number, I feel I was able to understand the movement capabilities of the cast and highlight it. I noticed it was moving toward cohesiveness, but I would like it to be cleaner and sharper. I continue to believe as we continue with the run of the show in rehearsals the choreography will continue to smooth out in all areas with repetition.

”Get’cha Head in the Game” needed timing of the music with the orchestra and the jocks to start the number. The principals who start the scene worked on getting the feel of the music and song together. The timing is very important since Troy begins the movement of the number right on the downbeat of the first word of the song. If he does not start correctly, the entire beginning will be out of sync with the music. Once the combo band is in rehearsal, this will greatly help with the music timing. It was a long night and I sensed the cast beginning to get taxed in energy. Tomorrow will be a new day and hopefully, the cast will be fresh for rehearsal to finish Act One.

9/13/22 Finish the Stop and Start

Today was a start and stop to finish Act One and go into Act Two. We did not finish the work through of Act One the previous rehearsal. Again, I was thankful the director allowed me to stop and clean areas. I was able to work on cleaning the finale of Act One. I believe this is going to be an ongoing process until the show opens. It was still not where I would like it to be, but I hope with the continual run of the show it will begin to sink in more with certain cast members. Most of what I saw in certain sections are from the inexperienced cast members who have little to no dance training in their background. The high school students are not accustomed to moving this fast in rehearsal. Something I learned long ago from a choreographer is sometimes it is best to just keep it simple, stupid. To define this statement, means to keep the movement as simple and minimal as possible yet, get across what you want for choreography. I keep thinking is there a simpler way to have various movement in sections of the Act One finale? There were moments during the finale I asked a dance captain to step out of the number or even watch onstage certain sections for another opinion. During this rehearsal, the director, Matthew Caron had ideas to help with the blocking and staging which I thought were great. Caron cleaned areas of this number in the blocking. Caron used more levels of the set to restage portions which gave it a better picture on stage. The decision to do this opened up more area of the stage for movement. In my observation, this seemed to ease the mind of some of the cast and even assisted in cleaning some of the movement.

Act Two has far less choreography so, the beginning of the rehearsal was done to clean acting scenes by the director. I had the dance captains work with groups and individuals for sections of the “Status Quo” backstage and in room 113 which is across the hall from the stage. There was a section in this scene where the brainiacs have a book as a prop. The timing and synchronization working with the prop was not quite clean. I worked with the group on using the book in an easier way to handle that section. I saw them become more relaxed and not worry about the prop. I gave the definition to them to think of the book as part of their body. In this explanation, I had them pick up the book, walk with it, open it as if they were handling it in class. Starting with basic movement in this fashion allows the understanding of how the prop or object itself moves. The exercise allows an individual to understand how efficiently the prop can be manipulated. I then went back and added the choreography to it bit by bit to so that learning to work with the prop is less frightening and more intuitive.

In rehearsal tonight, we were not able to finish all of Act Two. We will pick up tomorrow evening where we left off tonight.

9/14/22 Finish Stop and Start of Act Two

Today was a finish of a start and stop of Act Two. For me, Act Two is a bit better overall concerning the dance sequences. The compositions of dance are shorter and there are no large sections until the end of the show. I did not stop rehearsal because I wanted the cast to finish the run through to get to the large “Megamix” section which follows the show. I wanted to see how it would go and if the assistant stage managers could get the

basketballs tossed from the wings to the jocks in time for the “Ge’tcha Head In The Game” part of the “Megamix.”

The “Megamix” is a bit messy and the timing of the basketballs will take more rehearsals. Each section of this ending to the show needed cleaning from the rehearsal tonight. The rough patches really reflected tonight during the “Megamix” or the encore number as I tend to think of it. The major issue I saw tonight for the finale of Act Two is just repetition of the choreography. Transitions from one song section into another is where cleaning is needed. Once the cast continues running the number, the transitions will become easier. The director wanted to incorporate flags which I felt was a great idea and would give the scene a layer of something extra and different. The flags will be used by cast members on the top upper level of the set and will give a great visual affect. I had to come up with very simple movement for the flags. We plan to run the choreography each night behind the set with the flags prior to the scene. From the audience perspective, it gave a super visual look.

I also had a small meeting with the music director, Nick Wayne concerning some percussive drum sounds I would like to add to the “We’re All In This Together” reprise. It involves eight measures of adding strong percussion to a section of the dance number to highlight a group of selected cast members in strong dance movement. He agreed his percussion player would be able to handle this and liked the idea of what I suggested. He would pass this on to his musician and have it ready when the combo band was in rehearsal with the production.

9/15/22 Complete Run Through of the Show

On the rehearsal schedule was a complete run through of the show. The run through actually was not too bad. Again, there were sections I want to clean, but hopefully, it will not take too long. I am utilizing the dance captains in this area when cleaning is needed. As we worked through the show tonight, the dance captains worked backstage or in room 113 on these small sections with cast members. Most of the sections which needed cleaning are the large musical segments which are not quite clean and crisp. I feel with more runs of the show and especially, when the combo band is incorporated it will give the added level of energy and connection for everyone. The cast will be able to feel the beat and more of the music which will help with the choreography. At this point in rehearsals, we are only using a pianist to play the music for the show. The piano lacks somewhat in giving the complete down beat to feel and hear to some areas of the music. There is a percussion section of music I added in the reprise of "We're All In This Together" which definitely needs to be heard in order for the selected dancers who perform in it to feel the percussive beats needed for the choreography. Wayne has advised me he has passed this section to the percussionist of the combo band. I added this percussion section to the dance in order to give a strong movement piece to it. The percussive drum beats will give a strong dance visual and "break" as we call it in dance. A "break" in dance is where all elements such as vocals, and other music except for percussion disappear. It will add a different feel to the choreography since the time signature of it changes to a strong 4/4 beat in the counts of the eight measures.

9/19/22 Change to Rehearsal from Run a Through

Today was a plan to run the show, but I had to tweak the “Auditions” number at the beginning of rehearsal. Since we open the show next week, I had to make the movement simple and easy for the cast in the number to remember, but enough to still keep it interesting. It was frustrating to rework some of this number for the cast, but I thought the number looked better from it. One of the individuals in the number commented how he liked the movement and it was easier. I was glad I reworked it. It was cleaner and the cast was more relaxed with the new movement. The reason behind this extra rehearsal for the number is that I referenced a video online. It was due to my severe illness prior to the start of my rehearsal week with the choreography. The illness eventually turned into slight pneumonia in my lungs. Questions were voiced to the director about the referenced choreography. I reworked it tonight with original movement and the director was satisfied.

The entire rehearsal for the complete run of the show did have to stop due to me reworking the number, but I worked it as fast as I could in order for rehearsal to continue. We did not complete the run through of the show and decided to pick up where we left off for the following night. Overall, the show is becoming more cohesive, but the time I spend on reworking a section cost a loss of time running the show. I did not clean any other sections of choreography in order for the cast to try and complete the rehearsal which was scheduled. I noticed strong improvement in the “Get’ch Head in The Game” number with the jocks maintaining better control of the basketballs. The timing at the beginning of the number is now where it needs to be for the character of Troy to start the

number in the correct measure of music. The formations are also tighter in the section with the jocks as they move through the number. All this tells me the movement is enough on what the cast members are able to do and the rhythm and tempo is smoothing out. I made notes and talked with the dance captains to keep working with individuals and groups in the large production numbers. It was a long and exhausting rehearsal for me. It is not easy to rework a number so close to opening, but it turned out better with everyone involved feeling more relaxed with the new choreography.

9/20/22 Pickup for the Run Through

Today we picked up rehearsal with the “Megamix” number which needed to be tweaked in several sections. I worked those sections as fast as I could and decided to use the set as levels for one of the sections. The director had an idea to re-block the beginning of the number which he felt gave a better visual to the audience. In the end, the director and I both felt the number looked better using more levels for the number. It was a good rehearsal for this section and we started from the beginning of the show and continued as far as we could go for the evening. Again, the reason I had to rework two sections of the choreography was due to concerns voiced again to my reference to a video online. I was ill in bed and could not work in any capacity. I should have just advised the director and had the rehearsal schedule redone. I could have come back when I was able to move and choreograph as I normally do in the process. I was able to push through rehearsals, but to the detriment of my health. I did accomplish working my own movement outside of these two segments of dance, but it is what led to more severity of

my illness. I have learned a very important lesson. If I am ever ill which impedes my capacity to work as a choreography, I will advise those who need to know and rearrange the schedule until I am healthy again.

When I choreograph, I do not look at anything which has been done online concerning a production. I do not want it to influence me in anyway. I have enough dance training, and experience in musical theatre to pull upon to do my own work

Tonight, was another long and exhausting rehearsal for me. Again, the time I spent reworking a section cost the time of running the show. The director informed me he was sorry to have to drop this at my doorstep, but I am glad it all worked out for the better for the production. It was better for the show and a very important learning experience for me.

9/22/22 More Complete Show Runs

Due to another show opening today and being box office manager, I had to work the show shift for *In the Next Room* which opened tonight. Everyone who works in the box office is involved in shows which is an anomaly. Once I closed the box office, I came into rehearsals. I was not able to see any of Act One except the very end of the finale. I had previously spoken with the dance captains to take all notes and work anything they saw which needed cleaning. I told them to give notes at the end of rehearsal this week since I am working all the show shifts for “In the Next Room.” Since I am unable to watch the majority of Act One, I am trusting the dance captains. I am confident in their ability and very grateful for their work in this area.

I watched Act Two, but there is not much dance until the latter part of the Act. The mood and feel from the cast as I watched from the audience is a good vibe. I see growth in characterization and fun in relationships on stage. The choreography is really coming together in all areas. I still see sections to clean and spacing to check, which are all in the “Megamix” finale. The transitions between each section of music in the finale is improving. The basketballs being thrown from offstage by the assistant stage managers are being timed better. After rehearsal and notes, I spoke with the dance captains who decided to come in early tomorrow to work on cleaning for the “Megamix” finale. I applaud this initiative and greatly appreciate the help. My duties this week are split between the box office and the show. Having the dance captains with such a large cast is a tremendous help to me and the production.

I had a short meeting with a member of the production staff, Steven Smith. Steven is the lighting designer. He and I discussed my idea for lighting on the “Cellular Fusion” number after the director, Matt Caron had agreed to the idea. Steven loved it and thought he could really work with it. He instantly knew what I was talking about when I made the reference to the Telephone Hour in *Bye, Bye Birdie*. He agreed to work on it and show it during lighting tech.

9/24/22 Early Rehearsal

Today I had an early rehearsal at 6:15 to clean a few spots for “Auditions” in room 113. It was small sections which I felt just needed some slight tweaking. The cast involved was fine with the early rehearsal. I felt the number finally had the cleanness

overall from this rehearsal. As I discovered early on, these high school students in this section had several undergraduates who are mentors. These undergraduates worked and assisted me in this rehearsal to keep the focus and energy with the high school students. Once the rehearsal was completed, I had a dance captain move to the stage with part of the cast and rehearse a section of the “Megamix” number. At this point the cast just needs to go through runs of the show to keep getting the movement into their body. Once we get into full tech, dress and the band it should give the extra level of energy and excitement for the cast.

Once I finished with this early rehearsal, I left and went to the box office. Once I closed the box office, I was not able to make it for the end of Act One. I watched the run through of Act Two. My intention was to watch how the “Megamix” number flowed. The small adjustments reworking sections of the choreography by the dance captain tightened up the transitions in the choreography. I could see the momentum building in the number. It is the first time I have noticed this momentum in the song and dance. From what I saw of Act Two, I felt it was a good run through of the show tonight. I listened to notes from the director on blocking items and the dance captains on what they felt needed attention. I cannot state how lucky I am having these dance captains assist with my split duties this week. I am not able to watch Act One and this would stress me out not knowing how the numbers are appearing. It relieves the weight off my shoulders to know overseeing the movement is in capable hands for the production.

9/25/22 First Dress Rehearsal

Today was the first dress rehearsal. I had not seen any of the costumes. I was curious to see how the actors were going to look and perform in them. I was interested if the costumes were going to help the actors develop their characters and how they were going to move. A costume will affect movement in a dance if the actor is not comfortable in it. I also wanted to see how the cheerleaders' costumes looked and how they would allow them to move. I was very happy with the dark red look and the skirts on the cheerleaders looked great. Once they started moving in the outfits it was quite visually affecting. The new pom poms gave the extra look needed. I did not care for the original pom poms, but a box with fuller pom poms appeared. It was never established where these new pom poms originated or any one person who ordered them. The cheerleaders have been using them instead of the originals.

Tonight, I was able to watch the full run of the show. The overall tempo and rhythm of the show has picked up. I saw an additional level of energy and more character development with each scene. The unifying color of red for the jocks and cheerleaders looked great when they are moving in the dance numbers. It gave a strong identity to those cliques of the jocks, cheerleaders, and for the skater dudes. I believe the audience will identify with those groups in memory from high school as part of or recollection from a distance of observation in their youth. The young audience members should definitely identify in ways to the cliques on stage. As I was watching the basketball number, I noticed the posture of some of the jocks. I went backstage after Act One to discuss with the jocks to see if they could keep their center of gravity closer to the

ground as they are working with the basketballs. I explained they would need to be in a demi-plie position when bouncing the balls or getting into position to work with the balls. Doing this keeps their center of gravity closer to the ground and the body more stable than standing straight up and trying to bounce the ball. I wanted them to try that next time and see if it helps more to control the ball and move from position to position quicker. I also gave the note to the dance captains to watch and observe this number when the jocks come on to do it.

9/26/22 Entire Show Run

Today was a full run for the entire show. I scheduled a quick rehearsal at 6:15 for the jocks to review some movement of the “Get’cha Head in the Game” number. The jocks needed to work on the section where they are back-to-back and pass the ball around to each other. They are not quite together and the movement only required one pass around. I worked it and at the rehearsal everyone got the timing together. It was a note from the director and I passed the information on to the jocks in the rehearsal. There is also a lift call scheduled with the jocks who catch the character of Ryan as he jumps into their arms at one point in the show. It is scheduled for safety and timing each night. I choreographed a moment when the character of Ryan goes upstage center during his song and then jumps into the arms of the jocks while they lift him over their heads. His sister in the show, Sharpay, then goes underneath him in the lift and comes downstage center. It is a small lift, but must be rehearsed prior to showtime for safety.

I also scheduled the jocks a small re-block of the “Breaking Free” dancers to center them better on stage. It was the section I added with the new percussive beats. The group was a bit too far stage right and needed to be centered for it to look symmetrical on stage against the characters of Troy and Gabriella. This re-block was another note from the director and was an easy fix for the jocks. The rehearsal was able to start fairly on time. The cast was getting the routine of the show into their body with mics and getting through sound check quickly. Once the run started, it was going smoothly until the “Get’cha Head in the Game” number where one set of jocks did not pass the ball around each other as rehearsed. I will have to recheck this with them or talk to the one couple who did not get the timing in the run.

For me, each night the numbers are becoming more crisp and clean. The cast is playing with their characters and relationships. I am able to see this transform into the movement of each number. The fluidity of the choreography has greatly improved with each rehearsal. The sequencing from scene to song and dance are flowing well. We still have each night individuals who are out for various reasons and I would really like to see a full cast together. After the run through tonight, the director stated there should be a full cast for tomorrow. There are individuals who have not had a partner due to these absences. I need to see if everything will work with everyone on stage. I am a bit concerned for those who have been missing due to various reasons. There is an individual who has yet to work with a partner in all the production numbers. Spacing will have to be reworked once there is a full cast on stage. I have discussed this with the dance captains. Different track patterns may need to be reset in some production

numbers with everyone involved in the section. I will see how it will work out tomorrow at the run through of the show.

9/27/22 Another Run of The Show

Today was another full run of the show. I was informed we still have several individuals out for this run. Student preview night is tomorrow and hopefully, there will be a full cast for it. We have added the Maverick Machine into the show the past several rehearsals. The Maverick Machine drumline is a great percussive addition to the sound of the show. It took some time for them to get the timing of coming on stage and when to exit. It slowed the full run of the show down, but we were able to get through the entire show. I am glad the decision was made to add this strong element to the show. I observed how the percussive sound from the Maverick Machine gave heightened energy to the cheerleaders and cast too. The cast is really flowing together more in each of the large numbers.

The opening number of "Start of Something New" I felt eased the cast into the movement of the show musically. The song is ballad and is easy to sing and move with the choreography. I feel it allows the cast to settle into the show with the large production sections since the entire cast is onstage for the number. The jocks at moments still have a little trouble keeping their basketballs with them. It may be something which will occur on occasion and I expected it somewhat. My only concern is that if a basketball really gets out of control and bounced away from a jock it may go into the pit or out into the audience. I kept the movement in the number to a minimum in order to

help control the basketballs. I know there will be show nights where slips will occur with the balls so, I just need to expect it. The mascot really has more of a difficult time since he has mittens on his hands to handle his basketball which I know is difficult. I cannot expect the movement to be exactly as I feel it should be due to all the levels of experience. There are individuals in the show who have never moved before, read music, or are vocally trained. When you have to put all three items together, singing, dancing, and acting with limited experience it can be difficult.

I have witnessed growth in cast members and confidence get stronger. Although, what the cast has obtained at this point is really commendable movement wise and vocal. I do feel the show is going to get to another level with the cast once the audience is in attendance. The energy, and the response of an audience will give the cast the extra boost in giving a high energy performance.

9/28/22 Corporate Preview

Today was corporate preview night for sponsors. I saw elderly patrons coming into the theatre after warmups. I enjoy preview night since it allows the cast members to finally feel the response of an audience. It is also attended by a group of theatre goers who enjoy theatre and support the department. I am pleased with how tweaking some of the numbers last week and adding levels for the cast on the set have given a great visual affect. The “Auditions” number was tweaked as well as a couple of sections of the “Megamix” number where more levels were set. Both numbers looked better after the updates. It was a very stressful and disturbing time for me reworking these sections. I

was worried making changes a week before opening, but it all worked out for the better. It was for the best as well as a great learning experience. I sat and watched the show from the back and the response from the audience was great. It was a nice, solid house for the student preview. I could see how the audience gave the cast the extra energy it needed for the show. The boost helped the cast members to add a bit more characterization to their characters and this was nice to see. Those in attendance enjoyed the show and was very responsive to it. The audience gave a standing ovation to the cast after the “Megamix” number. All the work through the rehearsals during my illness, the assistance of the dance captains which was a blessing have all been a great educational experience. Once the show opens tomorrow, it will be out of my hands. I am looking forward to opening night since attendance is the house looks very good according to the box office. I believe the show will be a great success. The production team has really worked with all the various levels of experience to bring together a solid production for the department.

9/28/22 Opening Night

Tonight, was opening. I always order handmade cookies for every cast I am on the production team or involved as a performer. Tonight, was no exception and I delivered enough cookies for the cast and crew with the initials “HSM” on them. I appreciate the opportunity and hard work of the cast. I know my work has been done for this production despite some hurdles. I am grateful I will be able to have this show as my thesis to complete my MFA degree here at Minnesota State University, Mankato. I can

feel the excitement of the cast which is the norm for an opening night. The audience will be almost a full house according to ticket sales at the box office. It will be a great experience for everyone involved in the show.

After I watched the show, I felt everything experienced with this production was good and the production turned out great. The audience was very responsive and took the journey with the cast. The cast seemed to truly enjoy the time onstage and the energy level was out of the roof. Again, the “Megamix” number really brought it home for the cast. The audience again gave them a standing ovation after the number. According to the box office, this show will be well attended. It will give the cast a great experience for every performance and memories to last a long time.

CHAPTER 4

POST-PRODUCTION ANALYSIS

One of the elements as choreographer I learned during this production was how to work with a large cast in a musical. The musical was composed of forty-one individuals and the most I had worked with as a choreographer had been twenty plus. Each cast member in the show had their own level of experience in dance or some type of movement. Since the production was a dance heavy musical, I knew I would have a big responsibility of creating movement on all the various levels of experience. After watching the TV show of *High School Musical*, I knew the movement should stay in the style of what Disney produced. The overall impression of the original production I knew would stay with me, but it would help me to create something reminiscent of the same style of movement.

It was important to me to have movement which was challenging when the entire cast was involved in the larger numbers, but still accessible enough to allow those with less experience to gain confidence and feel good about what they were doing. The content needed to look good, but at the same time I did not want anyone to feel like they were being set up for failure in the movement. I decided to use pedestrian movement something which I felt everyone in the cast may have done in daily life. For example, using a hand slap with another individual, touching elbows or pointing in different

directions with a partner. I kept the choreography simple by using these everyday movements and gestures. I saw this type of dance still gave the large cast confidence and stage presence in the big production numbers. This simple action for the cast allowed them to use the space and their bodies to complement the music and continue the narrative of the plot.

Another way I found working with such a large cast to create the choreography was using counts versus the lyrics of the song. I knew I had cast members who were able to count music versus others who were not trained in this area. Normally, I will count as I am showing the choreography, but in this production I decided to use the lyrics to help me with the movement. I associated certain choreography with words in the song which I saw helped everyone remember what movement to do at certain moments. Using counts is usually the simplest way to teach and learn choreography, but when a large cast has to sing and dance together I saw word association with specific moves was a great benefit in learning the choreography.

Through this production I experienced working with high school students. I had not worked with high school students in the past and learned about the challenges along with the delights of working with that age group. One of the problems I needed to resolve included helping the students be more focused. I found the attention span of the high school students was very short. I also felt they were accustomed to having more flexibility to do what they wanted in a rehearsal setting. In addition, the pace of learning choreography was another new experience for them to grasp. I discovered using some of the undergraduates who were involved in these production numbers to coach them. I

detected this was a very positive way to help the high school students learn and stay focused in the production.

I had three dance captains for this production. I have not used a dance captain in previous musical productions here at Minnesota State University, Mankato. Due to the large cast, I knew I would need assistance and had two dance majors in the cast who would be a great benefit. A musical theatre major who had dance training was also used to assist in this area. Sharing the responsibility of the choreography with three individuals was new territory for me. What I discovered was how it allowed me to teach the choreography and step back to watch each production number from the outside. I could review what I saw and give the notes to the dance captains to work with certain individuals or areas of the movement which needed more attention. I saw how the dance captains took the responsibility with passion. Letting go of the duty of allowing someone else to work on choreography with cast members I thought might be hard for me to do. I observed with the large cast it was a good decision and having three individuals who wanted the responsibility and did it well was another learning experience for me. I felt I could rely on any of the dance captains to adjust spacing, or rework a problem due to their knowledge of dance. The dance captains would just inform me a step had been reworked or a spacing issue had been resolved. Once the show opened, my role was completed. I knew the dance captains would continue to support the vision of the movement and understand how to solve any problems once I had stepped away from the production. It was a new, great learning experience for me working in this capacity with

these dance captains with a large cast. I will remember this going forward if I ever work on a production of this size.

Another very important lesson I learned was referencing online video work. The term referencing is used to refer to reproducing a phrase of work from an online video. I have not done this in the past since I did not want viewing a production to influence my work. Due to a severe illness, two days before my dance rehearsals started, I could not get out of bed. I tried to listen to the music and originate ideas while in bed, but the illness was very incapacitating. I could not get up and move or work in the normal process I do as a choreographer. I referenced two videos online due to this situation. Here is what I learned concerning Intellectual Property (IP) Federal Law regarding social media. According to attorney Zach Barr from Knutson & Casey Law Firm, IP Copyright law is very grey and confusing. He reviewed the videos I used to reference work on the show. When an individual establishes a YouTube Channel to upload videos, YouTube will have two types of licensing requirements to choose. One selection is the “Standard YouTube License.” It means the videos can only be viewed for personal enjoyment on the site. No downloads, distribution, reuse or remixing without the creators’ permission. The other choice is the “Creative Commons.” Videos uploaded with this license setting may be reused, reworked, edited and shared freely, even commercially without restriction as long as you attribute the original author. Using the CC by option, the uploader is automatically granting you a license (i.e. permission) to use it in those ways (Bahr).

Upon his review of these videos which are over thirteen years old, it appears the uploaders used the cc by option. The uploaders established their own YouTube channel

and also have a button to request for subscribers to their channels. Anything that is uploaded to YouTube, YouTube will run a test to see if anything on the video is copyrighted. If it is, YouTube will take it down immediately. I have experienced this when I was uploading my work reel for job applications or just uploading videos of me doing dance combinations in class. YouTube checked these uploads and some of my combinations were muted due to copyright law on the music. I only sent them out as unlisted to only those individuals I wanted to view them. I did not try to make the videos public or it may have taken them down due to the copyright infringement. Bahr informed me if any of the work on those videos I referenced had been copyrighted, the uploaders would not have been able to publish the videos on YouTube.

Social media such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, along with YouTube are a new area, a specific area and hard to press on the area of copyright infringement. In my instance, I changed the choreography, referenced it in my paper, and cited the sources for the reference. I was instructed to do this and all the areas are covered with no infringement or wrong being committed according to Bahr. I learned a lot from this conversation and more about the area of social media.

I feel I have accomplished the goals I set out to do when I became choreographer on this production. I served the production in a professional manner, and delivered leadership skills. These items were done despite hurdles being set in my path such as illness and grievances concerning choreography. I was able to maintain a positive attitude throughout the process regardless of illness and my mental health deteriorating. I

learned valuable experience with this production and despite the hurdles am proud of what was accomplished.

CHAPTER 5

PROCESS DEVELOPMENT

As a graduate student at Minnesota State University, Mankato, I had a unique journey. I returned back to school as a non-traditional student and completed my Master of Music (M.M.) in musical theatre at the University of Central Oklahoma. Prior to the return, I left professional theatre and worked in the banking industry for some years as an underwriter. I supervised many positions as an underwriter in mortgage departments at various banks and learned a great deal. I thought I had left my professional theatre career behind and life led me in this direction. The pay was quite lucrative, but stressful in facets which are too many to list. My desire to complete my graduate degree never left. I always told myself all those years of training, sacrifice, and money are going to waste in the corporate world. It was not my passion and I tried to use outlets to substitute. I volunteered in the non-profit sector on several boards. I was president of one board for six years. I learned how to run a board, fundraise, work on performing seasons on another board, planning and development. I decided I could not use my remaining years in this capacity and left the corporate world to return to education.

I had a very solid professional career in musical theatre as a dancer. I had been a dance major at Oklahoma City University (OCU) on scholarship. I was always on scholarship each summer prior to college in either L.A. or New York where I would study for a week at a time at various professional dance studios. All of this prepared me

to enter college as a dance major at OCU. I had to return home to care for my ailing father and did not finish my last year as an undergraduate. I found a job at Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, Oklahoma which was just down the road from my hometown of Pawnee, Oklahoma. I began working in an office and worked my way to the administrative assistant to the Vice President for Multi-Cultural Affairs. In addition, I went to school part-time in the theatre department where I transferred what credits I could since there was not a dance department. I learned a lot about running a university, working with deans, department heads and how a university functions. After my father passed away, I returned to school full-time and finished my theatre degree. I returned back to OCU and finished my dance degree. I went back into working in musical theatre as a professional. I worked very much in regional theatre and national tours. I had been residing in New York and left to live in Colorado with my aunt to apply for graduate school in dance. I was accepted into the MFA program in dance at the University of Colorado at Boulder. I went for one semester and returned home with my aunt who had cancer. I had worked in the real estate area the year prior to being accepting for graduate school at Boulder. I fell back into it when I returned home. I decided to stay in the mortgage, real estate arena due to the pay, but never let go of my desire to perform or become an educator.

Once I left banking and went back to school to receive my graduate degree in musical theatre, I knew I would continue. I wanted to find a terminal degree in musical theatre, but there are only a handful in the country. I found Minnesota State University, Mankato by pure luck on a chat board online. Once I reviewed the website and

curriculum, I felt it could be the place for me. I immediately called and spoke with Paul J. Hustoles, Department Chair. He was quite excited about my interest in the program and told me to submit my materials as soon as possible. I submitted the required materials and he emailed me the next day. He invited me down for an audition. He informed me there were others which were accepted into the musical theatre track, but I was more seasoned which was just fine.

COVID hit and he called to let me know I did not have to attend the intense interview period he had planned for me. At this point, he just asked me if I wanted to join the department in the fall and I accepted. I did visit the department and Mankato, but it was a truncated visit compared to what was planned.

The first year at Minnesota State University was the year of COVID. COVID changed everything about school and the community. Vaccines were not available at this time. Masks were required for classes as well as social distancing. The first semester a COVID outbreak occurred in the department closing down the very first show. I was involved in the first musical of the season which had a very large cast. We were in rehearsal and were required to close for three weeks. It was decided by the department to continue with the season, but everyone knew if another outbreak occurred we most likely would be shut down for the entire season.

Once Thanksgiving break occurred, we did not return back to classes in person. All classes went to remote. By the time of Thanksgiving, most classes on campus had switched to being remote. It was a difficult time since not every class works by taking it remotely. My ballet class required us to be in class one day a week and take class

remotely the other day. In this capacity, half the class could be in person while the other half took class by zoom. The other day of the week the other half would switch to zoom. It was difficult to dance full out in my apartment living room. The remainder of my first academic year continued to be by remote classes.

One class I took my second semester was Advanced Directing. I chose to take it even though it was not on my course outline for musical theatre. I wanted to learn more in directing since I wanted to direct and choreograph. I knew if I was going to grow as a director, I needed more expertise. Due to COVID restrictions, in this class as students we were allowed to rehearse, but social distancing was in place. I felt I did learn and grow a bit more despite COVID and how it affected the class environment. I was thankful Matthew Caron the professor of the class allowed me to enroll. Class size was limited for enrollment and COVID restrictions also limited class size during this time.

In the musical theatre area classes, I discussed with my voice teacher Nick Wayne how I felt all the classes were like a big review for me. As a graduate in musical theatre, I was given the opportunity to be a teaching assistant for both Musical Theatre Acting Styles I and II classes. I was grateful for the opportunity to co-teach Musical Theatre History with Wayne since I love history in any form. I have had dance, theatre, and musical theatre history. I recognize how each area compliments and informs each other. I was able to stretch my wings a little more teaching in musical theatre. I was grateful for each opportunity. I have felt Wayne has been the strongest advocate for me and has always been in my corner. Wayne and I collaborated together on three musical here at

Minnesota State University, Mankato. His support in these artistic endeavors was immeasurable to me as a graduate student.

Research and writing are big areas in graduate school. The classes of Theatre Research, Theatre Theory and Criticism which were taught by Heather Hamilton. I have writing anxiety, but these classes made me work toward overcoming this situation. There were times I struggled in these classes, but Hamilton was always supportive and positive toward any improvement. I am thankful for that patience with me. The minor and major area paper requirements for the MFA program enabled me to understand the significance of research and writing. The journaling aspect of these papers was something new. I realized how affective it could be toward discovery of something new in the process.

Another class I took was Devised Theatre from Vladimir Rovinsky. It was entirely new to me. I was not sure what it was about since I had never watched a Devised Theatre performance. The topic intrigued me and I was able to take it as a substitute class in lieu of Dialects II I am so glad I did since it is like choreography, but encompassing elements of life to expose a theme or story to the audience. It took good collaboration as a team and being supportive toward other artists as we were put in groups for the final.

The acting classes I took from Rovinsky have all been a wonderful learning and growing experience. I had not had an acting class in a while and his style of acting was a bit new to me. I enjoyed the exploration exercises, working on content and subtext toward a character. When he cast me in *Tartuffe* that was a very different journey. It was a totally different lens and cannon from musical theatre. I am grateful he allowed me the

opportunity to act in this capacity. I truly felt I grew as an educator and artist from the experience in his classes and production.

As a dancer, there were not many classes in musical theater offered. Ballet always conflicted with my theatre classes. I was able to enroll in Ballet I my first semester. After the first semester, Allison Doughty the ballet teacher would allow me to come to class when I could which I thought was such a gracious act. She knew I did not have to be trained and just wanted to dance for my own need. The opportunity to choreograph on the main stage was a great experience for me. I am most appreciative of this responsibility since I knew I needed it on my resume at the college level. I had been a professional choreographer before and wanted to return to this capacity.

As a graduate student, I do not have a lot of time to myself. My schedule is hectic from classes, to rehearsal, to teach, and homework. One area which I am so thankful I found here is restorative yoga with Julie Kerr-Berry. I have been studying with Kerr-Berry since my second year and I look forward to my weekly classes. It is my time to become centered and let all other problems fall away. It is good to use the breath and stretch my body in a relaxing way to start my day. It has been essential to my approach each day particularly completing my final year of graduate school.

The program here at Minnesota State University, Mankato is very competitive. It places great emphasis upon academic and artistic demands of graduate students. The journey of graduate school has installed in me discoveries toward my growth as a person and educator. Now that I am nearing this journey, I wonder still can I do it? I have persevered through many disappointments and know I still have much to complete before

I am awarded this degree. I hope I have learned enough and grown enough to accept the final challenge to the finish line. I know my creativity, self-reflection, perseverance and craftsman have all grown. I will take that with me.

APPENDIX A

REHEARSAL SCHEDULE

HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL

Rehearsal Schedule



~Schedule is subject to change. Please check your email and the callboard regularly for possible changes~

MUSIC rehearsals will be PA 112 (Choir Room). CHOREO will be in the Ted Paul Theatre.

Wk	R#	Date	Time	What (all called unless otherwise noted)	
1	1	Tue, Aug 23	6:35-7:00	Welcome Wildcats!	
			7:00-7:15	Music: #1 Wildcat Cheer	
			7:15-7:45	Music: #2 Start of Something New	
			7:45-8:15	Music: #18 Auditions	
1	2	Wed, Aug 24	8:15-8:45	Music: #22 Cellular Fusion	
			8:45-9:30	Music: #23 Stick to the Status Quo	
			6:35-6:45	Music: #29 Wildcat Cheer	
			6:45-7:30	Music: #30 Counting on You	
1	3	Thu, Aug 25	7:30-8:00	Music: #32 When There Was Me and You	
			8:00-8:30	Music: #40 We're All in This Together/Reprise	
			8:30-9:00	Music: #47 Breaking Free	
			9:00-9:30	Music: #11 Get'cha Head in the Game (Troy/Jocks)	
1	4	Fri, Aug 26	6:35-7:30	Music: #51 Megamix!	
			7:30-9:30	Music: Act I Music Review including all solos/duets	
			6:35-8:00	Music: Act 2 Music Review including all solos/duets	
			5	Sun, Aug 28	6:35-9:30
2	6	Mon, Aug 29	6:35-7:35	Choreo: #47 Breaking Free	
			7:35-9:30	Choreo: #40 We're All in this Together	
			6:35-9:30	Choreo: #50 We're All in this Together	
			6:35-8:00	Choreo: #18 Auditions	
			8:00-9:00	Choreo: #19 What I've Been Looking For (Ryan/Sharpay)	
			9:00-9:45	Choreo: #33 Boom Box Rehearsal (Ryan/Sharpay)	
2	9	Thu, Sep 1	6:35-8:35	Choreo: #23 Stick to the Status Quo	
			8:35-9:30	Choreo: #85 Bop to the Top	
2	10	Fri, Sep 2	6:35-7:30	Choreo: #2 Start of Something New	
			7:30-8:30	Choreo: #1 Wildcat Cheer (Cheerleaders)	
2	10	Fri, Sep 2	8:30-9:35	Choreo: #11 Get'cha Head in the Game (Troy/Jocks)	
			--	Sun, Sep 4	--
3	11	Mon, Sep 5	6:35-7:30	Blocking: Act I, Scenes 1-3	
			7:30-8:30	Blocking: Act I, Scenes 4-6	
			8:30-9:30	Blocking: Act 1, Scenes 7-9	
	3	12	Tue, Sep 6	6:35-7:30	Blocking: Act 2, Scenes 1-4
				7:30-8:30	Blocking: Act 2, Scenes 5-8
3	13	Wed, Sep 7	8:30-9:30	Blocking: Act 2, Scenes 9-11	
			6:35-9:30	Work Act I	
3	14	Thu, Sep 8	6:35-9:30	Work Act II	
3	15	Sun, Sep 11	6:35-9:30	Full Run Stumble Through (no Nick)	

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4	16	Mon, Sep 12	6:35-9:30	Work Act I
	17	Tue, Sep 13	6:35-9:30	Work Act II
	18	Wed, Sep 14	6:35-9:30	Work Act I
	19	Thu, Sep 15	6:35-9:30	Work Act II
5	20	Sun, Sep 18	6:35-9:30	Full Run
	21	Mon, Sep 19	6:35-9:30	Full Run
	22	Tue, Sep 20	6:00 6:35	Publicity Photo Call Full Run
	23	Wed, Sep 21	6:35	Full Run; Sound Tech
	24	Thu, Sep 22	6:35	Full Run; Light Tech
	25	Fri, Sep 23	6:35	Full Run; First Tech
	26	Sat, Sep 24	6:35	Full Run
6	27	Sun, Sep 25	7:30 go	First Dress
	28	Mon, Sep 26	7:30 go	Full Run ** (Auditions for <i>Carol</i> and <i>Bluefish</i>) **
	29	Tue, Sep 27	7:30 go	Full Run; Lobby Photos
	30	Wed, Sep 28	7:30 go	Final Dress; Student Preview
	P1	Thu, Sep 29	7:30 curtain	Open
	P2	Fri, Sep 30	7:30 curtain	Evening Performance
	P3	Sat, Oct 1	7:30 curtain	Evening Performance
7	P4	Thu, Oct 6	7:30 curtain	Evening Performance; Photo Call following
	P5	Fri, Oct 7	7:30 curtain	Evening Performance
	P6	Sat, Oct 8	2:00 curtain 7:30 curtain	Matinee Performance Evening Performance
	P7	Sun, Oct 9	2:00 curtain	Matinee Performance; Strike following

APPENDIX B

CAST LIST

HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL

Cast List

Gabriella.....	Sarah Potvin
Troy	Hunter Conrad
Sharpay	Maddy Morgan
Chad	Joaquin Warren
Ryan	Jacob Haen
Taylor	Emerald J. Clark
Jocks	
Zeke	Garmunee Phillips
Jason	Matthew Monson
Other Jocks	Elias Pohren-Everett, Seth Possin, Timothy Snyder, Eric Cendenjas Caballero
Thespians	
James	Anthony Palesotti
Susan.....	Sydney L. Belonge
Cathy.....	Evelynn Ducheneaux
Alan.....	Skyler Gustavson
Cyndra.....	Rachel Reidburn
Performance Art Kids.....	Ruby Wilmes, Rebekah Willey, Kayla Scholfield
Brainiacs	
Martha Cox	Maddy Pool
Kratnoff	Logan Hayden
Other Brainiacs.....	Katelyn Severson, Saarah Hassan
Skater Dudes	
Ripper.....	Davis Jensen
Mongo	Elizabeth Albenesius
Other Skater Dudes	Ella Wilde, Klara Lybeck
Jack Scott.....	Jonathan Mor
Kelsi Neilson	Nevaeh Braucks
Wildcat Cheerleaders.....	Tatianna Roley, Gracelyn Frietag, Sienna Hannay, Bailey Frerichs, Olivia Piglsy, Nicole Dagget, Amelia Wayne, Sydney Marcia
Ms. Darbus.....	Ruby Carlson
Coach Bolton	Billy Krager

Thanks to everyone for auditioning!

Scripts will be distributed at the first rehearsal, which will be **Tuesday, August 23rd** at 6:35 P.M. in the Ted Paul Theatre See you then!!

APPENDIX C
PRODUCTION PHOTOS



Scene Design-John David Paul

Lighting Design-Steven Smith

Costume Design-David McCarl

Sound Design-George E. Grubb

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