



Affinity Voices Choir (actual name TBD) is a Minnesota-wide pilot LGBTQ “Honors” Choir program created by **One Voice Mixed Chorus**, in partnership with the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA - MN) and the Minnesota Music Educators Association (MMEA). This program seeks to provide a safe and supportive learning environment dedicated to the voices and experiences of LGBTQ youth, to celebrate and affirm their identities, and present their works in seasonal performances and presentations.

One Voice Mixed Chorus will host creative sessions on Zoom focused on “The Rhythm of Equality”, the theme for the 2023 Minnesota Music Educators Association (MMEA) Mid-Winter Clinic. Along with a planning team of LGBTQ youth, we will share stories and experiences, listen to songs and read lyrics by LGBTQ composers, and recommend repertoire that will be presented by the Affinity Voices Choir in February 2023.

Planning Session One - SEPT 13 through OCT 4, 2022

Session 1: Four (4) Youth Planning Team Virtual sessions with prompts to write original music, share stories. Composer works with youth text and melodies to create original choral songs. Team will meet four (4) times on Tuesdays 4:00-5:30pm on 9/13, 9/20, 9/27 and 10/04.

Rehearsal Session Two - OCT 18, 2022 through FEB 16, 2023

Session 2: Affinity Voices Choir begins virtual rehearsals for the February 2023 Performance. There will be approximately eight (8) virtual rehearsals and three (3) in-person rehearsals at the MMEA Mid-Winter Clinic in February 2023.

Performance - FEB 16, 2023 at the Minneapolis Convention Center.

To learn more about the program use the QR Code provided.



OneVoiceMN.org

Why This Project is Important

Schools are the center of socialization for youth, and the impact of COVID-19 has made social exchanges even more difficult. While all students have been impacted by a reduction of social spaces, LGBTQ+ youth face unique challenges. Music and singing can make a difference in the lives of LGBTQ+ youth.

GLSEN's 2019 [school climate survey](#) showed that 86% of LGBTQ+ youth reported being harassed or assaulted at school, which can significantly impact their mental health. [The Trevor Project 2021 survey](#) on LGBTQ+ Youth Mental Health showed that 94% of LGBTQ+ youth said that recent politics have negatively impacted their well-being. Currently, hate groups, like the [Minnesota Child Protection League](#), are continuing to advocate against safety programs for LGBTQ+ youth.

In many states and school districts, LGBTQ+ students lack protection from discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity. The impact on mental health is palpable—particularly for those with intersecting racial or socioeconomic identities—while facing discrimination, prejudice, denial of civil and human rights, harassment, and family rejection.

This \$25,000 project proposal is for a Minnesota-wide LGBTQ+ High School “Honors” Choir (actual name TBD), to provide a safe and supportive learning environment for LGBTQ+ students from across Minnesota, to acknowledge artistic excellence, skill building and enrichment through choral music, and to encourage social connection, belonging, and empowerment.