Children's Chorus of Greater Dallas

Prelude, Apprentice, Concert II, Concert I,
Women's Youth Chorus and Youth Chorus

Handbook

2016-2017

325 North Saint Paul Street
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ORGANIZATION

The Children's Chorus of Greater Dallas (CCGD) was founded in 1996. The mission of the Chorus is to provide children with the experience of artistic excellence and artistry through choral singing. The Children's Chorus creates a spirit of community, reflects the diversity of greater Dallas, and enriches audiences with the best in children's choral literature.

The Children's Chorus includes girls and boys with unchanged voices in the fourth through eighth grades. The Women's Youth Chorus is composed of young women in the ninth through twelfth grades. The Youth Chorus includes young men and women in the ninth through twelfth grades. Members are selected through an audition with the artistic staff. The qualifications are a good voice, a good sense of pitch and a commitment to regular attendance at rehearsals and performances.

STAFF

Cynthia Nott, Artistic Director	cynthia@thechildrenschorus.org
Kim Ahrens, Conductor	kim@thechildrenschorus.org
Nora Henson, Conductor	nora@thechildrenschorus.org
Kelly Pfaffenberger, Conductor	kelly@thechildrenschorus.org
Terrie Preskitt-Brown, Conductor	terrie@thechildrenschorus.org
Chris Collins, Executive Director	chris@thechildrenschorus.org
Mary Duncan, Marketing & Development Director	mary@thechildrenschorus.org
Susan Tomlinson, Operations Director	susan@thechildrenschorus.org
Pat Morris, Production Manager	
Kevin Morris, Assistant Production Manager	

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Chorus Office:	(214) 965-0491
Chorus Fax:	(214) 965-0264
Chorus Website:	www.thechildrenschorus.org

CURRICULUM/PHILOSOPHY

Through the rehearsal and performance of distinctive choral literature, CCGD will give the children the vocal, musical and artistic skills necessary to express themselves in song.

Through skilled, beautiful singing, children will begin a journey of self-discovery as they learn the music, thought and feelings of cultures that span centuries and continents.

During the course of a year, choristers will have the opportunity to learn the music of the major periods of Western Civilization – Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic and the 20th and 21st Centuries. Children will explore the folk-based art music of many cultures different from their own.

The children will receive instruction in how musical elements work together. Those elements are melody, rhythm, harmony, timbre, dynamics, form, style, history and performance practice. These musical concepts are taught through the singing, listening, analysis and evaluation of the repertoire.

The children will learn how to use their personal instrument, their bodies and voices, in an expressive, artistic way. In order to sing the varied repertoire, they will be given instruction in classical vocal techniques. In each rehearsal, correct singing posture, vowel shape, breath support, and tone placement will be taught and developed.

Informed performances can transform young singers. Children can experience music through singing with their whole beings. Their relationships to the production of sound into art, of bodies into instruments, transcend the actual notes and words on the page. In singing, they touch the music and the music touches them, for the pure joy of the experience. This experience will enrich all those involved in the process, including the avid concertgoer, the parent and, of course, the child.

We look forward to guiding your child in this adventure.

*REHEARSALS AND PARKING INFORMATION

All rehearsals are held on Monday evenings during the school year.

Prelude rehearses from 5:30 PM – 6:30 PM at First Presbyterian Church, 1835 Young Street.
Apprentice rehearses from 6:00 PM – 7:15 PM at First Presbyterian Church, 1835 Young Street.
Concert II rehearses from 6:30 PM – 8:00 PM at First United Methodist Church, 1928 Ross Avenue.
Concert I rehearses from 6:45 PM – 8:30 PM at First Presbyterian Church, 1835 Young Street.
Women's Youth Chorus rehearses from 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM at First United Methodist Church, 1928 Ross Avenue.
Youth Chorus rehearses from 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM at First United Methodist Church, 1928 Ross Avenue.

Please do not arrive more than 15 minutes early unless you plan to stay with your child and please be prompt picking up your child.

At First Presbyterian Church (FPC):

Prelude and Apprentice: Parents park for free in the First Presbyterian Church parking garage. The entrance is accessed from Young Street at Park Avenue. Place the yellow parking pass on your car dashboard and **park on levels 4-6**. Take the elevator to the basement floor. **DO NOT PARK in the outside flat lot in front of the circular drive or on levels 1-3 in the garage.**

Concert I: Free parking is available during **Monday night rehearsals** in the Platinum Parking Flat Lot #190 at the corner of Young & St. Paul Streets if the blue parking pass is placed on the car dashboard. For **Saturday rehearsals**, parents park for free in the First Presbyterian Church parking garage. Place the yellow parking pass on your car dashboard and park on levels 4-6. **DO NOT PARK in the outside flat lot in front of the circular drive or on levels 1-3 of the garage on either Monday evenings or Saturdays.**

The parking rules will be explained further at Parent Orientation. We are guests in the church so please respect the church space at all times – if you are staying during rehearsal, you may wait downstairs either in the rehearsal room or the Blakley lobby. Please supervise any children who are with you at all times and do not allow them to wander in other spaces.

At First United Methodist Church (FUMC): Free parking is available during rehearsals in the public lot at Harwood and Ross after 6:00 pm if the bright orange parking pass is placed on the car dashboard. **Please do not park in the First United Methodist Church parking lot.** Use the San Jacinto Street entrance to the building. Please respect the church space at all times. Parents and siblings who choose to wait at FUMC during the rehearsal are welcome to observe the rehearsal or wait in the Atrium but please do not wander around in other spaces or sit on the floor in the Art Gallery.

Choristers are to arrive at rehearsal in comfortable, appropriate attire ready to sing. Prior to rehearsal, choristers should have had a light snack or meal. Upon arrival, they are to use the restroom, get water, and throw away any gum or candy. **There is no food or drink allowed in any rehearsal room.** Each chorister will pick up his/her folder and a pencil, and find his/her assigned seat. Choristers then wait quietly for the rehearsal to begin. They are expected to remain for the entire rehearsal. If a chorister has a personal need, he/she should quietly approach a rehearsal monitor or assistant conductor.

Children are NOT permitted to walk between FPC and FUMC without adult supervision, and CCGD will not be held legally responsible for any who do.

***Please review this section with your child.**

*SUPERVISION OF CHORISTERS

The children come under CCGD supervision only when they enter the rehearsal room. We will do everything we can to make drop off and pick up as smooth as possible, but there is no substitute for parents ensuring that children arrive at the rehearsal room safely and on time.

Whenever and wherever CCGD gathers, the choristers are under the supervision of the CCGD Staff, assisted by parents who volunteer as chaperones. In as much as the Chorus rehearses and performs in public places, the Chorus instructs the choristers in the concept of "director dependence". The children are expected to respond appropriately and immediately to all direction from the CCGD Staff, whether given in person or through the chaperones who are acting under the direction of the CCGD Staff. In addition to the Artistic Staff, the Chorus is committed to providing the appropriate number of chaperones at each rehearsal and performance. While director dependence is most often an artistic issue, it can at times be a safety issue. Parents are expected to discuss and reinforce the concept of director dependence with their child. Children in noncompliance will be asked to leave the Chorus.

***Please review this section with your child.**

*PERFORMANCE AND REHEARSAL ATTENDANCE POLICY

PERFORMANCE ATTENDANCE

Performance attendance is different from rehearsal attendance. Missing a performance may be grounds for dismissal. Requests to miss a performance must be submitted to Ms. Nott four weeks in advance.

All performances listed on the CCGD calendar handed out in August are **mandatory**. In August, if you find you have a conflict with a performance, call the Artistic Director, Ms. Nott at 214-965-0491 IMMEDIATELY.

PLEASE DO NOT ACCCEPT A ROLE IN ANY MUSICAL OR DRAMATIC PRODUCTION THAT WILL CONFLICT WITH A CCGD PERFORMANCE!

REHEARSAL ATTENDANCE

Singers must attend ALL rehearsals in order to fully learn the music being taught. However, we understand that unavoidable circumstances do arise. There are two kinds of absences: Regular and Music. **We ask that you notify Susan in the chorus office, preferably by email (susan@thechildrenschorus.org), if your child is going to be absent for any reason.**

Regular Absences

A singer can be absent **3 times each semester** for illness, too much homework, car trouble, spring break, bad traffic, bad weather, school testing, vacation, "forgot", Fair Day, you name it. These are called "regular" absences.

These "regular" absences are tracked as follows:

- **One (1)** absence for missing a **Monday** night rehearsal
- **One and one half (1.5)** absences for missing a **Saturday** rehearsal (applies to Concert I, Concert II and Apprentice)
- **Two (2)** tardies count as one absence
  - Choristers are considered tardy if:
    - Arriving 10 minutes after the rehearsal start time; or
    - Leaving rehearsal more than 10 minutes early

Penalties for Excessive "Regular" Absences

After three "regular" absences, a letter will be sent from Ms. Nott, the Artistic Director. After the fourth "regular" absence, the chorister may be dismissed from the chorus. There are no refunds for tuition.

Music Absences

CCGD encourages all choristers to participate in their school music and religious choir programs. Absences for **graded school music** (school choir, school band or school orchestra) or religious choir are considered "Music" absences and will not count toward the three "regular" absences. **However, you must let CCGD know at least four weeks in advance of a school music or religious choir absence.**

Penalties for Excessive "Music" Absences

This is handled on a case-by-case basis. On occasion, there may come a point when your child simply is not in enough rehearsals to participate fully. The Artistic Director will call you and discuss dismissal. There are no refunds for tuition.

All Musical Theatre Productions (school, church, community, etc.)

If you choose or are required to participate in a musical theatre production (at your school, your church, in the community, etc.), **this is not considered a "Music" absence and must be coordinated in advance with Ms. Nott**, the Artistic Director:

1. Let the musical conductor know of your Monday night commitment with CCGD. This discussion

should occur *well in advance* of the first musical rehearsal. Many musical directors accept a "conflict sheet" at the time of the musical audition for the student's regularly scheduled activities They will work with you!

2. Once you have discussed your CCGD commitment with the musical director, email Ms. Nott, the Artistic Director (cynthia@thechildrenschorus.org) to discuss a compromise, including in the email all dates you foresee being absent from CCGD rehearsal.

REMEMBER: Participation in any musical theatre production must be coordinated in advance with Ms. Nott.

There is room for compromise, but you must be present at CCGD rehearsals and performances in order to participate fully.

***Please review this section with your child.**

*CONCERT ATTIRE

All children should arrive at each performance in complete concert attire, ready to sing. Failure to wear specified concert attire may prevent a chorister from participating in the concert.

CHILDREN'S CHORUSES

GIRLS' FORMAL ATTIRE:

Black and white CCGD concert dress
Black opaque tights or knee-highs (must come to the knee, not ankle; no black socks)
Black leather ballet slippers (Bedroom shoes that resemble ballet slippers are not acceptable.)
Hair must be secured away from face and shoulders with discrete black or invisible clips. If hair is longer than shoulder length, it must be secured in a pony tail.
NO make-up, nail polish, jewelry, perfume – NO EXCEPTIONS
NO sports bras - Please take care in choosing your singer's bra or camisole, if needed. Sports bras are not acceptable. They cross in the back and can be seen from the stage. White or beige undergarments are best. Red, black, bright orange, etc. are hard to hide!

Please dry clean or wash and press your outfit before each major performance. If you are singing several times in a short period of time, please make sure to hang up the dress and press, if needed.

BOYS' FORMAL ATTIRE:

Tuxedo shirt (white pointed "wing tip" collar with white buttons, no black studs), tuxedo pants (The hem of the pants should be just resting on the top of the shoe with a small break in the front and falling just above the heel in the back.
Black bow tie and black cummerbund
Black socks
Black dress shoes – NO athletic shoes or cowboy boots
NO jewelry or makeup is to be worn.
Hair must be clean and secured away from the face, using only black or discreet clips, if necessary. Hair longer than shoulder length must be secured in a pony tail.
We suggest that boys <u>not</u> wear an undershirt because it is too hot. However, this is a personal choice.

Please dry clean or wash and press your outfit before each major performance.

Infractions will be addressed on a case-by-case basis. The Artistic Director reserves the right to exclude any chorister from a performance. In the fall, an "outfit check day" will be scheduled during one of the regular rehearsals.

CASUAL ATTIRE FOR ALL CHORUSES
All Prelude and Apprentice singers may be required to purchase a blue CCGD T-shirt.
All Concert II, Concert I and any touring singers are required to purchase a black CCGD polo shirt.
These will be worn with blue jeans and athletic shoes.

WOMEN'S YOUTH AND YOUTH CHORUS
WOMEN'S FORMAL ATTIRE:
Women's Youth Chorus/Youth Chorus black concert dress
Black Panty Hose or knee-highs
Black Ballet Slippers
Hair must be clean and secured away from the face, using only black or discreet clips, if necessary.
Small stud earrings and small watch are appropriate; NO bracelets or necklaces.
NO facial piercing or tongue studs; NO perfume.

Please dry clean or wash and press your outfit before each major performance. If you are singing several times in a short period of time, please make sure to hang up the dress and press, if needed.

YOUTH CHORUS
MEN'S FORMAL ATTIRE:
White pointed "wing tip" collar tuxedo shirt (white buttons, no black studs), tuxedo pants and jacket
(The hem of the pants should be just resting on the top of the shoe with a small break in the front and falling just above the heel in the back.
Black bow tie and black cummerbund
Black dress shoes (no athletic shoes or cowboy boots)
Black socks
Hair must be clean and secured away from the face, using only black or discreet clips, if necessary.
Only a watch is appropriate; NO bracelets or necklaces; NO cologne.
NO facial piercing or tongue studs.

Please dry clean or wash and press your outfit before each major performance.

***Please review this section with your child.**

*PERFORMANCES

CCGD is a professional performing arts organization. Performances require the very best in conduct, appearance, and musicianship. Performance standards will be clearly communicated to choristers during rehearsals; choristers are expected to adhere to these standards. Final written instructions are provided at the last rehearsal prior to each performance in the form of 'HotSheets' which are printed on hot pink paper.

***Please review this section with your child.**

TICKET SALES

A ticket is required to attend most Chorus performances. Tickets for CCGD concerts at the Meyerson Symphony Center are available online at our website, www.thechildrenschorus.org. Ticket information for other concerts is distributed through HotSheets and is always available on our website.

TUITION

Tuition is due in full on or before August 8, 2016. Tuition is payable by cash, check or credit card. CCGD accepts Visa, MasterCard, American Express and Discover. Tuition is non-refundable

You may request a payment plan (up to a maximum of three payments), but your tuition must be paid in full before our fall concert.

NEED-BASED TUITION ASSISTANCE

If you are interested in applying for need-based tuition assistance, please complete the Tuition Assistance Application form included in your membership packet. **The completed application MUST be submitted no later than July 1, 2016 in order to receive priority consideration.** Tuition assistance award notification letters will be mailed on July 15, 2016. Those receiving tuition assistance awards must return their tuition assistance contracts to CCGD by July 29, 2016. If your application is denied, your full tuition payment is due August 8, 2016. If you receive tuition assistance, the portion of your tuition not covered by your award amount is due August 8, 2016. In both cases, you may establish a payment plan as described above. Please note that concert attire, music and retreat fees are NOT included in tuition assistance.

RETURNED CHECKS

Families will be billed for NSF (non-sufficient funds) fees. If a second check is returned for non-sufficient funds, payment will only be accepted by cash, credit card or money order.

LOST AND FOUND

Lost and Found items may be claimed in the Chorus office. Choristers are encouraged to limit the number of personal belongings brought to rehearsals and performances. The Chorus is not responsible for choristers' personal belongings.

PARENT VOLUNTEERS

CCGD depends on our parents to provide support at performances, rehearsals, and other events. **All parents are strongly encouraged to volunteer for one or more of the volunteer opportunities listed on the Volunteer Preference Form sent in the Membership Packet.** Time commitments range from a one-time, two-hour commitment to several hours throughout the season. *Regardless of other interests, please consider volunteering to chaperone one or more concerts.*

COMMUNICATION

The Children's Chorus of Greater Dallas will communicate with parents and singers in a variety of ways: email, various handouts, and HotSheets (hot pink, always) before each performance or important change. These are given out at rehearsals and mailed to absentees. You may also access all of these forms on the Chorus website. If you have questions not answered in this way, please feel free to call or email the Chorus office.

INCLEMENT WEATHER – REHEARSAL CANCELLATION

A decision about whether to cancel rehearsal will be made by 2:00 pm. At that time, an email will be sent to all chorus families, the notice will be posted on the website (www.thechildrenschorus.org), and the outgoing message on the chorus phone will indicate the cancellation.

TOURING POLICY

PURPOSE

The Children's Chorus of Greater Dallas (CCGD) goes on tour to provide the children with experiences that enhance our artistic excellence.

OBJECTIVES

- To enrich the children's musical skills and experiences
- To develop camaraderie among singers, parents and staff
- To learn about the music, history and heritage of other cities, states, and countries

TYPES OF TOURS

National Tours

- By plane
- 5 - 8 days
- Early summer
- Costs in the $1000 - $2000 range

International Tours

- By plane
- 8 - 11 days
- Early summer
- Costs in the $2500 - $3800 range

TOURING FREQUENCY

Our touring policy is to alternate between national and international tours every two years. 2016-2017 is not a touring season.

WHO TOURS

In general, Concert I, Women's Youth, Youth Chorus and the 7th and 8th graders from Con II will tour.

CHAPERONES

Parent chaperones will be selected by the CCGD staff. Parent chaperones will pay a discounted tour price and will be expected to oversee a small group of singers throughout the tour. Typically, there will be one parent chaperone for every six to eight students on national/international tours.

TOUR CONTRACTS

Each tour participant will sign a tour contract at the time he/she signs on to the tour, which will cover payment schedules, behavioral requirements, legal issues and other tour-related items.

STAFF BIOGRAPHIES

Staff biographies may be found on our website, www.thechildrenschorus.org.