

Children's Chorus of Greater Dallas



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

Handbook 2021-2022

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www.thechildrenschorus.org

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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 choruses include girls and boys in the fourth through eighth grades. The Women's Youth Chorus is composed of young women in the ninth through twelfth grades, and 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
Megan Heber, Executive Director	megan@thechildrenschorus.org
Susan Tomlinson, Operations Director	susan@thechildrenschorus.org

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 singers the vocal, musical and artistic skills necessary to express themselves in song.

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

Singers 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 and will explore the folk-based art music of many cultures different from their own.

The singers 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 singers 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. They 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 singer.

We look forward to guiding your singer in this adventure.

*REHEARSALS AND PARKING INFORMATION

All rehearsals are held on Monday evenings during the school year and are at Lovers Lane United Methodist Church, 9200 Inwood Road (corner of Northwest Highway and Inwood). There is free parking at the church for all rehearsals.

Prelude rehearses from 6:00 PM – 7:00 PM

Apprentice rehearses from 6:00 PM – 7:15 PM

Concert II rehearses from 6:30 PM – 8:00 PM

Concert I rehearses from 7:00 PM – 8:45 PM

Women's Youth Chorus rehearses from 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM

Youth Chorus rehearses from 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM

Please do not arrive more than 15 minutes early unless you plan to stay with your singer and please be prompt picking up your singer. We will follow the mask policy of the church for adults.

We are guests in the church so please respect the church space at all times.

Parents who are staying during rehearsal may wait in the rehearsal room if there is space or in the public areas of the church. Please supervise any children who are with you at all times and do not allow them to wander around the church alone.

Singers are to arrive at rehearsal in comfortable, appropriate attire ready to sing and **wearing a mask**. Prior to rehearsal, singers should have had a light snack or meal. Upon arrival, they are to use the restroom, get water, throw away any gum or candy, and go to the rehearsal room. **They should not wander around the church unsupervised. There is no food or drink allowed in any rehearsal room.** Each singer will find his/her assigned seat. Singers then wait quietly for the rehearsal to begin. They are expected to remain for the entire rehearsal. If a singer has a personal need, he/she should quietly approach a rehearsal monitor or assistant conductor.

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

***SUPERVISION OF SINGERS**

The singers come under CCGD supervision only when they enter the rehearsal room. Parents must ensure that the singers arrive at the rehearsal room safely and on time.

Whenever and wherever CCGD gathers, the singers 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 singers in the concept of “director dependence”. The singers are expected to respond appropriately and immediately to all direction from the CCGD Staff, whether given in person or through the chaperones/monitors 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/monitors 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 singer. Singers in noncompliance will be asked to leave the Chorus.

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

***PERFORMANCE AND REHEARSAL ATTENDANCE POLICY**

PERFORMANCE ATTENDANCE

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

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.

PLEASE DO NOT ACCEPT 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

Singers 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 singer may be dismissed from the chorus. There are no refunds for tuition.

Music Absences

CCGD encourages all singers 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.** See the section below about participation in school musicals.

Penalties for Excessive “Music” Absences

This is handled on a case-by-case basis. On occasion, there may come a point when your singer 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 singer.**

***CONCERT ATTIRE**

All singers should arrive at each performance in complete concert attire, ready to sing. Failure to wear specified concert attire may prevent a singer 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 the outfit before each major performance. If 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 dress socks – no short athletic 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 not wear an undershirt because it is too hot. However, this is a personal choice.

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

Infractions will be addressed on a case-by-case basis. The Artistic Director reserves the right to exclude any singer 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 Concert II and Concert I singers are required to purchase a black CCGD polo shirt.

All Prelude and Apprentice singers are required to purchase a blue CCGD t-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.

If hair is long and won't remain behind the shoulders, it must be put up or in a pony tail.

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 the outfit before each major performance. If 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 dress socks – no short athletic socks

Hair must be clean and secured away from the face, using only black or discreet clips, if necessary.

If it's long and won't remain behind the shoulders, it must be put up or in a pony tail.

Only a watch is appropriate; NO bracelets or necklaces; NO cologne.

NO facial piercing or tongue studs.

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

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

***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 singers during rehearsals; singers 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 singer.**

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 16, 2021. Tuition is payable by cash, check, credit card or Zelle. CCGD accepts Visa, MasterCard, American Express and Discover, but there will be a 3% transaction fee added to all credit card purchases and tuition payments. 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 August 1, 2021 in order to receive priority consideration.** Tuition assistance award notification will be emailed to you. If your application is denied, your full tuition payment is due **August 16, 2021**. If you receive tuition assistance, the portion of your tuition not covered by your award amount is due **August 16, 2021**. 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. Singers are encouraged to limit the number of personal belongings brought to rehearsals and performances. The Chorus is not responsible for singers' 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 emailed 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. We will also occasionally use the Remind text messaging system if we need to distribute important information quickly. (Information on subscribing to Remind will be sent at a later date.)

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, a Remind text will be sent to those signed up for Remind, and the notice will be posted on the website (www.thechildrenschorus.org).

STAFF BIOGRAPHIES

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