



Children's Choir Handbook

Mission Statement & Goals

Mission Statement:

Celebrating choral music through masterful performances, educational outreach and cultural enrichment.

Goals:

- To extend the celebration of choral music to future generations, through educational outreach to children in grades 4-8.
- To provide an ongoing community asset through the formation of a regional children's choir focused on training in the classical tradition, for grades 4-8 treble voices. Currently, there is no regional classically trained children's choir in our area.
- To provide cultural enrichment through an artistic outlet for children in the region, where excellence in choral singing is valued and supported for all children in the community, bridging cultures, ethnicities and economic backgrounds.
- To bring the enrichment of choral music to new audiences through the masterful performances of the children's choir.

Handbook

1. Auditions

- a. Students enter the program through a personal audition with the Conductor. Singers do not need prior experience to join our choir – development of musicianship and skills is part of every rehearsal.
- b. Auditions are held in the early fall of each year and the beginning of January (as needed). Auditions are required of all singers. Membership is a year-long commitment covering both fall and spring semesters. If a member chooses to sing for only one semester of the current concert year, he or she must re-audition for the following concert year. Choir members may be asked to re-audition at any time.
 - i. What to expect:
 1. An audition is required of each singer. This will be scheduled by appointment. Each applicant will be asked to sing a well-known song and simple pitch and rhythm-matching exercises in a relaxed environment.
 2. Acceptance and placement notifications will be made in a timely manner.

2. Dues

- a. Membership dues are required of each member at the beginning of each semester.
 - i. Dues are \$75 per semester and are expected to be paid at or prior to the first rehearsal.
 - ii. Choir members will not be allowed to sing after the third rehearsal until dues are paid.
 - iii. Payments may be made in cash or personal check.
 - iv. A \$25 fee is imposed for any check returned because of insufficient funds.
- b. Scholarships
 - i. Financial burden should not prevent any member from participating in the group. Contact the Director if the current dues create a financial hardship.
 - ii. For some singers, the opportunity to learn and grow through music is a dream that is only realized through the financial help of others. If you would like to help another singer by making a contribution, contact the Conductor. Only through your generosity can we offer the opportunity of the Children's Choir experience to all children on the Palouse. Thank you!!

3. Rehearsals

- a. Rehearsals will take place weekly and may be scheduled during school breaks.
 - i. Sundays, 4:00-5:15 pm
 - ii. Moscow High School Choir Room, door facing 5th Street, Moscow, ID
- b. Arrive a few minutes early, check in, and be in your seat before rehearsal begins.
- c. Use the restroom before rehearsal begins. Do not interrupt the rehearsal for a restroom break unless there is an emergency. There may be a scheduled break during rehearsal if needed, during which time members may leave their seats, get a drink of water, and use the restroom.
- d. Choristers are expected to treat rehearsal and performance venues with respect.
 - i. Eat a nutritious snack or meal before arriving. Only water will be allowed in rehearsal.
 - ii. Walk in the hallways.
 - iii. Use quiet speaking voices.
 - iv. Leave your rehearsal space neat.
 - v. Remain in designated area(s).
- e. Rehearsals will begin and end on time.
- f. Staff and volunteers will not be responsible for children before or after rehearsals.
 - i. Parent/Guardians may not drop children off more than 10 minutes before rehearsal or pick them up more than 5 minutes after rehearsal.
 - ii. Parents/Guardians MUST come into the building to pick up children. Children will not be allowed to leave the building without a parent/guardian or other designated individual. (See and fill out Departure Form on the last page.)
 1. Persons picking up children will not open the rehearsal room door, but will wait for children to exit into the hallway.

4. Code of Conduct: This challenging program of voice and choral repertoire demands dedication and discipline from its young members. The Director will choose engaging, varied, and appropriate repertoire and will cultivate an environment of dignity and respect.

- a. Come to rehearsal prepared and on time
 - i. Be in assigned seats before rehearsal begins.
 - ii. Listen for instructions.
 - iii. Make sure your pencil is sharpened prior to the start of rehearsal.
- b. Treat choir leaders with respect at all times.
 - i. Purposeful noncompliance with directions will not be tolerated.
 - ii. Raise your hand and wait to be called on before you speak.
- c. Treat your fellow choristers as you would wish to be treated
 - i. Keep your hands to yourself at all times.
 - ii. When others are singing or speaking in turn, you are not.
 - iii. Be kind to those around you. Rude or inconsiderate behavior is unacceptable.
- d. Repeated mistreatment of choir leaders or fellow choristers will result in a disciplinary meeting with the Conductor, student, and parent/guardian.

5. Dress Code

- a. For rehearsals
 - i. Comfortable clothing and shoes that allow freedom of movement
 - ii. No hats, sunglasses, or high-heeled shoes
- b. For performances
 - i. Plain black dress slacks or black skirt (MUST be at least 2 inches below fingertips or longer) with black tights, black dress shoes, black belt (if pants have beltloops), and a white button-down, long-sleeve dress shirt with a collar.
 - ii. No distracting hair bows.
 - iii. No jewelry other than studded earrings.
- c. If any of these guidelines present an obstacle to participation, the singer and/or parent/guardian should bring it to the attention of the Director in a timely fashion so that a solution can be sought.
- d. Neat grooming is expected of all participants. Please wear non-scented deodorant, and do not wear perfume or cologne.

6. Attendance Policy

- a. Attendance is mandatory.
- b. Punctuality is expected – arrive ahead of time, check in, organize music, and be seated in assigned seat prior to the start of the rehearsal.
- c. Coming to rehearsal late or leaving early may be considered an absence.
- d. Chorus members will be allowed to miss no more than two rehearsals per semester.
- e. No distinction is made between excused or unexcused absences.
- f. After two absences, the singer may be ineligible to sing at the next concert(s).
- g. If an extenuating circumstance arises that forces a singer to miss more than the two allowable absences, he or she must petition the Conductor for permission to perform.
- h. Excessive absences will be addressed in a meeting with the Conductor, the student, and parent/guardian and may result in suspension from the choir.
- i. Attendance at dress rehearsals is mandatory. Anyone who is absent from a dress rehearsal is ineligible to sing at the concert(s).

7. Students with disabilities

- a. Every effort will be made to include any child who has the interest and ability required to participate in this organization.
- b. Prior to the first rehearsal, communicate any necessary disability related accommodations and pertinent medical information to the Conductor.

8. Communication

- a. Communications will largely be made via email, handouts, and phone chain.
- b. Following each rehearsal and performance, ask your child if handouts were distributed.
- c. If a parent/guardian needs to communicate with the Conductor, he/she may email sasant27@gmail.com or call 208-301-4065. The Conductor will NOT answer phone calls during rehearsals but will check for text messages prior to rehearsal in case of an emergency. Please text the Conductor (and your child, if applicable) if you need to get a message to the student by the end of rehearsal.
- d. Students are NOT allowed to use cell phones during rehearsal. They are allowed to check phones at the end of rehearsal in case of an emergency. Please do not expect your child (or Conductor) to reply to a text during a rehearsal.

BOTH PARENTS AND CHILDREN:

PLEASE:

READ THE FULL MANUAL

FILL IN

SIGN

DATE

THE NEXT PAGE

AND

RETURN TO Janice O'Toole, Executive Director, at the FIRST rehearsal.

THANK YOU!!!

9. Departure Preferences

- a. Children will not be allowed to leave the building without a parent/guardian, other designated individual, or other prior arrangements.
- b. Staff and volunteers will follow the below selected preferences. Please initial or fill in the appropriate sections:

_____ We live _____ blocks from Moscow High School. My child will walk home unless I make other arrangements with the conductor.

Besides me/us, the following people have permission to pick up my child.

_____ I understand that I or one of the above listed individuals must come into the building to pick up my child as described in section 3f.

10. Contract

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I have read the Palouse Children’s Choir Member Guide and understand my obligations as a singer or parent/guardian of a singer.

Printed name of singer

Signature of Singer

Date

Printed name of parent/guardian

Signature of parent/guardian

Date

If more than one parent will be involved in supporting the singer, we ask that both parents read the handbook and sign this acknowledgement. Additional copies of the handbook are available. Please ask the conductor.

Printed name of parent/guardian

Signature of parent/guardian

Date