

Children's Chorus of Carroll County

HANDBOOK

2015 - 2016

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Our Mission Statement

Children's Chorus of Carroll County exists to provide an accessible, quality music education and choral experience for children in central Maryland. Furthermore, it is dedicated to serving the community and helping children develop attitudes that will perpetuate lifetimes of joyful singing.

To those ends we provide:

- Developmentally appropriate choral activities for children of all ages
- Highly qualified musical leadership and instruction
- A variety of performance formats, including artistic collaborations
- Exposure to and involvement in music from a wide spectrum of historical, cultural, and ethnic styles, thus nurturing a respect for diversity
- Opportunities which develop teamwork, personal excellence, self-discipline, responsibility, self-control, self-expression, personal confidence, and community service

The Organization

Established in 1986 by Idalea Rubin and Diane Jones, Children's Chorus of Carroll County has grown from one group to several distinct groups of varying sizes and ages.

Children's Chorus of Carroll County is governed by a Board of Directors representing the greater community. The Board is responsible for establishing and monitoring the budget and all fiscal matters, setting policies and strategic plans, and promoting the Chorus in the greater community. The Board may make changes to policies and procedures contained in this Handbook during the Chorus year if the need arises.

Auditions

LPV, DB, BC I, BC II, THE BOYZ: General auditions for these performing groups are held annually in May; private auditions may be arranged during the summer by contacting the Artistic Director.

musique joyeuse

Director: Jenna Lebherz Daly

An early childhood music and movement program for children ages 5, 6 and 7 based on the Musikgarten© curriculum.

Using the whole-child approach, our youngest members explore the wonder of music while expanding their self-awareness and experiencing quality social interaction. **There is no performance expectation** or schedule.

Les Petites Voix

Director: Jenna Lebherz Daly

Second and third grade students are potentially great young musicians and their potential in many areas is developed through the choral experience. The skill set of *musique joyeuse* is expanded, basics of musicianship and music reading are developed and the excitement and joy of performance is introduced. No previous formal music instruction is necessary.

Weekly rehearsals are one hour long with approximately three extra Saturday rehearsals during the year. This group performs in the winter and spring celebration concerts.

Il Choro Della Bella Voce

Director: Judy Guynn

Choristers in fourth, fifth and sixth* grades exude the spontaneity and energy of the younger singers, but a higher skill level enables them to engage more advanced music. Repertoire includes canons, descants, unison and two-part pieces, accompanied and unaccompanied in English and other languages. Basic musicianship skills are introduced and developed during a rehearsal component that is taught by Joann Benson during the rehearsal.

*Sixth graders entering the Chorus for the first time may be placed in this group.

Weekly rehearsals are one hour long with approximately three extra Saturday rehearsals during the year. The Basic Skills Class is 25 minutes long. *Della Bella's* perform locally in a variety of venues and participate in the winter and spring celebration concerts.

Cantare Bel Canto I

Director: Diane Jones

Designed to provide challenge and opportunity necessary to meet the artistic potential and developmental needs of choristers in grades six through high school, the *Bel Canto* repertoire and schedule is more personally demanding than the other Choruses. Repertoire includes unison through four-part treble, accompanied and unaccompanied in English and other languages.

Weekly rehearsals are between one and a half and two hours long with approximately three extra Saturday rehearsals during the year. *Bel Canto's* perform locally in a variety of venues and participate in the winter and spring celebration concerts. Additionally, *Bel Cantos* enjoy travel opportunities both in the USA and abroad.

Cantare Bel Canto II

Director: Rachel Morgan

Most members of this group have been in *Cantare Bel Canto I* and have been chosen through a second, rigorous audition, including sight-singing in solfege. Repertoire includes unison through four-part treble, accompanied and unaccompanied in English and other languages.

Weekly rehearsals are between one and a half and two hours long with approximately three extra Saturday rehearsals during the year. *Bel Cantos* perform locally in a variety of venues and participate in the winter and spring

celebration concerts. Additionally, Bel Cantos enjoy travel opportunities both in the USA and abroad.

THE BOYZ

Director: Jeff Liebknecht Assistant: Charlie Im

Dedicated to the unique gifts of our male singers, this group is for unchanged, changing and changed voices of members of DB, BC and the greater community. The diverse SATB repertoire is designed to meet the needs of both the singers and a variety of community presentations.

Boys with unchanged voices must be current members of one of our treble choirs (DBs, or BCs) to participate in **THE BOYZ**. Young men with changed voices are accepted by audition and do not need to participate in a treble choir. No previous experience with the Chorus is necessary. New members are welcome - both changed and unchanged voices.

Small Group Criteria

On occasion, we may have to limit the number of singers involved in a performance. At the discretion of the director, the following guidelines will be used in selecting the small group: specific voice requirement, balance of parts, longevity in Chorus and Chorus attendance record.

Student Internship Mentorship Program

Pre-requisites

At least two years of membership in Children's Chorus

Successful interview with Artistic Director before entering program

Level One Expectations

Regular punctual attendance at all rehearsals and performances

Help prepare and close-up the rehearsal/ performance space

May lead physical and vocal warm-ups upon Director's request

Assist the director before, during and after the rehearsal as needed

Level Two Expectations

Intern must have completed Level One

Continue all Level One Expectations

Initiate interaction with students when appropriate

Help create a positive learning environment

Lead physical and vocal warm-ups upon request

Conduct sectional rehearsals

With the director assisted preparation, conduct the ensemble in rehearsal

At the director's discretion, in performance

Professional Staff

Joann Long Benson, Accompanist and Instructor of Basic Skills, is a graduate of Mansfield University of PA with a degree in piano performance, and has completed a Master's of Music Education at Towson University. She's been a general music teacher in the Carroll County Public School system for 19 years, most recently at Sandymount Elementary School. Mrs. Benson also has accompanied the music and drama departments at Carroll Community College and McDaniel College. Recently, Mrs. Benson has been employed by the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, designing lessons to support their Youth Concert series.

Jenna Lebherz Daly, Director of *musique joyeuse* and *Les Petites Voix*, earned Bachelor's degrees in Music Education and Vocal Performance from Westminster Choir College in Princeton, NJ. Mrs. Daly earned a Master's degree in Opera Performance from University of Maryland's Opera Studio, and has performed as a mezzo-soprano, singing for opera companies and orchestras in many states and venues. Currently, she teaches the Lower School Music Program Pre-K through 5th grade at Gerstell Academy in Finksburg, MD.

Judith Guynn, Director of *Il Choro Della Bella Voce*, received her BA degree from Washington College, Chestertown, MD. During 1976-1977, she taught English literature and music at Hope Waddell School for Boys in Calabar, Nigeria. While teaching grades 3-8 at Taneytown Elementary, her fourth through eighth grade choir was invited by Baltimore mayors Schaeffer and Burns to sing at City Hall for the Mitten Tree Ceremony. She taught for 38 years at Northwest Middle School as the general music and choral director. There she produced and directed 28 musicals, was Team leader for Unified Arts and in 1992, was awarded The Outstanding Teacher of the Year.

Charlie Im, Assistant Director of *THE BOYZ*, earned a Bachelor's degree from McDaniel College in 2012 and is currently working on his Master's Degree in Music Education at McDaniel. While an undergrad, he founded and directed the first men's a cappella group on campus, Accidental Tonality, and participated in many other music ensembles. He also directs a local church choir and works in music retail.

Diane Jones, Co-Founder and Artistic Director and Director of *Cantare Bel Canto I*, earned a Masters of Liberal Arts from Western Maryland College and a Bachelors of Music Education from Houghton College in New York. Prior to establishing the Children's Chorus, Ms. Jones taught in New York and Maryland public schools for over twenty five years. She was also adjunct faculty at McDaniel College. In addition to her work with the Children's Chorus, Ms. Jones has an active private piano studio and enjoys a variety of collaborative musical experiences as an accompanist, pianist, and choral director.

Jeff Liebknecht, Director of THE BOYZ, is also Director Emeritus of the Old Line Statesmen Barbershop Chorus and a 30 year member of Barbershop Harmony Society. This all male group has added another dimension to Children's Chorus and makes it possible for all of our singers to continue with us through high school.

Rachel Morgan directs *Cantare Bel Canto II* and conducts the combined *Cantare Bel Canto* choirs. Under her leadership, the choir has won numerous awards at choral festivals and adjudications. As co-directors of ***Voce Viaggio***, she and Ms. Jones took students to Europe in the "Austrian Choral Festival with Henry Leck" in 2014, where they performed in Vienna, Salzburg, and Prague. Currently, Ms. Morgan is the Choral Music Teacher at North Carroll Middle School after having served nine years as the Lead Music Teacher at William Winchester Elementary. Ms. Morgan is also the Artistic Director and Mentor Teacher of Lamplight Artists' "All About Kids Productions" and has worked on special projects with Lamplight as a performer/composer/clinician at state and national levels. In addition, Ms. Morgan volunteers as both a vocalist and keyboardist at LifePoint Church, and she has studied African hand drumming. Ms. Morgan holds a Masters of Music degree in Music Education from the Peabody Institute of the Johns Hopkins University (Baltimore, MD) and a Bachelors of Music Education from Wheaton College, Wheaton, IL.

Choral Highlights

Children's Chorus of Carroll County presents two major annual concerts and is also involved in other concerts and musical collaborations. The Chorus has joined forces with the Peabody Children's Chorus and Peabody Strings, The Johns Hopkins Chorus and Orchestra, The Georgetown University Chorus and Orchestra, Masterworks Chorale of Carroll County, McDaniel College Choir, Old Line Statesmen Barbershop Quartet and Chorus, Estonian Television Girls Choir, Blue Ridge Brass Quintet, Westminster Ringers, Westminster Ballet Company and the Paide Girls Choir (Estonia). Each fall, the Bel Cantos help raise monies for the local Safe House by performing in the annual "With One Voice" Concert, St. John Church. Select singers are regularly showcased at the Big Band Merry Christmas Concert.

Highlights of the two younger performing groups, *Les Petites Voix* and *Il Choro Della Bella Voce*, include performances at Hershey Park Candy Lane, the Washington, D.C. Mormon Tabernacle Visitors Center, Port Discovery in Baltimore, and the Teddy Bear Factory in Gettysburg, and joint concerts with the Westminster Senior Singers.

Cantare Bel Canto highlights include performances at the White House Candlelight Tours, Carnegie Hall and the Riverside Church in New York. Each spring the Bel Cantos participate in an adjudicated event. In May of 2003 they were awarded a Superior Rating at the Paramount King's Dominion Choral Festival. In May of 2004, the Bel Cantos went to Philadelphia to participate in the Heritage Children's Choir Festival, receiving an adjudication rating of excellent. May of 2005 found the group once again in New York City participating in a "Music Maestro, Please" festival where they earned a superior rating. In April 2006 the Bel Cantos went to Six Flags America in Washington, DC and earned two trophies: one for a superior performance and one for Best in Category. In 2007 they received an excellent rating in Music in the Parks at Busch Gardens, VA. The choir earned a superior rating and "Outstanding Festival Choir" at the 2008 Music in the Parks at Hershey Park. In New York's 2009 and 2011 *Heritage Festivals*, they received a Gold award, and the opportunity of participating in a Gold Festival in Chicago, 2010. In March 2009, the BC's joined the Maryland State Boy Choir and the Annapolis Children's Chorus in Young Voices of Maryland, a one day festival culminating in a stellar evening concert. The Chicago *Heritage Festival* was the destination in May 2010, where, once again, they received an outstanding rating and had a fabulous time. In 2011, the choir received a Superior Rating and the "Esprit De Corps" award at Music in the Parks at Hershey Park. In 2012, they participated in the Heritage Festival in NYC and earned an Excellent rating at the adjudication. In the spring of 2013, they captured the coveted Superior Rating and Best of Contest at Music in the Parks at Hershey Park. Also in 2013, BC's appeared with "Bach in Baltimore" under the direction of Maestro T. Herbert

Dimmock. A Heritage Festival in Philadelphia in May of 2014 earned another Gold Rating and the highest scores in the adjudications. June 20, 2015: Bel Canto members sang at Carnegie Hall, NYC, as participants in the National Children's Festival Chorus, sponsored by *manhattan concert productions*.

Voce Viaggio is the group that travels most extensively, representing our community and state both near and far. In 2004, they travelled to Finland, Sweden and Estonia, representing Westminster and the United States in Estonia as an extension of the Westminster, Maryland/Paide, Estonia Partner City Program. In July 2008, they journeyed to England to participate in the "12th International Children's Chorus Festival," where they sang in Oxford, Coventry and London under the direction of Dr. Rollo Dilworth and Dr. David Flood. They returned to England in 2011 with the International Children's Chorus Festival and had a home-base of Canterbury. In June of 2014, *Voce Viaggio* traveled to Austria and The Czech Republic with KIconcerts Festival under the direction of Dr. Henry Leck.

Commissioned Works

The following pieces have been commissioned by Children's Chorus of Carroll County, thereby enriching the choral music available for unchanged voices:

"Te Deum" by Richard Eichman

"Hippopotamathalium" by DJ Sparr

"The Letter" and "Wesley Church" by Dr. Larry Harris

"The Journey to Ithaca" by Garth Baxter

"And Death Shall Have No Dominion" by Garth Baxter

"Songs of Life" by Garth Baxter

"Journeys to Freedom: Rännakud Vabadusse" by Rebecca Oswald

"Carroll Canon" by Dr. DJ Spaar (Commissioned by Glenn Patterson, Carroll County Sousa Band)

The Kodály Philosophy

The approach to music education embraced by the Children's Chorus of Carroll County follows the philosophy inspired by the Hungarian composer and music educator, Zoltán Kodály (1882-1967). Key elements of this method are expressive singing of both folk and quality composed music, and a sequential approach to learning to read music notation.

The voice is the child's first and most natural musical instrument. Children's songs, folk songs, and singing games provide the background for the earliest study of rhythm and melody. In addition to the singing, solfegg and rhythmic syllables coupled with physical movement are used to internalize music concepts.

Personal Department Policy

Children's Chorus of Carroll County believes that before anything of substance can be taught or learned, a safe, nurturing and ethical environment must be created. Children's Chorus of Carroll County welcomes children from all walks of life and believes in the kind of personal freedom that is tempered by an understanding of the rights, sensibilities and sensitivities of others.

To that end, it must be clearly understood by Chorus members, parents and staff that no form of harassment, bullying or mean speech or action, including those posing as humor, based on race, creed, gender, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or nationality will be tolerated from any child or adult connected with the Chorus.

This is the Children's Chorus of Carroll County Community Standard and we expect all members of our community to live by it and to expect it from each other. Any infraction of this Standard shall be reported to the Director immediately and remedial action, up to and including dismissal from the Chorus will be taken.

Attendance

The standards and objectives for members of the Chorus are high and it is the expectation that each member and his/ her family needs to make a commitment to uphold those standards in the pursuit of excellence in all areas. Objectives include having every member thoroughly prepared and enjoying the sense of satisfaction that comes with high achievement. **Attendance plays a major role in such preparedness. Choral singing is a team effort with all members being essential players and equally important; every singer on the team needs to extend his/her personal best in all aspects of Chorus membership, including attendance.**

It is the expectation that members participate in their groups' events and activities listed on the original calendar issued at the Parent's Orientation Meeting. Reminders and more event details will be stated in the monthly News Bulletin.

It is the expectation that all members complete the two semester season. Recognizing the unforeseen circumstances of life, however, if your student *must* leave the Chorus before the end of the choir year, please inform the Director, the Choir Coordinator and the Financial Manager *in advance*.

Attendance Awards

Recognition of outstanding attendance will take place during the final Spring rehearsal. Perfect attendance, a high honor, may be earned by a member who has missed no more than two Chorus events because of school-related activities.

When accruing the number of years of Chorus involvement, membership in *musique joyeuse* is counted. However, acquiring bars and pins does not begin until a member has completed one year in an auditioned group, whether that is LPV, DB, BC or any other performing group.

Attendance Policy for Rehearsals

ATTENDANCE AT EVERY REHEARSAL IS MANDATORY

Generally, if a singer is well enough to attend school, she/he is well enough to attend rehearsal. If a member has a sore throat, it is important that he/she still attends rehearsal, but informs the director that he/she will be listening and following the music, singing inside his/her head. Even though a member is not actively singing, he/she can be actively learning by listening and reading.

Written notification of absence must be received in advance to be valid. Forms are in the Appendix to this Handbook. Completed forms should be submitted to the student's Choir Coordinator. A brief written explanation is all that is needed; **please do not contact directors about absences.**

ATTENDANCE AT EVERY REHEARSAL IS MANDATORY

Choir Coordinators will notify directors after a student has missed two rehearsals. At the director's discretion, the student may be required to sing for the director before or after rehearsal. **After three absences, the student will be asked to sing privately for the director.** This is in no way a punishment; the private hearing facilitates the ability of the director to address any musical problems a student may have and to assess current expected singing abilities. A Chorus member may request help from their director, at a time to be determined by the director. *Please note that repeated tardiness and/or early departures accrue as absences.

Punctuality (arriving on time) is very important because vital warm-up exercises are frequently first on the rehearsal agenda. These exercises establish habits essential for good vocal health and performance. Also, students arriving late create distraction and disruption for other choristers.

- Written notification, Absence Forms, must be received in advance by Choir Coordinators; these are on the website under FORMS
- **Arriving more than 10 minutes late to a rehearsal three times is counted as an absence. If an emergency arises, a Choir Coordinator should be called to say that the student will arrive late and stating the reason.**
- **Leaving more than 10 minutes early, three (3) times will count as one (1) absence.**
- More than three absences, repeated tardiness or early departure may be cause for dismissal from the Chorus.
- The directors reserve the right to make final decisions regarding the Attendance Policy in extenuating circumstances.

ATTENDANCE AT EVERY REHEARSAL IS MANDATORY

Extended Music Enrichment (also called Sing-In's) occurs two times in the Fall semester and once in the Spring. These Saturday rehearsals are essential for performance preparation. They also provide the opportunity to expand general musicianship, develop team spirit, and offer socialization opportunities. **The mandatory attendance policy applies to these events; missing a session equates to being absent from a weekly rehearsal.**

Attendance Policy for FINAL REHEARSALS (Mandatory, pre-performance rehearsals):

There is a **Final Rehearsal** before each major concert: Winter Celebration, Spring Celebration or combined concerts with other musical organizations. **FINAL REHEARSALS ARE MANDATORY. STUDENTS NEED TO ATTEND THE ENTIRE REHEARSAL, arriving on time and not leaving early. We rehearse in the hall just one time and every minute of the rehearsal is important. Students not attending a Final Rehearsal will not perform in the upcoming concert. At the director's discretion, students arriving late or leaving early for the rehearsal may not be allowed to sing in the upcoming concert.**

This is the time when performance and behavior details are “fine-tuned;” one unprepared singer can diminish the quality of the performance experience for the entire group. Also, an unprepared singer is always a stressed singer, a condition we work diligently to avoid.

Singers do not wear concert uniforms to the Final Rehearsals.

Friday Evening Rehearsals: The directors may decide to schedule a Friday evening rehearsal if necessary.

ALL PERFORMANCES LISTED ON THE CHORUS CALENDAR PRESENTED AT THE PARENT ORIENTATION MEETINGS ARE MANDATORY. Any performance absence may be cause for dismissal from the Chorus.

Inclement Weather Policy

An announcement will be emailed to families and placed on the Chorus website by 5:00 pm on Tuesday evenings and 8:00 am on weekends when there is an activity. In the situation of an afternoon or evening concert, the announcement will be made 90 minutes before concert call time.

If schools are closed, Chorus may still meet if it is determined that the roads are safe. Watch for emails and check the website, www.ccccnotes for verification.

Rehearsal Schedule and Places

Our regular rehearsals begin the first Tuesday after Labor Day and go through to and including the last Tuesday in April. Activities involving members of *Bel Canto* and **THE BOYZ** may require rehearsals beyond April. Please refer to monthly News Bulletins, print and digital calendars to reference rehearsal times and places.

Tuesday evening rehearsals begin the first Tuesday after Labor Day. They will be at Grace Lutheran Church, 21 Carroll St., Westminster, MD 21157.

Final Rehearsals for the Winter and Spring Celebrations will be at a location announced in the News Bulletin.

Fall Extended Music Enrichment is held at Friendship Valley Elementary, 1100 Gist Rd., Westminster, MD 21157. The spring session will be at Westminster United Methodist Church, Main and Center Sts., Westminster, MD 21157.

Rehearsal Procedures:

- Arrive no more than 10 minutes before the designated rehearsal time, and go directly to rehearsal room, sit quietly in assigned seat and make necessary preparations for practice.
- Turn in any paperwork, permission forms, surveys etc. to the Choir Coordinator. **Do not give any paperwork to the director.**
- There should be no one roaming the building at any time. Students should be in rehearsal area only.
- **At no time should siblings or other children be unattended anywhere in the building.**
- Respect for fellow Chorus members and all adults should be demonstrated at all times.
- Pay attention to the Director and save talking for later.
- Running, yelling and rowdy behavior are not permitted in the building or on the grounds.
- Bring materials in the Chorus tote provided. Bel Canto singers will need 2 sharpened pencils at all times.

- ▷ Bel Canto singers are encouraged to bring a bottle of water to drink during rehearsals. **No beverage except water is allowed during rehearsals.**
- ▷ **No electronic devices, including phones, should come into the rehearsal or performance venue. The director may hold a member's phone or other electronic device until the end of the rehearsal.**

Choir Coordinators

Head Coordinator: Fred Saurborn, cccnotes@gmail.com

Choir Coordinators are liaisons between the directors and the parents. The Choir Coordinator is a parent volunteer who assists the members, parents and directors with paperwork and other non-musical tasks. Choir Coordinators will be at the rehearsal Sign-in Tables to greet parents and members, convey any pertinent information, ensure uniform readiness, log Community Service Hours and receive paperwork.

Parents, it is important to communicate with the Choir Coordinator at each rehearsal. Make sure you get their cell phone numbers so you can contact them in the event of an emergency during rehearsal.

Most communication between the Chorus and families takes place by email. If your email changes, let your Choir Coordinator know. They frequently send the emails. Please make sure Chorus emails are not directed in your spam folder.

Safety and Security

To ensure the safety and security of your child, the Safety Committee, as directed by the Board of Directors, has put the following procedures into place:

Before rehearsal

- Parents must escort all children into the building and sign-in on the Attendance Roster. [**Only exception:** students who drive themselves to Chorus may sign in and out themselves.] The roster will be at the rehearsal room entrance where the Choir Coordinator will assist in signing in; this should be a quick procedure. Parents, please do not leave until you have completed this task. It is for the safety and security of your child.
- If carpooling, the parent who is driving will need to sign-in all the children in his/her care.
- Before and after all rehearsals, children must stay in the areas designated for Chorus activity.
- Chorus members should not use elevators unless there is a physical need to do so.

After rehearsal

- All children will need to be signed out by a parent. In the event of carpooling, the supervising adult will need to sign-out the children in his/her care.
- As always, please be prompt in picking up your child.
- **NO CHILD SHOULD BE OUTSIDE THE CHURCH OR ANY REHEARSAL OR PERFORMANCE AREA WITHOUT AN ADULT. Leaving the building unescorted WILL result in dismissal from the Chorus for one semester.**
- Directors will not leave the rehearsal or performance area until all children are picked up.

For the security of our members, **signing in and out is required for all rehearsals and performances.**

Emergency Procedures

We will evacuate the church or school by going out the closest exterior door. Choir Coordinators will assist in notifying the parents by phone as soon as the students are out of harm's way.

Personal Conduct

Use of rehearsal and performance facilities

- Please wipe your feet at the entrances.
- Do not track in mud, leaves, or snow.
- After using rest rooms, make sure toilets are flushed, hands are washed, towels are in trash cans and faucets are off.
- Absolutely no littering or defacing property. Demonstrate respect for the building.
- Remember that at all times the singers represent Children's Chorus of Carroll County.
- No matter what the rehearsal setting, all members of our group are expected to treat one another, the staff and facilities with respect.
- In school settings, it is imperative that the teacher's desk and all books and instruments are off-limits for Chorus members.

Personal Demeanor

A member of the Children's Chorus is to consistently exhibit respect for himself/herself, respect for others, respect for property, and respect for the program. A certain amount of assistance and guidance will be given to help correct unacceptable behaviors, but it must be remembered by all that the organization is not equipped to deal with chronic or extreme behavior problems.

If a member does not, under normal classroom management approaches, meet behavioral standards, the following discipline procedure will be implemented.

1st problem - A private teacher/student conference.

2nd problem - A private teacher/student conference, parent via the letter below.

3rd problem - Director will contact parents with a warning that the next offense may result in dismissal. A conference may be requested by the director, parent or student.

The following is the letter that will be sent home if there is repeatedly a discipline problem with a student (Referred to above as 2nd problem.)

Dear _____,

Children’s Chorus of Carroll County strives to provide a high-quality experience for all of our members. Every student of this team is valued and nurtured to the best of our ability. High goals for personal and musical achievement mean that all singers must work together and contribute their best efforts during rehearsals and performances. Regrettably, at this point, your student’s behavior is not meeting the standard for the following reason(s):

- _____ Belligerent or rude attitude
- _____ Conversing with other members at inappropriate times
- _____ Distracting others during rehearsals
- _____ Habitually arriving late for rehearsals
- _____ Inattentiveness
- _____ Not following directions
- _____ Using electronic devices during rehearsals (not allowed at Chorus events)

Prior to this notification, the following steps have been taken:

If you would like to discuss this, please see me after our next rehearsal or contact me by email. For the benefit of your child and the group, I need to know of any extenuating circumstances that may be creating or contributing to this difficulty.

If improvement in the behavior noted above does not occur in the next two weeks, it will be necessary to meet at a mutually agreeable time to discuss the situation.

Sincerely, _____ Date: _____

Please sign below and have your student return this letter to me, their director, at the next rehearsal.

Parent: Signature _____ Date: _____

Performances

Music is an expressive art, a marvelous vehicle for conveying the breadth of human emotion and experience. Our public performances are our opportunities to communicate and to shine! They are the Play-offs and World Series for our singers. Obviously, all singers need to attend all performances. If a schedule conflict occurs, the absence must be discussed in advance with the director of the choir involved. Any unexcused absence from a mandatory performance may constitute a reason for dismissal from the Chorus. Performances require the very best conduct, appearance, and musicianship. Before a concert, singers should always eat a nutritious meal, be adequately hydrated and get plenty of rest. Be sure the singer has used the rest room prior to arrival at the concert site.

Participating in Services at Grace Lutheran Church

Children's Chorus is a non-sectarian community group, embracing students from all ethnic and religious backgrounds. We literally take-over Grace Lutheran Church on Tuesday evenings, engaging not only their facilities, but also their wonderful administrative and custodial staff. Therefore, once a year, at least three of the performing groups sing in a Sunday morning service. This demonstration of goodwill allows the church members to get a glimpse into what we are about. We, in turn, have an opportunity to thank them for graciously allowing our organization to share their space.

This event is as important as other performances. Please plan accordingly.
Attendance at this event is necessary to maintain perfect attendance.

Gather at 10:30 am; we usually meet in a room in the church and proceed as a group to the sanctuary for a warm-up. Parents, please keep singers' coats with you. Uniform: formal

The service begins at 11:15 am and is generally over in an hour.

A printed service program will be distributed to provide hymn numbers and other information.

Everyone is welcomed to the communion table. However, we will instruct the children that those who have never taken communion should not participate in the sacrament for the first time during this service.

If a parent would like the child to participate in communion, they can pick up their child from the LPV/DB pew and proceed as a family to receive communion.

General Performance Procedures

Singers should arrive 10 minutes before the performance call (designated time for performers to arrive) and immediately check-in with the adult in charge, usually the Choir Coordinator. (Arriving after a performance has begun may result in exclusion from participation in part or all of that performance. **A singer arriving late must never go up on the stage after a concert has begun.**)

- ▷ All performers must arrive attired in proper concert dress. Failure to wear the proper uniform will result in non-participation in the performance.
- ▷ Singers should conduct themselves at all times in a calm, polite and professional manner. They must give their undivided attention to the director or person in charge at all times.
- ▷ Each singer is personally responsible for developing a confident command of the concert repertoire over the course of the semester. Failure to demonstrate this at the Final Rehearsal may result in release from the upcoming concert.

If a singer feels ill during a performance, he/she should quietly sit down on the riser and rest for the remainder of the song. Then, if feeling better, the child may get up and sing again; or if not, quietly leave the stage. If the child leaves the stage, he/she may not return during the current musical set, but can join the next time his group returns to the risers. Choir Coordinators assist with such situations.

Remember that when appearing in public, Chorus members represent the entire Chorus and are a direct reflection of the entire Chorus program. All performances are important and require outstanding behavior.

SHOUT-OUTS

The Winter and Spring Celebration concerts have a formal written program in which families and friends can place Shout Outs: short notes of encouragement for the student, a thank you to the directors, Choir Coordinators, or any other appropriate greeting. Forms for the Shout Outs will be available at the website under Forms and will be at the Sign-In tables in October and again in the March.

Example: Way to go, Mandy! We love your singing! Mom & Dad

Program Ads

Chorus members are asked to solicit advertising funds for the two concert programs. The concerts planned for the season build on our continued success. The success of the Chorus presentations for the past number of years should be presented as a special draw for advertisers to submit ads for our concert programs.

Certainly prior-year advertisers need to be asked to participate again, but there are many other businesses in the greater Carroll County community who may be willing to advertise if the extra steps are taken to ask them. This is especially true of businesses Chorus families patronize. **Program ad income adds a significant amount of revenue to our operating budget for the season.**

Chorus members should point out to each prospective advertiser that their advertisement will appear in two concert programs (Dec & Apr) and that **each ad will be seen by as many as 800 arts-oriented, culturally-minded citizens** in our area. You should also mention that the Children's Chorus of Carroll County is an independent arts organization, only partially supported by the Carroll County Arts Council, the Maryland State Arts Council and McDaniel College. We need additional support to continue our outstanding concert presentations.

After explaining the pricing of the various sized advertisements as described on the ad order form (see Handbook Appendices/Forms), you should obtain an accurate copy of their advertisement, either a business card (for the smaller ads) or camera-ready copy for the larger ones. If they prefer, advertisers can email the copy directly to Don Jones as indicated on the ad order form. If they wish to repeat last year's ad, please be sure it is correct for this year's listing. **Chorus members may submit all ads at once, but Don Jones needs all of them no later than Dec 1**, in order to prepare copy and program layout for the first concert.

Please ask advertisers to submit a **check payable to Children's Chorus of Carroll County**. The Financial Manager will collect the checks. **Chorus members must remain actively engaged in coordinating the receipt of ads, delivery of copy to Don and payment to the Financial Manager.** Use the ad order form to record your progress receiving the ad from each advertiser. **Please be persistent and the rewards will be there.**

Concert Dress/Uniforms

Information about uniform ordering will be handed out in a separate flyer at the Parent Orientation Meetings.

A well-groomed choir is essential for a truly professional and artistic experience. The Chorus uniform is a public statement about each individual member and the entire Chorus organization. What the audience “hears” is greatly influenced by what they “see.” For that reason and for developing a sense of pride in the Chorus, please carefully assist your Chorus member in dressing for all performances.

- **Address uniform questions to your Choir Coordinator or Jacie Mathias-Jones, JMathias@carrollcommunityfoundation.org.**
- **Hang all parts of the uniform together: shirt, tie, pants or skirt, vest.**
- **All uniforms should be freshly laundered.**
- **Shirts and vests should be always be pressed.**
- **Periodically check your child's uniform for good fit.** This is especially important in the spring and needs to be done **at least two weeks before the spring concert.** Contact your Choir Coordinator if it doesn't fit.
- When in public, please have shirts tucked in at all times and maintain a neat appearance.
- Additionally, good personal hygiene is a must for all singers. Out of respect for those who may be sensitive or allergic to fragrance, **please do not wear perfume or cologne.**
- **Hair should be clean and styled away from the face.** Hairstyles that obscure the eyes are not acceptable. Be sure that hair will not come loose during a performance and fall into the face. Refrain from using scented hair spray. Headbands should be limited to 1/4". Bows should be limited to the back of the head and should be small. We ask that hair ornaments be limited to colors that match either the singer's hair color or the color of our uniform. Glitter in the hair is not acceptable at any time.
- No skin glitter or fake tatoos.
- *Bel Canto's:* If makeup is used, it should be natural, neutral and applied lightly. Do not wear any dark or exceedingly bright shades.

We ask that members of *Les Petites Voix* and *Il Choro Della Bella Voce* not wear any makeup at all.

- Jewelry should be limited to the following: 1 ring per hand, small stud earrings, Chorus award pins.

*****Exceptions to the dress code will not be tolerated*****

- ***A singer failing to dress or groom properly may not be allowed to participate in the scheduled event.***

Formal Uniform for LPV and DB

Provided by Chorus: Red vest with Chorus patch and tie

Purchased by family:

White oxford chorus shirt for boys and girls plus the following:

Girls

Black pleated skirt from Flynn & O'Hara School Uniforms.

White opaque tights

Black dress flats (No open toes, clogs, boots or sneakers, heels 3/4" or less)

Boys

Black dress pants with black belt (No black jeans)

Black dress shoes (No boots, clogs or sneakers)

Black socks

Formal Uniform for BC I & BC II

Girls

Purchased by family:

Concert blouse

Full-length black concert skirt

Hem: 3 inches above the floor in concert dress shoes

Black opaque nylons or tights

Black dress shoes

Boys

Provided by Chorus: red bow tie and cummerbund

Purchased by family:

Black Chorus shirt

Black dress pants with black belt (No black jeans)

Black dress shoes (No boots, clogs or sneakers)

Black socks

Formal Uniform for ~~THE~~ BOYZ

Provided by Chorus: tie and fedora

Purchased by family:

Black **BOYZ** shirt

Black dress pants with black belt (No black jeans)

Black dress shoes (No boots, clogs or sneakers)

Black socks

Casual Uniform for all performance groups

Red Chorus Polo

Dark blue jeans*

Sneakers

*Jeans should have no holes or wide legs. They should not ride low on the hips, and should be **dark blue**, not faded. No sandals or clogs. Sneakers should be white, as plain as possible and in good condition.

General Information

Travel Procedures

Tuition must be paid-in-full before any member can sign up for a travel event.

While traveling, all previously stated rules of conduct apply. (See page 14, Personal Department Policy) In the most severe discipline cases, the director may send the singer home at the parent's expense before completion of the event.

If it is known in advance that a singer must leave an event before the stated departure time, *advanced* written permission must be given to the chaperone in charge of the student. Also, emergency medical forms, which are given out at Parent Orientation Meetings and completed by the first rehearsal, must be on file for the current year before any member can board transportation provided by Chorus.

Chaperones

The number of chaperones needed for trips will vary depending on the group involved and the event. Advance notification will be posted when there is a need for chaperones.

Medication

If your child takes medication on a regular basis, please continue it for all rehearsals and performances.

If medication is discontinued, please inform the Choir Coordinator and the choir director so he/she can be aware of any behavior changes.

Emergency Information

Two Emergency Forms, given out at Parent Orientation Meetings, must be filled out and returned to the Choir Coordinators before the first rehearsal.

Service-Learning Hours for students in grade six and beyond

Service-Learning Hours are accrued for performance times and 20% of rehearsal time. The number of hours earned in one year will be tallied at the end of the spring semester and forms will be distributed at Recognition Night.

Materials Collection Night/Re-Registration

On the third Tuesday in April, at any time during the designated group rehearsal time, all Chorus materials, including binders and music will be collected at Grace Lutheran. Uniforms will also be collected on this night. Exceptions for turn-in of items may be travel event following the collection night and turn-in/collection will be coordinated on an individual basis. All financial obligations are finalized this evening, including the return of Material Deposits to members who will not be returning. This is the also date for registering and making deposits for the following season.

Recognition & Ice Cream Party Night

This night is normally the fourth Tuesday in April. The calendar and News Bulletins may adjust this date. Members of LPV, DB, and BC performance groups are awarded certificates, bars and pins for years of participation; other special accomplishments may be recognized. BC members may receive Community Service hours.

Printed Music & Teaching Materials

It is the singer's responsibility to take good care of all Chorus materials, including binders and all print music. **The music loaned to Chorus members is the property of the Chorus and stamped with the Chorus name.** Music with the Chorus stamp and related materials must be returned to the Chorus. The Chorus tote bag, distributed at the first rehearsal, is for keeping and transporting all music, at least two sharpened pencils and other Chorus materials. Please encourage your Chorus member to maintain all materials in good condition. **If music or materials are lost, irreplaceably damaged or not returned on time, the Materials Deposit will not be refunded in full.** The difference between the value of the lost materials and the Materials Deposit will be assessed.

Music is to be used, not abused.

Observe the following guidelines for the handling and care of music and materials:

- Materials must be brought to all rehearsals and performances unless you are notified otherwise.
- Never fold or roll music.
- All markings should be done lightly in pencil and only at the direction of the music director.
- 2 sharpened pencils should be brought to each rehearsal.
- If for any reason a piece of music is in need of repair, please do so with clear tape.

Financial Information

Tuition

Tuition for membership covers the following: salaries, purchase of music, rehearsal and concert hall rentals, hospitality, and other operational expenses.

Tuition is billed in three installments in June, July and August following the receipt of the Enrollment Deposit. **The Enrollment Deposit is non-refundable.** Tuition may be paid in extended installments beyond the normally scheduled three payments by special arrangement with the Financial Manager. Please make such requests by June 30.

All payments must be made by check, money order or via PayPal on the Chorus website (ccccnotes.com). All checks and money orders should be made payable to Children's Chorus of Carroll County. Tuition checks are to be remitted to the Chorus address: 91 W Main ST, Westminster, MD 21157. **Tuition is non-refundable after August 31.**

*****Travel costs are not included in tuition fees*****

Members may not sign up for a travel event with the Chorus if tuition has not been paid in full.

All tuition on extended installment plans must be paid in full at least three weeks prior to the December concert; failure to be paid in full will result in exclusion from that performance.

Financial Assistance

We recognize that paying full tuition may cause a hardship for some families and we do not want any accepted member to have to decline membership because of financial difficulties. If you need assistance, please contact the General Manager. The non-refundable Enrollment Deposit needs to be remitted for each student who wishes to be in the Chorus, including those applying for financial assistance.

Returned checks

Payment will need to be resubmitted within 7 days for all checks returned due to non-sufficient funds. A second returned check will necessitate payment by money order. The Chorus member's family is expected to pay any fees assessed by the bank, and a \$20.00 service fee assessed by the Chorus.

Current Fees

Tuition for the season is as follows:

musique joyeuse \$350.00, including family owned home materials

Les Petites Voix \$350.00

Il Choro Della Bella Voce \$400.00 (includes a \$50.00 fee for Basic Skills Class)

Cantare Bel Canto \$450.00

THE BOYZ \$300.00 (for members whose voices do not allow them to sing with BC's; there is no extra fee for members enrolled concurrently in either DB or BC.)

Sibling discounts

A \$35 discount is available for the younger child/children of each family. The Financial Manager coordinates these transactions on the third tuition installment invoice(s).

Materials Deposit & Commitment Deposit

This is a \$25.00 deposit for use of music owned by the Chorus, uniforms and other Chorus materials which is due when a student enters the Chorus, paid by check at the Parent Orientation Meeting. The \$25.00 is returned when the student leaves the Chorus after returning all materials in good condition. This fee is not included in the tuition payment.

In the event that music or other materials are damaged or lost, it is the Chorus family's responsibility to pay the replacement cost of that material.

*****Replacement fees for lost or damaged music will be assessed per copy.*****

Beginning in the fall of 2014, newly purchased music scores are the property of Chorus members. An annual \$15.00 Sheet Music Fee will be assessed to all Chorus members to cover that expense.

Newly accepted members will pay a total of \$40.00 to cover both the Materials Deposit and the Sheet Music Fee.

Returning members will only pay the \$15.00 Sheet Music Fee. (They have already paid the \$25.00 fee.)

Deposit to Reserve Chorus Position for Next Year

All deposits to reserve a Chorus position for the next year must be remitted at Materials Collection Night at the end of the Chorus Year. Failure to make the deposit at Materials Collection Night may result in forfeiture of any accrued funds and require reapplication to the Chorus.

Fees for lost or damaged uniforms:

\$20 Red Vest

\$10 DB ties

\$10 BC cummerbunds/ bow ties

\$5 Pearls for BC Girls

Individual Travel Accounts

This program enables members to accrue money towards travel with the Bel Canto's and for younger students to make deposits toward future tuition. All LPV, DB and BC students may participate in this program.

Individual Travel Accounts work in the following manner:

Profits of some fundraising events will be shared by all students going on a particular trip. This happens when the assistance of individuals cannot be identified with the result of the event. An example would be when an event is held at a restaurant and the Chorus gets a percentage of the proceeds from the event.

When a fundraising event has results that can be attributed to individual students, the resulting profit will be computed and credited to the student in proportion to the effort put into the event. An example would be sales of pizza/cookie dough when a student earned 8% of the total monies collected; 8% of the total group profit would go into that student's individual travel account.

When a student participates in a travel event, the funds in his/her individual travel account may be applied towards the amount required for the trip.

If a student leaves the Chorus before exhausting funds in his/her individual travel account, the account balance returns to the Chorus' general fund.

Financial & Community Support

Chorus receives grant money from the Carroll County Arts Council (Department of Parks and Recreation) and the Maryland State Arts Council. Additionally, our affiliation with the Music Department at McDaniel has provided facility use, expanded choral opportunities, and collaboration with college music students and professors.

Carroll County Arts Council Affiliation

The Chorus is an alliance member of the Carroll County Arts Council (CCAC). **This entitles our member families to receive a discount for CCAC's activities and programs. To receive the discount when attending a CCAC function, state that you are a Chorus member.**

Leaving the Chorus

If your child does not plan to continue next year, please tell the Choir Coordinator by the third Tuesday in April Material Collections Night.

From the Financial Manager

A copy of the Chorus Budget, as established by the Board of Directors, is kept at Grace Lutheran Church and is available upon request. Finances are regularly prepared for review by a CPA and are IRS compliant.

Communication

Chorus Calendar

A hard-copy of the calendar is distributed at the Parent Orientation Meetings. Please display this in a place where it is frequently and conveniently seen. The calendar also contains contact information for all Chorus personnel.

Weekly Chorus Sign-In

Check weekly with your Choir Coordinator for postings or distribution of information.

Email

Email is consistently and frequently used for updates and reminders: Please open and thoroughly read **ALL** emails from the Chorus.

If you are not receiving emails, CHECK YOU SPAM FOLDER. If not there, CONTACT YOUR CHOIR COORDINATOR.

Text Messages

Contact the General Manager if you prefer this mode of communication. No text messages will go to students.

Website

cccnotes.com is the communication center for the Chorus. There are both group-specific and general Chorus calendars, directions to various venues, pictures, current and past News Bulletins and much more at this site. Browse it regularly.

Monthly News Bulletin

Posted at **cccnotes.com** and sent via email at the beginning of each month, **this is the primary mode of communication for the Chorus; parents must read the News Bulletin to know what is going on within the Chorus.**

Families without computer access need to request a hardcopy of this Handbook and other email communications. Contact your Choir Coordinator and also inform the General Manager.

Notify the Choir Coordinators about changes in address, email or phone numbers. This is very important for effective communication and imperative in case of emergencies.

If there is a need to communicate with one of the choir directors about a problem or personal matter, please send an email, talk over the phone, or request a conference. Directors are pre-occupied before rehearsals, but may be available after rehearsal. Under no circumstance should a director be interrupted during a rehearsal with personal questions. When the singers are practicing, the director needs to be focused on them.

Appendices/Forms

Absence Form



Absence Form.pdf

Medical Form



Medical Form.pdf

Program Ad Order Form



Program Ad Form.pdf

Shout Out Order Form



Shout Out Order Form Winter 2015.pdf