



CONTRA COSTA  
**Children's  
Chorus**

*Celebrating musical  
excellence since 1984*

# Parent Student Manual 2016-17

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PO Box 2518  
Walnut Creek, CA 94595-0518

### Rehearsal Site

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### Staff Available Only During Rehearsal Times

Monday (4:30-7:00pm) ♦ Wednesday (4:00-6:30pm)

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# GENERAL INFORMATION

## ♪ MISSION STATEMENT

*Contra Costa Children's Chorus is devoted to developing choral excellence through education, instilling values of self-discipline and commitment, while inspiring the artist within each child through the power of music.*

## ♪ CHORUS HISTORY

Since 1984 the **Contra Costa Children's Chorus (CCCC)** has been providing high quality choral music education to children in the San Francisco East Bay area. Co-founded by Iris Lamanna and Sandy Warner, and after several interim directors, it is once again under the artistic direction of Iris Lamanna. The chorus continues to enrich the musical life of its members, their families, and the community at large. Following Iris' retirement in 2011, CCCC was under the artistic direction of Martín Benvenuto from 2011-2014, and then Andrew Brown from 2014-2017. Over the years the chorus has grown to include 4 choir levels, an Honors Ensemble, Summer Music Institute, and Metro♪Gnomes for the 4-6 year old.

The CCCC offers a comprehensive program of musical and vocal training, and performance of a wide variety of high caliber choral repertoire from all musical periods and styles. Its pursuit of excellence has earned the chorus national and international recognition, singing at many prestigious venues, including Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, Canterbury Cathedral, La Madeleine in Paris, Smetana Concert Hall in Prague, and the Vatican.

Among its many honors, the CCCC was a first place award winner at the Golden Gate International Children's and Youth Choral Festival Competition in 1991, has received gold ratings at numerous Heritage Festivals, and has participated in the Oregon Bach and Junior Bach Festivals. It has also collaborated with major performing arts organizations such as the California Symphony, Diablo Symphony, and Mormon Tabernacle Choir, and has been featured at the American Choral Directors Association Western Division Conventions in 1994 and 2000.

An integral part of the CCCC experience has been its participation in national and international tours. These have taken the chorus to Denmark, Hungary, Australia, China, Greece, Argentina and Western Europe, performing in some of the most prestigious venues around the world, including a live broadcast concert over the Hungarian National Radio, and singing at the opening ceremonies for the one-year countdown to the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing, China.

# OUR PROGRAM

## ♪ MUSIC PROGRAM

The CCCC is a **Kodály based program** offering a comprehensive program of musical and vocal training, and performance of a wide variety of high caliber choral repertoire from all musical periods and styles. In addition, our program includes training in the following areas:

- ✓ **Musicianship:** written and aural theory skills, solfège method, sight-singing (more details below)
- ✓ **Vocal technique:** development of healthy vocal habits, including good posture, breathing, and freedom of resonance. (more details below)
- ✓ **Foreign language:** development of skills at all levels
- ✓ **Instruments:** use of Orff rhythm instruments, drums and other percussion instruments, which enhance the music and improve rhythmic abilities
- ✓ **Choreography:** development of body movement, flexibility and rhythm for overall expressiveness.
- ✓ **Performance Skills:** stage presence, discipline, self-confidence, and theatre etiquette.

## ♪ CHORUS LEVELS

**Level 1** – For young beginners ages 6-9, with little or no previous musical experience. This level provides the foundation for progress in our program: attentiveness and focus, development of music theory and score reading, vocal technique basics, and beginning of part-singing.

**Level 2** – For beginners ages 7 to 10, who have demonstrated some basic vocal and musical competence. Performance demands increase, and vocal technique focuses on proper breathing and freedom of production. A larger focus is placed on score reading, solfège and sight-singing, with the goal of singing two-part music confidently.

**Level 3** – For intermediate singers ages 9 to 12, with previous musical experience or choristers who have mastered the skills developed in Level 1 and 2. The focus is preparation for the musical and vocal demands of Level 4, the advanced performing chorus. Musicianship skills are further developed further, foreign languages are emphasized, and the goal is singing three-part music confidently.

**Level 4 (Advanced Performing Chorus)** – For advanced singers ages 11 to 18 who have significant choral experience or choristers who have mastered the skills developed in Level 3. This level represents the pinnacle of the CCCC training and performance. Challenging literature is performed at the highest possible level, in three, four and more parts in various languages. Music theory knowledge is advanced, and sight-singing skills are refined. Vocal technique of a certain maturity is required, and is adapted to the different musical styles. An ambitious rehearsal (including the mandatory Summer Music Institute) and performance schedule provides the opportunity to choristers to offer their music to a variety of audiences, including national and international tours.

**Honors Ensemble** –The Honors Ensemble is the most elite group at CCCC and demands the highest level of commitment and dedication. Membership is by rigorous audition for skilled Level 4 choristers in grades 9 thru 12. Repertoire is mainly a cappella, suited for smaller ensembles, and most challenging. Excellent intonation and vocal quality, musical independence, and exemplary attendance are expected. Members are strongly encouraged to study voice privately.

# 🎵 MUSICIANSHIP & VOCAL CURRICULUM

## MUSICIANSHIP CURRICULUM

Music theory skills are taught at every regular rehearsal, and reinforced by individual work at home on assigned theory workbooks. This emphasis helps to provide a unique choral music education experience that produces well-rounded young musicians and choral singers.

Sandy Felstein's Practical Theory, a combination text and workbook in three volumes, will be assigned and provided to each chorister at the beginning of each season as part of tuition. Choristers are expected to bring the workbook to rehearsal in addition to their regular music binder. Singers in Levels 1 and 2 will be usually working on Volume 1, and singers in Level 3 on volumes 1 or 2, and singers in Level 4 on Volumes 2 or 3.

## VOCAL CURRICULUM

Vocal technique appropriate for each age/level is imparted at regular rehearsals. Our conducting staff is well trained in the area of vocal technique specific to young voices, and invested in the vocal development of our choristers. Private vocal instruction is encouraged only starting at 14-15 years of age, and the chorus office staff can provide voice teacher referrals.

## BREATHING

- 1) Posture: to develop proper posture for singing through exercises involving physical conditioning, active body positioning, and mental alertness.
- 2) Breath: to develop the cycle of inhalation-exhalation through exercises involving active use of the major breathing muscles.
- 3) Breath support: to develop the coordination to create an energized air column and control of the exhaled breath when applied to vocal production.

## PHONATION

- 1) Registration: to develop a healthily-produced lower voice, a free upper voice, and a gradually sophisticated blending of both.
- 2) Freedom: to develop the technique of singing with an open throat, with vertical mouth opening, unhinged jaw (down and back), and relaxed and forward tongue.

## RESONANCE

- 1) Resonance: to develop techniques of enhancement of vocal resonance, including spatial awareness, focus, and projection of the voice.
- 2) Uniform vowel colors: to develop the five Latin vowels as the basis of true legato singing.

## LEVEL 1 MUSICIANSHIP GOALS

Learn all treble clef note names

Learn all solfège hand signs

Learn to sing a major scale with solfège hand signs in the key of C major

Begin to recognize basic rhythmic values

Develop beginning sight-singing skills (step-wise melodies based on the scale of C major)

## LEVEL 1 VOCAL TRAINING GOALS

Align and prepare the body as an instrument for singing.

Demonstrate a natural breathing motion for singing

Apply the breath to vocal production (basic coordination).

Demonstrate the beginning of a free head voice production.

Correctly form and sing the [u] vowel with slightly flared lips and relaxed jaw.

## **LEVEL 2 MUSICIANSHIP GOALS**

Master skills covered in previous Level  
Master treble clef note names, and introduce bass clef note names  
Learn to sing major scales with solfège hand signs in keys C, F & G major  
Master basic rhythmic values and patterns, and introduce simple and compound meter  
Introduce basic musical symbols  
Introduce interval training  
Introduce key signatures (order of sharps and flats)  
Continue to develop basic sight-singing skills  
Be able to hold part independently in two-part music

## **LEVEL 2 VOCAL TRAINING GOALS**

Align and prepare the body as an instrument for singing: feet planted on the floor, unlocked knees, stretched spine, sternum comfortably high, shoulders relaxed, relaxed neck and forehead, hands down at the sides.  
Demonstrate a natural breathing motion as mentioned above, plus the beginning of breath “support”.  
Demonstrate the beginning of a smooth transition between “head” voice and “chest” voice.  
Correctly form and sing the five Latin vowels.

## **LEVEL 3 MUSICIANSHIP GOALS**

Master skills covered in previous Level  
Learn to sing all major and natural minor scales with solfège hand signs  
Recognize aural and written scales: major, natural minor, harmonic minor, melodic minor, whole-tone, pentatonic, chromatic  
Introduce more complex rhythmic values, including ties and syncopation  
Reinforce basic musical symbols  
Recognize aural and written diatonic intervals  
Reinforce key signatures (including relative minor keys)  
Distinguish between major and minor triads  
Continue to develop sight-singing skills, with an emphasis on coordinating rhythmic and melodic elements  
Be able to hold part independently in three-part music

## **LEVEL 3 VOCAL TRAINING GOALS**

Align and prepare the body as an instrument for singing, allowing for further freedom of movement in response to the music.  
Demonstrate increased coordination of the breathing motion, including a fast-paced inhalation-exhalation cycle.  
Demonstrate increased awareness of breath support and begin sustaining longer phrases.  
Sing with increased resonance and support throughout the vocal range.  
Correctly form and sing the five Latin vowels, and also diphthong combinations with attention to primary & vanishing vowels.

## **LEVEL 4 MUSICIANSHIP GOALS**

Master skills covered in previous Level  
Master singing all major and minor scales with solfège hand signs, and develop the ability to sing a chromatic scale  
Count simple and compound rhythms  
Master more complex rhythmic values; understand more complex/mixed meters  
Master all musical symbols & Recognize all intervals  
Begin to understand chordal structures and harmonic motion  
Develop more advanced sight-reading skills  
Be able to hold part and sight-sing proficiently in multiple-part music

## **LEVEL 4 VOCAL TRAINING GOALS**

Align and prepare the body as an instrument for singing for both sitting and standing positions, and with increased freedom of expression.  
Demonstrate a deep-breathing motion.  
Demonstrate increased awareness of breath support and control of the breath stream as a continuous flow of air.  
Sing with increasingly balanced resonance and support throughout a gradually increasing vocal range.  
Demonstrate correct mouth opening (vertical), jaw (unhinged), and tongue (relaxed and forward) positions while singing the five Latin vowels.

## HONORS ENSEMBLE VOCAL TRAINING GOALS

Align and prepare the body as an instrument for singing, and with increased awareness of choral performance as an art of communication.

Demonstrate consistent awareness of deep-breathing motion needed for singing.

Demonstrate increased awareness of breath support as the beginning of a true legato line, allowing the presence of vibrato as an outcome of freedom of production.

Demonstrate an extended vocal range, developing agility and sustained singing.

Demonstrate the skill of a correct vocal attack.

Demonstrate the beginning of the skill of performing a “*messa di voce*”.

Sing with a consistently open, unconstricted throat, unhinged jaw (back and down), and relaxed and forward tongue throughout the range.

## METRO♫GNOMES

Children aged 4 through 5 years old who want to sing but might be too young for our regular choir program are encouraged to join Metro♫Gnomes.

In this pre-choir class we lay the foundation for the musical skills developed in the choir program including:

- Building a strong sense of inner beat
- Discovering the child’s natural singing voice
- Learning songs and rhymes which prepare the ear for melodic and rhythmic literacy
- Interacting with peers in a playful, creative, supportive setting
- Fostering imagination and a sense of wonder

In each 45 minute class, your child will speak, sing and move through multiple songs and games. Whether choir is in the future plan or not, these elemental activities support your child’s social and intellectual development while sharing the rich, multi-cultural musical heritage we as Americans in the 21<sup>st</sup> century enjoy.

The movement, singing and listening activities will help them to:

- experience the joy of making music together
- improve coordination and balance
- build social interactions with peers and teachers
- nurture self-esteem
- lay the foundation for critical and creative thinking skills

Small sample of repertoire used in recent 10 week session:

- American – *Train is a comin’* – pentatonic spiritual
- Brazilian – *Abra a Roda* – rhythmic movement song
- Congolese – *Che Che Koolay* – movement and counting game
- English – *Fiddle-dee-dee* – story song about a fly and a bee
- Hungarian – *Naughty Kitty Cat* – “meowing” song/game

## ♫ CALIFORNIA ACADEMIC CONTENT STANDARDS

Contra Costa Children’s Chorus provides an excellent music education. Our program meets or exceeds The California Academic Content Standards. You may review these Standards on the web at:

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/mumain.asp>. These Standards & Frameworks were designed to encourage the highest achievement of every student in California, by defining the knowledge, concepts, and skills that students should acquire at each grade level. There are academic content standards for the Visual & Performing Arts for kindergarten through grade twelve, as adopted by the California State Board of Education. The Frameworks are blueprints for implementing the content standards and were developed by the Curriculum Development and Supplemental Materials Commission.

## ♪ ABOUT THE DIRECTORS

### **IRIS LAMANNA, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR**

#### **LEVEL 3 & 4**

Iris Lamanna, Co-Founder and Artistic Director of the Contra Costa Children's Chorus, is nationally recognized for her numerous achievements as a skilled musician and vocal director, and a dedicated musical educator. Her insight for music education, creativity, and pursuit of high artistic standards has developed the CCCC into one of the nation's top choruses. Iris holds a Bachelor's Degree in Piano and Voice Performance from Southwestern Oklahoma State University and a Music Education Degree from Central State University in Arkansas.

She has been the Western Division Chairperson for Children's Choirs for ACDA; has previously held office as California's R&S Chair, and was Western Division Chairperson for the 2002 Children's Chorus Honor Choir in Hawaii. Her many achievements include Recipient of Diablo Symphony's Distinguished Music Educator's Award and Level III certification in conducting and teaching from Doreen Rao's Choral Music Experience Institute.

She was honored by the Contra Costa County Arts Commission at the 2001 Arts Recognition Awards Ceremony as a leader in the arts and as having a significant impact on the arts in Contra Costa County. Ms. Lamanna conducted the 2005 ACDA National Elementary Children's Honor Choir in Los Angeles.

### **XIOMARA DE MAIO, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR**

#### **LEVELS 1, 2 & METRO, ♪ GNOMES**

The Contra Costa Children's Chorus is delighted to have Grammy Award winner, Xiomara Di Maio, as its new Associate Director. Ms. Di Maio's professional activities have been centered in the Bay area since 1998. She is a well-respected, award winning music educator, choral conductor, piano instructor and vocal coach. Ms. Di Maio was formerly the Preparatory and Musicianship Director at the San Francisco Boys Chorus and also the Preparatory Director at the Pacific Boy Choir Academy.

Ms. Di Maio was born in Caracas, Venezuela to a musical family. At five years old she was accepted by the Juan Jose Landaeta Conservatory of Music where she studied piano, percussion and sang in the children's chorus. She continued at the Conservatory through middle school and high school year. She was selected to teach musicianship classes to young children at the Conservatory when she was seventeen.

Ms. Di Maio came to the United States in 1980 on a full scholarship at Indiana University where she received her Bachelors in Music, majoring in Piano Performance and Percussion, and a Master's Degree in Choral Conducting. She has also studied with Vance George, the Director Emeritus at the San Francisco Symphony Chorus, Ragnar Bohlin, the current San Francisco Symphony Chorus Director and Roy Bogas, Professor of Piano at Holy Names College and has been a guest pianist for the San Francisco Ballet Orchestra.

Ms. Di Maio sang with the San Francisco Symphony Chorus for eight years where she appeared on several Grammy winning albums, and is now a member of the Women Sing ensemble directed by Martin Benvenuto. She has done collaborative work with the UC Berkeley Chorus and Orchestra under the direction of Professor Marika Kuzma. She was a guest conductor with the La Jolla Symphony Chorus and has performed with the internationally known Venezuelan conductor Maria Guinand. She specializes in Latin American choral repertoire and has taught many workshops on that subject throughout the Western states.

Ms. Di Maio has a remarkable ability to stimulate musical accomplishment in children who she inspires with her humor, her musicianship and her positive attitude. Many of her private students have gone on to study at Julliard, Oberlin and at the Berklee School of Music and many have gone on to professional careers in music and theatre.

Ms. Di Maio is the Music Director of the Lamorinda School of Musical Arts in Lafayette, California where she teaches piano and voice, and has been the chorus vocal coach, and accompanist at the renowned Stanley Middle School music program since 2000.



# CHORISTER INFORMATION

## ♪ REHEARSALS

All weekly rehearsals are held at the regular rehearsal site unless otherwise noted. Mass rehearsals are held once or twice a semester on a Sunday afternoon. All choir levels come together (“en masse”) to rehearse repertoire that the choirs sing jointly at the winter and spring concerts. Renowned guest clinicians are often a part of the mass rehearsal experience.

The technical rehearsal (“tech”) is the only opportunity for choristers to familiarize themselves with the performance venue, acoustically and logistically. All the details of putting on a professional performance are worked out at the technical rehearsal. Held at the venue in which the winter and spring concerts take place, it is scheduled in the week prior to the concert, sometimes in addition to the regular weekly rehearsal.

## ♪ PERFORMANCES

All performances are mandatory and are scheduled many months in advance, in order to allow choristers and families to plan accordingly. The recognition and stature of the CCCC depends upon each chorister’s commitment to be present at every performance or event, and all rehearsals leading up to that event.

Our Winter Concerts in January and Spring Concerts in May are our major public performances of the year, the rewarding culmination of months of rehearsing. Parents are expected and encouraged to attend both the winter and spring concerts, and bring along family and friends. These concerts are a major source of income for the organization.

There are instances when the chorus is offered an opportunity to perform or participate in a special activity on short notice. Before confirming participation in an event, members will be polled about availability. Choristers are expected to prioritize these opportunities to the best of their abilities. Conflicts will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

Public Events will be posted on our website, [www.childschorus.org](http://www.childschorus.org), under the Events tab.

Liking us on Facebook and checking our blog, <http://childschorus.org/blog/>, are great ways to keep up with CCCC events and programming.

## ♪ ATTENDANCE POLICY

As a member of CCCC you understand that your commitment to faithful, consistent, and punctual attendance is vital to the performance success of the group. It is expected that rehearsals take a very high priority in each chorister’s life, and that all members work together as a team. Dates of rehearsals, mass rehearsals, tech rehearsals and concerts are provided to choristers and families as soon as they are booked, which allows families time to plan their schedules.

Every effort is made to accommodate unavoidable conflicts. A **written** schedule of any such conflicts (i.e. sports, drama, school, church) must be submitted in writing as far in advance as possible to the office and to your conductor.

Occasionally, we schedule performances with very little advance notice. It is understood that some choristers may not be able to attend due to prior scheduling conflicts, but they should contact CCCC as soon as possible to discuss the matter. Each conflict is handled individually.

Attendance is recorded at each rehearsal and performance to help monitor student’s progress. Attendance and commitment are taken into consideration when choristers are evaluated in May.

## **Rehearsals**

- Three (3) absences allowed per semester regardless of reason.
- Each absence must be reported to CCCC.
- Planned/unplanned absences, last minute/emergencies – Use TeamSnap or email [frontdesk@childrengchorus.org](mailto:frontdesk@childrengchorus.org)
- For long term conflicts: email [frontdesk@childrengchorus.org](mailto:frontdesk@childrengchorus.org), complete a [Leave of Absence Form](#) and turn in to office.
- Mass Rehearsals count in our absence policy.
- 2 absences in a row requires a meeting with the director (phone call is ok).
- With the addition of Mass Rehearsals, each semester will have 19 rehearsals.
- After the second absence conductors will send an email home warning that they only have one absence left.
- After the third absence conductors will call home.
- After the fourth absence a chorister is ineligible to perform.
- Performances and Tech rehearsals are considered Mandatory and are only allowed to be missed under exceptional circumstances.

## **Tech Rehearsals**

The tech rehearsal may not be missed for any reason other than illness, or significant school or church events (their own, not friends). Choristers who have an unavoidable conflict are expected to approach the director as far in advance as possible. Missing the tech rehearsal for any other reason may result in the chorister not performing in the concert. Promptness to call times is expected.

## **Scheduled Performances/Collaborations/Workshops**

All performances are mandatory. There are instances when CCCC Level 4 is offered an opportunity to perform or participate in a special activity on short notice. Before confirming participation in an event, members will be polled about availability. Choristers are expected to prioritize these opportunities to the best of their abilities. Conflicts will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

## **Illness**

Sore throats, colds, and flus are a concern for singers of any age. If symptoms are mild or not contagious, encourage your chorister to attend. They may be asked to sit off to one side in the rehearsal, or to listen and watch instead. Please arrive early and inform the conductor of any of these circumstances.

Please keep your singer home if he/she has a fever, a significant sore throat, a severe cold or cough, or gastrointestinal symptoms such as vomiting or diarrhea. Use Team Snap or email [frontdesk@childrengchorus.org](mailto:frontdesk@childrengchorus.org), before rehearsal.

## **♪ EVALUATIONS, PROGRESS REPORTS, AND PROMOTIONS**

The appropriate level conductor evaluates a chorister's progress at the end of each season, usually in late May. These evaluations enable a conductor to measure the development of the singer's musical and vocal skills according to each level's musicianship and vocal curricula. The evaluations, along with conduct and rehearsal/performance attendance history, serve as a basis for promotions to the next level.

A progress report is sent after the evaluations with chorus level assignments for the next year. While some music skills are quantifiable, many are not. Evaluating a child's musical ability, vocal development, and readiness for advancement or promotion is subjective.

Promotions normally occur at the end of the Semester II, not at mid-year. There are no promotions into Level 4 mid-year. A chorister usually remains in the same chorus level for 1-2 years in Level 1 and 2, and 2-3 years in Level 3. Each season new repertoire is learned at every level. Returning singers provide peer leadership to their groups, and act as mentors to the less experienced members of that level.

## ♪ DISCIPLINE POLICY

In order for all students to benefit from CCCC membership, a discipline policy has been adopted. Designed to create a productive atmosphere at rehearsals and performances, the discipline policy allows all students to enjoy learning and performing great music in a safe environment. This policy applies to all rehearsals and performances, Summer Music Institute and all tours. Our singers represent the CCCC, California and the U.S. when they rehearse and perform in the community, and on national and international tours.

Coupled with the Discipline Policy is the Three-Strike Policy. It details the steps to be taken if infractions occur.

### Guidelines for Rehearsal

- Bring music folder/binder, assigned music theory workbook, water bottle, and pencil.
- Be on time, if not a few minutes early. We start on time!
- Use restroom prior to beginning of activity or at breaks.
- Dress Code: appropriate attire is required at all times. Levels 1, 2 and 3 choristers wear their Red Chorus T-shirt to all rehearsals. All choristers wear Red Chorus T-shirt or Polo (L4) to all mass and tech rehearsals (these are often photo opportunities for our marketing materials), and at other times as requested.
- At all times, pay attention and show respect for each other, conductors, parent volunteers, and staff.
- Show respect for the facility and equipment.
- No eating, chewing gum or drinking beverages other than water. There will be a snack break during longer rehearsals.
- All devices such as cell phones, iPods, iPads, or any other electronic device should be turned off and placed in the designated area at the rehearsal site. There are no exceptions! Use of any of these devices is strictly forbidden and will result in confiscation.

### Guidelines for Performances

Members of the CCCC perform in concert halls and churches, and in public and private settings. Here are the expectations for our choristers at performances:

- All of the above apply.
- Wear the appropriate performance uniform.
- Keep your eyes focused on your conductor, and avoid doing anything that draws attention to yourself and away from the group as a whole.
- No talking at any time while on stage.
- Do not clap onstage as a form of acknowledgement to other performers.
- When working with guest clinicians, do not initiate conversations, ask for autographs, or take photographs unless given permission by the conductor.
- From the moment you arrive at a performance and until you leave, you are representing CCCC. Your appearance and behavior reflect directly on the chorus as a whole. You are expected to be professional.

### Guidelines for Tours and Summer Music Institute (SMI)

- All of the above apply.
- A list of rules pertinent to tour or SMI will be included in their respective informational packets.

## 🎵 **THREE-STRIKE POLICY**

In the event of an infraction of the Discipline Policy Guidelines, CCCC has adopted the following Three-Strike Policy:

### **Strike One**

When an infraction of the Discipline Policy Guidelines outlined above has taken place, a warning is given to the chorister. A chorister-conductor conference is held, and a written discipline incident report is generated and signed by chorister and conductor. Parents are notified. The chorister is warned that repeated behavior will incur further strikes and possible dismissal.

### **Strike Two**

When a second infraction of the Discipline Policy Guidelines outlined above occurs, a second warning that constitutes Strike Two is given. A chorister-parent-conductor conference is held and the signed report of the Strike One infraction is discussed, in addition to the infraction that brought on Strike Two. A probationary behavior contract may be set up, detailing specific expectations and consequences.

### **Strike Three**

A third infraction will result in Strike Three, which constitutes dismissal from the CCCC program. A chorister-parent-conductor conference will take place as needed. There is no refund for a Strike Three dismissal.

### **IMMEDIATE DISMISSAL WILL RESULT FOR THE FOLLOWING**

- Possession or use of any drugs, drug paraphernalia, alcohol, tobacco, or any type of weapon (including pocket knives).
- Abuse, defacement or theft of property either of other choristers, CCCC, or rehearsal or performance venues.
- Any behavior that puts a chorister or others at risk or severely impacts the success of the group.

There is no refund for any infraction that warrants immediate dismissal.

## 🎵 **AUDIENCE ETIQUETTE**

Choristers, parents, family members and friends are kindly asked to observe the following guidelines about formal concert hall etiquette. Parents' teaching and reinforcing these is greatly appreciated.

- Before the performance begins, turn off all electronic devices – cell phones, games, ipads, etc.
- No photography or video/audio recordings, unless special permission has been given.
- If permission is given, recording equipment should be put on silent mode; and no flash photography.
- Don't talk – or even whisper – during a performance. This includes disciplining younger children. We encourage parents with younger children to sit toward the back, so if you need to leave you can exit as quickly and discretely as possible. When a concert begins, please cease all talk.
- Be sensitive and avoid extraneous noises such as cough drop and candy wrappers and coughing. If you cannot refrain from coughing, try to leave at the end of a set or during applause.
- Applaud at the end of performance selections. Refrain from clapping until the end of a multi-movement work or if several pieces are being performed together as a "set." Follow the program and the director in this regard.
- Parents are discouraged from waving and/or calling out their choristers, since they are working on focusing on their conductor and their performance.
- Remain seated for the duration of the show with good posture, to avoid distractions to both performers and other audience members.
- Take your belongings with you when you depart the concert, making sure to dispose of them appropriately.

## ♪ UNIFORMS & PERFORMANCE APPEARANCE

We take pride in our professional appearance! All choristers wear uniforms, formal or informal, to all performances. Your director will inform you of which uniform is required. Parents/guardians should make sure that their chorister is wearing the complete uniform required following the appearance guidelines below, BEFORE arriving at all performances. Choristers may be asked to not perform if not in compliance.

All decisions about appropriateness of uniform, jewelry and personal appearance rest with the director, parent liaisons, and chorister section leaders (if applicable), in that order. Their decisions are final!

### **FOLLOW THESE “APPEARANCE GUIDELINES”:**

- Uniform should be clean and pressed, and be in good condition.
- Hair should be clean, neat, off the face and off the back of the neck! For girls, French braids are preferred. Any headbands or barrettes must be black and not noticeable on stage.
- Yes – on deodorant; no – on perfume.
- Jewelry – only small stud earrings are permitted. No dangles or large earrings. No watches, bracelets, rings, or necklaces are allowed.
- Makeup – only lipstick and blush are allowed.
- Wear undergarments that are neutral in color and do not show through the uniform.

### **FORMAL UNIFORM – LEVELS 1, 2, 3 – BOYS AND GIRLS**

- Girls: Black Palazzo Pants and Red Sequin Cummerbund
- Boys: Black Tuxedo Slacks, no Cummerbund
- White Wing-Tip Tuxedo Shirt (white buttons only) and Black Bowtie (Boys’-size)
- Black Socks, Knee-highs or Nylons (knee-highs are cooler)
- Black Dress Shoes (all black, closed-toed, no sandals, no platforms)  
(Be sure that the shoes are comfortable to walk in and to stand in for long periods of time.)

### **INFORMAL UNIFORM (ALL LEVELS)**

- Red Chorus T-Shirt (Levels 1,2,3), Red Chorus Polo Shirt (Level 4) – tucked into pants
- Plain Black Slacks (no jeans, no leggings, not tight-fitting, in good condition, no holes, writing, decorations, )
- White Socks & All White Shoes

### **FORMAL UNIFORM – LEVEL 4 GIRLS**

- Long Red Gown with Silver Pin, Beige/Nude Nylons or Knee-highs, Black Character Shoes
- Character Shoes – 1 ½” heeled “Capezio” type black character shoes. (They come in patent, cheaper, or leather, more expensive, but more comfortable over the long run.)



### **FORMAL UNIFORM – LEVEL 4 BOYS**

- Black Tuxedo Pants, White Wing-Tip Tuxedo Shirt (white buttons only) and Black Bowtie (Boy’s-size), Black Socks and Black Dress Shoes

### **FORMAL UNIFORM - HONORS GIRLS**

- Long Black Gown with Silver Pin, Beige/Nude Nylons or Knee-highs, Black Character Shoes

## ♪ UNIFORM SIZING DAYS / UNIFORM CHECK DAYS

At the beginning of every semester choristers have the opportunity to try on sample satin uniform pants so that the correct size can be ordered for them. These days are called “Uniform Sizing Days.” Once everyone has their full uniform we have a “Uniform Check Day.” This is when choristers come to rehearsal in full uniform and are checked to make sure they have all the pieces to the uniform, and that the pieces fit well. Once you have all the uniform pieces, you should keep them together in an inexpensive garment bag ready to be used when performances begin. Have bowtie secured inside the back shirt loop. Have cummerbund pinned to the pants at the waistband. Include hair products, shoes, socks, etc.

## ♪ UNIFORM PURCHASE INFORMATION

- The cost of the formal uniform for Levels 1,2,3 is approximately \$60.00.

### Purchase from CCCC:

- Girls: Black Palazzo Pants and Red Sequin Cummerbund
- Boys: Black Tuxedo Slacks
- Tuxedo Shirt and Bowtie
- Gowns for Levels 4 and Honors
- Red Chorus T-Shirt (Levels 1,2,3); Red Polo Shirt (Level 4)

### Purchase separately:

- White Shoes and Socks
- Informal Black Pants
- Dress Black Shoes and Socks

### OPTIONAL ITEMS AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE FROM CCCC

- Red Canvas CCCC Bag
- Replacement Silver Pin for Level 4/5 Dresses

## ♪ UNIFORM PANTS CARE INSTRUCTIONS

**Hemming:** You will need to hem your new uniform pants, as you are the best judge of your growing chorister’s size. Please have your child wear their dress shoes when determining the appropriate length. All pants include a generous amount of fabric to turn under for gains in height. Please hem the pants by tacking with black thread only. Tacking (by sewing in the shape of a tiny X) around each pant leg is the best (and easiest) way to hem these pants.

**Laundering:** Pants are machine washable.

**CUMMERBUNDS:** Please attach your cummerbund to the waistband of your pants with small safety pins at the Xs, front, back, both sides. This ensures that the cummerbund will stay at the waist during the performance, and will not disappear between performances! When cleaning pants, detach cummerbund first.

**TUXEDO SHIRT** - May be washed and ironed.

## LONG DRESSES, LEVEL 4 & HONORS

May be washed and put in dryer or hung to dry. Take off the silver pin before laundering.



## ♪ NUTRITION & HEALTH CONCERNS

Be sure to give your child's body the proper fuel it needs to meet the demands of rehearsing/performing. In the car have water, juice, raisins, granola bars, carrot sticks, fruit rollups, dried fruit etc. as a quick snack. Choristers output 100% of their energy while singing. It can be just as taxing as participating in physical sports.

Everyone can perform well at home and at school with proper rest and diet. If you follow the guidelines listed below you will have taken the first step toward being an *elite performer!*

1. Start your day off right with a nutritional breakfast.
2. Keep in mind that germs can be spread on surfaces in your home and car. Keep your hands clean and away from your face. Choristers stand very close to one another on the risers. It is important that each child has: brushed teeth, washed hair, showered and used deodorant. Please do not use perfumes, as many people in the chorus and the audience are allergic to them.
4. Due to the number of choristers with **peanut and tree nut allergies**, some life-threatening, we ask that **no one bring to chorus any food item containing any nuts**. Check package contents if you are unsure.
5. If your child is running a fever, or is contagious, please allow them to stay home. We need to protect all other choristers as much as possible. However, if your chorister is not contagious, please have them come – they can sit on a chair to the side, if need be. Learning can take place even if they are not able to sing or stand on the risers. Please let your conductor know upon arrival, or send an email prior to the rehearsal that you need to sit to the side.

## ♪ SAFETY FIRST

**Arrivals and departures:** Make arrangements to drop off and pick up your children promptly from rehearsals and performances. Please contact us immediately through Team Snap if a situation arises which causes you to be late. CCCC is not responsible for childcare; however no child will ever be left alone at a rehearsal or performance. All choristers who have not been picked up immediately after rehearsal should return to the chorus office to await pickup.

If you have children in several choirs, you need to pick up your first chorister and take care of them while you wait for the second to finish their rehearsal. CCCC is not able to provide childcare services for these situations, but we will always accommodate emergency situations.

**A fee will be charged if tardiness in picking-up becomes a problem.**

### **DROP OFF & PICK UP OF CHORISTERS**

**ALL LEVELS:** Follow the arrows when you drive into the parking lot. Park in the first/upper parking lot and walk down to the church entrance. There is a school in session near the lower parking lot and we are requested to not use the lower parking lot.

## ♪ TOURING

Touring is a natural extension of our program, and offers great musical, cultural and social opportunities to our choristers.

**Level 4** may take a domestic or international tour of 7-10 days. We are often invited to participate under the direction of well-known clinicians at organized festivals. Tours create unity within the chorus, allow the choristers to work with world-renowned conductors of children's choruses, perform in prestigious venues, and master challenging repertoire. Choristers will also experience different cultures first hand. **These tours always involve extra mandatory rehearsals.**

**Level 3** may take a domestic tour, generally to a festival with a well-known clinician. **These tours may involve extra mandatory rehearsals.**

## ♪ SUMMER MUSIC INSTITUTE (SMI)

**(If you are in Level 3, please read this section! Note the approximate dates of SMI before planning your next summer's vacation in the event your child may be promoted to Level 4.)**

**Summer Music Institute is held for 4-9 days at the end of July/beginning of August of every year. It is a mandatory activity for all Level 4 choristers**, and is an optional 2-3 day camp for current Level 3 choristers, by invitation only.

SMI is an essential part of the Level 4 season. We focus on learning the repertoire for the upcoming choral year. The curriculum may include: music theory, vocal technique instruction, rhythm training through choreography, movement classes, and African Drumming. Depending on the year, choristers may work with well-renowned guest clinicians and composers. SMI is an intense community-building experience, as well, and we create the "musical team" which is as important as learning the music. Members look forward to evening campfires, movie night, drumming concerts, and other activities.

**All current and incoming Level 4 choristers must have their SMI Fee paid in full by June 30<sup>th</sup> of each year. There will be no exceptions to this policy. *There are no refunds as each chorister is responsible for his/her equal share of SMI costs.***

A more detailed description of SMI will be available to all Level 3 and Level 4 choristers in May. Level 3 choristers should seriously evaluate the added requirements of Level 4 membership before they agree to join.



# CONTRACT & FINANCIALS

## **♪ PARENT STUDENT CONTRACT**

To participate in Contra Costa Children's Chorus, each chorister and parent/guardian must initial and sign the Parent Student Contract. This ensures that all parties understand and accept the participation, behavioral, financial, and legal policies and guidelines set forth.

## **♪ LIABILITY WAIVERS**

### **WAIVER OF LIABILITY**

In consideration for being allowed to participate in Contra Costa Children's Chorus activities, including but not limited to auditions, rehearsals, vocal coaching, workshops, performances, tours, and camps, and transportation to and from all such activities, we acknowledge and agree to the following:

We, the parent/guardian and chorister, on behalf of ourselves and each of our heirs, executors and administrators, agree to release and hold harmless Contra Costa Children's Chorus ("CCCC") and each of its officers, directors, agents, employees, administrators, volunteers, representatives and assigns from any and all right, claim or liability for any and all damages, injuries, costs or expenses incurred by the undersigned chorister or his/her parent/guardian during the course of, as a result of, or in any way connected with the undersigned chorister's or parent/guardian's participation in CCCC activities, whether such damages, injuries, costs or expenses may arise from circumstances outside the control of CCCC, from the acts of any other participants in CCCC, or from the acts of CCCC or any of its officers, directors, agents, employees, volunteers, representatives and assigns, including negligence or carelessness of same. This agreement extends to all claims of every kind and nature whatsoever, whether known or unknown, including an express waiver of any rights or benefits either of us may have under section 1542 of the California Civil Code relating to the release of unknown claims. By signing the Parent Student Contracts, you acknowledge that you each have read and understand the provisions of this waiver of liability.

### **PHOTO, VIDEO, AND AUDIO RELEASE**

I understand and agree that during any Contra Costa Children's Chorus (CCCC) activities, my chorister may be photographed, video recorded, or audio recorded. I understand and agree that CCCC shall hold the sole copyright to any images or recordings of the undersigned chorister, and I hereby waive any and all claims to such images or recordings, including but not limited to ownership or copyright claims.

I further agree that my chorister's image and voice, including photos, videos, audio recordings, and any other reproduction of the undersigned chorister's likeness may be used by CCCC for any purpose, including but not limited to marketing, fundraising, external news or entertainment media, publicity, archiving, or any other purpose, without payment or any other compensation, now or in the future. I understand that CCCC will not use the chorister's name without my express approval. I hereby release CCCC and its officers, directors, agents, employees, volunteers, representatives and assigns from any expectation of confidentiality for the undersigned chorister.

### **SEVERABILITY**

In the event that any provision of this contract is held unenforceable, all remaining provisions shall remain in full force and effect.

### **CHOICE OF LAW**

This agreement shall be governed by and construed and interpreted in accordance with the laws of the State of California. Any action arising out of or in relation to this agreement shall be resolved in the courts of Contra Costa County.

## 🎵 FINANCIAL OBLIGATION

Enrollment in CCCC is for the entire season, which begins in September and concludes with the final concerts in May/June. Each chorister is expected to remain active and committed to the program **for the entire season**.

**Financial obligations** include the Registration Fee/Intent to Return Fee, tuition and uniforms, and fundraisers.

**Registration & Intent to Return Fees.** Fee is charged “per family” (L1, L2, L3, L4 chorus levels). If more than one chorister is in a family, there is still only one fee. Both fees are non-refundable and do not apply toward tuition. New choristers pay the registration fee to enroll in CCCC. (includes a Chorus T-Shirt). Each Spring, returning choristers turn in their Intent to Return Form along with the annual fee. All L4 choristers: Your SMI deposit is also confirmation of your Intent to Return. (A **Late Fee** is charged if the Intent to Return Fee is received after the due date, usually June 15<sup>th</sup>.)

**Payment by cash, check, money order.** Make your check payable to “CCCC.” You may pay in person on your weekly rehearsal day, or mail in your payment to CCCC, PO Box 2518, Walnut Creek, CA 94595-0518. All payments should include chorister’s name, chorus level, and reason for payment (tuition, tour, uniform, etc). Any checks returned by our bank will be subject to a **Returned Check Charge, per check**, billable to your account.

**Payment by VISA or MasterCard.** A 3% transaction fee is added to all credit card transactions.

**Payment options.** Tuition should be paid in full in September. You may opt to pay half in September and the remaining half in January, or choose our six-payment option. There is a \$10 handling fee added to the two-payment option, and a \$50 fee added to the six-payment option. See Tuition Fee Schedule for details.

**Account Status** – Your chorus account must be current before enrolling in optional programs, i.e. tours, Theatre Arts, etc. Whenever there is a balance due for tuition, any payment made will be applied first to tuition, then to any optional program. It is your responsibility to be sure all payments are received on or before their due dates. Please contact the Finance Manager if you need to make alternative payment arrangements. *If your account is in arrears you may be informed by the Finance Manager that your chorister(s) may not attend rehearsals or any scheduled chorus events. If your account continues with non-payment your chorister(s) will be dismissed from chorus.*

**Music Loss/Damage Charge.** Music is issued to each chorister on a “loan basis” and remains the property of CCCC. Folder/or binder and music are returned to CCCC in December, and will be reissued in January with the next semester’s music. The folder/or binder and music must be returned in May, at the end of the chorus year. We keep all the music we purchase in our library. Each copy must be in good repair to be reused. If it is tattered, or otherwise destroyed, it must be replaced. **If music is damaged, lost or stolen a fee will be charged to the chorister responsible.** The fee is different for each level as the cost of each piece of music varies. Remember, music is to be used, not abused!

### **Replacement of Theory Workbooks/Worksheets**

Theory workbooks are included with tuition, but if they are lost/damaged and need replaced, I/we will be responsible to pay for replacements.

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## 🎵 RECRUITMENT INCENTIVE

As part of our ongoing recruitment efforts, any current chorister who brings in a new chorus member will receive a \$50 credit on their chorus account, in December for Semester I, or in May for Semester II, providing the new member remains in chorus for the entire semester, and their account balance is paid in full. Good for entry into Levels 1, 2, 3 and 4.

## ♪ SCHOLARSHIPS

We were very graciously awarded a grant for the period of Jan – Dec 2017 to provide scholarships for financially qualifying applicants. The grant will support the music/choral education we provide for children who are interested in our music program but unable to afford the tuition. We are very grateful to **The Sam Mazza Foundation** for awarding this grant, and hope it opens up the opportunity to experience the gift of music for many students. It is expected that every chorister who receives any scholarship amount attend all rehearsals and performances, and otherwise participate in all Chorus activities. Questions? Email Kathy at [accounts@childrenschorus.org](mailto:accounts@childrenschorus.org)

### Application Process:

- CCCC SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION. Print and fill out all required information, submission instructions are included in the form.
- Applications will be reviewed by the scholarship committee bi-annually.
- All qualifying need-based students will receive partial funding for chorus tuition and SMI fees. Award amounts will vary depending on the number of applications received and funds available.

## ♪ REFUND POLICY & DROP/RESIGNATION

**Because every chorister is expected to live up to his or her commitment for the entire season, CCCC has a very limited Refund Policy.**

A **\$100 non-refundable Administrative Fee** will be deducted from your tuition, and cannot be included in any refund. After that, the Refund Policy is:

- **50% Refund** – if CCCC is notified within 6 weeks of chorister's 1<sup>st</sup> rehearsal day (per semester)
- **0% Refund** – if CCCC is notified after 6 weeks of chorister's 1<sup>st</sup> rehearsal day (per semester)

If a chorister must drop out of chorus anytime during the performance year, they, and their parents will inform their conductor in writing by email or letter, and **submit a Drop Form to the office**. The chorister's family should confirm that the drop has been recorded in CCCC records by emailing the Finance Manager. Any Refund amounts are based on the date that the drop form has been received by CCCC.

*Even if a chorister drops out of chorus, all tuition and fees incurred to date remain immediately due and payable. Also, music must be returned or an additional fee will be assessed.*

*We do make exceptions to our drop/refund policy for extreme circumstances, if, for example, your child leaves due to serious illness or injury, or the family moves outside the CCCC attendance area. These exceptions will be left to the discretion of the Finance Manager.*

**Drops from Tours** are of special concern. The initial deposits are **non-refundable**. Additional payments made for these events should also be considered non-refundable, unless CCCC is able to recover the charges paid out on your behalf. From the moment a tour is arranged, CCCC is required to make timely advance payments to the tour companies, festivals, etc. These tour companies have their own refund policies, and our payments to them are typically non-refundable. Thus, CCCC is usually unable to offer the chorus family a refund on those amounts.

## **SUPPORT CCCC**

For sponsorship and donation inquiries email the finance manager.

Contra Costa Children's Chorus is a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation. Much of our funding comes from tuition, concert ticket sales and seasonal fundraisers. The chorus relies on financial support from individuals, families, businesses and the community in order to provide excellence in musical education. **EIN: 68-0065565**

**The Matching Gift Program** at many businesses benefits CCCC when Chorus families submit these requests to their employers. But, it is the individual gifts from our chorus families that we rely on the most.

### **Where does our money go?**

As in similar organizations, most of our income goes to artistic and administrative staff salaries and professional support services. Next is facility and equipment costs, rentals, insurance, new music and the scholarship fund.

## **HOW CAN YOU HELP?**

### **INDIVIDUAL GIVING**

Make a cash donation of any amount. We appreciate gifts of all sizes!

### **BUSINESS DONATIONS, SPONSORSHIP & UNDERWRITING**

Corporate and business underwriting is vital to the successful continuation of our programs in this community.

### **BECOME A TOUR OR EVENT SPONSOR**

Sponsor specific Choir activities, performances or programs. In return for your financial support, CCCC will publicly acknowledge your generosity in our concert programs and on our website.

### **MAKE MATCHING GIFTS ON BEHALF OF YOUR EMPLOYEES**

Great companies invest in their employees, and great employees invest their time, interest, and support in their communities. Help your employees to make a difference in their communities, building a higher quality of life for their families, friends and neighbors, by helping them to support CCCC. With your resources behind them, they'll find they can really make a meaningful contribution to their children's future.

### **ADVERTISE IN OUR NEWSLETTER AND CONCERT PROGRAMS**

Our printed concert programs reach large audiences of local families and their friends and social networks. Our monthly email newsletter *Chorus Line* reaches hundreds of local residents.

### **MAKE AN IN-KIND DONATION**

Help us save a few dollars through the donation of supplies or business-oriented services, we can then apply more funds directly to our choral programs. Your contributions will be acknowledged on the donor page in our concert programs under "Gifts In Kind."

### **ESCRIP**

Please choose CCCC as your non-profit of choice!!! EScript is a simple way to support our programs; 2-5% of every purchase is donated to the chorus by merchants as a way of giving back to their communities. To sign up or renew, visit [www.escrip.com](http://www.escrip.com) (our #137317439).

### **UNITED WAY**

United Way payroll deductions are a great way to easily provide monthly financial support for the Chorus. To make a United Way contribution by this method, simply identify CCCC (Fed Tax ID#: 68-0065565) as direct/sole recipient of that contribution, and the funds collected are forwarded directly to CCCC.

## **SHOP WITH SCRIP**

Purchase gift cards through CCCC. You only pay the value of the card. CCCC receives a small percentage of the gross receipts.

## **SMILE.AMAZON.COM**

The Amazon Smile Foundation gives back .05% of all qualifying sales to non-profits! Whenever you buy at amazon.com, go through smile.amazon.com, pick CCCC as your non-profit of choice, and purchase as usual. It's automatic and doesn't cost you anything. <http://smile.amazon.com/ch/68-0065565>

## **OTHER WAYS TO SUPPORT**

- Enroll your children in our choirs, and spread the word with friends and neighbors so they'll join our choir family.
- Bring friends and family to our concerts. Tickets are available for purchase through CCCC.
- Make donations of money, goods, music equipment or services.
- Volunteer your time at rehearsals, events and performances.
- Buy choir CDs and give them to everyone you know!

## **♪ ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF CONTRIBUTIONS**

The Patron Categories are:

- **Opus (\$10,000 and above)**
- **Full Measure (\$1,000-\$9,999)**
- **Whole Note (\$500-\$999)**
- **Half Note (\$100-\$499)**
- **Quarter Note (\$50-\$99)**
- **Eighth Note (\$25-\$49).**

You may designate your acknowledgement "in memory of" or "in honor of" someone special in your life.  
Contra Costa Children's Chorus - Non profit 501 (c) (3) Tax ID 68-0065565

# **ADDITIONAL SUPPORT**

## **♪ PARENT ORIENTATION MEETINGS**

At the beginning of Semester I, and usually at the beginning of Semester II, we hold a Parent Orientation Meeting. It is important that all new parents attend, and those returning parents who want to keep up on all the new information.

## **♪ VOLUNTEERS / LIAISONS**

As a non-profit organization, volunteers are an integral part of CCCC. Volunteer opportunities are numerous and diverse, from areas of transporting risers, chorus liaisons, performance assistants, office assistance, fundraising, development, marketing, chaperoning and other projects. Some jobs are extensive. Some are very short term and can be done at home. All parents of CCCC are encouraged to volunteer some of their time during the chorus year. Please let the CCCC staff know if you are interested in helping out. A limited number of work/trade positions are available. Please contact the admin staff for details.

## **♪ COMMUNICATIONS**

CCCC makes every effort to keep you informed about chorus activities throughout the year. Our main sources of news are through our website and by sending emails. Please keep CCCC informed of any changes in your contact information. This includes mailing address, phone numbers and email accounts. It is highly advisable to include our email addresses on your cell phone, so that they are readily available when needed.

### **WEBSITE ([www.childrenschorus.org](http://www.childrenschorus.org))**

A wealth of information! Find copies of all forms needed throughout the year! Go to Member Center!

### **EMAILS FROM YOUR DIRECTORS**

Emails are sent to parents on a bi-weekly schedule. If you are not receiving these, please contact the admin staff. It could be these emails are going into your spam folder.

### **OTHER EMAILS FROM CCCC**

Other important information will be sent to you via email. Please read and respond if requested.

### **CHORUS LINE**

Our monthly email newsletter. It will bring you all the latest general news and information concerning CCCC.

### **TEAM SNAP**

CCCC now uses Team Snap as our major means of communicating with choristers. You need to accept the “invitation to join” and then download the app so that you have easy access on your cell phone. You will also be able to access information on our Team Snap web page. This is a private service, and the only place where you will see your chorus calendar, as it will no longer be accessible from our public chorus website.

### **EMAIL TO CCCC**

To reach anyone on the Artistic or Administrative Staffs, use the email addresses listed on the front of this manual. There are also links in Chorus Line. Email is the preferred type of communication.

### **SNAIL MAIL**

Our address is: **CCCC, P.O. Box 2518, Walnut Creek, CA 94595.**

Please do not use the rehearsal site address, 1035 Carole Lane, Lafayette, when mailing to CCCC.

## ♪ FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **Do we have to live in Contra Costa County to belong to CCCC?**

No. We have members from all over the East Bay area.

### **What are the age limits for CCCC?**

Our choristers are boys and girls aged 4-18. We have a Metro ♫ Gnomes program for younger children, aged 4-6.

### **Is CCCC a church-based choir?**

No. We are a community-based chorus.

### **How often do we rehearse?**

Once a week for approximately 1-2 hours depending on level. Two “Mass” rehearsals per semester on a Sunday afternoon. One Technical rehearsal per semester, in the week prior to the concert.

### **Do we always rehearse at our weekly rehearsal site?**

All weekly rehearsals are at Our Savior’s Lutheran Church. Sunday rehearsals are also there unless you are advised of a different location. Technical rehearsal is at the location of the concert.

### **What is the time commitment for the chorister?**

In addition to the rehearsals mentioned above, we have winter and spring concerts, as well as a few additional performances.

### **What is the responsibility of the parents?**

Parents are expected to actively support their child’s choral singing. Please be sure that your chorister arrives promptly to rehearsals and performances. Do check your TeamSnap Schedule often, read all incoming emails from CCCC, and read Chorus Line. Be sure to notify the office in advance about tardiness or absences, and keep up-to-date with the family financial obligations to CCCC.

**What is the cost?** Varies by Chorus Level. Please see Tuition Fee Schedule for details.

**Can we pay by credit card?** Yes. We accept Visa and MasterCard.

### **Are scholarships available?**

Partial scholarships based on need may be available. Email [accounts@childrenschorus.org](mailto:accounts@childrenschorus.org) to receive an application.

### **Are there any fundraisers for which we are responsible?**

Yes, we plan for at least one per semester.

### **What is the uniform?**

See Parent Manual for uniform specifics.

### **What does the uniform cost?**

Cost is around \$60.00

### **What will my child learn?**

- Written and aural theory skills, as well as sight-singing
- The foundations of good vocal technique
- A wide variety of choral repertoire from all musical periods and styles
- Your child will sing in foreign languages even in the beginning level. Many pieces are choreographed.
- Please read the Musicianship and Vocal Curriculum Section of the Parent Manual

### **Does my child need to have singing experience to join the chorus?**

There is no experience required to join our training choirs. Older students, or those with more choral experience will be placed in the level that best suits their skills, as determined by the conductors.

### **My child is interested, what do I need to do?**

Schedule a placement interview appointment by emailing [frontdesk@childrenschorus.org](mailto:frontdesk@childrenschorus.org). We hold audition/placement interviews in May and at the beginning of each semester, September and January.

### **Registration**

All prospective choristers fill out the registration form, and when they join, pay the non-refundable Registration Fee.

**How are levels determined?** By age, ability and placement by director.

### **How do I get updates from the chorus?**

Mass emails are sent to each level with updates. Please check Team Snap schedule regularly, [www.childrenschorus.org](http://www.childrenschorus.org), and read *Chorus Line*, our monthly newsletter.

# ♪ AWARDS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS



## AWARDS

Best Music School/Lessons – Best of the East Bay, *Diablo* magazine, 2015  
Best After School Program – Best of the East Bay, *Diablo* magazine, 2013  
Best Music Lessons – Best of the East Bay, *Diablo* magazine, 2012  
First place - Outstanding Choral Group, Heritage Festival, Anaheim, 2008  
First place - Heritage Festival Adjudicator's Award, Anaheim, 2008  
First place – Gold Award, Heritage Festival, Anaheim, 2008  
First place award winner - Golden Gate International Competition, Oakland, 1991

## INTERNATIONAL TOURS

Western Europe, 2016  
Argentina, 2014  
International Festival of the Aegean, Greece, 2011  
Concert tour of China, 2007  
Tuscany International Children's Festival, 2005 and 1995  
Concert tour of Australia and New Zealand, 2003  
International Children's Music Festival, England & France, 1999  
Prague International Choral Festival and Competition, Prague, 1997  
Three Spires International Choral Festival, selected participant, Denmark, 1993

## FESTIVALS

Crescent City Children's Festival, New Orleans, 2012  
Annual Junior Bach Festival, Berkeley, 2013, 2009 and 2006  
Crossroads Children's Chorus Festival, Nashville, 2008  
Heritage Gold Festival, San Francisco, 2008 and 2007  
Pacific Rim Festival, Honolulu, Hawaii, 2006, 2003 and 2001  
Oregon Bach Festival, Eugene, 2006  
Santa Barbara Children's Festival, 2005  
10th Annual North American Children's Chorale, Carnegie Hall, New York, 2004  
Oregon Music Festival, Guest Honor Choir, Holt Hall, Eugene, 1994 and 1992

## PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCES

Diablo Symphony Orchestra, Gypsy Magic, Regional Center, Walnut Creek, 2013  
San Francisco Choral Society, Carmina Burana, Davies Symphony Hall, San Francisco, 2012  
Lincoln Center, Avery Fisher Hall, New York, 2010  
Opening ceremonies, Summer Olympics Countdown, 2007  
Diablo Symphony, Carmina Burana, Regional Center, Walnut Creek, 2000  
Televised Guest Appearance with Mormon Tabernacle Choir, Salt Lake City, 2001  
California Symphony, Guest Artist, Fourth of July Extravaganza, Concord Pavilion, 2000 and 1998  
Carnegie Hall, Solo Performance, New York, 2004 and 1996  
Young Artist in Residence, CME Institute, British Columbia, 1999  
*Joseph & The Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, Regional Center, Walnut Creek, 1999  
Hungarian National Radio Show Guest Performers, Budapest, 1997  
United Nations 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, Opening Ceremonies Celebration, San Francisco, 1995  
*Joseph & The Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, Golden Gate Theatre, San Francisco, 1993

## CONVENTIONS

50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Convention, Shaklee Corporation, San Francisco, 2006  
ACDA Western Division Performance, Los Angeles, 2000  
ACDA Western Division Performance, Sacramento, 1994



## 🎵 QUOTES

Regarding "Reading of the Names." "It was Exquisitely done. Like beautiful pearls one after another. The innocence of the voices. The ACCOMPANIST! I didn't mention her in my message! I had no idea the piece could sound so beautiful on piano. The Amazing Grace part played to perfection...The voices of the children were haunting...this was the most perfect performance of this piece I think that will ever be done. It takes a great conductor to "let" a performance come through. It was effortlessly powerful. I cannot thank you all enough for your respect and reverence towards these beloved firefighters. The thank-you cards made me start crying before I even heard the piece. They will be framed and put up on my wall. The check: are you sure? I really don't charge that much you know! God Bless you all for this great gift. Thank you for sharing your love of singing and music."

**Jessica Locke, Composer**

"I have the time of my life working with Contra Costa Children's Chorus. Their rigorous training, which enables them to learn at an astonishing speed, is combined with an ability for creative and independent thinking – something that very few choirs ever encourage. There are many highly trained groups whose sound, however polished, puts me to sleep; but whenever Contra Costa sings, something really happens. I say their training and the emotional commitment in performance make them a global role model for choirs of all ages."

**Stephen Hatfield, Composer**

"Their sound is remarkably professional. These children capture the audience's hearts with their brilliant performance skills."

**Barry Jekowsky, Conductor, California Symphony**

"My association with Contra Costa Children's Chorus will always be one of my most satisfying musical experiences. One cannot be directly associated with this organization without being caught up in their pride of accomplishment and joy of participation. This community is indeed fortunate to be represented by CCCC and to share in its artistic accomplishments. I will always be grateful and honored to have my name associated with Contra Costa Children's Chorus."

**James Mulholland-Composer**

"One of the most remarkable performances of any choir of any age I've ever heard."

**Dr. Charlene Archibeque, Director of Choral Studies, San Jose State University**

### **From our parents:**

"I couldn't believe it when my daughter came to me and said, 'Mom, I will never forget the feeling of excitement and pride I felt when we went on stage at Carnegie Hall! The challenging music and long rehearsals made us better than all the rest!' We want to thank you for making tough choices, your vision, leadership, opportunities, and your unbelievable energy. We firmly embrace the vision you so capably champion. We appreciate what you give every member of CCCC."

"I appreciate your insistence on excellence as does my daughter, who has remarked several times and in different ways, that the hard work and high equality are connected and worth the effort!"

"We enjoyed the concert. Beautiful, uplifting and inspiring!"

Great! Thank you! The performance was spectacular. Loved it.

### **From our choristers:**

🎵 "CCCC helps me be truly myself. Learning to be self-disciplined has helped me with school and athletics. I swim, play baseball, volleyball, basketball and best of all...I sing!"

🎵 "Chorus is like a second home to me. Whatever my problem was I could always come to rehearsal and let out that other person. The real me. Oh, how I love music and singing."

🎵 "When I was nine I couldn't even sing Twinkle Twinkle Little Star. Now I have performed all over Europe and even at Carnegie Hall. Singing opened up a whole other side of my life that wouldn't have been there if I hadn't joined CCCC."

🎵 "CCCC taught me more than musical skill (though it definitely taught me that). It taught me things that were much more wide-reaching: diligence, dedication, time management, organization, leadership, cooperation, friendship, and the value of hard work. And I must admit that when I sat down to write my personal statement for my graduate school applications, I found myself reflecting on my time in CCCC, even though I graduated from it 5 years ago. I also found myself writing about my exposure to various cultures and the amount of time and effort it took to master a musical piece for international tours. And while none of this directly relates to my field of study, the lessons I learned as a chorister absolutely translate into my success now."

# MISCELLANEOUS

## ♪ WHY WE TEACH MUSIC . . .

Music is a **science**: it is definite, specific, and it demands exact acoustics. A conductor's full score is a chart; a graph, which indicates frequencies, intensities, volume changes, melody, and harmony all at once with the most precise control of time.

Music is a **foreign language**: most of the terms are in Italian, German or French; and the notation is certainly not English, but a highly developed kind of shorthand that uses symbols to represent ideas. The most complete and universal language is semantics of music.

Music is **mathematical**: it is rhythmically based on the subdivisions of time into fractions, which must be calculated instantaneously, not worked out on paper.

Music is **history**: it usually reflects the environment and times of its creation often even the country and/or cultural ambiance.

Music is **physical education**: it requires fantastic coordination of fingers, hands, arms, lips, cheeks, facial muscles, in addition to extraordinary control of the diaphragm, back, stomach, and chest muscles, which respond instantly to the sound the ear hears, and the mind interprets.

Music is all of these things, but most of all, it is **art**: it allows a human being to incorporate dry, technically boring, difficult techniques and use them to create emotion. This is one thing science cannot duplicate: humanism, feeling, and emotion.

### **We teach music:**

Not because we expect you to major in music  
Not because we expect you to play or sing all your life  
Not so you can relax  
Not so you can have fun

### **But so you will be . . .**

Human  
Recognize beauty  
Sensitive  
Closer to an infinite beyond this world  
Have something to cling to  
Have more love, compassion, gentleness, goodness – in short, more life!

Of what value will it be to make a prosperous living unless you know how to live?

This is why we teach music!

Author unknown  
University of Delaware