

# Parent Handbook



## **Oregon Children's Choir**

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[www.oregonchildrenschoir.org](http://www.oregonchildrenschoir.org)

## Introduction

### About OCC

*Oregon Children's Choir* (OCC) is a Eugene-based non-profit 501(c)3 organization hosting a wide variety of choirs serving Lane County youths by promoting a love for singing and music. The organization is comprised of choristers, parents, guardians, members of the community, an executive board of directors, paid administrators and musical directors, accompanists, and many volunteers. Our general membership meetings are held annually, and we invite you to join us!

OCC was founded in 1982 by Dr. Randall Moore, University of Oregon Music Director Emeritus, to supplement the music education offered in local schools by providing advanced choral experiences for talented young musicians. Our underlying goal is to encourage the lifelong learning and enjoyment of music.

## Mission

*The mission of Oregon Children's Choir is to nurture and educate the youth of today through choral and vocal music.*

OCC's mission objectives are: To enrich the cultural life of the local Eugene-Springfield community; To enrich the cultural life of Oregon; To promote the cultural image of Oregon; and to introduce choristers to the music of many cultures worldwide.

Oregon Children's Choir's overarching goals are:

- To provide a healthy environment where young people are empowered and instilled with the ideals of musical teamwork.
- To share nurturing and creative choral experiences with children and young adults, developing their self-esteem.
- To create opportunities for children and young adults to serve our community using choral repertoire from different cultures and people.
- To present diverse, challenging and appropriate choral experiences for children and young adults of all abilities, backgrounds and ages.
- To prepare its choristers to become musically and vocally diverse artists, patrons, and leaders in the musical world of tomorrow.

Oregon Children's Choir is a choral organization where fellowship, learning, and striving for excellence encourage all of our choristers to become ambassadors of harmony within our community and into the world beyond.

Oregon Children's Choir rehearsals and performances throughout the choir season – as well as invitations to participate in other professional community productions – make for a rigorous and challenging musical experience.

OCC has grown from one choir in 1982 to include 8+ after-school choirs, summer camps and in-school programming serving over 500 youth. Choirs rehearse and perform throughout the choir season (September through May/June). Oregon Children's Choir produces four public

concerts per year in addition to performing at retirement homes, community events and with other professional community productions.

## Our Choirs

OCC hosts 8 after-school choirs. They are, in age order: Prelude Choir, Oregon Junior Boychoir and Oregon Junior Girlchoir, Oregon Boychoir and Oregon Girlchoir, Oregon Young Men's Ensemble, Counterpoint, and Synergy. For more information about our choirs and how to join them, visit [oregonchildrenschoir.org/choirs](http://oregonchildrenschoir.org/choirs).

### Prelude Choir

Prelude Choir is OCC's choir for young musicians in Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> Grade. Prelude is non-auditioned, and focuses on learning the foundations and basic elements of music through movement, games and fun.

### Oregon Junior Girlchoir and Junior Boychoir

The Oregon Junior Girlchoir and Boychoir are for youths in 2nd-5th grade. Junior Boychoir and Girlchoir continue to develop choristers' foundational music education, introducing a wide variety of songs.

### Oregon Boychoir and Oregon Girlchoir

The Boychoir is for musicians in 6th through 8th grade and the Girlchoir is for musicians attending 6<sup>th</sup> through 10<sup>th</sup> Grade. These choirs further advance our musicians' abilities by introducing a broad repertoire of music, including classical, contemporary and pop, and teaching excellent performance etiquette and technique.

### Oregon Young Men's Ensemble

The Oregon Young Men's Ensemble is for high school age men to practice choral music and to continue to learn excellent musicianship.

### Counterpoint

Counterpoint is OCC's outstanding auditioned high school men's a cappella group. Counterpoint sets a high standard for vocal excellence, and teaches the core standards for a cappella, including tight harmonies, pop sounds, vocal percussion, and choreography.

## Synergy

Synergy is OCC's advanced, auditioned high school women's a cappella group. Synergy focuses on developing healthy, strong vocal technique and musicianship skills through contemporary a cappella music. Singers will develop skills in music reading, choreography, vocal percussion, independent practice, teamwork, and collaboration.

## Membership

### Tuition, Fees & Scholarships

Tuition is determined annually by the OCC Executive Board. Choristers new to OCC are allowed to try one free rehearsal per season. **Registration and payment is required for participation in the choir beyond the first free rehearsal.** A deposit of \$75 is required at time of registration to hold your child's space in the choir. Pre-paid tuition for OCC choirs is **non-refundable, even if the child chooses not to participate with the choir at any time during the year.**

Tuition may be paid for the entire season or by term. If paid by term, a \$35 annual convenience fee is added. Not paying the minimum \$75 tuition fee by the beginning of September rehearsals may jeopardize a chorister's continued participation with their choir. A tuition agreement form must be completed for each chorister at the time of registration, and payments must be made in accordance with the tuition agreement.

We offer **sibling discounts** and several need-based **scholarships**. Please ask for a scholarship application with your registration materials, or [tap here for a file you can print at home](#).

Specific information on financial commitments for each of OCC's choirs can be found at <http://www.oregonchildrenschoir.org/choirs.html>. For information on Financial Policies, including returned checks and late fees, please see the Policies section below.

### Choral Tours/Festivals

Each year all choirs except Prelude participate in a choir tour. This is the end of the year trip to celebrate all the choirs' hard work, to encourage bonding, and to share our performances with the community. Directors work with the choristers throughout the year on music performed during the tours. Music Directors should inform parents in the fall term about proposed trips so parents can adequately plan and save for trip

costs. Tour attendance is critical; tour costs are not included with tuition. If you have questions about your chorister's tour, please contact your director or the OCC treasurer.

### Uniform Requirements

A formal uniform is to be obtained by each choir member if requested by the music director. This uniform is required dress for all formal performances. One t-shirt is included in the price of registration. If you require additional shirts, you may pay for them. Shirts from previous years in good condition may be used. This shirt, with bottoms specified by choir, will serve as a uniform for less formal concerts and travel. Please treat them as part of your uniform.

### Performance Admission

**Admission to OCC performances is free!** The cost for performances (such as concert hall rental and program printing) is included in the annual tuition breakdown.

## Policies

### Payment Responsibility and Refund Policies

I understand OCC does not provide refunds for tuition. \$75.00 of tuition is immediately non-refundable. Any other pre-paid tuition, beyond the \$75.00 is non-refundable after August 1st. Families may choose to pay tuition in full or per term. The per term option includes a \$35.00 convenience fee. All non-refundable tuition rates are determined annually by the Oregon Children's Choir Executive Board. The choir's operating expenses, which include music, choir director's fees and rehearsal space, are funded by chorister tuition. In addition, all choristers will be required to participate in the spring or summer tour as scheduled by their choir. Tour costs are the responsibility of each choir family and are not included in tuition. An additional expense for each chorister is a choir formal uniform (if applicable).

**Returned Checks:** I understand that a fee of \$35.00 per check will be assessed for any returned checks.

**Late Fee:** I understand that a \$10 late fee will be added to my account on the 10th of every month for which my account is past due.

**Sibling Discounts:** Families with more than one child enrolled with Oregon Children's Choir are given a 25% tuition discount for a second child and a 50% tuition discount for a third or more after the first/oldest in the choir.

**Scholarships:** A limited number of partial, need-based tuition scholarships are available. Recipients of scholarships will receive an adjusted tuition payment schedule.

### Choir Season Attendance Policy

Choristers and at least one parent/guardian are expected to attend the **September Season KickOff Meeting** on the Sunday after Labor Day. Choir rehearsal and trip information, expectations and season schedules will be handed out at this meeting. Choristers will also meet their directors and fellow choir members.

The Oregon Children's Choir calendar consists of three terms: Term One (September through the December Winter Concert), Term Two (January through the March Spring Auction Concert) and Term Three (March through May). Your chorister's commitment ends following the Finale Concert and Spring/Summer tours. If there is a choir tour that takes place during the summer, the choir year will end upon return to Eugene.

In the event that a rehearsal falls on a "no-school day", according to the Springfield, Bethel, and 4-J school calendars, rehearsals will be held at the discretion of the director. Because OCC wishes to maintain the excellent quality and reputation it has established, no concerts will be scheduled during summer vacation. Should a special opportunity arise during a vacation period, participation will be voluntary.

Attendance is **mandatory** at the following events: All rehearsals, as scheduled; October Preview Concert; Winter Concert; Spring Auction Concert; Finale Concert; Spring/Summer Choir Tours. Updates to the calendar will be posted at [oregonchildrenschoir.org/calendar](http://oregonchildrenschoir.org/calendar).

### Rehearsal Attendance Policy

To maintain quality rehearsals, we require that each chorister be present and on time to every rehearsal. Each choir meets once weekly, with some additional rehearsals as scheduled. If your child must miss a

rehearsal, please notify your director or parent helper immediately. Contact information is provided at the required parent/chorister meeting before the season begins in September.

No more than two unexcused absences are permitted per term. Being tardy for three rehearsals may be counted as one unexcused absence. Missing more than two rehearsals unexcused in any term may result in probation or dismissal from OCC. Disciplinary actions are at the discretion of the director and the Executive Board.

### Performance Attendance Policy

Choristers are required to participate in all major choir concerts and, with the exception of Prelude Choir, the spring/summer choral tour.

Choristers must arrive in proper concert dress at least 30 minutes before the performance and immediately check in with their Choir Administrator/Parent Helper. Tardiness to a performance may cause a chorister to be excluded from participation at that performance.

### School Choir Participation Policy

OCC wants to see all music education in our area flourish. All OCC choristers are encouraged to participate in their school's music programs where available. If not, they are to write a letter to explain why they cannot participate in their school choir to their OCC director. We hope to be a place where students can improve their skills and increase their abilities to support school choral instruction.

### Behavior Policy

OCC expects all choristers to treat people and property with care and respect. OCC staff will contact the parent/guardian if any chorister's behavior is of concern and will attempt to work out a solution. However, OCC staff reserves the right to remove any child from choir, without a refund of tuition, if a child's actions warrant it.

Music and a folder are provided for each chorister. Choristers are required to bring their music folder to all rehearsals, and a sharpened pencil and eraser should be kept with their music at all times. Only mark music lightly in pencil, with direction from the director. Do not fold or

roll music. Music will be collected at the end of each term, and fees for lost or damaged music may be charged.

### Safety Policy

OCC is committed to the safety and good behavior of all choristers. No adult should be in a one-on-one situation with a chorister. All teaching areas are to be as open as possible. A complete list of OCC's safety expectations can be found at [oregonchildrenschoir.org/safety](http://oregonchildrenschoir.org/safety). We require all parents to review this information, for their child's safety and for the safety of other choristers.

OCC wants to protect and respect all our members and staff in online communications. When contacting students through email, parents should be included on all communications. All online groups should invite all parents. Cell phone reminders should have parent or adult in leadership added in for teacher student communication. The Music Director should be included on all choir-specific group email communications.

### Criminal Background Clearance Policy

OCC's board members, contracted staff and all OCC volunteers in supervisory positions are required to have a cleared criminal background check on file with OCC. Volunteer Background Authorization forms are available by emailing [billing@oregonchildrenschoir.org](mailto:billing@oregonchildrenschoir.org).

### Parent/Guardian Expectations

The OCC Executive Board has established policies to ensure the safety of choristers and volunteers at all OCC activities. Upon registration, Parents/Guardians will be asked to read and accept the following policies:

### Arrival/Departure Policy

I understand that, unless I have made alternate arrangements for my child, it is my responsibility to make sure my child is supervised by a choir adult before I drop him/her off and that supervision does not begin any earlier than 10 minutes before choir rehearsal or performance call time. I also understand that it is my responsibility to come inside the rehearsal space to pick up my child unless alternative arrangements have been made by me.



## Attendance/Excursion Policy

I do hereby give my permission for my child to participate in all activities of the Oregon Children's Choir. These activities include, but are not limited to, rehearsals, performances and recreational activities at regular rehearsal spaces, public areas and community venues. I also give permission for my child to accompany the choir on choir tours within and outside the State of Oregon. I understand that I have the right to request that my child not participate in any OCC event. I further understand that my child may be removed from the choir for non-attendance at required choir activities.

## Family Participation Policy

Oregon Children's Choir depends on families who volunteer their time and services. These volunteer hours allow us to provide a quality choral program at a reasonable cost. Families will be called on to volunteer for at least 2 activities during the season to support the choirs. Those families who cannot manage the 2 activities during the season may opt out for a \$100 tax deductible donation.

## Email Communication Policy

OCC primarily uses email and an e-newsletter to communicate with parents/guardians. Please make sure to add the choir to your address book so you don't miss important information.

## Publicity/Photography/Video Release

I fully understand that by volunteering for the choir and allowing my child to participate in Oregon Children's Choir, we may be included in photographs or videos that will be used for promotion of the program or concert or for archival purposes. I also understand that we might be in contact with the press about Oregon Children's Choir. Also it may be necessary for program staff to photograph or videotape participating youth for purposes other than promotion. Oregon Children's Choir staff will only use photography or videography of children in the choirs and camps for its legitimate purposes, including, but not limited to website, public purchase and organizational/event promotion.

## Forms

The following forms are included as a part of OCC's online registration:

- ✓ Online Registration Form
- ✓ Scholarship Application
- ✓ Medical Release Form
- ✓ Parent Waivers and Responsibilities
- ✓ Criminal Background Check (for chaperones, parent reps, parent admins)

OCC's forms can be found at:

<http://www.oregonchildrenschoir.org/forms-and-resources.html>.