



Piedmont East Bay
Children's Choir

Inspiring Voices, Enriching the World

Membership Handbook
2019-20

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Table of Contents

HISTORY OF THE PIEDMONT EAST BAY CHILDREN’S CHOIR	4
ARTISTIC PHILOSOPHY.....	4
PROGRAM OVERVIEW	5
Kinder Department.....	5
Training Department.....	5
Performing Department.....	6
SUMMER CHOIR CAMP.....	7
TOURING	8
CURRICULUM	8
PROGRESS REPORTS AND EVALUATIONS.....	9
PLACEMENT, ADVANCEMENT AND PROMOTION	9
MUSIC AND THEORY WORKBOOKS	10
WHAT TO BRING TO REHEARSAL	10
FOODS BROUGHT TO REHEARSAL MUST NOT CONTAIN NUTS.....	10
ATTENDANCE	12
ATTENDANCE AT REHEARSALS.....	12
ATTENDANCE AT PERFORMANCES.....	12
ILLNESS.....	12
LEAVES OF ABSENCE.....	13
CODE OF CONDUCT	13
CONDUCT AT REHEARSALS.....	13
CONDUCT AT PERFORMANCES.....	14
SINGERS AS AUDIENCE MEMBERS	14
DRUGS, ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO POLICY	15
ILLEGAL DRUGS AND OVERNIGHT TRIPS	16
DISCIPLINE POLICY	16
COMMUNICATIONS.....	18
MEMBERSHIP AGREEMENT	18
TUITION AND FEES / PAYMENT POLICIES.....	19
LATE ENROLLMENT	19

	3
SCHOLARSHIPS	19
WITHDRAWAL AND REFUND POLICY	20
STATEMENT OF NONPROFIT STATUS.....	20
FUNDRAISING.....	20
BOARD OF DIRECTORS.....	21
GROUP PARENTS	21
VOLUNTEERS	21
FACULTY AND STAFF DIRECTORY.....	22
ARTISTIC STAFF.....	22
PERFORMING DEPARTMENT CONDUCTORS.....	22
TRAINING & KINDER DEPARTMENT.....	22
ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF	23
PIEDMONT EAST BAY CHILDREN’S CHOIR.....	24

MEMBERSHIP HANDBOOK

Welcome to the Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir!

HISTORY OF THE PIEDMONT EAST BAY CHILDREN'S CHOIR

In 1982, founder of the Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir (PEBCC), Susan Rahl, tapped Robert Geary to be the first (and only) Artistic Director of the new organization and saw an initial enrollment of 27 young boy singers. Today, over thirty years later, the celebrated faculty trains over 350 students annually through a series of progressive choirs, summer music camps, national and international concert tours, and hosts the prestigious *Golden Gate International Choral Festival (GGF)*. Our faculty and staff has developed a relationship with the students and the community it serves that is unique and profound in the world of choral music today. Refusing to only explore historical music, Geary defines PEBCC through his determined advocacy of "new music," through commissions, premieres, and recordings of innovative and demanding new works by today's leading composers.

Students of this award-winning program have gone on to pursue successful careers as singers, conductors, performers, composers, teachers, and concert pianists. Others have chosen to work in the fields of Aeronautical Engineering, Biochemistry, Medicine, Education, Arts Administration, Dance, International Relations, Law, Math & Applied Sciences, Physics, Psychology, and Public Policy among many other fields.

ARTISTIC PHILOSOPHY

Guided by our belief that music is good for children, and that choral singing is a deeply wholesome, invigorating, enriching practice, our mission is to advance the choral arts through education, performance, and collaboration at the highest artistic level, fostering individual development and international relationships. We also believe that the choral arts should be available to every child and youth. Toward this end, PEBCC's program is designed to serve the child at the appropriate music level. Through our choirs, a solid music foundation is laid through the basics of singing, study in music theory, and a multi-year, sequential curriculum. When children have achieved an advanced level of proficiency in vocal production and musicianship, they may audition for advanced groups, which place an emphasis on performing, recording and competing at the highest level.

Our fundamental program is rounded out with concerts and collaborative performance opportunities. In the past, these have included working with the Berkeley Symphony, Cal Performances, the Mark Morris Dance Company, the Oakland East Bay Symphony, the San Francisco Opera, John Denver, David Benoit, and the Barenaked Ladies among many others.

The Choir also takes an active role in introducing today's choirs to living composers through our extensive commissioning and the subsequent premiering of new works. To date, we have commissioned and premiered dozens of new works by more than 25 living composers to great acclaim regionally and abroad.

International concert tours and competitions are the core of the choir program. Choir tours provide an unparalleled opportunity for young people to learn about themselves and the world around them in a very personal and profound way. We have toured and performed throughout the United States and in 27 countries, participated in nineteen choral competitions in North

America, Asia, and Europe, and have brought home more than twenty-five awards, including many First Prizes, Gold Medals and Grand Prizes.

Complementing our international touring activities, the Choir triennially hosts the *Golden Gate International Choral Festival*. Thousands of children in choirs from more than twenty-five countries and the United States have participated in the Festival. Founded in 1991, it was the first such Festival of its kind in the western U.S. The next *Golden Gate International Choral Festival* is scheduled for July 2018.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir enrolls over 350 children in twelve choir groups, including boys, girls, and mixed choirs, ranging in age from 4-17. The choirs are grouped into three divisions: Kinder Department, Training Department, and Performing Department.

Kinder Department

For our youngest singers, we offer a Pre-KinderChoir and a KinderChoir to introduce group singing and beginning music concepts using age-appropriate music activities and games. These groups are intended to be exploratory in nature, providing a child's first exposure to choral music in a friendly and playful environment. The KinderChoir semester culminates in an informal presentation to parents and friends during the last class.

Training Department

The choirs in the Training Department provide a thorough preparation in the basics of singing and music theory, through a multi-year sequential curriculum. Training Department choirs allow students to build their skills at a steady pace while keeping the emphasis on fun. Training Department choirs rehearse once each week throughout the school year.

The Training Department presents recitals once each semester, typically in December and May. In addition, students perform at the Winter Concert in January and at the Spring Sing in June. Occasionally, a Training Department choir performs elsewhere within the larger Bay Area community; for example, at a retirement home, holiday tree lighting, or sports event.

In the fall, Training Department choristers are required to attend a half-day, Saturday workshop where they will work with a special guest clinician on vocal technique and repertoire for their end-of-semester performances. The workshop culminates in a potluck party for Choir members and their families. It is truly a fun day for all!

In the spring, some Training Department groups attend the *Holy Names Choral Festival* for an exciting half-day workshop where students develop their musicianship and learn how to apply the philosophy of Zoltán Kodály in choral and classroom settings.

Prior to concerts or other events, we schedule additional "dress" rehearsals to prepare the students for public performances. Families are notified of these rehearsals well in advance. Parents are invited to visit a regularly scheduled rehearsal whenever they wish.

We also offer Camp Joyful Voices, an optional one-week sleep-away summer music camp in August which provides a great opportunity for Training Department students to receive additional vocal training, musicianship, and music theory instruction in a small group setting, while enjoying traditional summer camp activities.

Auditions for new students are offered twice yearly; in August and January. New students are then placed in the Training Department group according to their age and grade level, their ability to match pitch and rhythm, and with consideration given to their previous musical training. Placement and advancement are subject to space availability at each level.

Boys and Girls are placed into separate groups at the Training Department levels as follows:

Boys	Girls
Boys Training 1 (BT1)	Girls Training 1 (GT1)
Boys Training 2 (BT2)	Girls Training 2 (GT2)
	Girls Training 3 (GT3)
	Girls Training 4 (GT4)

In the fall, members of Boys Training 2 and Girls Training 4 choirs are required to attend a full-day retreat held at the beautiful *Walker Creek Ranch* in Marin County. At the retreat, students will work on repertoire, participate in team-building activities, and familiarize themselves with the Walker Creek site where they will be required to attend summer music camp the following year, should they be promoted to Concert Choir (*see Performing Department, below*).

Performing Department

The Performing Department choirs represent the pinnacle of children's choral training and performance. Here, our singers learn teamwork, discipline, polish their musicianship and create life-long friendships as they become our ambassadors representing one of the finest children's choral performance organizations anywhere in the world.

The Performing Department includes four different choirs: Concert Choir, Ensemble, Ecco and Ancora. Students are placed in each choir based on demonstrated skill, vocal development, and commitment to the Choir as demonstrated through exemplary musicianship, attendance, attitude, and behavior. Promotions and advancement are subject to space availability and eligibility requirements as listed below. Each group may be offered performing opportunities throughout the year as arranged through the Artistic Director. These opportunities are an important part of the training process.

- **CONCERT CHOIR (CC)**, the entry-level group of the Performing Department, is a chorus of girls and treble-voiced boys between the ages of 10 and 14. Members of Concert Choir begin their season with mandatory summer camp in August. Regular rehearsals take place on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4-6pm throughout the school year. Concert Choir performs approximately ten to twelve times per season at various events, and tours domestically 4-7 days in the spring or early summer. Concert Choir repertoire includes two, three, and occasionally four-part music in various languages with some rhythmic and harmonic complexity. Students are expected to make regular progress in the study of music theory.
- **ENSEMBLE (Ens)** is a chorus of treble-voiced boys and girls who have completed two years of Concert Choir and are under the age of 17. Singers must be 15 years old or younger to audition for Ensemble. Members are required to sing with Ensemble for a minimum of two complete seasons. Members of Ensemble begin their season with mandatory summer camp in August. Regular rehearsals take place on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4-6pm throughout the school year.
- **ECCO (Ecco)** is a chorus of young women in grades 10-12, and young men of any age whose voices have changed. Ecco members are strongly encouraged to begin their season with an optional summer camp in August. Regular rehearsals take place on Monday evenings throughout the school year. Ecco participates in occasional retreats, performs four or more times each season, and may tour when opportunities arise. Ecco sings a wide variety of choral literature, ranging from classical to popular/jazz, including pieces for women's voices, men's voices, mixed voices – whatever is suggested by each season's enrollment configuration and the talents/interests of the participants.
- **ANCORA (Anc)** is a choir of young women in grades 9-12 who succeed in a rigorous vocal audition. 12th graders generally are not admitted as first-year Ancora members. *Ancora singers in grades 9-11 must also sing in Ecco or Ensemble. Ancora singers in grade 12 may opt to sing only in Ancora.* Ancora rehearses during the school year on Thursday evenings from 6:30-8:45pm. The group collaborates with composers and other arts organizations in the presentation of new music, makes recordings, performs for public events, and tours occasionally. All members of Ancora are expected to be studying voice privately. Ancora sings almost exclusively a cappella music, with members singing up to eight-part literature of the most challenging nature.

SUMMER CHOIR CAMP

Participating in camp for Concert Choir and Ensemble is a crucial part of our students' training for these exceptional Performing Department choirs. *These choirs begin the year with a 11-day summer camp at Walker Creek Ranch in Marin County.* Attendance at camp is mandatory for Concert Choir and Ensemble, strongly encouraged for Ecco, and optional for Training Department choirs. Campers spend up to four hours of rehearsal each day building repertoire for the coming season. Voice lessons, in-depth training in music theory and sight-reading, and daily performance opportunities are all built into the curriculum. Outside of rehearsal, campers have a choice of traditional camp activities

like swimming, canoeing, hiking, basketball, and arts and crafts. Camp is also a time to make new friends, sing around the campfire, and build lasting relationships.

TOURING

Touring is a key part of the musical, cultural, and social experience of the Performing Department program. Tour destinations are selected primarily on the basis of their potential for providing enriching musical experiences and secondarily for their cultural and geographical interest. While on tour, singers may participate in music festivals, community concerts, and cultural and recreational activities.

Concert Choir takes a domestic tour of 5-7 days in late spring or early summer. Ensemble generally undertakes a major, 14-day international tour each June or July. Given their busy high school schedules, members of Ecco and Ancora tour only intermittently.

When Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir groups travel, choristers are often hosted by the families of the choirs with whom we visit. Professional staff and volunteer chaperones accompany the choirs on tour. Photos and "tour blogs" are frequently posted to the Choirs' website, giving parents and friends a chance to "keep it personal" and read about the daily tour activities.

CURRICULUM

Our curriculum is designed to provide challenging, developmentally appropriate opportunities for young singers at each level. Generally, a child must master the curriculum for each level before advancing to the next.

Our formal curriculum stresses healthy vocal production, including such elements as posture, breath control and support, freedom of sound, resonance, and uniformity of phonemes. Beyond this, each level has its own set of objectives that guide conductors' work with their groups. In the Training Department students and families are apprised of individual progress via personalized evaluations that are sent home at the conclusion of each semester.

A typical rehearsal begins with group warm-ups that is integrated with the vocal and repertoire goals of the rehearsal. Full group singing is often augmented with sectional work, during which the conductor focuses on a specific subsection of the larger chorus, giving attention to individual voices as needed. From time to time, work on specific pieces may be punctuated by discussions, music theory or music history, which are again tied to the music or the current curriculum. Please click the links below to be directed to each individual choir's goals:

[BT1](#)
[BT2](#)

[GT1](#)
[GT2](#)
[GT3](#)
[GT4](#)

[Concert Choir](#)
[Ensemble](#)
[Ecco](#)
[Ancora](#)

PROGRESS REPORTS AND EVALUATIONS

In the middle of each semester, Training Department families will receive a report via email that summarizes the progress of the choir as a whole.

A singer's individual progress is evaluated at the end of each semester. These evaluations enable a conductor to measure the development of a child's musical and vocal skills and his or her grasp of music theory. The evaluations, along with conduct and attendance, serve as a basis for determining readiness for advancement or promotion. Training Department students receive report cards after the last rehearsal in each semester.

For a child in Boys Training 2 or Girls Training 4 the report card at the end of the fall semester is an important indicator of areas that might be strengthened before the Performing Department auditions held in the spring. (*See the following section on "Placement, Advancement, and Promotion."*) If you have any questions about your child's evaluation or progress in general, please contact the conductor of his or her choir.

PLACEMENT, ADVANCEMENT AND PROMOTION

Promotions normally occur at the end of the spring semester, not at mid-year. It is not unusual for a student to remain at any given level for two to four semesters before being advanced or promoted. Because training at each level builds upon concepts introduced earlier, it is essential for a child to be ready to take the next step before he or she advances.

Sometimes a child shows marked improvement or progress during summer music camp. Although no written report will be sent, re-evaluation by camp staff or by the conductor in the fall may result in advancement to the next training level.

While some music skills are quantifiable, most are not. Evaluating a child's musical ability, vocal development, focus, and "readiness" for advancement or promotion is subjective. Our conductors, who are familiar with each child's rehearsal behavior and musical strengths, make this decision. As always, if you have questions or concerns about your child's readiness for promotion, please contact the conductor.

During the spring semester, all children in Boys Training 2 and Girls Training 4 are evaluated to assess readiness for promotion to the Performing Department. Not all will be considered ready. Membership in the Performing Department represents a significant step forward in skill levels, self-discipline, and commitment from both singers and their families. BT2 and GT4 students who are not ready for promotion remain in the Training Department, providing peer leadership to their groups. Such leaders are expected to act as mentors to less experienced members of the Choir.

Audition dates are announced in spring and prospective members receive information about the audition process and what it means. All singers in GT4 and BT2 audition for Concert Choir. The audition consists of singing a song from the repertoire and taking a comprehensive theory test and an aural interval identification test. Students demonstrating proficiency in the auditions may be invited to join the Performing Department, as space permits.

Children who are promoted to Concert Choir must begin the year by attending the summer camp in August, and must tour with their choir during the following spring or summer.

All singers in Concert Choir audition for Ensemble. The audition consists of singing a song from the repertoire they have been studying and taking a comprehensive theory test and an aural interval identification test. Students demonstrating proficiency in the auditions may be invited to join Ensemble, as space permits.

Children who are promoted to Ensemble must begin the year by attending the summer camp in August, and must tour with their choir during the following spring or summer.

MUSIC AND THEORY WORKBOOKS

Music is distributed to choir members during rehearsals, along with a choir binder in which to keep it. Choir members are responsible for taking the music home and bringing it with them to each rehearsal. All music is the property of the Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir; *pieces will be collected by the conductor when your group is through using them.* If the music binder and its contents are lost, you will need to purchase a replacement from the Choir office at a fee of \$20.00.

Students using theory workbooks will each be provided one copy as part of their tuition. Students are expected to bring the workbook to rehearsal in addition to their choir binder. In the event that a student loses his or her workbook, the Choir office will provide a replacement copy at a fee of \$10.00.

WHAT TO BRING TO REHEARSAL

- Music binder
- Music theory workbook
- 1 or 2 sharpened pencils with erasers
- Water bottle (marked with the student's name)
- Non-messy snack, *must not contain nuts* (Please note: snacks may be consumed only in places and times as directed by the conductor.)

FOODS BROUGHT TO REHEARSAL MUST NOT CONTAIN NUTS

The Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir wishes everyone a happy and safe experience at all rehearsals and concerts. The choir holds a strict no-nut policy, we ask that any foods brought to classes for parties or foods brought to receptions, not contain any type of nut as several members of our Choir family have severe allergies to nuts. Thank you to everyone for complying with this important policy.

DOGS MUST BE ON LEASH

As a reminder, when dropping off or picking up your child before and after Choir rehearsal, we ask that you have your dog on leash at all times. Children are sometimes frightened by dogs, and California has a strict liability policy which means people are liable for any

injuries or damage that a dog does, whether or not the owner was negligent. We love children and we love dogs! Please help us keep them both safe!

UNIFORMS

Concert Choir and Ensemble have a casual and dress uniform. Members are required to wear their casual uniforms for off-site rehearsals and concert uniforms for performances. The cost of custom-made uniform-items is included in the tuition fees. The Choir office provides the Concert Uniform to singers and expects it to be returned at the end of the season. Casual Uniform items are purchased directly from one of our designated vendors: Dennis Uniform or Lands' End.

Singers without full regulation uniform will not be allowed to perform in the concert. No special uniform is required for regular rehearsals.

Detailed information about uniforms for each Choir level is provided to Choir members at the beginning of the semester and is available on our website. For additional information, please check in with Member Services.

ATTENDANCE

Excellent attendance is expected of all singers. Absences make it difficult to learn the repertoire and keep up with memorization deadlines. Attendance is also an important factor in making promotion decisions. Therefore, excessive or unexcused absences may result in disciplinary action or expulsion from the program.

ATTENDANCE AT REHEARSALS

Pre-planned absences: When a situation arises which will prevent attendance, please notify the Choir office by sending an email to absences@piedmontchoirs.org.

Unplanned absences: If an illness or emergency occurs the day of a rehearsal, please phone the Choir office at (510) 547-4441 to report the impending absence.

For the majority of our groups, three rehearsal absences, planned or unplanned, are permitted each semester. Certain Performing Department groups may have more stringent attendance requirements. Please check with your conductor for further information.

Following a fourth absence, students may be asked to sing for the conductor to demonstrate sufficient mastery of the music. If the preparation is deemed insufficient, a tutor may be suggested, or the singer may be asked to sit out part or all of a performance.

The Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir maintains the right to dismiss any student who does not abide by its rules and regulations. PEBCC tries to avoid taking this extreme measure first through warnings and then through parent conferences. Please refer to the Discipline Policy on page 16 for further information.

ATTENDANCE AT PERFORMANCES

Attendance at all dress rehearsals and performances is mandatory for all students. We do everything possible to schedule our performances months in advance. This is to ensure that all choir members and families plan for and can attend all scheduled performances. Choir members may be exempted from a performance only for illness, significant church or school events like graduations and bar/bat mitzvahs or confirmations (their own, not their friend's), and important family events. Members who wish to be excused from attending a concert are expected to approach the conductor as far in advance as possible.

A student may not miss a dress rehearsal for any reason other than illness, or he or she may not be allowed to participate in the associated performance.

Occasionally the Choir receives a request to perform on short notice. In such circumstances it is understood that singers who have other commitments may not be able to perform. Unforeseen schedule conflicts are handled on a case-by-case basis. A member should discuss the conflict with the conductor as soon as it arises.

ILLNESS

Sore throats, colds, and flus are a concern for singers of any age. 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. Please be sure to call 510-547-4441 or email absences@piedmontchoirs.org to inform the office of the singer's absence.

Singers may return to rehearsal when they are feeling better, have been fever-free for at least 24 hours, and are attending school again. If they still have minor symptoms, like a cough or runny nose, they may be asked to sit off to one side in rehearsal, or to listen and watch instead of immediately joining in with the other singers. Please arrive early and inform the conductor of any of these circumstances.

LEAVES OF ABSENCE

Training Department students are permitted to take a one-semester leave of absence, and return to the Choir at the same level at which they left, without re-auditioning. Training Department students who wish to rejoin the Choir after more than one semester of leave will be asked to re-audition. Performing Department students who wish to take a leave of absence should contact their conductor.

CODE OF CONDUCT

CONDUCT AT REHEARSALS

The Choir rents rehearsal space from the Piedmont Unified School District, Piedmont Community Church, and similar organizations. We value our relationships with our community partners, and insist on the following rules of polite and respectful behavior in our rented facilities:

DO:

- Practice your music and lyrics at home in advance of rehearsals.
- Arrive on time to every rehearsal.
- Bring everything you need for rehearsal, and remember to take all of your belongings home with you when rehearsal is over.
- Pay attention to the conductor, accompanist, group parent, adult chaperone, or student leader in charge.
- Be friendly and respectful of any staff working at the places where we rehearse.

DON'T:

- Eat or chew gum in any rehearsal room. Your conductor will let you know where you may eat your snack, if you've brought one (usually outside).
- Bring any beverages except for bottled water.
- Touch or handle anything that doesn't belong to you specifically, including music instruments.
- Run through landscaped areas, climb or sit on walls, gates, trees, or other architectural features.
- Shout (inside or outside).
- Litter. Every item you bring in should leave with you, or be carefully placed in a trash receptacle.
- Write on blackboards without permission.

- Explore or wander into areas where you're not supposed to be. [Students should be in the proximity of adult supervision at all times.]

CONDUCT AT PERFORMANCES

Members of the Choir perform in concert halls and churches, in public facilities, and in private settings. All students in the Performing Department should have had enough previous training and experience to present themselves in a fully professional manner while on stage. Training Department members learn these skills as they progress through the Choirs. Here is what we expect of our singers at performances:

DO:

- Participate in all scheduled performances.
- Be ready for performances, with all music, lyrics, and movement thoroughly memorized.
- Come on time wearing the proper uniform.
- Find your place and/or line up quickly and quietly.
- Pay attention to the conductor, accompanist, group parent, chaperone, or student leader in charge.
- Obey rules about eating and drinking.
- Respond quickly and quietly to instructions.
- Stay focused on the music, the conductor, and the performance activity.
- Enter and exit the stage with poise and dignity.
- Stand relaxed and with good posture with your arms at your sides.
- Remain silent when on stage and not singing.
- Stand calmly before and after each selection.
- Keep your eyes focused on the conductor during performance.
- Let the nature of each piece of music be reflected in your facial expression and overall demeanor.

DON'T:

- Talk or whisper at any time while on stage.
- Let your eyes wander around the room while on stage.
- Clap onstage as a form of acknowledgement to other performers.
- Leave the stage when a piece is in progress.
- Do anything to draw attention to yourself and away from the group as a whole.
- Do anything to distract another singer at any time while on stage.
- Wave to parents or friends.

In some performance situations, choir members may be in close contact with famous performers or other high profile individuals. Singers should not ask for autographs or initiate conversations unless they are invited to do so and are given permission by the conductor.

SINGERS AS AUDIENCE MEMBERS

It is important for Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir singers to learn about formal concert hall etiquette as they prepare to interact with choirs in formal settings in various parts of the globe. Therefore, everyone's assistance in teaching and reinforcing these values is greatly appreciated.

DO:

- Applaud at the conclusion of performance selections. If a piece has more than one movement, or if several pieces are being performed together in a "set" (check your program), then refrain from clapping until the end of the set.
- Smile at the performers to show your support and respect.
- Remain seated during the performance, to avoid distracting the performers and disturbing the experience of other audience members. Restroom breaks should be taken during intermission, or in an emergency, only between performance selections or sets.
- Take your program and any other trash or belongings with you when you depart the concert, making sure to dispose of them appropriately.

DON'T:

- Talk – or even whisper – during the performance.
- Make an inappropriate display of enthusiasm: Please don't stand in your seats, dance, or whistle/yell/hoot, even if you're trying to get into the spirit or support the performers.
- Wave at the performers or otherwise try to get their attention.
- Eat or drink in the audience area, or take photos or make video/sound recordings. Make sure to follow the "house rules."

DRUGS, ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO POLICY

PEBCC is a caring community committed to promoting the physical, intellectual and social development of all individuals. The inappropriate use of alcohol and other drugs threaten the health and safety of all students, faculty, employees, volunteers and the general public as well as impairs performance. No alcohol or illegal drugs are allowed at choir rehearsals, performances, tours, retreats, or other choir related events. Nor may a choir member be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs at choir rehearsals or any other choir events. Possession, use, furnishing or sale of alcohol or illegal drugs, or being under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol at any choir events may result in a probationary behavior contract, suspension, and/or dismissal from choir.

Smoking is prohibited for all students (through the age of 18) at all times, anywhere the Choir holds classes, performances, camps, retreats, homestays, hotel stays and tours. In the event of an incident related to alcohol or illegal drug use at choir related events, the choir will implement the following disciplinary process:

1. If a choir member is suspected of possession or being under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol at a choir event, the choir member's parents will be notified and they will need to pick up their child from the event immediately. An investigation conducted by the Board of Directors will ensue.
2. A conference will be scheduled with the choir member, the parents, the conductor, and either the Artistic Director, Executive Director or Board Member.
3. Then, at the discretion of the Board of Directors, the choir member may be placed on a probationary behavior contract, suspended, or dismissed from choir.

4. The Board of Directors is routinely informed of any student suspension or dismissal. Parents may request full Board review of any disciplinary actions rising to the level of suspension or dismissal.

5. Students dismissed for disciplinary issues are not entitled to any refund beyond what is provided for under normal refund policies.

ILLEGAL DRUGS AND OVERNIGHT TRIPS

These policies and procedures are designed to insure illegal drugs and alcohol free overnight activities (tours, camp, retreats):

1. All students' bags, suitcases, backpacks must be submitted for inspection when a chaperone requests to do so.
2. If alcohol or drugs are plainly visible in a room when a chaperone enters it, all students in the room will be deemed to be in possession. A student innocent of possession may avoid problems by insisting to the student owning the drugs or alcohol that they be removed, or by reporting their presence to a chaperone immediately.
3. Students found in possession or under the influence of alcohol or drugs will be sent home at the parents' expense.
4. Students in possession of illegal drugs or alcohol will also be subject to choir discipline upon return. Penalties include loss of activities/privileges, suspension or expulsion from choir, and/or referral to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

The Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir's Board of Directors has adopted the following statement of policy regarding behavior standards.

- In order for the Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir to provide effective training for the singers and in order for the Choir to present performances of the highest quality, each Choir member needs to contribute his or her best efforts toward creating a positive environment in all Choir activities.
- The Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir expects that each singer will make a positive contribution to all rehearsals, performances, and other Choir-sponsored events. In general we ask that each singer act in such a way that he or she is not detracting from either the leader's ability to teach/conduct or the other singers' ability to learn/perform.
- Failure to live up to this standard may lead to corrective action by the Choir staff and eventually to dismissal from the Choir.

The Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir discipline procedures have been created in the hope of accomplishing the following goals:

- To help maintain order and harmony, and promote a sense of security and focus in the participants;
- To teach students that only they are responsible for their actions, and that those actions have real consequences;
- To provide students with tools for exercising self-control;
- To enhance the self and mutual respect of all participants;
- To protect students, adults and property from harm;
- To model how caring people can guide, protect, and care for one another.

Here is the process generally used in the event of a specific behavioral problem:

1. When inappropriate behavior* occurs, an adult staff member will give the student a verbal reminder regarding appropriate behavior.

* *“Inappropriate Behavior” usually means excessive talking or laughing, poking, not focusing, talking back/insubordination, swearing, throwing things, making faces, horseplay, running around, continually leaving rehearsal, etc. If the behavior is crudely sexual or involves physical violence, the student will be removed from rehearsal immediately. [In this instance, please skip directly to Step 4 of the formal disciplinary process, given below.]*

2. If the student continues to misbehave, the adult staff member may direct the student to sit out the rest of the rehearsal and send a first notice home to alert the parents to the problem. The signed notice must be signed by a parent and returned to the office.

3. Should a similar situation occur in any subsequent rehearsal or other choir event, (including performances, tours, retreats, or camp) another notice will be issued and the child will not be able to resume choir activities until a parental conference is held.

4. At that conference, a determination will be made as to whether the student and his family can make a commitment to sustaining the behavior standards that are requisite for remaining in choir. It is possible that parents may be asked to be present at weekly rehearsals and/or performances to supervise/control their child.

5. If the student can make such a commitment, the student will be readmitted to rehearsal. If the commitment is not possible, the student will be dismissed from the Choir.

6. After returning to choir, if the student is successful, and stays within the bounds of the behavior standards for the remainder of the choir year, the next semester will begin with a clean record.

7. If the student is unable to uphold the behavior standards a third and final notice will be sent home alerting the family to the child’s suspension from choir for the remainder of the current semester, or, in the case of Concert Choir, Ensemble, and Ancora, the year. After this “time off,” a student may petition to re-enroll. Re-enrollment may be approved, with or without conditions, or disapproved.

8. If a student is out of control during rehearsal, the parents may be phoned to come pick up the child immediately. The Registrar will contact the parents and ask them to come in with their child for a conference as soon as possible.

9. The Board of Directors is routinely informed of any student suspension or dismissal. Parents may request Board review of any disciplinary actions rising to the level of suspension or dismissal.

10. Students dismissed for disciplinary issues are not entitled to any refund beyond what is provided for under normal refund policies.

COMMUNICATIONS

Our professional staff attempts to keep parents well informed of what's going on with the Choir in a clear and timely manner. As such, it is vital that the office have your correct home address, e-mail address, and telephone numbers.

The Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir website (www.piedmontchoirs.org) and messages sent to families via e-mail are our primary forms of communication regarding the activities of the various performing groups. This is the most efficient and expedient method we know for notifying families of specific concert dates and venues, call and performance times, and uniform requirements. To keep things simple, we try to send out as much routine information as possible via our regular weekly email bulletin. If you don't seem to be getting these emails, please check your spam folder or contact the Choir office so we can make sure we have your correct email address.

MEMBERSHIP AGREEMENT

At the beginning of the choir year (or 2nd semester if a spring enrollment) each member of the Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir and his or her parents are asked to acknowledge their understanding of the general rules of conduct outlined in this handbook by signing a Membership Agreement.

TUITION AND FEES / PAYMENT POLICIES

Tuition is due by semester for the training department though you may pay for a full year. Tuition is billed annually for the performing department. Our standard payment plans are below. Don't hesitate to reach out if you want to consider another payment plan.

Annual Payment Options
Plan A - 1 payment per year, no installment fee
Plan B - 2 payments per year, \$35 installment fee per year
Plan C – 10 automatic monthly payments, \$55 installment fee per year

LATE ENROLLMENT

To be included on our roster, please select a payment option (pay in full or set up automatic recurring billing) prior to the first day of class in order to be included on the roster. A \$49 late fee will be assessed for any child enrolling after the first day of class. For new students, late fees can be waived during the first two weeks of a semester. After two weeks, rosters are closed and new and students will have to wait till the following semester (or year for Performing Department).

SCHOLARSHIPS

Because it is our hope that no student will miss out on Choir participation due to financial concerns, the Choir maintains an active scholarship program. Funds available for scholarships are limited and are need-based. An application form, with further information, is available on the Choir's website, or via the Choir office. **As we receive more requests than we have funds, parents must submit scholarship forms and required documentation by the stated due date for your application to be considered.** Scholarship students are expected to maintain excellent attendance, effort and conduct during the scholarship period. Violations, after a warning, may lead to revocation of scholarship status and/or affect future scholarship awards.

WITHDRAWAL AND REFUND POLICY

The following refund policies apply regardless of whether the student withdraws or is dismissed from the Choir.

A. IF YOU WITHDRAW:

- a. Students may withdraw from classes by submitting a Withdrawal Request form to the Registrar. (Form is available online and at the Choir office). Students who submit the Withdrawal Request form prior to the first meeting will receive a refund of tuition fees paid, minus a \$100 non-refundable cancellation fee. After the first day of class, there are no refunds.
- b. There are NO REFUNDS for camp, tour or retreats.

B. IF A CLASS IS CANCELLED:

Although it is rare that classes are cancelled, Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir reserves the right to cancel a class if it has not enrolled to an adequate level prior to the beginning of class instruction. Adequate enrollment is determined upon Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir sole judgment. In the case of cancellation, all enrolled students are notified by email or phone and given a full refund.

STATEMENT OF NONPROFIT STATUS

The Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir is a private, nonprofit organization recognized as a 501(c)(3) organization by the Internal Revenue Service. All revenues and expenditures are dedicated to the support of the choral music program.

FUNDRAISING

Tuition is the single largest component of the Choir's income, but tuition alone is not sufficient to sustain the needs of the organization. Other sources of income account for nearly 25% of revenues. Those sources include individual donations, corporate and foundation grants, performance revenues, our annual appeal and PEBCC fundraising events. A significant percentage of income is tied to the success of our annual fundraising efforts such as the "Joyful Voices Gala and Auction" spearheaded by the Board of Directors and volunteers. The success of these events depends on the vigorous efforts of volunteers to implement and support these fundraising activities. Your contributions are necessary and welcome. Please contact the Executive Director if you would like to help.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors is a volunteer advisory body that exists to support the mission of the Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir and is governed by its by-laws. Board members serve three-year terms. They include parents whose children are current and former members of the Choir, and other dedicated members of the community.

The Board oversees all aspects of the Choir organization and takes an active part in setting policy. It provides guidance to the staff, helps to implement the Choir's long- and short-term goals, provides leadership and advocacy of the Choir throughout the Bay Area, and initiates development and fundraising. The Board is also charged with ensuring accountability to the parent body in fiscal and personnel matters.

David Baraff, President
Yen Trac, Vice President
Marisa Rahl, Secretary
Shirley Pao, Treasurer

Ben Barr
Poppea Dorsam
Natalie Henrich
Kelly Kirkpatrick

Camden Louie
Sue Malick
Carrie McAlister
Caroline Santander

GROUP PARENTS

Group Parents are an invaluable component of the Choir organization. Group Parents serve the Choir by coordinating activities associated with an assigned choir. They chaperone students at off-site dress rehearsals and concerts, ensure that choristers are in compliance with Choir uniform dress code, enlist additional volunteers for special events such as end-of-term celebrations, and generally assist staff and conductors in any way they can. Please contact the Choir office if you are interested in volunteering or learning more about group parents. (510.547.4441).

VOLUNTEERS

The Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir depends on the support of volunteers to help the Board and Choir staff accomplish the organization's goals.

The active participation of parents in the Choir is vital. It would be impossible to sustain the quality program that the children enjoy without the active and enthusiastic support of choir families. It is only by your giving your time as a volunteer that we can enhance the success of the Choir and ensure that limited resources are used as effectively as possible. Volunteering is also an effective way to participate in your child's experience in choir and to meet other choir families.

Information about volunteer activities is included in the registration packet. Parent volunteers perform many tasks, large and small. Volunteers help with mailings, organize uniform sales and re-sales, and initiate fundraising events. Parents with professional expertise may help with the choir website or write grant proposals and articles. Whatever skill or talent you can offer, the Choir has need of it. (510.547.4441).

FACULTY AND STAFF DIRECTORY

Please contact our faculty and staff members at any time – we're here to help!

ARTISTIC STAFF

PERFORMING DEPARTMENT CONDUCTORS

Eric Tuan

Artistic Director and Conductor of Ensemble and Ecco,

etuan@piedmontchoirs.org

(510) 547-4441 x7

Topics: Performing Department curriculum and promotions

Sue Bohlin

Associate Conductor of Performing Department

sbohlin@piedmontchoirs.org

Andrew Brown

Conductor of Concert Choir

abrown@piedmontchoirs.org

Robert Geary

Conductor of Ancora

rgeary@piedmontchoirs.org

Shauna Fallihee

Director of Pedagogy

PERFORMING DEPARTMENT

Naomi Braun

Training Dept. Director, Kinder Dept. Director and Conductor of Girls Training 2

nbraun@piedmontchoirs.org

Topics: Training Department and Kinder Department curriculum and promotions

Anne Daniel

Conductor of Pre-KinderChoir A & B

KinderChoir A, B & C and

Girls Training 1

adaniel@piedmontchoirs.org

Nancy Linford

Conductor of Girls Training 4 and

Boys Training 2

nlinford@piedmontchoirs.org

Elizabeth Wagman

Conductor of Boys Training 1

and Girls Training 3

ewagman@piedmontchoirs.org

Alice Del Simone

Director of Pedagogy

TRAINING

DEPARTMENT

Please feel free to contact your group's **conductor** with questions or concerns about weekly assignments, repertoire, and/or your child's progress within the group.

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Karim Baer
Executive Director

kbaer@piedmontchoirs.org

(510) 547-4441 x6

Topics: Choir policies, faculty/staff concerns, parent concerns, fundraising, questions about the Board of Directors

Alice Del Simone
Performing
Department

Program Administrator

adelsimone@piedmontchoirs.org

(510) 547-4441 x3

Topics: Rehearsal & performance details and schedules, group parents, Concert Choir Tour, camp

Heather Saulnier
Marketing
Training
Department
Director

hsaulnier@piedmontchoirs.org

(510) 547-4441 x4

Topics: General information, volunteering, uniforms, concert tickets

Martin Hodge
Bookkeeper & Accountant

accounting@piedmontchoirs.org

(510) 547-4441 x5

Topics: Billing

Beth Hooper
Registrar and Development
Manager

bhooper@piedmontchoirs.org

(510) 547-4441 x2

Topics: Registration, scholarships, attendance, changes of address, donations

Suzie Rahl
International Tour Coordinator

srahl@piedmontchoirs.org

Topics: Tours

Alice Del Simone
Golden Gate Festival Program Manager

adelsimone@piedmontchoirs.org

(510) 547-4441 x3

Topics: Golden Gate Festival

PIEDMONT EAST BAY CHILDREN'S CHOIR

3629 Grand Avenue

Oakland, CA 9610

510.547.4441

www.piedmontchoirs.org

GOLDEN GATE INTERNATIONAL CHORAL FESTIVAL

- *A program of the Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir* -

510.547.4441

www.goldengatefestival.org