



Singer and Parent Handbook

2019-2020

**Phone: 805-464-0443
PO Box 15757
San Luis Obispo, CA 93406**

Central Coast Youth Chorus

Welcome to the Central Coast Youth Chorus (CCYC). Founded in 1994 as the Central Coast Children's Choir, CCYC is committed to bringing the highest level of artistic training to the youth of San Luis Obispo County, and dedicates itself to presenting world-class music and artistry in every performance. Our organization provides youth in our community the exceptional opportunity of experiencing the joy of singing in rehearsals and concerts, while they receive a high-quality music education.

Comprised of over 60 boys and girls from ages 7-19, Central Coast Youth Chorus singers are divided into six choruses: Brio, Cadence, Cadenza, Young Men's Ensemble, Vivace, and Advanced Vocal Ensemble. The rehearsals are scheduled during after-school hours, and include musicianship training plus vocal coaching to assist in developing healthy singing habits. Repertoire is selected to fit each choir's skill level, and includes established classical works, folk songs from around the world, as well as more contemporary styles, always striving to suit the singers' voices. Choristers develop self-discipline and confidence as they meet musical challenges and achieve artistic excellence under the direction of dedicated music professionals.

Over the last 24 years, CCYC has seen amazing growth in artistic quality and has become a highly respected and valuable asset in SLO County. The CCYC collaborates with premier performing groups in the community, such as the San Luis Obispo Vocal Arts Ensemble, Cuesta Master Chorale, SLO Symphony, OperaSLO, Canzona Women's Ensemble, and Cal Poly Choirs and Orchestra. CCYC performed several world premiere pieces, including "Your Voice Within" with jazz extraordinaire Inga Swearingen, and "Barter" by Meredith Brammeier, commissioned for CCYC's 20th Anniversary. The choir also performs for senior care facilities as well as local non-profits, benefiting organizations such as the SLO Children's Museum, Hospice, and C.A.S.A. Over the years, our singers have been chosen to represent California in National and Western Division Honor Choirs in numerous cities nationwide. During the summer of 2014, our singers in grades 7-12 traveled to England to perform in the International Children's Choir Festival, singing at Canterbury Cathedral and in London, England. In the summer of 2016, they participated in the Pacific International Choral Festival in Eugene, Oregon. In 2017, CCYC participated in the community-wide SLO Responds event, an effort to raise funds for California areas ravaged by mudslides and fire.

As we move into our 26th season, we are excited that you will be joining us as we continue to build on our tradition of musical excellence!

Welcome to the CCYC Community!

♪ CCYC Leadership and Administration

All Central Coast Youth Chorus activities and decisions are guided by a collaborative process within the CCYC Staff. CCYC decisions are overseen by the CCYC Board of Directors, comprised of CCYC parents and private sector individuals who have a strong interest or career in the artistic and educational communities.

2019-20 Staff

Artistic Directors	Melody Svennungsen
Advanced Vocal Ensemble/Vivace Director	Melody Svennungsen
Young Men's Ensemble Director	Paul Osborne
Cadence/Cadenza Director	Lissa Melton
Brio Director	Kelley Lokensgard
Vivace/AVE Accompanist	John Cribb
YME Accompanist	David Alm
Cadence/Cadenza Accompanist	Karen Rhoades
Brio Accompanist	Megan Greenaway
Administrative Manager	Jill Whaley
Financial Manager	Nikki Clark
Onsite Manager	Erin Zvada

2018-19 Board of Directors

President	--
Treasurer	Kelly Hagerman
Secretary	Sandra Eatherly
Member	Alicia Borlolan
Member	Julie Spence
Member	Steinar Svennungsen
Member	Stephanie Tarica
Member	Bill Denissen
Member	Amy Gillham
Member	Donna Jones

Mission Statement

The Central Coast Youth Chorus is devoted to creating choral excellence, instilling values of self-discipline and commitment, and building lasting friendships while inspiring the artist within each singer through the power of music.

Our Choirs

The Central Coast Youth Chorus seeks to provide an exciting and stimulating place for young singers to explore the highest level of choral artistry.

Brio is a beginning level chorus of boys and girls, grades 2-3. They perform at the major concerts and at events within the county. Singers learn basic techniques of healthy singing and build vocal skills. Musicianship is taught through a variety of musical games and activities. No audition is required. Brio students should be able to follow directions, work cooperatively in a group setting, and show a strong interest in singing. Every informal community concert will include all Brio singers, but the opportunity to perform in the choir's seasonal concerts will depend on each singer's ability to demonstrate appropriate focus, stage presence, and non-disruptive behavior.

Cadence is a beginning/intermediate level chorus for singers in grades 4-8 who perform at the major concerts, including the Performing Arts Center, SLO. Occasionally, Cadence singers have additional opportunities to perform in community events and to travel to choral festivals within the state. Along with receiving musicianship instruction, singers learn techniques of healthy singing, build vocal skills and develop part-singing. No audition required.

Cadenza is an auditioned subset of Cadence, usually for singers in grades 5-8. Cadenza singers will typically sing in the same performances as Cadence, with added local opportunities and additional combined performances with upper choirs. Additional pieces of music will be selected for these singers to build their vocal ability and prepare them for the transition to Vivace in the years ahead.

The **Young Men's Ensemble** is designed for young men grades 6+, and has been designed for both changed and unchanged voices. No audition is required; regular voice checks will be a part of rehearsal. YME will join Vivace on selected songs. This is the place for men to find their voice! In addition to performing in major performances, they may also tour or participate in choral festivals and appear at other local events including sporting events.

Vivace is an auditioned choir for young women in grades 7 and up. They perform advanced treble repertoire of many styles, from classics to 4-part a cappella pieces. Rehearsals focus on continued musicianship training, team-building, and aural & vocal development. Vivace singers display vocal independence and flexibility; they are capable of learning music outside of rehearsals and can sing varied vocal parts. These young women show mature comportment and focus in rehearsals and performances. Vivace members have the opportunity to participate in Opera productions, and are often called upon to appear at community events with local adult groups, such as the San Luis Symphony & the San Luis Vocal Arts Ensemble. In addition to performing in all major concerts and events, they may tour or participate in national and/or international choral festivals.

The **Advanced Vocal Ensemble** is an auditioned choir that is open to Vivace students. AVE serves as CCYC's ambassadors to our community and are leaders within the Vivace choir.

♪ **The Artistic Experience**

CCYC focuses on the whole artist. The music that we study and perform includes a broad depth of repertoire spanning the different historical eras of music from Renaissance to modern-day, as well as different styles such as Gospel, Jazz, art song literature and folk music from many countries. An emphasis is given to the connection of words to music and how they express human emotion and ideas.

Training the young singer to use a healthy vocal production is at the heart of CCYC instruction. Learning to produce a consistent core sound filled with resonance, projection, and beautiful tone supported by strong breath management is our goal.

♪ **Commitment**

Our choir year is divided into two semesters: September - December, and January-May. Members are expected to complete the semester, but preferably to commit to the entire year. New members are accepted each semester.

♪ **Singer Expectations**

Attendance

Students are allowed **two** absences per semester. More than two absences per concert season can result in a singer not being allowed to perform in that season's concerts. CCYC trains students to be young professionals, so one must be prompt. Students who arrive late cause disruption to the entire group. Being on time is more than a courtesy, it is an *expectation*. Two tardies will be counted as one absence. *BE ON TIME = BE EARLY!* Super Saturdays are important rehearsals - we are able to combine classes and work on joint music. Often a special guest or activity takes place at these rehearsals. Singers are expected to make every effort to attend all scheduled rehearsals.

When a singer must miss a rehearsal, we request that parents please call (805-464-0443) or email the CCYC office (info@CentralCoastYouthChorus.org) so the absence can be properly recorded. Leaving a message does not excuse an absence, but it is a courtesy that we appreciate, as we worry about your singer's whereabouts during rehearsal. If a student cannot sing, but is not infectious, we ask them to attend rehearsal so they can watch and listen. This is not time wasted as they will remain caught up with the music instruction and often will be asked to share with the group what they observe and hear--this can be very encouraging to singing peers and allows the observing singer to have even more ownership over their choir experience.

Concert Rehearsals Are Considered Mandatory

The two Tuesday rehearsals just prior to the concert weekend are the only opportunity the singers have to rehearse lining up, entering and exiting the stage, and learning all the performance cues for the concerts.

Dismissal

If a singer is disruptive to the choir rehearsal, shows disrespect to others, or the singer's maturity level doesn't show a developmental readiness for performing, the Director has the option of asking the singer not to perform in the upcoming concert or dismissing the singer from the choir. The Artistic Directors will be available for discussion if necessary.

Rehearsal Standards

Punctuality and faithful attendance is required. In order to maintain the highest possible standards of singing, choir members are expected to:

- Arrive **ten** minutes early.
- Bring all music/musicianship book(s).
- Bring 2 sharpened pencils with erasers.
- Put music in rehearsal order *before* rehearsal begins, if applicable.
- Help clean-up at the end of rehearsal if needed (chairs, music, etc).

CCYC is only responsible for singers from 15 minutes prior to rehearsal start time through ten minutes after its conclusion.

Standards of Behavior & Excellence

- Maintain focus
- Show respect for the directors/parents/fellow singers
- Represent CCYC in a polite and professional manner
- Sit and/or stand with correct posture while singing
- Have fun!

Rehearsal/Performance Facilities

We are guests at many beautiful facilities. Be respectful by following these guidelines:

- Singers may not run or play in the buildings or in surrounding areas.
- Stay in designated areas with parent helpers or Directors.
- Water bottles with secured tops are allowed in rehearsal areas.
- Snacks are to be eaten only in designated areas at designated times.
- Use polite voices inside and out.
- Singers must be dropped off and picked up promptly.
- Singers in Brio must have a parent/adult pick them up in the room where their choir is held.
- Singers in Cadence and Cadenza must wait in the lobby for a parent/adult to pick them up after choir.

Care of Music

Music is very expensive and difficult to replace. Choristers must assume the responsibility of looking after it carefully and returning it in good condition. Music should be kept neatly in the music folder, and is to be returned at the semester's end.

Music should be marked clearly and legibly *in pencil only* with such notations as the Director instructs during rehearsal. No drawings on music are permitted. Replacement charges for music lost, damaged, or not returned is \$5.00 per piece of music.

Attendance at Concerts

Singer attendance at final rehearsals and concerts is required and a condition of membership. Call times indicate the time the singer is expected to be in place and ready to sing. If a singer is late for call time, she/he may jeopardize their privilege to sing in that performance.

Permission for absence from a concert for a reason other than illness must be requested in writing to the Director at least one month before the concert date.

Occasional weekday concerts for older singers may require absences from school. These will be kept to a minimum and will be announced in the calendar well in advance. Letters to the school explaining the reason for the absence, along with an explanation of the educational benefits of CCYC, are available from the Artistic Directors.

It is recommended that singers eat a healthy meal or snack one hour before call time.

♪ Tours/Trips

Our upper-level choirs participate in tours and out-of-town choral festivals. The decision to undertake a tour or trip is made by the Board of Directors and parents. In general, only Vivace may take a tour, and Vivace and Young Men's Ensemble may be invited to out-of-state and international festivals. The choirs may participate in a choral festival locally or in a nearby county. Tours and trips allow our youth to sing for different audiences, to meet singers from similar choirs, work with other directors/guest artists, and help broaden each singer's understanding and appreciation of other cultures.

Tour and trip standards and guidelines, as well as chaperone information, will be reviewed with parents and singers prior to a tour. If expenses are involved in a tour or trip, parents will receive commitment information well in advance. Though we lower the cost as much as possible through fundraising, tour expenses remain the responsibility of the choir member and his or her family. CCYC strives to include all members of the selected choir in tours, regardless of financial situations.

♪ Financial Matters

Tuition

The Board of Directors determines annual tuition. Tuition costs pay for rental of rehearsal space and concert venues, staff salaries, insurance, music purchases, office supplies, and other business-related matters. Tuition is due on the first day of rehearsal, and then subsequent payments are due according to the payment plan you select. Any payment received after the due dates will be assessed a late payment fee of \$5.00. Payment in arrears can result in the singer being dismissed from the program. Please contact the Board Treasurer or President if financial difficulties present themselves.

Any family with unpaid tuition from a previous semester will be asked to fulfill that obligation prior to participating in the next semester. They may be asked to pay the semester's full tuition rather than use the payment plan.

Refunds

Should it become necessary for your singer to leave the choir before the end of a semester, please send written notification to the CCYC office. A prorated adjustment may be arranged.

Financial Aid

Families are eligible to apply for scholarships within the first two weeks of each semester. CCYC scholarships are based on need and apply to tuition only. Scholarship request forms may be obtained by calling the CCYC office. Since finances are a private issue, please be assured that only the Board President, Board Treasurer and Finance Manager will be involved in financial discussions. If financial difficulties should present themselves, please speak with the President, Treasurer, or Finance Manager to work out a satisfactory payment plan. The Board does not wish for anyone to feel the need to drop from the program over finances.

Financial aid may be withdrawn if payment of remaining tuition and/or other fees are not kept current, or if the singer exceeds the number of permitted absences per semester. Students on scholarship are expected to have exemplary behavior and work ethic. Parents of those students receiving a scholarship are expected to exceed the minimum of ten volunteer hours per year to at least twenty hours or to head a committee.

Concerts

Each family is encouraged to sell 4 tickets to each of the Holiday and Spring concerts and any Benefit events. Our singers deserve a full house! We also ask that families help promote our events by posting flyers in their hometowns, discussing CCYC events on social media, and by word of mouth. Professional audio and video recordings of the concerts will be available for purchase, so we ask that there be no private recordings. No flash photography or video recording is allowed.

♪ Family Involvement

The success of CCYC, as in all volunteer organizations, is **dependent on family involvement**. CCYC will provide a parent volunteer sign-up form at the beginning of the season to allow families to select 5 areas in which to volunteer. Each family is required to contribute 10 hours per year (7 hours if joining in January). If a singer chooses to participate in Opera, 3 additional hours will be required. Volunteering can be done by service, donation of snacks, or by cash donation, including a \$150 "in lieu of" contribution (\$100 if joining in January). Each hour is roughly equivalent to \$15.00.

Parents/guardians are also responsible for the following:

- Assure singers arrive and are picked up at rehearsals/performances on time.
- Provide/arrange transportation to and from all rehearsals and events.
- Maintain upkeep of required uniform.
- Give your singer encouragement.

- Inquire about assignments/ask for newsletters and flyers.
- Listen and be involved with your singer as he/she practices at home.

It is expected that one parent/representative attend parent meetings. These meetings are scheduled as needed and are essential to provide communication and information regarding planning, events, the budget, individual choir information, etc. Please check the calendar and newsletters frequently to stay apprised of dates and times. Our season kick-off, Back To Choir Night, occurs in September. This is our meeting of welcome and of sharing essential information.

Visiting Rehearsals

Visitor seating is sometimes limited, therefore parents, grandparents or other relatives and children may come and observe all or part of a rehearsal if pre-arranged with the Director. We request that infants and very young children not attend due to the distractions they may cause the singers and directors.

Program Ads & Sponsorships

Program ads and sponsorships are essential to the success of CCYC. Please help by soliciting businesses and individuals in your field of influence. A personalized message in one of our concert programs is always appreciated by singers. The program ad and sponsor forms are available to download from our website (www.CentralCoastYouthChorus.org/support.php).

Donations/Tax Deductions

CCYC is a 501(C)(3) non-profit organization. Please save all your receipts for any donations, as they may be considered tax deductible (consult your tax professional). Also, many employers have matching funds programs and we appreciate any help that you can offer in support of our non-profit organization. CCYC now also makes it possible for you to donate stock in lieu of cash; people with investments in stocks, bonds and other securities they've held for at least one year can donate those that have appreciated in value, resulting in significant income-tax savings. For more information, please visit www.CentralCoastYouthChorus.org/support.php or contact our Finance Manager at finance.cccc@gmail.com.

Website

CCYC is fortunate to have an extensive website that provides information about our wonderful choral program at www.CentralCoastYouthChorus.org. Families can access many documents from the website, such as our registration forms, season calendars, sponsor forms, and info on advertising in our concert programs. You can also find upcoming events, choir and director information, reviews, and a photo gallery. Donations to CCYC can be made through the website as well.

Online Communication

Throughout the year, the CCYC will be sending weekly emails and newsletters, and will utilize the CCYC website for updates to the calendar and other essential information. We also regularly post information and updates to our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/CCYouthChorus. Please notify us if you do not have reliable access to the internet.

Publicity

Privacy and security are important to the CCYC. We ask on our registration form if we may use a singer's image in photograph or video in publicity efforts for our concerts, or for online social media such as Facebook or our website. We never include a singer's name or address with the picture and carefully protect our singers' identities. Let the Board know if you have any questions regarding this policy.

Questions

If you have any questions, contact our CCYC office at info@CentralCoastYouthChorus.org, your Choir Director, or a Board Member. Please keep us informed of anything that you think may influence your singer's behavior. This helps us to better serve our singers and families. All information will be kept in confidence.

♪ Uniforms

Just as the ensemble's sound is important, so is the ensemble's appearance. A well-groomed, neatly uniformed ensemble is essential for a truly professional and artistic experience. Good personal hygiene is a must for all singers. The formal uniform is loaned to each choir member for the choir year. The uniform must be returned in the same condition as it was received. Lost or damaged items will be billed to the singer. Uniforms should be washed and hung neatly between performances and should not be worn to other events.

Brio Girls:

Burgundy Blouse (Fall) / Royal Blue Blouse (Winter/Spring), Short Black Skirt
(please supply black closed-toe shoes and full-length black tights)

Cadence/Cadenza Girls:

Burgundy Blouse (Fall) / Navy Blue Blouse (Winter/Spring), Short Black Skirt
(please supply black closed-toe shoes and full-length black tights)

Brio/Cadence/Cadenza Boys:

White Shirt, Black Ties, Black Suspenders
(please supply black dress pants, black socks, black shoes)

Young Men's Ensemble:

Shirt and tie to be assigned.
(please supply black dress pants, black socks, black shoes)

Vivace/Advanced Vocal Ensemble:

Long Black Dress, Necklace provided by CCYC
(please supply black closed-toe shoes and full-length black tights or black nylons)
Advanced Vocal Ensemble also needs to provide a knee-length dress of their choosing, under the approval of their Director.

Hair should be clean, combed, and groomed away from the face. No large hair ties, bows or adornments. Make-up cannot be worn by Brio, Cadence, or Cadenza level singers, and must be worn discreetly by the singers in the advanced choirs. Accessories, watches, or any distracting jewelry is not permitted. Stud earrings are permissible.

The Informal Uniform is as follows:

Solid black, clean shirt or blouse, casual closed-toe shoes, nice black or dark jeans/pants are acceptable for Brio, Cadence, and Cadenza. Black pants are required for AVE, Vivace, and Young Men's Ensemble.

♪ Contact Information

Address: PO Box 15757, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406

Phone: 805-464-0443

Email: info@CentralCoastYouthChorus.org

Website: www.CentralCoastYouthChorus.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/CCYouthChorus

We thank you in advance for entrusting your singer to us; we appreciate each and every one of them!

Music can, and does, change lives!