

pittsburgh —girls choir—

Policy Handbook 2017-2018

Mission

The mission of PGC is to welcome girls of all races, ethnicities and socio-economic backgrounds into a supportive community committed to artistic excellence through an exemplary music education program.

Slogan

Pittsburgh Girls Choir: Where girls find their voice and community

Staff

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Kelly Brennan, Interim Board Chair

Rehearsal Locations:

Shadyside Presbyterian Church (5121 Westminister Pl., Pittsburgh, PA 15232)
DO NOT RING DOORBELL

Mailing Address

PO Box 9062
Pittsburgh, PA 15224
412.267.7707

Vision

The Vision of PGC is to share the transcendent beauty of girl's voices with our audiences and to transform the lives of choristers by creating communities characterized by compassion, mutual respect and encouragement and united by dedication to excellence.

Membership

Membership in PGC is maintained by attending rehearsals and performances and by contributing in a cooperative way with all others in the choral organization.

Auditions

All potential choir members are auditioned to determine musical skill and experience before placement in the appropriate ensemble.

Invitation to Return:

Each year, choristers will receive an invitation to return for the next season if they have fulfilled the requirements of membership including attendance, completion of homework, being respectful towards faculty, staff and other choristers.

Re-Audition and Interview (for Concentio and Via members only)

Every year all invited choir members will re-audition in order for director to evaluate progress and to assign proper voice placement. If chorister leaves the choir for any period, the former Choir member is permitted to re-audition one time after leaving the Choir for any period. The re-audition will include an interview, where the potentially returning choir member and at least one parent will meet with the Artistic Director to evaluate their potential return to the Choir.

Commitment

Enrollment in PGC implies a commitment to attend and participate in the rehearsals, concerts, performances, and events on the season's Calendar.

Choir Calendar

While it is not possible to foresee an entire Choir season, every attempt is made to include all events on the season Calendar, so that families can plan accordingly and balance their commitment to the Choir with other commitments. An updated Calendar will be provided in January.

Concentio or Chamber Choir Opportunities

If an extraordinary performance opportunity is presented to Concentio or Chamber Choir, it will be added to the Calendar and update Choir families as soon as possible.

CHOIR CONDUCT

The following requirements govern conduct in Choir rehearsals and events, including breaks.

Choir Environment

- No cell phones (will be collected at beginning of rehearsal)
- No texting
- No iPods, headphones, etc.
- No smoking
- No bullying, excessive teasing
- No romantic activity
- No alcohol, drugs, or illegal substances

Cell Phone Calls

Your child should not make calls to you on his/her cell phone during a rehearsal, even during a break, until the rehearsal is dismissed. If your child needs to reach you during a rehearsal in the case of an emergency, the chorister will seek permission from the Artistic Director to call you.

Homework

Choir members complete a minimum of 30 minutes of homework per week for Training Choirs, 60 minutes for Concentio and Chamber Choir of Concentio. Assignments are given each week at rehearsal and are due to be turned in on the following week at rehearsal.

REHEARSALS AND REHEARSAL SCHEDULES

Rehearsals are held at Shadyside Presbyterian (5121 Westminister Pl, Pittsburgh, PA 15232). Choir members should remain in designated areas and treat the church facility, staff, and volunteers with respect and courtesy at all times. Each month, all families will be emailed an updated attendance report.

Training Choir Rehearsals

Tuesday rehearsals are 4:30 to 5:45 p.m. for Melodia, 6:00 to 7:45 p.m. for Harmonia and 6:00 – 8:00 for Via unless otherwise noted. Each semester, Choir members are allowed 2 absences, 2 late arrivals (30-minute maximum) and 2 early dismissals (30-minute maximum). Late arrivals and early dismissals exceeding the above limits will be counted as absences by the Choral Instructor.

Concentio Rehearsals

Friday rehearsals are 4:10 to 6:30 p.m., unless otherwise noted. Monthly Saturday rehearsals are 10:30am to 2:30pm.

Chamber Choir Rehearsals

Monday rehearsals are 7:00pm-9:00pm, unless otherwise noted. Monthly Saturday rehearsals are 10:30am-2:30pm.

Camp and Retreat (Concentio and Via)

Camp and Retreat are required for all Concentio and Via members. Dates for camp will be released a year in advance.

Dress Rehearsals and Concerts

Each concert has two dress rehearsals for Concentio, and one dress rehearsal for other choirs. All dress rehearsals and concerts are required for all choristers.

Tour (Concentio and Via)

Tour is required for all Concentio members, with the exception of grand tours.

Attendance Policy

Concentio Attendance Policy: 4 absences total (5 for juniors and seniors) from August – Feb. Total of 2 early dismissals and 2 late arrivals (MUST BE at rehearsal for at least 1 hour)
ABSENCES MAY NOT BE APPLIED TO DRESS REHEARSALS

Chamber Choir Attendance Policy

1. In the Fall, may miss up to 2 Monday rehearsals
2. In the spring, may miss up to 3 (Mondays and Fridays)
3. 2 Earlies and 2 Lates per semester.

Reporting Absence, Late Arrival, and Early Dismissal

Attendance is taken at each rehearsal. If your child must be absent, arrive late or be dismissed early from rehearsal, notice must be given to the General Manager via phone or email at least 24 hours before said rehearsal. In the event of a day-of emergency, please call 412-267-7707.

Communications:

Updates will be posted to the Parent Portal through the PGC website. Occasional emails will be sent as needed. Please inform the General Manager if you are not receiving sufficient communication.

CONCERT DRESS

Concentio

Concert dress includes the Choir dress or uniform, flat black shoes, and a 14” pearl necklace for Concentio members. Shoes and pearl necklace are to be provided by chorister. The Wardrobe Manager is available to help Choir members with dress fittings at the beginning of each season.

Via and Harmonia

A concert dress will be provided. Please plan to purchase skin-colored hose and black flats. Hair must be neat and away from the face. No high buns. The Wardrobe Manager is available to help Choir members with dress fittings at the beginning of each season.

Melodia

A concert dress will be provided. Please plan to purchase white tights, and Mary Jane type shoes. Hair must be neat and away from the face. No high buns. The Wardrobe Manager is available to help Choir members with dress fittings at the beginning of each season.

Additional requirements regarding choir dress for Concentio, Via, Harmonia and Melodia:

- No perfume, body spray or any other scented product
- Hair must be kept out of choristers face (no high buns)
- Deodorant (Concentio, Via, Harmonia)
- Stud or post earrings, no dangle earrings
- Light make-up (blush, mascara, no lipstick, no sparkles) for Concentio
- No make-up except chapstick for Via, Harmonia and Melodia
- No additional jewelry or ornamental hair accessories
- Natural hair colors only
- No visible tattoos or piercings (except earlobes) and no tongue piercing
- No heels or sandals

CHOIR FAMILY MEETINGS

Choir Family Meetings are scheduled at the beginning of the choir year and before Tour for parents of Concentio members. Attendance at these meetings by at least one parent/guardian (and chorister for Concentio) per family is expected, and attendance by all parents/guardian/supporting family members is encouraged. Choir Family Meetings provide updates, materials, and important information to meet the needs of the families and to streamline communications. Family Meetings are conducted by the Artistic Director and Assistant Director or an appropriate choir parent, depending upon the material covered by the meeting.

ENROLLMENT AND COSTS

Tuition

Starting in the fall of 2017, Pittsburgh Girls Choir will adhere to a sliding scale tuition. Please see the chart at the end of the handbook.

Tuition payments are intended to cover Choir family obligations for one year of enrollment, with the following exceptions:

- International tours
- Spending money for tours and outings
- Concert and event tickets

Payment Plans

For programs that run September to May:

- 1st installment due September 30
- 2nd installment due October 30
- 3rd installment due November 30
- Final installment due February 28

For Concentio/Chamber only:

- 1st installment due September 30
- 2nd installment due October 30
- 3rd installment due November 30
- Final installment due January 30

1 Installment Due Date:

- All tuition and fees due September 30th

2 Installment Due Dates:

- 1st installment due September 30 + fall activities fee
- 2nd installment due November 30 + spring activities fee

4 Installment Due Dates:

- 1st installment due September 30th
- 2nd installment due October 30th + fall activities fee
- 3rd installment due November 30th
- Final installment due February 28th + spring activities fee
 - Final installment due January 30th + spring activities fee (Concentio/Chamber only)

All tuition payments will be set up via ACH and automatically withdrawn on the dates above. There is a \$10 insufficient funds fee. There is a \$10 fee for installments received 5 days past the due date. There will be a \$35 fee for checks that bounce/are returned for any reason.

ADDITIONAL FEES

Wardrobe Deposit

At registration, parents will write a separate check for **wardrobe deposit** (\$75) and date the check for May 1, 2018. If the family fails to return their concert attire, they will receive email notification stating that they have one week to either return the dress or make sure that they have sufficient funds in their account to cover the check. After the week is up, the check will be cashed.

Activities Fee

Each girl will be charged an activities fee of \$55 per semester. The fee is due in October and in February. Families with many children in choir may be charged less, on a case by case basis. Parents can reduce their fee by volunteering for more than the required amount of VOD and event shifts: \$5 for each additional shift. The difference will be refunded at the end of the year.

Fundraisers

Fundraiser payments must be submitted on collection dates or be sent by the due date to PO Box 9062, Pittsburgh, 15224. Please send all payments to PO Box. Do NOT give check to staff at rehearsal. No staff member will accept payment in person. All tuition and fees are due in full to Bookkeeping by May 1.

REGISTRATION

All registration must be complete prior to the first rehearsal of the season. A chorister may not participate in rehearsals until registration is complete. This is for the child's safety and for insurance purposes. All required forms including the first two pages of the 2016 tax returns and ACH form are due upon registration.

CONCERNS

Concerns about rehearsals, performances, and scheduling should be addressed to the General Manager via email, or in person. Concerns about your child's artistic growth and his or her ability to attend rehearsals due to health or other issues should be addressed to the specific Choir Conductor via email, phone, or in person. Extreme concerns, beyond those of rehearsals and artistic growth, should be addressed to the Artistic Director, who will consult with the Board Chair, as appropriate.

VOLUNTEERING

Events

PGC families contribute volunteer hours to the organization through a commitment to volunteer as a Volunteer on Duty (VOD) throughout the year and at one choir event. This volunteer work allows us to keep administrative costs down. Family members will sign up for events at the Choir Family Meeting in the fall (or beginning of the semester). In tandem with the Parent Committee, the General Manager will be responsible for communicating volunteer duties for that event with the rest of the volunteers.

Volunteering at one event in the year contributes a monetary value of approximately \$200 to the organization. Families who do not wish or are not able to volunteer at two events throughout the year may exempt themselves from the requirement by paying \$200 (\$100 for one event). A person with special skills (photography, wardrobe, etc.) that volunteers throughout the year may be exempt from the one-event minimum, at the discretion of the General Manager. The Parent Committee will confirm that each family is signed up at the beginning of the year for one event and follow up with the family if they have not committed to the event.

Volunteer on Duty

All choirs (including Concentio) will have a Volunteer on Duty (VOD) at each rehearsal at Shadyside Presbyterian Church, usually an adult chorister family member. VOD slots will be assigned by the General Manager at the beginning of the year. If the assigned VOD date does not work for the parent, it is the parent's responsibility to trade slots with another family. This can be done through the parent portal and the choir directory. Each family must participate as a VOD in one regular rehearsal per semester.

The VOD must arrive 15 minutes early and will be responsible for letting choristers in the building at the Westminster Place entrance at Shadyside Presbyterian Church. (Choristers, please do not ring bell. If early, please wait until the VOD arrives). VOD will also bring a snack for the choir's break. The snack should be something simple and easy to eat with fingers or limited utensils. The choristers have only between five and ten minutes to eat snack. Please consider ease of clean-up in choosing a snack (ie... popcorn). VODs may also have mailing or other administrative work to do during rehearsal as assigned by the General Manager. If no work is available, VODs may read or do other work as long as they pay attention to the door. **For no-shows and late arrivals there is a \$25 fee which will be applied to the next tuition payment.**

Tour Chaperoning

Tour chaperones are generally selected on their demonstrated willingness to enhance the tour experience and to work in a cooperative manner with the Artistic Director, and fellow chaperones. Chaperone applications are available in September and due by mid-October. Decisions will be made by November.

If you are interested in chaperoning a tour, express your interest to the Artistic Director promptly. Your interest will be carefully considered and it is important to understand that there is no obligation to invite you to chaperone a tour. All tour chaperones must have a

completed PA background check, PA Child Abuse Clearance, and FBI Fingerprinting or notarized Affidavit before going on tour.

Alcohol and Substance Abuse

Choir volunteers are not permitted to operate a motor vehicle or volunteer in any other manner while under the influence of alcohol or any other substance that may impair their ability to ensure the safety and well-being of Choir members. While you are responsible for determining your ability to ensure the safety and well-being of Choir members, volunteers may be removed from assignment due to impairment at the discretion of the Staff and Event Chairpersons.

FUNDRAISERS

The Choir hosts the following fundraisers each year as part of the regular season. Each chorister in PGC is supported financially by the organization. Participation in the fundraisers is essential to supporting every member, and making sure all choristers can participate regardless of financial circumstances.

Every Voice! Benefit

The Board hosts this benefit one a year. Choir parents are invited to participate as paying guests.

Winter Sing-A-Thon

The Sing-A-Thon is required of all choir members (Concentio and all Training Choirs). This fundraiser is necessary to subsidize every choir member. All choristers need to raise a minimum of \$250 (Concentio) and \$200 (Training Choirs) to cover the cost of his/her choral education. The choirs will perform at local nursing homes, hospitals, etc. All choir members are asked to get a minimum number of sponsors for their three concerts that day. Sing-A-Thon packets will be given in early October. Participation in the Sing-A-Thon enables the choir to refrain from traditional holiday wrapping/cookie-selling fundraisers to focus on music.

Lasagna Dinner

Concentio and Via members participate in this event that raises money for the choir's summer tour.

SLIDING SCALE Tuition Rates

For the purposes of this table, “Income Level” is defined as total gross income for all family members contributing to the household, as found on line 37 of your 1040.

“Family Size” is defined as the total number of family members claimed on the household tax return, as found on line 6d of the 1040.

Chamber Choir & Concentio Combined				
Income Level	Family 2-4	Family 5	Family 6	Family 7+
Under 30,000	\$225	\$175	\$125	\$75
30,000 - 44,999	\$450	\$375	\$300	\$275
45,000-59,999	\$750	\$675	\$600	\$525
60,000-74,999	\$1,050	\$975	\$900	\$825
75,000-99,999	\$1,350	\$1,275	\$1,200	\$1,175
100,000-124,999	\$1,650	\$1,600	\$1,550	\$1,500
125,000+	\$1,850	\$1,850	\$1,800	\$1,750

Concentio				
Income Level	Family 2-4	Family 5	Family 6	Family 7+
Under 30,000	\$200	\$150	\$100	\$75
30,000 - 44,999	\$350	\$300	\$250	\$200
45,000-59,999	\$550	\$500	\$450	\$400
60,000-74,999	\$750	\$700	\$650	\$600
75,000-99,999	\$950	\$900	\$850	\$800
100,000-124,999	\$1,150	\$1,100	\$1,050	\$1,000
125,000+	\$1,350	\$1,350	\$1,350	\$1,300

Via				
Income Level	Family 2-4	Family 5	Family 6	Family 7+
Under 30,000	\$150	\$125	\$100	\$75
30,000 - 44,999	\$200	\$175	\$150	\$125
45,000-59,999	\$350	\$300	\$250	\$200
60,000-74,999	\$550	\$500	\$450	\$400
75,000-99,999	\$750	\$700	\$650	\$600
100,000-124,999	\$950	\$900	\$850	\$800
125,000+	\$1,150	\$1,150	\$1,150	\$1,100

Harmonia				
Income Level	Family 2-4	Family 5	Family 6	Family 7+
Under 30,000	\$100	\$75	\$50	\$50
30,000 - 44,999	\$200	\$175	\$150	\$125
45,000-59,999	\$300	\$275	\$250	\$225
60,000-74,999	\$400	\$375	\$350	\$325
75,000-99,999	\$500	\$475	\$450	\$425
100,000-124,999	\$600	\$600	\$575	\$550
125,000+	\$700	\$700	\$700	\$675

Melodia				
Income Level	Family 2-4	Family 5	Family 6	Family 7+
Under 30,000	\$100	\$75	\$50	\$50
30,000 - 44,999	\$150	\$125	\$125	\$100
45,000-59,999	\$200	\$175	\$175	\$150
60,000-74,999	\$250	\$225	\$200	\$200
75,000-99,999	\$300	\$275	\$250	\$250
100,000-124,999	\$325	\$325	\$300	\$275
125,000+	\$350	\$350	\$350	\$325

Flat rates:				
Choral Skills Class	\$250			
Women's Choir	\$250			
Up to 50% scholarships available for these programs				