

**CENTURY HIGH SCHOOL
CHOIR HANDBOOK¹
2011-2012**

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My Name is: _____

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1. Information has been taken largely from Indianapolis Children's Choir
Singer and Family Handbook.

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I. Introduction

Welcome to CHS Choir! The purpose of this handbook is to provide you with the basic information about participating in Century High Choirs. Please feel free to contact the director if you don't find the information you need.

Participation in vocal music can be an exciting and rewarding experience while here at Century. Striving for excellence in choir can develop lifelong skills of responsibility and self-discipline which can aid you in the real world. Taking part fully will allow you not only grow musically as an individual but will enable you to experience the joy of music-making with others for years to come. Truly, the more you put into it, the more you get out of it!

II. CHS Choir Mission and Values Statement

We will relentlessly pursue choral excellence through learning fundamentals of music and music making.

Century High Choirs value personal growth in virtues of self-discipline, responsibility, cooperation, and respect through choral rehearsal, activities, and relationships. We welcome all students of religious, racial, cultural, and economic diversity. We strive to contribute to the school and community through music.

III. Background

Century High Choirs began when the school opened in 2000, with Ms. Becky Moore as director. Since then, Century choirs have successfully performed in many district festivals, Heritage Festivals, Trills and Thrills Festival, and travelled both locally and nationally to share music with others. We have consistently received Excellent and Superior ratings at festival, both in performance and sight-singing. Students from Century Choirs have also successfully gone on to higher education in music at Idaho State University, Brigham Young University, Utah State University, and Boise State University.

IV. Curriculum and Grading

Century High Choirs study music from a variety of styles and cultures, from traditional folk songs to contemporary musical literature. The music is selected by the director to educate the singers of Century Choirs in history, culture, style, and perspective. Singing technique is taught alongside music reading skills in relation to the repertoire. Therefore it is essential that all singers be willing to sing all the music.

High quality music is chosen from all styles and cultures since the best musical experiences are derived from great music. Folk, gospel, classical, spiritual, and contemporary compositions are the basis for the curriculum, by composers such as Handel, Mozart, Schubert, Copland, Whitacre, and others.

Students are taught to read music and sight-sing using the "Sing at First Sight" curriculum and the sol-feg system. Notes, worksheets, quizzes, and assessments are used along with rehearsal to assist student learning of music.

Students are also taught how to use their vocal instrument through exercises for posture, breathing, tone production, vowels, and diction. Performance skills are assessed in individual achievements in rhythm reading, scale singing, and sight-reading pass-offs. These skills are graded using a performance rubric.

Students are expected to perform in all scheduled events, which is the end goal for all rehearsals. See 'Attendance' for details on performance absences.

Students are expected to perform a solo at the end of each trimester to demonstrate their individual singing skills. By improving and performing as an individual singer, students can contribute more effectively to the ensemble.

Solo rehearsal time will be provided in class, but students are expected to practice* outside of class in order to be truly successful. Final solos are graded using a performance rubric.

*Practice. A typical practice session might be as follows:

5 minutes of vocalization/warmups

10 minutes to work on new or uncertain music,

5 minutes working on phrasing, tone, and diction.

Practicing with your section in choir will ensure even more success individually and chorally.

Although not required, students are encouraged to audition for honor choirs and participate in solo and ensemble festivals throughout the year.

Grading

The grade students earn in choir is entirely reflective of their achievement in singing and musical skills. Rubrics will be used regularly to assess student achievement in counting rhythms, singing scales, and sight-singing pass-offs.

These will give students direct feedback on their achievement level and progress, as well as give them a grade in Infinite Campus. Unit worksheets and assessments are also included in the student's grade in Infinite Campus.

The following are required to earn a successful grade in auditioned choirs and demonstrates that the student is progressing in singing and musical skills:

- Achievements: 2 levels per trimester of rhythm counting and scale singing; one level of sight-singing
- Unit worksheets, reviews, and assessments
- Perform one solo per trimester for the class

- Performance evaluations-individual

Other ways to earn bonus points:

- Attend music concerts or any fine arts exhibit or concert and turn in a short summary of the experience.
- Audition for any honor choir
- Perform a solo/ensemble at district and/or state solo festival

Students and parents are encouraged to regularly check Infinite Campus to ensure that all assignments and achievement pass-offs are current and that the student is successfully achieving in choir. Any missing assignments will be marked, and will need to be made up and/or turned in by the student as soon as possible following any absence.

Any assessment or portion of an assessment can be re-taken by a student at an arranged time with the director. The better grade will be put into the grade-book.

V. The Program

Century High Choirs is committed to

The program consists of General Choir, Male Order, Treble Choir, Concert Choir, and Century Singers.

General Choir

General choir is an entry level choir made up of any students interested in learning to sing. This class is offered all three trimesters, requires no audition. No fees are assessed, as this choir only performs in class. The curriculum consists of introductions to singing technique, music history, music reading, and choral rehearsal. Music selection includes unison, rounds, two-part, and three-part songs of varying style and culture. Students are encouraged to audition from General Choir into either Treble Choir or Male Order.

Male Order

Male Order is an auditioned, all-men choir that is only offered during Trimester 1. The curriculum consists of singing technique specific to the male voice, music reading and choral rehearsal. Music selection includes unison, two-part, three-part, and four part arrangements for tenor, baritone, and bass voices. Various styles including rounds, barbershop, gospel, classical, madrigal, and contemporary will be performed. This choir will attend the Men's Choir Festival in Boise and perform in concert.

Treble Choir

Treble Choir is an auditioned, all-female choir that is offered for all three trimesters. The curriculum consists of singing technique specific to the female

voice, music reading and choral rehearsal. Music selection includes unison, two-part, three-part, and four-part arrangements for soprano, mezzo-soprano and alto voices. Various styles including rounds, gospel, classical, madrigal and contemporary will be performed. This choir will attend festivals and perform in concert.

Concert Choir

Concert Choir is an auditioned, mixed choir that is offered only during Trimesters 2 and 3. The curriculum consists of choral singing technique, music reading, and choral rehearsal. Music selection includes two and four or more part arrangements in various styles, including rounds, gospel, classical, madrigal, and contemporary styles. This choir will attend festivals and perform in concert.

Century Singers

Century Singers is the top auditioned mixed choir that is offered all three trimesters. The curriculum consists of choral singing technique, music reading, and choral rehearsal as well as a focus on performance in concert and in the community. Music selection will be a higher level of four part arrangements in various styles including rounds, gospel, classical, madrigal, and contemporary.

Performing *a cappella* music is also a focus of this group, as well as a higher level of sight-reading. This choir performs rigorously throughout the year for school and community events, festivals, and concerts.

VI. Membership

Singing in Century Choirs is intended to be a positive, learning experience for singers that can lead to a life-long love of singing music. These students will share inspiring times together both musically and socially. Students are expected to understand and practice commitment, self-discipline, and responsibility. We encourage students to give their best effort and be proud of what we produce. We expect each student to be committed for the entire trimester they are enrolled.

VII. Financial information

Students who participate in any auditioned choir (Male Order, Treble Choir, Concert Choir, Century Singers) is required to pay a participation fee to the district, as well as a uniform rental and cleaning fee paid to Century High School. These fees are intended to be paid at registration. General Choir students are not required to pay any fees.

- Participation: \$95-85
- Uniform rental: \$20
- Uniform Cleaning: \$15
- A choir t-shirt is \$6 in addition to these fees, and is essential for the choir casual uniform. This is to be paid to CHS Choirs.

- Choir retreat is in addition to these fees and cost will be announced prior to the retreat. We believe this retreat is essential to achieving student learning goals, and is beneficial to building positive relationships for the year.
- Choir tour is in addition to these fees and cost will be announced at the beginning of the year. Fundraising will be available throughout the year. See 'Fundraising Opportunities' and 'Tour' for further details.
- Choir activities throughout the year are in addition to these fees. Activities will include trips to the Utah Opera, Utah Symphony, and musical productions or concerts that will offer a professional musical experience to our students.
- Solo and Ensemble Festival fees are in addition to these fees. Although the choir program will support our students for some of the fees, students who audition and are accepted into honor choir, All-state choir, or All-Northwest will need to pay for their participation fees. Travel expenses are also to be paid by the student, although we will make every effort to help as much as possible.

It is essential that fees are paid at the beginning of the year. If students enter the program second or third trimester, fees need to be paid at the beginning of that trimester. You will receive a statement by midterm of Trimester 1 that shows your known fees.

Payment Options

Century High School allows monthly payments.

Methods of payment

Payments should be made at registration, which occurs at Century High School.

Other payments should be made to CHS Choirs in the bursar's office located in the main office.

Online payments can be made via Infinite Campus.

Financial Assistance

There is some financial assistance available to help with uniform rental and cleaning fees only. Assistance with the District participation fee must be addressed with either the district office or Century High administration. If you would like financial assistance, you must complete a Financial Assistance form and turn it in to the director. Forms are reviewed and assistance awarded by the director and CHS Choir Boosters based upon the financial need or special circumstances described on the form. Incomplete forms will not be considered.

Tour Accounts

Opportunities are available for students to participate in tours to various locations and festivals. CHS Choirs maintain a separate tour account for each student. If a student chooses to participate in CHS sponsored fundraising events, a percentage of the student's sales are designated by the director to be held in escrow in the student's personal tour account.

- The credits held in escrow are available to help pay for any future tour expenses the student may incur. They are not available to pay for any other fees (t-shirt, rental/cleaning, participation, activities). The escrowed funds are owned by CHS Choirs and are not eligible for cash withdrawal by the student.
- Direct deposits as well as any charges for tour will show in the student's tour account.
- Statements showing activity in the account will be provided at least once before tour. Additional statements can be requested throughout the year.
- Any balance remaining at the time of graduation or withdrawal/removal from CHS Choirs will revert to the CHS Choir general fund. This fund is used to offer financial assistance and pay general touring costs not covered by touring fees charged to participants. Upon request, any student's tour balance can be transferred to an active sibling's tour fund.

Fundraising Opportunities

There will be frequent opportunities for students to raise funds for tour with fundraising. Some fundraisers are listed below, but others may develop throughout the year.

The following fundraisers will be taking place each year that benefit student tour accounts directly:

- **Water Bottles:** CHS Water Bottles will be sold in the fall. Students will receive \$5 per bottle sold into their tour account.
- **Round-up:** CHS fundraiser, in which students sell raffle tickets. Students will receive \$5 per ticket sold into their tour account.
- **Showcase Auction:** Students can bring or seek items to be donated and put in a silent auction. 100% of item profit will be deposited in the student's account. Auction items are encouraged to be of a new or near-new quality, and gift baskets are encouraged.
- **Chocolate:** Cases (25 boxes) or individual boxes of chocolate are checked out to students to sell. Students receive 50% of the price into their tour account.

The following fundraisers benefit the CHS Choir program. Proceeds will help to purchase music and classroom supplies, pay for festival fees, and extra musical experiences, and provide scholarships for students.

- **Dinner at (Restaurant):** Certain restaurants will donate a certain percentage of an evening's profits to our program if we assist them for

a certain amount of time. We will announce details prior to the event and by bringing people to eat there, you can benefit our program.

- Showcase tickets: Tickets and door money to Choir Showcase will directly benefit the CHS Choir Program
- Rummage Sale: Proceeds from all items donated will benefit both the CHS Bands and Choir Program
- Choir Booster Cookbook: each year, the choir boosters put together, print, and sell a cookbook for \$10. We ask students to contribute some recipes to the cookbook to make it a lasting memory for family and friends. At times, we allow students to make a profit from the sales to benefit their tour account.

VIII. Rehearsal and Grading Information

Membership in the Century High Choirs is a commitment to faithful, consistent, and punctual attendance. Each student is holding a very valuable place in the choir. It is expected that rehearsals hold a high priority in each student's daily schedule. All rehearsals are mandatory, unless indicated on the choir calendar.

Absences from rehearsal/class time

Every moment during rehearsal and class period is valued as educational from bell to bell or from the start to end time. Notes, worksheets, assessments along with sight-singing activities are part of a daily music education. Missing either a rehearsal or a period of class results in missing valuable information and practice. It is vital that the student take responsibility for any absence by asking a trusted peer or the director about what learning he/she has missed from the absence and make up any missed notes, assignments or assessments. Also, the student should inquire about what was rehearsed in order to make that up individually or with a peer/section leader.

School Activities

If a rehearsal must be missed due to other school activities, the students must turn in a written note to the wire basket well in advance of the missed rehearsal. A parent and/or the school activity director/coach must sign the note for the absence to be excused.

Resignation or Removal

Each student is expected to fulfill his/her commitment to participate in CHS Choirs for the entire season or trimester(s). If, however, an extremely unusual circumstance occurs that would prevent a student from honoring that commitment, a personal conference between the director, student, and parents will be required before submitting a letter of resignation. If a student resigns, the parent is still responsible for all the fees incurred by the student.

Rehearsal Etiquette Procedures

The following procedures help us achieve the discipline and professionalism for which Century Choirs are known. These procedures are enforced for student safety, to ensure orderly rehearsals, and out of respect and courtesy for each other.

1. Arrive to class before the first bell. Please use the restroom and get drinks before the first bell. Immediately check in with the Choir Rep. Then take a chair off the stack and set it in your assigned seating area, which will be posted on the rolling white board as you enter the room. Then get your music binder, notebook, pencils and blue pen and be seated. Late arrivals should quickly and undisruptively get their things and go to their place.
2. Put any notes, excuses, forms, or assignments in the wire basket at the front of the room to avoid disturbing the director at the beginning of rehearsal.
3. At all times, show respect to each other, the director, accompanists, guests, materials, and the facilities. Pay attention to the director at all times. Do not behave in a manner which is disruptive to the rehearsal or distracting to fellow singers, directors, or accompanists, or which prohibits a positive and successful rehearsal.
4. Always bring your music binder, notebook, assignments, blue pen, and three sharpened pencils to rehearsal.
5. If, for any reason, a student cannot actively participate in a rehearsal, the student should turn in a written note to the wire basket and observe the rehearsal quietly and attentively.
6. Students are responsible for taking home any handouts that are distributed at rehearsals. These are important sources of information and should be requested by parents from the singer. CHS Choirs will also attempt to communicate via the school daily bulletin, the CHS Choir website and email as much as possible. Students are also responsible for taking note of the events schedule and announcements from the board daily.
7. Do not bring any food or drink other than water to rehearsal. Students are encouraged to bring bottled water to rehearsals. Try to eat a nutritious meal before rehearsals, especially early morning Century Singers.
8. Parents and interested members of the community are always welcome to observe rehearsals as space allows. Please check in at the front office, turn cell phones to silent, and observe quietly.

Disruptive Behavior

1. Cell Phones: must be turned off during rehearsal and class time, according to District policy. Please refer to the District Handbook for further details on cell phones.
2. Music: Music must be with the student in all rehearsals.

3. Other disruptive behavior will be addressed by 1) a verbal warning during rehearsal, 2) a private conversation with the director, 3) a phone call or email to parents, 4) a written discipline to the principal, 5) removal from the group.

IX. Performances

All performances are mandatory unless otherwise specified on the schedule and attendance is required.

Performances are considered part of your class requirement and are equivalent to an exam. They are essential for a grade and continuing choir membership.

All absences from mandatory performances must be pre-approved by the director at least two weeks prior to the performance. Any exception to the above reasons must be presented BOTH in person and in writing (Pre-Arranged Performance Absence Request Form) to the director two weeks prior to the performance.

If you must miss a performance due to severe, unexpected illness or a family emergency, a Pre-arranged Performance Absence Request Form (See form below) must be submitted within one week following the performance date.

In the case of a scheduling conflict on your part, a Performance Absence Request Form must be submitted two weeks prior to the performance.

If the Absence Request Form is signed by all parties including the director, the student must complete a makeup research paper within one week following the scheduled performance. If the Absence Request Form is not signed by all parties including the director, the student will not be able to make up the points.

Students required to attend another school activity to miss a performance must turn in an Absence Request Form well in advance. The Absence Request Form must be signed by a parent, the director of the other school activity, and the choir director in order for the absence to be excused.

Note: Unexcused absences include absences without prior notification or inappropriate and avoidable excuses. Unexcused absences may result in movement to another choir, or removal from the program.

Tour

Opportunities to travel both in and out of state to either festivals or exchanges are offered for students in CHS Choirs. Tour activities encourage connections, friendships, and musical experiences that can contribute to you as a musician and provide long-lasting memories. Attending any extra tours is

not required, but is strongly encouraged. Expenses for tour are detailed in the Financial Information section of this handbook.

Parents or adults wanting to chaperone tour or choir trips must complete a background check through School District 25 prior to any trips taken.

Chaperones will be expected to pay a fee to cover food, lodging, and travel costs as well as purchase a choir t-shirt to match our casual uniform.

X. Performance Procedures

Performances require the very best conduct, appearance, and musicianship.

More information will be given in detail prior to each performance and on the choir website (www.centuryhighchoirs.com).

1. Singers should always eat a nutritious meal, drink plenty of water, and get plenty of rest before a performance. Be sure the singer has used the restroom prior to entering the performance site.
2. Singers should arrive 10 minutes before the uniform check out time. Immediately go to the uniform manager and check out your performance uniform, then quickly change in the nearest restroom or changing area. Singers may not arrive more than 15 minutes prior to uniform check out time.
3. Singers should arrive 10 minutes before the performance call time and immediately check in with their Choir Representative, then stand in their designated warmup area.
4. Any medication given to a student less than three hours before a performance should be reported to the director or staff.
5. Tardiness to a performance may exclude a singer from that performance.
6. All performers must be attired according to the uniform detail sheet. Failure to be properly attired may result in exclusion from that performance. Performers should remain in their uniform until the performance time is completely over.
7. Students should conduct themselves in a calm, polite, and professional manner at all times to each other, the director, staff, and chaperones.
8. All singers must know the music. Each musician must have a confident command of the performance repertoire. Failure to demonstrate this at the final rehearsal may result in release from the corresponding concert commitment.
9. If a singer feels ill during a performance, he/she should quietly sit down on the riser and rest for the remainder of the song. Then, if feeling better, the singer may get up and sing again. If not, quietly leave the stage. A staff member will be watching and available to help if necessary. Once a singer has left the stage, he/she may not enter return to that performance.
10. Remember that singers represent Century High School at all times.

Note: Final dress rehearsal, and pre-performance rehearsals are closed to the audience, including families. This allows the singer to concentrate on the music, director, and any final instructions.

Tickets

Fall and Spring Choir concerts are free of charge. Showcase and Festival of Trees performances will require a ticket. Ticket sales benefit the choir program.

Audience Etiquette

Children under the age of 6 are not encouraged to attend choir concerts.

Children making any noise, including talking, during a performance should be immediately removed from the audience.

Cell phones, electronic devices, and flash photography must be turned off or silent during a performance. Talking should be kept only during pre/post concert, and during applause. No talking or whispering during a performance.

Only enter the performance site in between songs and quickly and quietly find a seat.

Whooping, hollering, or whistling are behaviors that are more appropriate for sports events. Please show your appreciation of the performance appropriately by applause.

XI. Formal and Informal Uniform Requirements.

Uniforms are intended to provide a professional uniformity across the choir.

A rental fee of \$20 will be assessed at registration as well as a cleaning fee of \$15. These fees must be paid before the first performance or there will be consequences. Any uniform issues (damage, tears, missing parts, stuck zippers, etc.) must be reported to the uniform manager at once to allow us time to get the problem fixed before your next performance.

Casual Uniform

All auditioned choir students will need to purchase a choir t-shirt at the beginning of the year for \$6. This is to be worn tucked in with nice jeans, black shoes, black socks.

Performance Uniform

These performance uniforms are rented to you with the expectation that they will be treated with care in order to ensure future use of the uniform.

Century Singers, Treble Choir, Male Order, Concert Choir students will be measured, fitted and assigned a performance uniform of a dress* or tuxedo (and accessories) at the beginning of the trimester. *Ladies have the option of purchasing their own gown. Cost: \$80.00.

Dresses and tuxedos will be stored in the CHS Choir room. Students will come to the school prior to a concert, check out and change into their uniform; following a concert, students must check in their uniform. However, we encourage students to check out their uniform to dry clean it at your own expense. This ensures a clean uniform and longer use of the uniform.

All choir girls are to provide the following to accompany their performance uniform: Black hose; Black, flat & closed-toe shoes; white slip; hair out of face, including bangs pinned back; tasteful jewelry (unless otherwise instructed); deodorant/antiperspirant; little or no hairspray and/or perfume.

Century Singers boys are to provide the following to accompany their performance uniform: Black socks, Black dress shoes, White tux shirt, Tuxedo (Jacket, Pants), Purple bowtie, Purple Vest, hair out of face, deodorant/antiperspirant, little or no hairspray and/or cologne.

Male Order/Concert Choir boys are to provide the following to accompany their performance uniform: Black socks, Black Dress Shoes, White tux shirt, Tuxedo (Jacket, Pants), Black Bowtie, deodorant/antiperspirant, little or no hairspray and/or cologne.

XII. Music

Music is one of the great assets that District 25 provides for our program.

Great care should be taken to keep music in good condition. 3-ring binders have been provided for this purpose. Music should be kept in the binder at all times, unless otherwise instructed. It is the singer's responsibility to make sure both binder and music is cared for and kept from getting lost. All music and binders are property of CHS Choirs and must be returned at the end of the season, or if a student leaves the program early. If music or binders are not returned, a \$2 fee per piece of music and a \$5 fee to cover the binder will be charged to the student's account. Broken folders may be reported to the Head Librarian. When turning in folders, make sure the sticker that has the student name and number has not been removed in order to receive proper credit. You should also be sure to remove all personal items from the folder before returning it.

Handling and Care of Music

1. Music should be brought to every rehearsal unless otherwise instructed.
2. Never fold or roll music.
3. Never write on music unless with permission of the director. Any markings should be done lightly in pencil, never in pen or marker. Do not deface any piece of music. Blank pages or portions of music are not for drawing personal pictures, writing notes, etc. Photocopied music is done with permission and should be treated the same as an octavo.

4. If, for any reason, a piece of music needs to be repaired, do so carefully with clear tape, or bring it to the attention of the head librarian.

XIII. Development

Century High Choirs continues to be grateful for the support of parents, families, alumni, and friends. Charitable donations are tax-deductible through the Education Foundation and are deeply appreciated. If you have donated to CHS Choirs this year, thank you.

Century High Choirs are also forming relationships with businesses and corporations to enhance the musical experiences we offer our students. If you know of a potential funding source, or if you would like to help us, please contact the director.

XIV. Volunteers

As a school activity that is often extracurricular, CHS Choirs depends on volunteers to help in various ways. The director, staff, and CHS Choir Boosters welcome all interested parties to help keep our choir going and growing.

CHS Choir Boosters

Century High School Choir Boosters is a parent organization that supports the choir program through volunteer service in fundraising and extracurricular events. The Choir Boosters elect at-large officers in the fall of each year.

Applications for these positions are available on the choir website (www.centuryhighchoirs.com).

Choir Boosters Officers and Board

Past President(s)-Lori Johnson, Ann Bringhurst

President-

Vice President-

Secretary-Bonnie Denually

Treasurer-Ann Bringhurst

Uniform Coordinator-Tracy Young

Tour Coordinator-Ann Bringhurst

Social Events Coordinator-

The CHS Choir Boosters provide fundraising opportunities and social activities for students and parents throughout the year. In the past, Boosters have put together and provided Choir Cookbooks for students to sell and raise funds for tour. They have also provided scholarships for choir students to take voice lessons. The Boosters are responsible for providing food for festival events at Century High School, and the annual Choir Awards Picnic at the end of the school year. The Boosters also provide recognition for choir students and

award uniform scholarships.

CHS Choir Parent Support Team: This group of volunteers changes on an annual basis. The Booster officers may contact the *CHS-PST* throughout the year for assistance in social activities or fundraisers for the Choir program.

Pre-Arranged Performance Absence Request Form

Today's Date: ____/____/____

Singer's Name: _____

Singer's Choir: _____

Date of Absence: ____/____/____

Reason for Absence: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Choir Director's Signature: _____

If absence is because of a school conflict, please have your activity director sign below:

Activity Director's Signature: _____

Date: ____/____/____

Pre-Arranged Performance Absence Request Form

Today's Date: ____/____/____

Singer's Name: _____

Singer's Choir: _____

Date of Absence: ____/____/____

Reason for Absence: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Choir Director's Signature: _____

If absence is because of a school conflict, please have your activity director sign below:

Activity Director's Signature: _____

Date: ____/____/____

