



2011-2012  
HANDBOOK

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

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## **INTRODUCTION**

This handbook is intended for singers and families of the Lake Superior Youth Chorus. It is not meant to be strictly a book of policy, but instead help provide information to questions that may arise throughout your singer's tenure.

Lake Superior Youth Chorus strives to:

- Develop vocal gifts through musical understanding and self-expression.
- Perform great music of various styles and historic periods.
- Value positive social interactions.
- Cultivate a positive image of youth and music in our community.
- Support interested singers of diverse ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds.

Performance opportunities for the singers are many and varied, including three major concerts and other opportunities to sing in the community.

One of LSYC's main goals is to help young singers make great music. By singing together youth can achieve many other goals such as:

- Become better singers
- Learn more about music theory
- Grow individually
- Learn more about the world and other cultures through music
- Gain confidence and self-assurance through successful performance
- Learn to work toward goals
- Have fun
- Experience that "whatever-it-is" that happens when great music is made in chorus

To obtain the goal of "making great music" each individual singer must strive to improve. There are two main areas LSYC emphasizes for young singers to work on: individual singing voice and being a choir member.

Lake Superior Youth Chorus (LSYC) is a non-profit, community arts organization. It is for students in grades 3 - 12 from the greater Duluth area, and includes singers from Hermantown, Duluth, Proctor, Cloquet, Esko, Superior, Two Harbors, and surrounding communities.

## **NON-DISCRIMINATORY CLAUSE**

The Lake Superior Youth Chorus admits singers without regard to race, color, creed, or financial situation.

## **DESCRIPTION OF ENSEMBLES**

- Choristers is a beginning choir for grades 3 and up.
- Concert Choir is open by audition to grades 6 and above and is for unchanged voices.
- Vocal Jazz/Gospel is a high school mixed large ensemble rehearsing once a week and singing music including but not limited to gospel, spiritual and jazz.
- Vocal Jazz is open by audition to high school singers interested in small ensemble vocal jazz repertoire, singing on an amplified system. This ensemble rehearses twice weekly.

## **ADMITTANCE PROCEDURES**

Each singer begins at a different place and develops at a different rate.

LSYC singers are placed in each choir according to age, vocal growth, and experience; striving to make great music together.

Choir Placement is determined by directors based on vocal development, known work habits, and responsibility for rehearsal and performance. Auditions are a part of the placement process. Auditions are informal and friendly and do not require advanced preparation.

**All youth in grades 3-12 who like to sing and are willing to commit to the program are welcome to join Lake Superior Youth Chorus.**

**Process for joining LSYC include:**

- initial auditions
- possible admittance into Concert Choir
- possible admittance into HS groups
- Completion of registration form
- Payment of registration fees

## **UNIFORMS**

Complete uniforms must be neat and clean for performance. Improperly dressed singers will not be allowed to participate. Uniforms provided in the fall will be turned in after the spring concert.

### **Concert Choir/ Choristers Formal Concert Dress**

Formal uniforms for Concert Choir/ Choristers consist of tuxedo shirt and black skirt/ pants supplied by the choir. Uniforms will be issued prior to the first concert. Singers must provide their own black dress shoes and black hose/ socks.

### **High School Formal Concert Dress**

Formal uniform for Encore! men consists of a white tuxedo shirt supplied by the choir and black dress pants supplied by the singer. Formal uniform for Encore! women is a black dress purchased through the choir. All singers must provide black hose/ socks and appropriate black dress shoes.

### **Expectations for Formal Dress Accessory Items:**

- Hair ties, clips, etc. must be black
- Make-up may be worn if applied tastefully
- Only clear nail polish may be worn
- Only small stud or hoop earrings may be worn
- No other jewelry may be worn (including necklaces, rings, watches, or bracelets)

### **Informal Uniform**

The informal uniform for all choirs is an embroidered polo shirt supplied by the choir to be worn with dark jeans (in good repair and provided by the singer).

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

When singers are missing from a choral ensemble, both musical and shared experience suffers. Each singer's voice is crucial to the artistic quality of both performances and rehearsals. Singers may never miss a performance. Singers may miss a rehearsal only in the event of sickness, family crisis, or for a school music or athletic event that is cumulative (see below).

All LSYC Choirs rehearse Sunday nights beginning at 5:30 p.m. Singers should arrive to rehearsals and performances 5 minutes prior to the call time in order to be prepared and seated for rehearsal.

Only the director can excuse an absence. Directors should be notified by phone or email about any absence PRIOR to rehearsal. Any singer with more than one unexcused absence during a concert series will be asked to meet with the director and his/her parents. This meeting may result in a dismissal from the current concert series.

### **Retreat**

Attendance at choir camp is required. LSYC Choir retreat is an overnight September 30 and October 1, 2011 and will take place at Wolf's Ridge.

### **Reporting Absences**

Absence due to illness or family crisis should be reported to the director PRIOR to the beginning of rehearsal. When possible, it is important that singers attend rehearsal to mark their score and follow along with rehearsal. Even though a singer is not actively singing, s/he is learning and helping the group move forward.

### **School-Related Events**

School musical or athletic events that are cumulative are defined as those events in which the singer is an active participant, and that are the culmination of a season's, class's, or team's work. The above constitutes an excused absence.

### **Absence Follow-Up**

When a singer has been absent, it is his/her responsibility to:

- Contact a fellow singer about the work they missed,
- Add necessary marking to his/her music,
- Determine what information, handouts, music were distributed or collected,
- Accomplish all of these things before the next rehearsal.

### **Inclement Weather Guidelines**

When severe weather conditions exist, the LSYC executive committee will make a decision to cancel practices/ performances at least two hours prior to the rehearsal/ call time. When such a decision is made, the decision will be posted on the web site [www.lsyouthchorus.org](http://www.lsyouthchorus.org). E-mails will be sent out and choir parents will notify singers about cancellations.

## **TOURS**

Day tours are planned for all four choirs every year. Choristers will have a local day tour in the spring. Overnight trips (e.g. New York, Chicago) are planned every few years for Concert Choir and both high school groups. A tour helps provide a broader range of performance opportunities, provides motivation for the singers, and helps develop a greater sense of unity. Home stays for singers may be a part of LSYC's tour. Choirs that we visit may host us overnight in their homes. We may also provide home stay opportunities for choirs visiting LSYC. Housing on tours may be provided through various other ways, including hotel/motel stays and dorm stays.

There may be extra fees for tours. Fundraising opportunities will be provided and singers must adhere to payment schedule or make arrangements with LSYC's treasurer to participate.

## **FAMILY COMMITMENT**

Parent/ Singer Participation Includes:

- Singer attends rehearsals and performances.
- Singer is punctual to all rehearsals and performances.
- Parents should ensure each singer works on music at home, helping if necessary.
- Clear all pre-excused absences with director. Report all absences due to illness/ family emergency to the director, choir parent or coordinator.
- Check singer's folder for correspondence, check e-mail and choir website ([www.lsyouthchorus.org](http://www.lsyouthchorus.org)) for information on upcoming events and announcements.
- Attend parent meetings during the year. Parent meetings provide an opportunity for families to have input in the organization and receive updates on current plans.
- Volunteer during the year as well as completing volunteer registration information.
- Participate as in-home hosts for home stays, when possible, for singers from visiting choirs LSYC hosts.
- Share successes and concerns about LSYC with members of the board of directors.
- Participate in fundraisers.

## **SINGER COMMITMENT**

Lake Superior Youth Chorus expects parents and singers to:

- INDIVIDUAL SINGER ARE RESPONSIBLE TO CONDUCT HIMSELF/ HERSELF WELL
- singers must rehearse music at home according to individual choir director's guidelines
- be attentive, focused, and give 100% during rehearsals and performances.
- respect director and board decisions

Singers unwilling to accept that responsibility should not accept a position in one of the choirs. Emphasis is on learning and mastery. To master anything of significance takes a willingness to be a learner and the dedication to work hard.

## REGISTRATION FEES

Choristers.....	\$300.00/ September – May
Concert Choir.....	\$400.00/ September – May
VJ/Gospel.....	\$400.00/ September – May
VJ Small.....	\$500.00/ September - May

Registration fees are due at the time of registration, unless a payment plan is arranged with the treasurer. Discussions and requests in regard to registration fees payment must be directed to the treasurer, who may request a review by the finance committee.

There is an initial \$30 deposit for music/ uniforms for each singer. This deposit is fully refundable upon return of the music and uniform, hanger, and garment bag in satisfactory condition. Charges may be assessed for missing or damaged music/uniform.

Lake Superior Youth Chorus offers a 10% family registration fee discount for multiple singers.

If choir membership is discontinued the following refunds will be issued:

- Prior to fall retreat, a full refund will be issued, less a \$30.00 registration fee.
- Prior to December 1<sup>st</sup>, 50% of registration fees will be refunded.
- After December 1<sup>st</sup>, no refunds will be issued.

## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

LSYC has limited funds available for need-based financial assistance, in hopes that no singer be excluded because of inability to pay registration fees.

Financial assistance applications are available upon request and at [www.lsyouthchorus.org](http://www.lsyouthchorus.org).

Deadline for financial assistance application is October 1<sup>st</sup>.

Financial assistance will be awarded based on available funds. Each financial assistance request and award will remain confidential among the treasurer and finance committee. Award letters will be mailed.

## FINANCES

Funding for Lake Superior Youth Chorus is provided by:

- Registration fees
- Corporate and individual donations and grants
- Performance fees
- Fundraisers including annual auction and dinner

Suggestions regarding additional sources of funding are welcome.