

Northwest Girlchoir – FRESCA – 2022-2023 Goals and Expectations

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MUSIC EDUCATION

In Fresca, we focus on the building blocks of great music making and choral performance. As singers, our earliest goals include pitch matching and healthy tone, so we spend a lot of time in Fresca working on these skills through songs learned by rote (hearing only) and score. We strengthen singing in head voice and work to engage the full body and breath while singing. We begin to be aware of the importance of using clear consonants and pure vowels in texts and learn to listen for balance and uniformity.

In addition to strengthening the basics of vocal skill and tone, Fresca focuses on the basics of music literacy. Learning to use the written page to discern melodic direction, follow along in a musical score, use a wider range of solfege syllables with hand signs, and read basic rhythms are all part of the Fresca curriculum.

We begin work to strengthen independence as singers by singing in unison, canon, and two-part choral music. In addition, singers will learn to perform with artistic expression and will be expected to memorize three or four songs for each concert. Fresca will join older choirs in combined pieces that help them learn to listen for entrances and sing with more mature voices.

Overall, we aim to continue to give singers a strong foundation of skills and knowledge that will serve them now and in the older choirs of Northwest Girlchoir. Please check the Families Section of our website regularly for curricular information and resources.

PERFORMANCE PREPARATION

Since some of these students have never performed as a member of a choir, we reinforce the basics of proper choral etiquette and practice them in each rehearsal. We are practicing skills such as how to stand and sit for singing, how to watch the director, what to watch for, how to be responsive to the director's cues, how to sing with a collaborative pianist, how to sing independently (without the director), and how to listen to each other. As we approach our first performance, we will also spend time practicing how to enter and leave a performance space, how to maintain focus with distractions in the room, how to continue when mistakes are made, and how to be respectful audience members when another group is performing.

While performances can be exhilarating for performers, it's important to note that concerts are not the sole reason to explore and learn musical repertoire. The process of learning and singing together is a fundamental focus of Northwest Girlchoir; the concert is a time to share what we have learned and to practice presenting ourselves in a public space.

COMMUNITY AND LEADERSHIP

Being part of Northwest Girlchoir requires a commitment from both the singer and their family. Regular attendance at rehearsals and performances are crucial elements in building a community of musicians and performers. Singers and artistic staff are co-creators in the weekly process, and regular, age-appropriate practice is essential. When a singer commits to Northwest Girlchoir, the singer and family join a legacy of choral excellence and commit to the "team" of singers in that choir. Each voice matters, and each rehearsal is filled with learning opportunities that cannot be replicated or easily "made up" when absent.

Northwest Girlchoir has been a strong musical community in the lives of young people for nearly 5 decades. We pride ourselves on serving generations of singers in our community and bringing musical joy to audiences all over the Seattle area and the world. We strive to act as a family from our youngest to our oldest singers and keep the goal of bringing beautiful music to our community at the forefront of our mission. We are especially excited to welcome new Fresca members every year as they are the singers we will watch grow through the organization for many years to come. Thank you for choosing to join Northwest Girlchoir - we are so happy you're here!