

Northwest Girlchoir – PREP CHOIR – 2022-2023 Goals and Expectations

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MUSIC EDUCATION

In Prep Choir, 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 Prep working on these skills through singing games and musical play. We search for every student's head voice and work to develop it. Oftentimes, the only loud and confident voice the young singers have found is their chest voice, or their playground voice. While this voice certainly has its place, the head voice is more conducive to a cohesive choral sound.

We also begin to build solfege and rhythm skills in Prep Choir. These become extremely useful tools in older ensembles, so beginning to learn and master these skills now will help singers now and down the road.

We begin work to build independence as singers as well. We will primarily be singing repertoire in unison, but may take on opportunities to practice singing in canon (rounds) as well as simple two-part songs, such as partner songs (two songs that can be sung together) and songs with ostinati (a repeating pattern). Overall, we aim to build a strong foundation of skills and knowledge for our young singers to build upon as they grow up through the various choirs. Please check the Families Section of our website regularly for curricular information and resources.

PERFORMANCE PREPARATION

Since many of these students have never performed as a member of a choir before, we are learning the basics of proper choral etiquette and practicing 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, 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 Prep Choir 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!