**Spring Branch Girls Choir**

**Policy Handbook**

**MEMBERSHIP:**

Membership in the Spring Branch Girls Choir is open to those girls who are currently enrolled in SBISD, have satisfied the audition requirements, and have been recommended by their school music teacher and one other teacher. Each fourth or fifth grade girl MUST actively participate in the vocal music program (choir) of her school. Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth grade girls are encouraged to participate in a performing arts program at their school. Membership is open to fourth through eighth grade girls.

**DIVISIONS:**

**Concert** - This group is the training and preparatory division of the choir. It meets from 4:30 - 6:00 pm on Tuesdays, and performs occasionally.

**Chorale** - This group is an advanced performing division of the choir. It meets from 4:30 - 6:00 pm on Tuesdays, and performs frequently. The Chorale traditionally competes in a music festival in the spring and takes an overnight trip.

**Chamber Singers** - This is a small group of 30 singers chosen from Chorale for their part singing abilities and conduct during regular rehearsals. This group meets from 4:30-6:00 pm on Tuesdays and performs for special invitation events. They are also chosen for solos, narration parts, and are notified of individual performing and recording opportunities as they occur. Since this is a select group from our choir, commitment to rehearsals, attendance, and learning the music is crucial to remaining a member of the Chamber Singers.

**ATTENDANCE:**

Each girl is expected to be at all rehearsals AND performances. She should be in her assigned seat at the beginning of rehearsal, music pulled from her folder, pencil sharpened and ready to sing. In order to be prepared for a concert, she must attend three out of five rehearsals immediately preceding the performance. Three unexcused tardies will constitute one unexcused absence.

If a girl misses a rehearsal or performance, parents can send an email to the director or choir secretary or send a note to the next rehearsal stating the reason. The note should be signed by a parent or guardian. Absences or tardies caused by illness, family death or illness, a doctor’s appointment, or conflicting SCHOOL activity will be excused. If a note is not received within a two-week period, the absence or tardy will be unexcused. Generally, civic-type sports games, birthday parties, and family outings are considered UNEXCUSED absences or tardies. If a girl is absent two weeks consecutively, the choir secretary will call to see if there is a problem or if the girl has dropped out. To insure accurate record-keeping, the absence-excuse should be returned even when a phone call is made. Three consecutive absences (excused or unexcused) will result in the directors deciding whether the girl can reasonably keep up with the choir after so much missed rehearsal time. IF ALL THREE ABSENCES ARE UNEXCUSED, THE GIRL WILL AUTOMATICALLY BE DISMISSED FROM THE CHOIR. This policy also applies to any three nonconsecutive unexcused absences.

These are high standards we understand. Please remember we only work with our singers once a week! We want your daughter to feel very prepared and confident when she is performing with the group. Each chosen choral piece is dependent upon who will show up for the concert, so we also want that feeling of confidence for the entire choir. Attendance at rehearsal is very, very important to the way we sound as a choir. We do understand the HORROR of Houston traffic and the occasional tardy. However, imagine that the choir has just been through a 10 min. warm-up, instructions have just been given to rehearse a soft passage in the next piece and suddenly and car pool of 6 shows up, crawling over everyone to get into place. If you could see the BIG PICTURE and do your best to be a little early to each rehearsal...we would appreciate it.

**TRANSPORTATION:**

It is necessary that each girl has her own transportation to and from rehearsals and performances. Parents may wish to form carpools with other girls from the same area. All girls should be picked up/dropped off at the front of the school at Northbrook Middle School – 3030 Rosefield Dr, Houston TEXAS 77080

PLEASE MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO PICK UP YOUR DAUGHTER PROMPTLY AT THE CONCLUSION OF EACH REHEARSAL AND PERFORMANCE.

**CONDUCT:**

We ask that each singer learn to discipline herself as members of the choir. Good conduct at rehearsals and performances is mandatory. Because the choir meets only once a week, girls must work hard during rehearsals to prepare all music required for performances. Girls who continually disrupt during rehearsals and performances will be asked to leave the room and their parents will be notified. Each choir member is expected to maintain a keen interest during the year. Continuous progress in vocal technique, musicianship and emotional maturity must be evident in order to retain her membership. In the event of repeated discipline problems at any given rehearsal, performance, or bus trip, a student will be told to phone her parents to come pick her up immediately. Such action is grounds for dismissal from the choir.

**UNIFORMS:**

***Dress uniform:***

**• White, long sleeved blouse**, with a Peter Pan collar, from Parker Clothing Company, which you should purchase directly from the choir for $20.

• **Navy skirt** must be rented from the choir for $10.00 per year. Skirts must be returned to the choir after the last concert of the year. If a skirt is not received, that choir member’s report card will be held pending receipt of the skirt.

• **DARK dress shoes**, such as flats and low heels (no lace ups or sandals)

• **Flesh-colored hosiery** (no anklets or knee socks)

• Jewelry can be post/non dangling earrings, watches, and rings.

• Hair should be away from eyes and face in a pony tail, braid, or other style. SOLID navy hair bows or headbands. Headbands can also be the color of the singer’s hair.

• **Chorale and Chamber Singers** will be provided with a cummerbund and bow tie by the district.

• **Concert** will be provided with a bow tie.

***Casual uniform*:**

**SBGC T-shirt**, purchased through the choir

**Blue jeans or black pants (depending upon the concert)**

**Tennis shoes or dark shoes (depending upon the concert)**

**MUSIC AND MATERIALS:**

Each member will receive a packet of music that is to be memorized. It is her responsibility to keep her music in good order. A $52, nonrefundable fee will be collected from each choir member for miscellaneous costs. The packet of music must be returned in good condition at the end of the year. Girls are expected to pay for any lost or destroyed music.

**DROPOUTS:**

We ask every girl chosen for the choir to commit to an ENTIRE year. However, we know that people often have to move midyear, so we ask that any girl who leaves the choir clear her record. It is highly recommended that she return all materials personally to the choir secretary. The choir is not responsible for materials that are unaccounted for because they were given to a friend or teacher to return, or were dropped off in a school office. Report cards will be held until materials are returned.

**NOTICES TO PARENTS:**

We communicate with parents through our email blasts. This is important information so PLEASE, PLEASE, PRETTY PLEASE check your email (and your SPAM folder) so you will not miss important information. We also ask parents to please visit our website frequently: www.springbranchgirlschoir.com

**ELIGIBILITY:**

Eligibility for fourth and fifth graders will cease if the elementary music teacher notifies the director that the student is not participating in the school choir. In addition, the state’s “NO PASS, NO PLAY” rule does apply to Girls Choir rehearsals and performances. If a student receives a grade lower than 70 on her report card, she should notify the choir secretary IMMEDIATELY!!

**FUND-RAISING:**

Fund-raising opportunities may include concert ticket sales, and outside organization sales (flowers, fruit, chocolate, etc.) All girls will be asked to participate.

**PARENT ADVISORY BOARD**

The Spring Branch Girls Choir is an organization sponsored by the Spring Branch School District and operated by the Parent Advisory Board. The Parent Advisory Board meets with the choir directors approximately four (4) times a year, at a mutually agreed upon time. The choir director’s duties are to direct the choir, choose repertoire, plan programs, train the girls’ voices, and act as a liaison between the district and the choir. It is the duty of the parent Advisory Board to do the following:

1. Coordinate the uniforms for the concerts and arrange for their collection and cleaning at the end of the year

2. Arrange for performances

3. Handle the publicity

4. Keep an accurate history

5. Plan parties for the girls

6. Facilitate fund raising

7. Number, distribute, and collect music

8. Keep an accurate record of income and expenses

9. Facilitate trips

It takes the help of all the parents in order for the choir to run smoothly and be fun for our girls.