



# YOUNG EL PASO SINGERS

2011 - 2012 SINGER / PARENT HANDBOOK

Dr. Cynthia L. Jay, Artistic Director & Conductor

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## CONTACT

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**YOUNGE EL PASO SINGERS (Y.E.S.)** is committed to:

- Providing opportunities to train and develop young singers who reside in the El Paso, New Mexico/Mexico border region, preparing them for community fine arts performances and involvement;
- Establishing and maintaining a professional and supportive environment conducive to personal growth, advancement, and collaboration with others;
- Promoting education and entertainment to be shared with all age/socio-economic groups.

Y.E.S. members are encouraged to participate in their school choirs and outside choral groups as long as the schedule of practice sessions and concerts does not conflict. Private voice lessons are encouraged, whenever possible, for further individual skill development, along with piano, theatre, dance mediums, and other performance arts activities.

**WELCOME!** Y.E.S. is now in its third season of performances after our successful launch in 2009! Our season runs from September to May, with a summer vocal camp in July. The choir is supported by the generosity of business and personal donations: if you or someone you know is in a position to provide a donation, please, let us know. Presently, the choir rehearsals will be every Tuesday – from 5:00-7:00pm with at least two scheduled concerts per season. These concerts usually begin at 7:00pm, with a mandatory dress rehearsal prior to the concert at our regular rehearsal time.

**Auditions:** The choir invites ALL singers, ages 8-21 to audition! Any singer participating in the summer vocal camp is automatically included in the upcoming season roster. All previous singers for Y.E.S. need not re-audition, and are welcome to rejoin the choir at any time. For auditions not part of the advertised audition slot, please contact Dr. Jay at 581-4503(office) or 227-6002(cell). One prepared song is advised, but not required. An accompanist is provided.

**Tuition and Fees:** Currently, the choir requests a one-time materials fee of \$75 per semester enrollment for the 2011-2012 season. There is a reduced rate for full season enrollment at \$125 (savings of \$25!). No waiver of this fee is considered, but payment options, with final payment required by October 4th, will be. There is an additional cost necessary of \$15 for the performance uniform polo shirts with Y.E.S. logo affixed. Previously enrolled singers receive \$10 credit for every new singer they sponsor into the choir.

**Responsibilities, Personal Conduct, and Expectations:** In order to create a professional and productive learning and performing environment for all, Y.E.S. members are expected to:

- Practice their sheet music regularly and come prepared to rehearsals each week. Each singer will be assigned a folder (notebook) with music, and the responsibility of each singer is to not lose these materials and to bring them to practice EACH week. Singers are encouraged, if they take private lessons, to review their music with their private instructor.
- Arrive to rehearsals early (5-10 minutes) in order to sign-in and get situated. All singers should be seated, with sheet music in hand, ready to rehearse at the designated rehearsal time.
- Bring all music and a pencil (not a pen) to rehearsals. Members are responsible for their own music and notebook (folder), and lost music will result in a replacement fee of \$25. It is important always to have a pencil with eraser to mark important notations in your music. NEVER mark music in ink.
- Show respect for one another, including self, and for all of the staff, board members and volunteers. Choir members should not talk, act, or dress in a disruptive manner. Any disruptive, rude, or illegal behavior may result in dismissal from the program.
- Be obedient to the staff, following all directions. Be respectful of the rehearsal space and leave the space the way it was found. Members should only eat during the designated snack time at rehearsals, and in the designated areas for such. Only bottled water may be brought into rehearsal.
- Respect the ten-minute break time when provided and the snack distributed. Each choir member is to take a turn at bringing refreshments. You MUST throw all trash away before the practice session resumes.

**Concert Dress:** The purchase of necessary concert attire items will be necessary for each singer during each season. Everyone needs to be conscience of their general appearance, especially hair, so that each singer looks professional, and particularly that hair, head, or facial adornments are not distracting. Y.E.S. shirts and black slacks are standard dress.

**Attendance Policy:** Attendance will be taken at rehearsal each week. Members will be considered tardy if not ready to sing and in place once the director has started rehearsal. Two tardies will be counted as one absence. Leaving a rehearsal early without the approval of the Y.E.S. staff will be counted toward one absence. If a member is absent for more than three rehearsals per season semester, s/he may have to be dismissed from the program at the discretion of the Artistic Director, the Y.E.S. staff, and/or the Y.E.S. Guild.

To be excused from a rehearsal, members must call between 10:00 and 4:00 on the day of the rehearsal (Tuesday) to report the absence to Dr. Jay at 581-4503 (office) or 227-6002 (cell). To report an absence any other day so designated as a concert day, call Dr. Jay ASAP. Texting via cell phone ensures the message will be delivered if late on the day of a rehearsal/performance. Acceptable excuses include, but are not limited to: illness, religious worship, and unavoidable family emergencies. Additional rehearsals may be added during the week of a concert performance to ensure preparedness. These will be announced at least 2 weeks in advance and will be considered mandatory. All dress rehearsals immediately prior to a performance MUST be attended or participation in the concert could be denied.

**Reasons for choir program dismissal:**

- Not meeting the singing demands of the choir by showing up to rehearsals unprepared;
- Too many unexcused absences and/or tardiness;
- Participating in any rude, disruptive, or illegal activity and using inappropriate language during any Y.E.S. related events;
- Causing or attempting to cause damage at the property locations of any Y.E.S. events or stealing or attempting to steal any of the Y.E.S. or Western Hills UMC property;
- Intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical or emotional injury to any person involved in the Y.E.S.;
- Possessing, handling, or transmitting any illegal substances or weapons;
- Violating any local, state, or federal laws.

If a member is determined to have engaged in prohibited activities during any Y.E.S. event;

- The member will be sent home at the expense of the parent/guardian;
- The parent/guardian will be financially responsible for any damages or expenses that may result from the member's activity;
- Y.E.S. will inform local law enforcement, if necessary.

Any case involving the potential dismissal of a student will be reviewed by the Staff and/or the Y.E.S. Guild. All decisions will be final and refunds will not be given.

**Y.E.S. Opportunities:**

Young Elite Singers should be a goal for all younger, more novice singers. It is a select group of singers from the full choir chosen by the Artistic Director. These singers are musically more advanced and have more aligned vocal technique. Also, members accepted into Y.E.S. will have the opportunity to participate in many interesting and exciting events, particularly with invitations from other organizations and civic groups. Y.E.S. singers have the opportunity to learn and grow through their music experience with the superior expertise and experience of Dr. Cynthia Jay and Ruben Gutierrez.