

Bass Ensemble Parent Meeting
2025-2026 Season
Thursday, September 11, 2025

Scott Semanski - Conductor
Rachel DeVore Fogarty - Pianist
Christa Chiovarelli - Chorus Manager

Bass Ensemble Rehearsal Schedule

Tuesdays from 5:00 PM - 7:15 PM
Thursdays from 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM

All regular rehearsals take place at Brooklyn Youth Chorus headquarters ([179 Pacific St. Brooklyn, NY 11201](#)).

Attendance Policy & Absence Points

Bass Ensemble members are allotted a fixed number of absences per semester. Absences are recorded with a discretionary point allowance intended to cover all regular rehearsal absences for most circumstances such as illness, vacation, academic work, and personal events. Absence points may not be used for mandatory dress or tech rehearsals prior to any performances. Choristers who miss final dress/tech rehearsals may not be permitted to perform. Absences likely to exceed the discretionary point allowance require a special exemption and must be requested in advance.

Fall Semester Point Allowance: 5

Spring Semester Point Allowance: 7

We understand that some schedule conflicts are inevitable. However, we expect families to do their best to honor the attendance policy and stay within the allotment of discretionary absence points. Absence points accrue as follows:

Points for full rehearsal absence: 1.0

Points for late arrival/early dismissal of 15-29 minutes: 0.25

Points for late arrival/early dismissal of 30 minutes or more: 0.5

You can find additional information about our attendance policy in the [2025-2026 Performing Ensembles Chorister Handbook](#).

Reporting Absences & Lateness

There are two main types of absences to report, each with their own form.

1. [Rehearsal Attendance Notification Form](#)
 - This form should be used to notify BYC staff of absences, pre-planned late arrival, or early dismissal needs from rehearsal. Please include an explanation of absence for your chorister's attendance record.
 - **Please fill out this form with 24 hours notice or more of your absence.**
 - A courtesy email notification will be sent home every time a chorister is more than 30 minutes late for rehearsal without notice.
2. [Leave of Absence & BYC-Produced Event Exemption Request Form](#)
 - This form is for leaves of absence and BYC-produced events (Holiday Harmonies, Spring Sings) ONLY.
 - **NOTE:** This form is to submit a **request** for leave or exemption. BYC staff will review any such request to see if it is possible to accommodate the additional absences without negatively impacting the ensemble in terms of performance or student morale.
 - Please continue to request exemptions for contracted events (performance events other than Holiday Harmonies or Spring Sings) on individual confirmation/availability polls.

Additionally, if a chorister is running late to rehearsal, please contact Christa. **It is very important that choristers arrive before 5pm for each rehearsal, and that lateness does not become a habit.** Choristers can text Christa directly at 917-525-7206 if they are running late to rehearsal. A courtesy text will be sent home every time a chorister is more than 30 minutes late for rehearsal without notification.

If your absence is last minute by nature (i.e. sickness, family emergency) or requires an extensive explanation, you can also text or email Christa using the contact information below.

Contact information:

Christa Chiovarelli, Chorus Manager

Email: bemanager@brooklynyouthchorus.org

Call/Text: 917-525-7206

Chorister Expectations Agreement

During our intensive week this year, choristers created and signed an agreement regarding expectations for chorister conduct. The conditions listed by the group in this agreement will help us to maintain a supportive, productive environment at rehearsals, events, and performances. You can review this agreement [here](#) or by visiting the [Members Area page](#).

Give-Back and Special Project Days

Give-back Days are planned rehearsal cancellations built into the schedule to avoid over-scheduling around events and special projects. It is possible that events may be added on these pre-planned free days, in which case alternate Give-back Days will be designated.

Special Project Days are regular rehearsal days designated for rehearsing special projects that involve only a portion of the full ensemble. Singers not involved in the special project being rehearsed will have these days off.

Performance Expectations

Performance events are added to the schedule throughout the year. Repeated absences or lack of availability to fulfill performance commitments may lead to probation or demotion.

BYC is very conscientious about accepting performance requests during the school day and works to keep such conflicts to a minimum. Examples of events that may require such exceptions are:

- Professional orchestral engagements
- Concert tours
- Network television events

Major productions often have more intensive rehearsal schedules leading up to performances, exceeding the norm for call days in any given week.

Performance Categories:

- BYC Self-Produced Events
 - Mandatory for all singers
 - Examples: Annual winter and spring concert series, BYC Gala, original music productions of commissioned works
- Contracted Performances
 - Events not produced or presented by BYC
- Special Projects
 - Events with rehearsal schedules unique to that project

Performance Roster Categories:

- Full Ensemble
 - Mandatory for the full division unless exempted in advance
 - Select Roster
 - Roster may include any subset of the ensemble
 - Singers may be invited to perform by the Artistic Director or may self-select for optional participation events (via Opt-In polls)
 - Tour Ensemble
 - Based on production needs and student availability to travel
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Members Area Page

<https://www.brooklynouthchorus.org/bass-ensemble>

The Bass Ensemble [Members Area](#) page is your go-to for up-to-date information, schedules, links, and materials. We encourage you to bookmark this page. Please check the Members' Area regularly for resources including:

- Memos
- Forms, Polls & Reference Documents
- Rehearsal and Event Schedules
- Event Masters & Run-of Show Documents
- Casting Lists
- Online Study Materials - scores & audio/video recordings

Please note that the Members Area is separate from the Parent Portal. **We recommend you ensure that both parent/caregiver and chorister have a login to access the Members Area.** For more information or to sign-up, please [click here](#).

How to Create an Account

- Go to <https://www.brooklynouthchorus.org/member-landing> to create an account
 - Scroll down the page to **Division Info**
 - Click the 'Sign-Up' button
 - Fill out the sign-up prompt
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Communication

Please check your email inbox and text messages regularly for chorus communications and updates.

- Weekly memos sent via MailChimp

- Memos include event polls and confirmation forms—please respond promptly!
 - 'Remind' text messages for reminders/urgent updates
 - Click here: [Remind Text Sign-Up](#) or visit the [Member Area](#) to sign up to receive Remind texts (if you were part of last year's BE Remind class, you will need to sign-up again this year)
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Event Forms & Polls

You will receive Availability Polls, Opt-In Polls, and/or Confirmation Forms throughout the season as events are added to the schedule or under consideration, or when input is required in order to set performance rosters. **It is important that families complete the event polls and forms by the stated response date in order to remain in good standing.**

1. Availability Polls are sent prior to confirming performance rosters, and sometimes prior to accepting bookings, when an event presents a known or potential conflict with a holiday, school day, or school-related events, or when the roster must be reduced from the full ensemble. Following a review of these polls, a final roster and even confirmation will be sent.

2. Opt-In Polls are used when participation is optional (not required). This includes events where there is flexibility in the size and/or make-up of the ensemble, or when the repertoire does not require specific voicing.

3. Confirmation Forms are sent to ensure that families have received the details of scheduled events and to acknowledge and confirm their chorister's participation, or to request a performance exemption.

Dress Standards

All Brooklyn Youth Chorus dress standards reflect expectations in accordance with the principles that:

- Students have the right to make choices about their dress and to feel comfortable in what they wear
- Students have the responsibility to respect the rights of others and support a positive and safe shared environment

Regular Rehearsals

Choristers may feel free to select their own attire at regular rehearsals in accordance with the above guidelines.

Tech, Dress, and Shared Rehearsals

When singers appear as representatives of Brooklyn Youth Chorus for dress and tech rehearsals and sessions with other artists or professional collaborators both in BYC spaces and at outside venues, choristers must adhere to the Brooklyn Youth Chorus Professional Dress Standards as outlined below. Any time BYC Professional Dress Standards are required it will be communicated to singers in advance.

Brooklyn Youth Chorus Professional Dress Standards:

Professional dress may include well-fitting pants, skirts or dresses of their choosing meeting the following requirements:

- tops and bottoms must be worn at all times
- undergarments (tops/bras or bottoms) may not be worn as outerwear
- hemlines for skirts or dresses should fall below mid-thigh
- avoid strapless tops or dresses

Performances

Brooklyn Youth Chorus will provide guidelines for concert attire on an event by event basis. Often, choristers are asked to provide their own uniform pieces. In this instance, choristers will be given parameters of clothing that they may wear for a performance, which can be pulled from their own wardrobe. Choristers are not expected to purchase new clothing. If a chorister is unable to provide clothing that meets the required parameters, please contact your Chorus Manager and they will be able to assist.

Parent Chaperones

For some performance events, we will ask for the assistance of one or more parent chaperones. Parent chaperones assist the Chorus Manager and Production Manager during the event with general management of singers, costume preparation, meal service, or occasional supply runs. The Chorus Manager arranges chaperones for each BE event where chaperones are needed. Parents are welcome to reach out to the Chorus Manager if they would like to be a chaperone.

2025-2026 Performance Highlights

Below is a preview of some of our exciting Bass Ensemble performances for the coming year. Details to come. Additional performances will be added as new opportunities arise throughout the year.

- Into the Charmed Churned Circle - Thursday, September 25th, 2025
- BYC at the Watermark - Monday, December 8th, 2025
- Holiday Harmonies 2025 - Saturday, December 13th, 2025

- Home Alone with the New York Philharmonic - Monday, December 15th through Saturday, December 20th
- Spring Sings 2026 - Friday, May 15 & Saturday, May 16, 2026