

**Chorus Information for *Mary Poppins***  
**The 2023 Grade 3-6 Pierce School Musical**  
**Phil Schroeder, Artistic Director**  
**phil@pierceschoolmusical.com**

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Welcome to the Chorus Information document! It's a LOT of stuff, but I believe it's all very important. At registration, you'll be asked to affirm that you've read and understand this information.

**EMAIL CONTACTS**

I have left behind last year's email address "piercemusictracks@gmail.com" for @pierceschoolmusical.com, to simplify things. There have been occasions where the new email has landed in people's promotions folders, so if you're not getting emails from me, please look there and clear me for your inbox. Our director, Tara Choat, also uses tara@pierceschoolmusical.com.

**WHAT IS THE CHORUS?**

Our Grade 3 & 4 chorus is actually *two* choruses, each learning in parallel and performing twice on the weekend of March 31–April 2. They'll rehearse on Thursdays beginning Feb 2, then are integrated into the play production in the final week of rehearsals. Seated on a set of risers onstage and singing most of the show's songs, they have fun and add charm to the show. In addition, they'll be featured performers in a song & dance number *in the show*. This is a great introduction to being in the cast someday.

**REGISTRATION AND FEES**

Chorus registration fee is \$220, which covers the cost of directors and supervisors, and contributes to the overall expense of this PTO program. Thank you for your participation.

We also grant scholarships on a no-questions-asked basis. This can be for the full amount, a partial amount ("pay what you can") or you may ask for structured payments. If you need this support, please skip the credit card form after your registration and get in touch with Phil to work out a plan.

**REHEARSAL DATES and TIMES**

There will be two choruses, each named for our casts: Penguin and Lion. Both rehearse only on Thursdays from Feb 2 – Mar 23, then their cast for one dress rehearsals the last week of March. Thursday rehearsals will start after school (2:30) and go until 4:30pm. That time is

divided into two blocks, where each gets 45 minutes learning songs in the music room then learning the dance feature in the auditorium.

Dress rehearsals will be:

A Cast & Chorus: Monday, Mar 27, after-school until 5:30pm.

B Cast & Chorus: Tuesday, Mar 28 after-school until 5:30pm.

## **SHOWS**

The shows will be:

Friday, Mar 31, 6:30pm, A Cast & Chorus

Saturday, April 1, 1:30pm, A Cast & Chorus

Saturday, April 1, 6:30pm, B Cast & Chorus

Sunday, April 2, 1:30pm, B Cast & Chorus

The shows last about two hours. Chorus needs to arrive 30 minutes prior to show start time.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Plan to attend! There's no point in doing this if the kids can't come. Plan for them to be at all rehearsals and shows, of course. We know these are children, and we won't deny them their performance because of a missed rehearsal. The dress rehearsals are long, we know, and sometimes kids need to leave early. This is *fine*.

Some kids will participate in Art Barn's Duck Soup Troupe, which begins its rehearsals in March on Thursdays. It will be fine to pull the kids out for this, because they'll know all the songs well in advance. There shouldn't be any other Art Barn conflicts.

The school does not notify us in the event your child is sick. It's up to you to let us know and saves us a lot of time when you do. We'll provide contact info as we get into rehearsals but you can always email [phil@pierceschoolmusical.com](mailto:phil@pierceschoolmusical.com).

## **SUPERVISION, CHECK-IN, AND CHECK-OUT**

We'll have a supervisor on hand to check in students at the beginning of rehearsal. The supervisor is CPR certified and can assist with emergencies and calling parents if the child needs to leave early, etc. They'll also call you if your child doesn't show and hasn't been previously excused.

Please send your kids with snacks! They're hungry after school and need to eat something. Please make it healthy and clean. We don't have a lot of capacity to clean up tables and the

custodians have already cleaned the cafeteria and moved on to other locations. Thanks for understanding.

We do not check children out! It is up to you to make pick-up arrangements when they are finished. Kids can be released into the amphitheater or out the School Street door to meet you.

Any children enrolled in PSED need to check in there first, then come to us. After rehearsal they must return to PSED to be checked out, even if you're there waiting for them.

## **VOLUNTEERS**

We really appreciate volunteers. The most important thing you can do is sign up to assist for one rehearsal day. Yes, we have a supervisor and teacher, but they're outnumbered – by a lot. Your help, even being a statue in the middle of the room to remind them there's an adult there, is huge. We'll circulate a sign-up sheet in January.

It will be very helpful to have parent volunteers for the dress rehearsals on March 27 and 28. We'd like 2-3 each day. This will help us manage expectations, as the rehearsals are long and may not even begin for an hour as the cast has to get into costume for the first time. The chorus will rehearse but will also need to have some managed play time in the cafeteria (or outside if we get lucky).

In addition, we'll need 2 parent volunteers at each performance. You'll show up with the kids 30 minutes before the show, distribute t-shirts and help escort kids to the stage, back to the mezzanine at intermission, back to the stage, and so on. We'll have one of our paid supervisors there but it's all hands on deck!

## **MEDICAL/EMERGENCY SITUATIONS**

Please note that the school does not provide nursing staff to after-school activities. We are not providing certified medical readiness, but we will have a first-aid kit on hand, and we do follow these procedures:

- If a situation arises that involves injury to a student and the parent or supervisor deems it a real emergency, 911 will be called first, and the parent will be called second.
- If a situation arises that is significant but does not appear to be an emergency, the parent will be called, and you may need to pick up your child.
- You agree that it shall be the judgement of the parent volunteer or supervisor as to the severity of the situation and shall support whichever decision is made. Further, you'll agree (at registration) to hold harmless our staff, and members/officers of the PTO. The same as for everything else you do these days...

Also, you'll be asked to provide us with any relevant information about your child's ongoing medical conditions that could arise during a rehearsal and let us know your preferred action plans. Please keep in mind that the school cannot provide us with this information because of confidentiality rules.

### **A FEW IMPORTANT WORDS**

The Pierce School Musical is a PTO program and is entirely funded through registration fees and tickets. We hire paid staff to manage and facilitate learning and supervision, and we charge the amount that makes it possible to do this without having to fundraise. We believe strongly in our mission but also recognize that this is a large undertaking and control of every situation is impossible. We thank you for supporting the community nature of this endeavor.

Generally, there are no refunds after rehearsals begin on February 2, unless your family is suddenly relocated overseas. (Yes, it happens!) Once you register, we've already begun spending your money, so please be "all-in" when you hit that button.

Children at this age have a lot of energy and we rely on parent volunteers to help settle them down in rehearsals. Real discipline issues with chorus members are extremely rare, but if any occur, they will be handled by the supervisor or parent volunteers in the room. If there is behavior that cannot be contained, our first step is to remove the child from the rehearsal for a "time out," then try to re-engage. If the issue is bigger, parents will be contacted and may need to come pick up the child.

### **COVID STUFF**

Refund policy: In 2020, as many of you know, we lost our shows to the immediate shut down of the schools. We were not able to issue refunds, as staff still needed to be paid. Our priority is to provide a complete educational and fun experience for children, regardless of outcomes, while honoring our agreements with our staff. While performances are one expected outcome, they are not guaranteed. If our program is shut down early, owing to situations beyond our control, we will refund money as we are able, and after all staff have been paid for work to date. After March 10, however, we'll not be able to offer refunds for program or show cancellations.

Masks: we welcome masks at all rehearsals and for the shows but as of this writing, they are not required. We will follow any mandates issued by the Town or the principal in this regard and expect the kids to do the same. We prefer that your child have a mask available in case we suspect a Covid exposure.

Registration is your choice and you register at your own risk (words we never thought we'd have to write). If this endeavor sounds risky or makes you uncomfortable, you should not register.

**VACCINATED, PLEASE**

We strongly encourage you to get your child vaccinated.