

FOR TEACHERS

OAKE National Conference Choirs

AUDITION GUIDE



The OAKE National Choirs are a source of pride and inspiration. We look forward to receiving your students' auditions!

March 5 - 8, 2025 in Chicago, Illinois

Please note: National Choirs begin Wednesday, one day earlier than the Professional Development conference for teachers.

Before auditioning singers, teachers:

- Visit the Choirs Menu at OAKE.org to learn about the conductors, city, and overall experience.
- Print/share the Family Brochure, also direct families to the Conference Choirs Menu at OAKE.org.
- Explain why you'd like them to have this musical and educational experience!
- Get confirmation from families that they can commit to the calendar and financial obligations. If a student is accepted and turns it down, another deserving singer has lost the opportunity.
- Explore financial and other support among your school and community, for you and singers.

Help families fully understand their commitment before you audition their singers:

- **\$30 audition fee:** Check to see if the school will cover the audition cost or if families will be responsible.
- **Full financial commitment, if accepted: \$300 registration fee, plus travel and hotel.** Estimate other expenses. Once accepted, registration and fee are a very quick turnaround in November.
- **\$30 Audition fees are non-refundable.** If singers are accepted, \$300 participation/registration fees are due in early December. OAKE incurs expenses in anticipation of the event and cannot refund these fees.
- **Families must stay at the official conference hotel.** It's near rehearsals, and importantly, these reservations defray the cost of rehearsal space and other aspects of the choirs.
- **Travel plans:** Be at the conference hotel in time for Wednesday afternoon check-in and Orientation. Concerts are Saturday, and we recommend Sunday departure.
- **Supervision:** The OAKE National Conference Choirs Committee will take care of students only during rehearsals. Families or a designated chaperone must accompany them during all down-time, including meal breaks. A schedule overview is available on the OAKE website and the detailed rehearsal schedule will be finalized in the weeks just prior to their trip.

A few more things for teachers to know:

- **For your singers to be eligible**, teachers must meet deadlines, maintain your OAKE membership, register by the Early Bird deadline, and attend the conference.
- Tenors and Basses in grade 8 may audition for the Chamber Choir, if desired.
- If you're in the local area and auditioning students for the first time, you may audition singers without an OAKE membership. If your students are accepted, you will need to become a member at that time and plan to register and attend the full national conference.
- OAKE is run by 2 staff members and a slew of volunteers planning the entire conference and choirs. Your timeliness helps us focus on creating a superb experience for you, singers, and families!
- Technical glitches can cause emails to not be received by families. It's important that you check in with them along the way and let us know immediately about any communication issues.
- Teachers will receive detailed rehearsal instructions for each piece, along with rehearsal tracks for each voice part and for every piece of music. Our clinicians spend a lot of time preparing these instructions! Please be certain you are well acquainted with their preferences! Teachers are responsible for teaching this music to the singers, but the notes and recordings are intended to help you with that process.
- **Preparation!** Please make sure your students memorize and know their music well. Perhaps do some spot checking of your own before the conference rehearsals. We want this to be the best possible experience for our students, clinicians, and accompanists. That outcome can only happen when our students come prepared. All choirs may have spot checks or sectionals during rehearsals to make sure the singers know their music. Please help us make this a great experience for all!

Quick Sheet for Teachers

Details will continually be added to oake.org

Children's Choir (SSA)	Youth Treble Choir (SSAA)	Concert Treble Choir (SSAA)	Chamber Choir (SATB)
Grades 4-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12	
Treble singers in grades 4-5	Sopranos and Altos in grades 6-8 *8th graders with changed voices may audition for Tenor or Bass in Chamber	Sopranos and Altos in grades 9-12	Soprano and Alto singers selected from the "Concert Treble" auditions, grades 9-12, Tenors and Basses grade 8-12

There is currently no audition limit per teacher for any of the choirs. OAKE values having participation from a variety of schools and teachers and in cases of close results may prioritize singers from schools with fewer accepted singers.

Important Dates and Financial Obligations

Auditions	Dates	Fee	Responsibility of
Audition Applications Open Online	August 15		Teacher educates families and singer about opportunity to participate
Audition and Fee Deadline <i>paid online through Opus Events</i>	October 15	\$30 USD <i>non-refundable</i>	Family completes the student info form and returns form to the teacher. Family pays the fee online (unless school pays). Teacher submits an audition.
Audition Results emailed <i>accepted or declined, all will be emailed</i>	by November 15		OAKE
If Accepted	Dates	Fee	Responsibility of
Student Registration & Fee Deadline <i>music packets can only be sent for singers registered by the deadline</i>	December 1	\$300 USD <i>non-refundable</i>	Family pays and submits registration (unless the school covers the fee)
Music Packets Mailed to Teachers	mid-December		OAKE / music distributor
Singers Learn Music with Teachers	ongoing		Teachers, Singers rehearse regularly
Teacher Conference Registration Deadline	Early Bird January 20		Teacher
Choir "Extras" Order Deadline <i>t-shirts, additional concert tickets, etc</i>	January 15		Family or Teachers are welcome to order extra <i>(both optional)</i>
Event Information	Details / Cost		Responsibility of
Accepted Singers In-Person: Chicago, IL MARCH 5-8, 2025 (Wed-Sat rehearsals, Saturday performance) <i>*Teachers may arrive later than Wednesday, conference attendance and registration are required.</i>			
Visit the Choir Menu at oake.org for Rehearsal Locations & Hotel Lodgings and group rate booking link	Chicago Palmer House Hilton OAKE Rate: \$179/night + tax Special Rate Ends Feb 6, 2025 Parking rates may also apply		Parent arranges for student/family. Teachers arrange for themselves. WE STRONGLY RECOMMEND booking hotel long before the OAKE special rate deadline as the hotel block may fill sooner.
Flight/Travel to Chicago, IL <i>(if accepted)</i>	Costs Vary		All arrange for self / family

Audition Guidelines

There is currently no audition limit per teacher for any of the choirs. OAKE values having participation from a variety of schools and teachers and in cases of close results may prioritize singers from schools with fewer accepted singers.

Audition Recording Guidelines

- Submitted online as mp3 files
- Must be **one combined track**. Teachers must ensure complete tracks and there will not be an opportunity later to submit any portions left out. If you are concerned about this, we recommend recording a single, uncut track.
- Individual sections may not be edited or stopped in the middle of the section, but you may stop the recording at the end of completed sections. Please leave 2 seconds between each section. A section may be rerecorded if the student makes an error within that section.
- The teacher's voice may not appear or be audible on recording while the student is singing, unless it is during the canon in the youth audition.
- No enhancements, such as adding reverb or auto-tune: these will likely result in disqualification.

For easy access, save the mp3 file on your desktop, and with this suggested file name format:

- CONFERENCE YEAR_SINGERS FULL NAME_VOICE PART_CHOIR.mp3
- Example: JAX2023_ESPERANZA SPALDING_ALTO 2_CONCERT TREBLE CHOIR.mp3

There are many platforms and utilities that you can use to record an mp3. While it is ultimately the teacher's responsibility to find a recording solution, common choices are Audacity or Apple's GarageBand. For more resources, we suggest that you contact a colleague or perform a google search.

Submitting Auditions Online

Teachers Submit Auditions Through Opus Events

Only teachers make Opus and OAKE accounts. Teachers will submit auditions and have visibility into whether payments have been made, registration submitted, etc.

Families and Students Do **NOT** Create Accounts

Other than Teachers, no accounts are needed with Opus Events, nor OAKE. Through Opus, Teachers may send a payment link for others to make payments by credit card, however no account is needed by those paying.

When auditions open, OAKE will publish a technical guide for Opus including how to

- Set up your Opus Events account as a Teacher (your Teacher account can include multiple "locations" for your private studio, school, community choir, etc)
- Create applications for each Student, with flexibility to attach their mp3 recording then or later
- Make fee payments for your students or send payment links either to school or families
- see whether students' auditions and registrations are paid

CHILDREN'S CHOIR AUDITION INSTRUCTIONS

Children's Choir - (SSA) - Treble singers in grades 4 - 5
Important! Teachers, see Audition Recording Guidelines

PART A: Spoken Introduction

At the beginning of the recording your student says,

My name is _____.

This is my audition for the 2025 OAKE National Children's Choir.

I am in _____ grade. I am auditioning for the voice part of _____

PART B: Vocalise

The student will sing four (4) legato five-tone scale passages, ascending and descending, beginning on the given pitches. All vocalises must be sung a cappella. Only the starting pitch (one note) may be given for each of the four vocalises on piano, pitch pipe, or voice. If singing the pitch, the teacher may play the pitch for himself/herself. Vocalises are to be sung on the syllable, "moo". We understand that the vowel may need to be slightly adjusted for the higher range. (Please sing these slowly, follow the metronome markings and do not stop the recording until all four phrases are completed.)

♩ = 80 – 90

moo _____ moo _____

Four Starting Pitches for Vocalises for Children's Choir:

Soprano I

Db above middle C
 F above middle C
 Ab above middle C
 fourth line Db

Soprano II

middle C
 E above middle C
 G above middle C
 C above middle C

Alto

Bb below middle C
 D above middle C
 F above middle C
 Bb above middle C

PART C: Part-Singing/Solfege Exercise

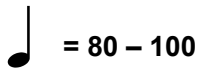
The student will sing the following exercise three times, first singing the top notes of the phrase, then the middle notes of the phrase, and then the lower notes. ***The three lines are sung continuously, without stopping or giving any pitches to the student other than the first pitch (sol).***

Using the chord pattern below, the student will:

1. Sing the top notes of the chord progression in solfege while the teacher plays the bottom two notes on the piano
2. Sing the middle notes of the chord progression in solfege while the teacher plays the outer two notes on the piano
3. Sing the bottom notes of the chord progress in solfege while the teacher plays the upper two notes on the piano

**Part D: Prepared Song (a cappella): *America, the Beautiful* (or *O Canada*)**

The judges will be listening for musicality, phrasing, breath support, beautiful tone, pure vowels, beginning and ending consonants, and great intonation.



= 80 – 100

Only the starting pitch (one note) may be given on piano, pitch pipe, or voice
You may not play more than one note

America, the Beautiful

Soprano I: Starting pitch is A (key of D)

Soprano II: Starting pitch is G (key of C)

Alto: Starting pitch is F (key of Bb)

O Canada

Soprano I: Starting pitch is B (key of G)

Soprano II: Starting pitch is A (key of F)

Alto: Starting pitch is F# (key of D)

YOUTH TREBLE CHOIR AUDITION INSTRUCTIONS

Youth Treble Choir - (SSAA) - Sopranos and Altos in grades 6 - 8
Important! Teachers, see Audition Recording Guidelines

PART A: Spoken Introduction

At the beginning of the recording,

My name is _____.

This is my audition for the 2025 OAKE National Youth Treble Choir.

I am in _____ grade. I am auditioning for the voice part of _____

PART B: Vocalise

The student will sing four (4) legato five-tone scale passages, ascending and descending, beginning on the given pitches. All vocalises must be sung a cappella. Only the starting pitch (one note) may be given for each of the four vocalises on piano, pitch pipe, or voice. If singing the pitch, the teacher may play the pitch for himself/herself. Vocalises are to be sung on the syllable, "moo". We understand that the vowel may need to be slightly adjusted for the higher range. (Please sing these slowly, follow the metronome markings and do not stop the recording until all four phrases are completed.)

♩ = 80 – 90

moo _____ moo _____

Four Starting Pitches for Vocalises for Youth Choir:

<u>Soprano I</u>	<u>Soprano II</u>	<u>Alto I</u>	<u>Alto II</u>
Db above middle C	Middle C	Bb below middle C	A below middle C
F above middle C	E above middle C	D above middle C	Middle C#
Ab above middle C	G above middle C	F above middle C	E above middle C
Fourth Line Db	C above middle C	Bb above middle C	A above middle C


We are aware that singers in 6th, 7th and 8th grade are undergoing voice change and that their voice part might change between the fall when you are recording auditions and March for the honor choir. Please select the voice part that best fits the student's voice at the time of their audition. Remember, *8th graders with changed voices may audition for Tenor or Bass in Chamber if this is the best option for your student.

PART C: Part-Singing/Solfege Exercise

The student will sing “Row, Row, Row Your Boat” with solfa, in a round with the teacher. **The teacher will start** singing first, and the student will enter at m. 3. This will be sung a cappella starting on D (one step above middle C) for both Soprano as well as Alto auditionees. Teachers should sing in the octave that is comfortable for them.

**Part D: Prepared Song (a cappella) – America, the Beautiful (or O Canada)**

The judges will be listening for musicality, phrasing, breath support, beautiful tone, pure vowels, beginning and ending consonants, and great intonation.

 = 80 – 100 Only the starting pitch (one note) may be given on piano, pitch pipe, or voice.

America, the Beautiful

Soprano I: Starting pitch is A (key of D)
 Soprano II: Starting pitch is G (key of C)
 Alto I: Starting pitch is F (key of Bb)
 Alto II: Starting pitch is Eb (key of Ab)

O Canada

Soprano I: Starting pitch is C (key of Ab)
 Soprano II: Starting pitch is A (key of F)
 Alto I: Starting pitch is F# (key of D)
 Alto II: Starting pitch is E (key of C)

CONCERT TREBLE CHOIR & CHAMBER CHOIR AUDITION INSTRUCTIONS

Concert Treble Choir - (SSAA) – Sopranos and Altos in grades 9 - 12.

Chamber Choir - (SATB) - Soprano and Alto singers selected from the “Concert Treble Choir” auditions and Tenors and Basses in grades 8 - 12, (*Tenors/Basses in grade 8 will be considered for Chamber Choir*) **Important! Teachers, see Audition Recording Guidelines**

PART A: Spoken Introduction

At the beginning of the recording,

My name is _____.

This is my audition for the 2025 OAKE National _____ (insert appropriate choir name).

I am in _____ grade. I am auditioning for the voice part of _____

PART B: Vocalise

The student will sing four (4) legato five-tone scale passages, ascending and descending, beginning on the given pitches. All vocalises must be sung a cappella. Only the starting pitch (one note) may be given for each of the four vocalises on piano, pitch pipe, or voice. If singing the pitch, the teacher may play the pitch for himself/herself. Vocalises are to be sung on the syllable, “moo”. We understand that the vowel may need to be adjusted for the higher range. (Please sing these slowly, follow the metronome markings and do not stop the recording until all four phrases are completed.)

♩ = 80 – 90

moo _____ moo _____

Four Starting Pitches for Vocalises for Concert Treble Choir and Chamber Choir:

Soprano I

D above middle C
F# above middle C
A above middle C
fourth line D

Soprano II

middle C
E above middle C
G above middle C
C above middle C

Alto I

Bb below middle C
D above middle C
F above middle C
Bb above middle C

Alto II

A below middle C
middle C#
E above middle C
A above middle C

Tenor

C below middle C
E below middle C
G below middle C
End on your highest comfortable note

Bass

Start on your lowest comfortable note
Bb (second line)
D (third line)
F (fourth line)

PART C: Solfege/Intonation Exercise

The student will sing the following exercise a cappella on solfege. The starting pitch may be given on piano, pitch pipe, or voice. Four Starting Pitches: Soprano 1 - E; Soprano 2 - D; Alto 1 - C; Alto 2 - B; Tenor - D; Bass - Bb

♩ = 80 – 90

PART D: Part-Singing/Solfege Exercise

The student will sing the following exercise on solfege in this way:

- The teacher will play three parts while the student sings the fourth part as follows:
- The first pitch (C for Sopranos and Altos and E for the Tenors and Bases) may be given.
- The Sopranos and Altos will sing the soprano line (while the teacher plays the ATB lines), followed continuously by singing the alto line (while the teacher plays the STB lines).
- The tenors and basses will sing the tenor line (while the teacher plays the SAB lines), followed continuously by singing the bass line (while the teacher plays the SAT lines).

♩ = 80 – 90

Part E: Prepared Song (a cappella) – America, the Beautiful (or O Canada)

The judges will be listening for musicality, phrasing, breath support, beautiful tone, pure vowels, beginning and ending consonants, and great intonation.

♩ = 80 – 100 Only the starting pitch (one note) may be given on piano, pitch pipe, or voice.

America, the Beautiful

- Soprano I: Starting pitch is A (key of D)
- Soprano II: Starting pitch is G (key of C)
- Alto I: Starting pitch is F (key of Bb)
- Alto II: Starting pitch is Eb (key of Ab)
- Tenor: Starting pitch is G (key of C)
- Bass: Starting pitch is D (key of G)

O Canada

- Soprano I: Starting pitch is C (key of Ab)
- Soprano II: Starting pitch is B (key of G)
- Alto I: Starting pitch is F# (key of D)
- Alto II: Starting pitch is E (key of C)
- Tenor: Starting pitch is A (key of F)
- Bass: Starting pitch is F# (key of D)