

Erika McCauley is founder and artistic director of Cantus Youth Choirs, a nonprofit community choir program for Idaho's Treasure Valley youth. She is a talented individual with an unrivaled passion for working with young people. Prior to moving to Idaho, Mrs. McCauley taught in the Salem-Keizer School District, a district with schools repeatedly earning GRAMMY Awards and recognized by the NAMM Foundation as one of the nation's "Best Communities for Music Education."

She taught at the elementary, middle and high school levels from 2001-2003 and 2005-2007. In four short years and with regionally and nationally recognized colleagues, Mrs. McCauley was nominated twice as "Music Educator of the Year." Her choirs repeatedly earned superior ratings at choral competitions, including 1st Place, the Festival Sweepstakes Award, Adjudicators Award, and a Festival of Gold Certificate at a Heritage Festival in 2007, and 1st Place at the prestigious Best in the Northwest Choir Competition in 2003 and 2007 under such acclaimed judges as Joseph Flummerfelt, chorus master of the New York Philharmonic, William Hatcher, former national president of The American Choral Directors Association, and Andre de Quadros, artistic director of the Tanglewood Institute.

Erika McCauley's passion for choral arts stems from a lifelong pursuit of both solo and choral music performance. She earned a Master of Arts with an emphasis in Music Education from Oregon State University in 2005 and a Bachelor of Arts in Music with an emphasis in Vocal Performance from Brigham Young University in 2001. As an undergraduate student, she held lead and supporting roles in university operas, earned 1st place in the NATS Vocal Competition, and performed as a soloist with the BYU Singers. As a graduate student, Mrs. McCauley served as a Graduate Teaching Assistant, a soloist and section leader with the OSU Chamber Choir, and received the "Music Education Award."

In the fall of 2010, Mrs. McCauley launched Cantus Youth Choirs. In its first season, 140 singers in grades 4-9 sang in three Cantus ensembles. All three ensembles competed at a Heritage Festival in Anaheim, California in the spring of 2011, receiving two adjudicator awards, superior ratings for all ensembles (auditioned and non-auditioned) and invitations for all three ensembles to perform in Carnegie Hall. Cantus is beginning its second season with over 200 singers and five ensembles, including two new high school ensembles. Mrs. McCauley is grateful to work as a choral director, to collaborate with local schools, and to influence the lives of youth through Cantus Youth Choirs.