



Parent Handbook 2025 – 2026

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ACC Handbook
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INTRODUCTION

The Appalachian Children's Chorus (ACC) is a non-profit organization in residence at the Southeast Church of the Nazarene. ACC is a music performance and education program for children and youth, emphasizing the

development of musical skills and understanding. Through its curriculum, ACC fosters the personal and social growth of its members and promotes their sense of self-esteem, accomplishment, and pride. ACC welcomes children from all religious, racial, cultural, and economic backgrounds and endeavors to enrich their lives as well as the lives of their families and our community. Choristers range in age from five to eighteen.

I. BACKGROUND

ACC, (originally the University of Charleston Children's Chorus), was founded by Selina Midkiff and Renay Conlin in 1990 under the umbrella and support of the University of Charleston's Department of Music. In the spring of 1996, the organization incorporated and became the Appalachian Children's Chorus. ACC continued to build an exceptional music program with a reputation for excellence. In November 2003, then Governor Bob Wise and Secretary of State Joe Manchin proclaimed ACC the **Official State Children's Chorus**. In January 2006, then Governor Joe Manchin commissioned ACC as an **Official Ambassador of Music for West Virginia**. ACC travels extensively; and, everywhere the choristers travel, they represent the best of West Virginia.

II. MISSION STATEMENT: The mission of the Appalachian Children's Chorus is to provide artistic excellence, quality music education and extraordinary opportunities while having a positive effect on the lives of West Virginia's youth.

VISION STATEMENT: To unify and serve our community and the world by transforming the lives of young people through excellence in choral music in a safe and caring environment where respect for self and others is fostered.

GOALS:

1. To foster the personal and social growth of choristers and promote their sense of self-worth, self-esteem, accomplishment and pride, in a loving, nurturing environment.
2. To offer a superior music education program for children and youth.
3. To attain a high level of excellence in public performances.
4. To maintain choir membership open to children of all racial, cultural, religious, and economic backgrounds.
5. To expose children to values and beliefs of other cultures and societies.
6. To contribute to the cultural and economic life of Charleston, the State of West Virginia, and the nation.
7. To support the quality of singing in area schools and churches.
8. To serve as positive ambassadors for West Virginia.

III. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Appalachian Children's Chorus is to provide children in West Virginia the opportunity to learn and perform choral music of the highest quality; grow personally in musical knowledge, skill, and performance ability; and work together with children of various ethnic, cultural, and economic backgrounds in a learning environment that develops unity, self-discipline, responsibility, leadership, caring and pride through personal and artistic excellence.

IV. CURRICULUM

ACC creates a special learning environment designed to provide a rich and rewarding musical experience for each child. The children study and perform a variety of music from simple unison folk songs to more challenging classical and multi-cultural repertoire. Masterpieces of music from all styles and periods form the foundation for musical learning and the basis for the curriculum. We believe that *"children should be led to musical masterpieces by means of musical masterpieces"* (Zoltan Kodaly). Since the best musical experiences for children are inherent in great music, the Appalachian Children's Chorus repertoire includes the music of classical composers along with folk, popular, secular, and sacred music.

Singing, a powerful means of musical expression, is the focal point of the musical experience for the Appalachian Children's Chorus. The goal is to form the foundation of a lifelong relationship with music for the choristers and their families. Children learn the systematic use of their vocal instruments through exercises, posture, breath, and tone production. Musical re-creation, through vocal performance, is a way of experiencing

and expressing music unlike any other activity. Singing skills and musical understanding are essential components of the creative process and a fundamental resource basic to music education. Through singing, children experience the "inner life" of music in a way that transcends the surface of notation and words. Singing allows one to *touch music*, be *touched by music*, and *touch others with music*.

V. THE PROGRAM

The program consists of the following choirs: Canzona, Camerata, Cambiata, and Concert Choir. Each choir is dedicated to excellence in musicianship and the development of skills at varying levels of the child's musical learning experience. The choirs rehearse once a week. Additionally, Concert rehearses one Saturday a month.

We welcome talented students who exhibit ability and willingness to sing and participate in our program. The program emphasizes music literacy and vocal training skills. It is the intent of this program to represent the diversity of West Virginia's youth. ACC embraces the ideals of artistic excellence and an exemplary music education program while offering our youth outstanding opportunities.

We offer a safe environment where children can develop the following competencies that will enrich their lives into adulthood: creative and critical thinking; interpersonal communication and cooperation; independence, self-confidence, and self-discipline; honesty and integrity; and dependability and responsibility. Along with these proficiencies, children in the program learn the importance of appropriate attire and appearance. Additionally, they improve their memory skills, and the proficiencies they develop contribute to their total learning experience as participation in choirs has shown to improve academic performance in school based on a study conducted by an international choir organization (Chorus America, 2009). Overall, children in ACC understand that striving for excellence requires hard work and commitment.

VI. INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS

Canzona Choir: Children explore their musicality, artistic interpretation, singing and rhythmic skills, aural and visual perception, language development, motor coordination, ensemble skills, and social interaction. This program is an ideal way to prepare a child for later instrumental and vocal study. The program is for children in grades Kindergarten through second grade.

Camerata Choir: Children in this choir demonstrate the ability to sing in tune, unison, and two parts. Tone development and vocal techniques are stressed. Sight singing and songs in foreign languages will be introduced. Camerata is for children in third through sixth grades (Seventh under special circumstances). They rehearse for an hour and 30 minutes per week.

Concert Choir: At this level, the children have demonstrated the ability to sing in parts. Part-singing skills are reinforced by two-, three-, and four-part music. Good vocal technique is stressed, and sight singing is taught. The children sing in different languages. This is the top choir and is for children in the fifth grade and up. This choir has the most demanding schedule but with that comes the most extraordinary opportunities such as international travel, singing for presidents, and Dolly Parton.

VII. MEMBERSHIP

These choirs are meant to be a positive learning experience for our choristers, one that they will carry with them throughout their lives. Our choristers will learn the meaning of **commitment** and **responsibility**. They will feel a sense of pride being in this choral organization with a high level of personal and artistic expectation. Choristers are taught to take their membership seriously. They are part of a team, with each member playing a vital role. **Enrollment in ACC is for the entire season, which begins in August/early September and continues through May or June is encouraged for Concert Choir. Members are expected to remain active and committed to the program for the period they are enrolled. Additionally, we offer mid-year enrollment beginning in January for all choirs. Students wishing to start in Concert Choir mid-year must go through an audition process to determine if starting mid-year is possible.**

Tuition for the entire season is due even if the child does not complete the season.

VIII. ENROLLMENT/VOCAL ASSESSMENT

Open enrollment for the fall semester is from May through August/September. The enrollment process is considered a friendly, positive experience for each child. Directors conduct vocal assessments in order to place a child where he/she receives the best possible learning experience. Another enrollment period occurs mid-year in January for children to enter the Canzona or Camerata choirs. Special appointments may be arranged by contacting the ACC office at 304.343.1111. **IT STRONGLY SUGGESTED TO START AT THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR DUE TO THE COMPLEXITY OF THE MUSIC.** Prior music training is NOT required. ACC welcomes children of all races, creeds, and economic backgrounds regardless of physical challenges. Note that vocal assessments are not required for children wishing to enroll in the Canzona Preparatory Program.

Children typically have these traits when joining the choir:

- A clear, pleasant singing voice
- Ability to hear and reproduce musical pitch and rhythm
- Interest in singing and a desire to be in the choir – **THE MOST IMPORTANT!**

IX. BEHAVIOR GUIDELINES

We are not just developing singers in the program, we are building skills of *LEADERSHIP, RESPONSIBILITY, DISCIPLINE, and CARING.*

The following behavior is expected of the Appalachian Children's Chorus members:

<u>Respect</u>	for other persons whom he/she encounters in his/her role as a member of one of the ACC choirs, for the property of the choir, other persons, and for any facilities or equipment owned or used by the choir.
<u>Cooperation</u>	with choir staff and other designated supervisors with specific instructions that pertain to his/her choir and to special situations.
<u>Persistent Effort</u>	toward the goals of the choir.
<u>Reliability</u>	in preparedness, punctuality, and team spirit.
<u>Polish and Pride</u>	in appearance and performance.
<u>Courtesy</u>	in all environments.
<u>Voice Care</u>	by avoiding shouting, screaming, or excessive use.
<u>Safe Practices</u>	for one's self as well as others and through caution in interaction with strangers.

X. GRADUATION -

If a child decides to leave choir after being involved for several years, he/she will be considered a graduate if: (1) he/she has completed ninth grade and has been a member of Concert Choir for three years; or (2) has been in the choir program for six or more years whether or not they are in the ninth grade when he/she leaves. Graduate status allows the child to receive special recognition at the end of the year banquet.

XI. ACC CHOIR ADVANCEMENT GUIDELINES

Year after year, the bar of excellence continues to rise for the ACC program. It is important for our families to understand that the welfare of each chorister is now, and always will be, our deepest and foremost concern. With this in mind, we developed guidelines for choosing the choir where each child will continue to flourish. It allows each child to reach his/her own personal level of excellence and success while continuing to be musically challenged.

ADVANCEMENT AND PLACEMENT GUIDELINES

The following are guidelines for singers who wish to advance through the ACC program.

Advancement into Camerata Choir from the Canzona Choir is determined by the Canzona Choir Director based on vocal evaluation at the end of the season using the following criteria:

- Vocal Ability
- Chorister maturity, age, and grade level
- Music readiness
- **Commitment** and **attendance** to the current choir
- The ability to sing a part in harmony when singing with another singer.

Advancement into Concert Choir from other ACC choirs is based upon the Camerata Choir guidelines above plus the maturity and commitment needed to be successful in the group.

Admittance into the Concert Choir from the General Public requires demonstration of vocal ability, maturity, music readiness, and successful presentation of a solo vocal piece in an audition setting. It is a privilege to have each and every child as a part of the ACC choir program. If you have questions or need clarification, please contact Mrs. Dietz at 304-926-4557 or christy@wvacc.org or the ACC Office at 304-343-1111 or accinfo@wvacc.org

XII. COMMITMENT TO SCHOOL AND CHURCH MUSIC PROGRAMS

ACC is founded on the concept of striving for musical excellence, and it is our desire to share this attitude toward singing and music education with the public schools and local churches. ACC choristers should be leaders in their school and church music ensembles. It is **strongly suggested** every ACC chorister be an active participant in his or her school and church choirs, if one is available.

XIII. FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Tuition

The actual cost for each student participating in ACC is over \$4,000. However, thanks to fundraising efforts of our staff, board of directors, and ACC families, we can keep tuition as low as possible.

Tuition is to be paid in full by January 1.

Full Year Tuition Payment Plans

Concert Choir (5/6th- 12th grade)

Payment Plans	Total Due	Deposit at Registration	Payment
1 payment by October 1 st	\$550	\$50	\$500
4 payments – first payment due October 1 st Paid in full by January 1st	\$550	\$50	\$125/month
Financial Assistance Submit financial aid form to the office	Varies	Varies	Varies

Camerata Choir (3rd – 5/6th grade)

Payment Plans	Total Due	Deposit at Registration	Payment
1 payment by October 1 st	\$450	\$50	\$400
4 payments – first payment due October 1 st Paid in full by January 1st	\$450	\$50	\$100/month
Financial Assistance Submit financial aid form to the office	Varies	Varies	Varies

Canzona Preparatory Choir (K - 2nd Grade)

Payment Plans	Total Due	Deposit at Registration	Payment
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1 payment by October 1 st	\$350	\$50	\$300
4 payments – first payment due October 1 st Paid in full by January 1st	\$350	\$50	\$75/month
Financial Assistance Submit financial aid form to the office	Varies	Varies	Varies

Spring/2nd Semester ONLY Tuition Payment Plans

Concert Choir (5/6th- 12th grade)

Payment Plans	Total Due	Deposit at Registration	Payment
1 payment by February 1 st	\$275	\$50	\$225
3 payments – first payment due February 1 st Paid in full by April 1 st	\$275	\$50	\$75/month
Financial Assistance Submit financial aid form to the office	Varies	Varies	Varies

Camerata Choir (3rd – 5/6th grade)

Payment Plans	Total Due	Deposit at Registration	Payment
1 payment by February 1 st	\$225	\$50	\$175.00
3 payments – first payment due February 1 st Paid in full by April 1 st	\$225	\$50	\$58.33/month (approximate)
Financial Assistance Submit financial aid form to the office	Varies	Varies	Varies

Canzona Preparatory Choir (K - 2nd Grade)

Payment Plans	Total Due	Deposit at Registration	Payment
1 payment by February 1 st	\$175	\$50	\$125
3 payments – first payment due February 1 st Paid in full by April 1 st	\$175	\$50	\$41.66/month (approximate)
Financial Assistance Submit financial aid form to the office	Varies	Varies	Varies

NOTE: If another payment plan is needed, please contact ACC Executive Director, Blaine Hess at 304-343-1111 or blaine@wvacc.org

For those with more than one child in ACC, please refer to the following information:

First child pays full tuition. The second child pays half of the tuition, and the third child pays \$100. **To receive the family discount, all choristers must be full year participants.** Second and third child's tuition must be paid in full by January 1.

Tuition Discount Opportunity

ACC offers a \$50 tuition discount to any chorister for each new member he/she adds to one of the choirs. If the new member(s) remains with one of these choirs for a minimum of one semester and is diligent in making tuition

payments, the chorister who recruited the new member will be given a credit of \$50 for each which can be applied toward tuition, events, or travel.

Tuition Payments

DO NOT SEND PAYMENTS TO REHEARSAL.

MAIL ALL tuition payments to:
Appalachian Children's Chorus
210 Brooks Street, Suite 309
Charleston, WV 25301

Special Note: Tuition payments can be made on ACC's website through DonorView; however, a small service charge will be added to your payment to cover the costs DonorView charges for this convenience. If you use online banking with your bank, you can designate ACC as a payee and make payments online through your bank to

Past Due Accounts

If you have not paid your tuition in full the previous season, it will jeopardize your child's membership in the choir for the next season. Tuition will have to be paid or arrangements made before your child can join in the new season.

Financial Aid

Financial aid is available to qualifying students. A Financial Aid Application Form must be completed. **Reapplication is required annually. All forms must be received in the office no later than September 30.** To request a form, call the office at 304-343-1111 or go online at www.wvacc.org. **No full financial aid is granted.** Families must commit some financial investment and volunteer in fund-raising activities to assist the choir. ***SPECIAL NOTE: When you receive your approval letter for assistance, you MUST sign the letter and return it to the office for the aid to be applied. If it is not returned, financial aid cannot be applied.***

XIV. UNIFORMS

Uniforms are required for performance and special event purposes.

When and what do I wear?

- **Informal Uniforms** are worn to every Saturday rehearsal, whenever the choristers are out in the community for rehearsals, or when we travel to other locations to rehearse or to perform.
- **Formal Uniforms** are most often worn as concert attire.

2025-2026 ACC Uniforms

ACC families will be provided with a sheet containing ordering information for the uniform for your child's choir. The uniform is to be ordered directly from the company as soon as possible in order to allow time for dresses or pants to be hemmed, or in case there is a backorder of an item. Backordered items often take an additional 5 weeks to receive, so please allow ample time for you order to be filled. There will be a full dress rehearsal held in November and choir pictures will be taken at that time.

- **Concert Choir Uniforms**

- Young Ladies

Concert Choir Boatneck Ford Concert Dresses Claret/Black \$99 <https://sepapparel.com/ford-dress-ladies-concert-choir.html>

The sizing chart is on the website.

Ladies Black Character Shoes w/Ankle Straps \$47

<https://sepapparel.com/capezio-character-shoes.html>

Pearl Necklace \$5 (order through ACC Office)

Total - \$151



- **Young Men (Concert Choir)** (All black with claret vest, claret bow tie, black shoes, socks, belt.)
 - Precentor Vest Claret \$49 <https://sepapparel.com/precentor-vest-men-concert-choir.html>
 - Black Shirt \$20.50 <https://sepapparel.com/dress-shirt-men-choir.html>
 - Color Claret Bow Tie \$8.50 <https://sepapparel.com/satin-banded-bow-tie-choir.html>
 - Flat Front Cavalier Black Pants \$29 <https://sepapparel.com/flat-front-cavalier-pant-men-choir.html>
 - Unisex Black Shoes \$54 <https://sepapparel.com/unisex-shoes-choir.html>
 - Total - \$161.00



- **Camerata Choir Uniforms**

- Girls
 - Claret Youth Choral Dress \$78 (Color: Claret) <https://sepapparel.com/youth-chorale-concert-choir-dress.html>
 - Knee high hose (no image)
 - Black Mary Jane Shoes - approx. \$25 (Can be purchased locally)
 - Total - \$103



Picture is in Black but the ACC Dress uniform is Claret.

- Boys (White shirt with claret vest, claret bow tie, black pants, shoes, socks, belt.)
 Precentor Vest Claret \$49 <https://sepapparel.com/precentor-vest-men-concert-choir.html>
 White Shirt \$20.50 <https://sepapparel.com/dress-shirt-men-choir.html>
 Color Claret Bow Tie \$8.50
<https://sepapparel.com/satin-banded-bow-tie-choir.html>
 Flat Front Cavalier Black Pants \$28 <https://sepapparel.com/flat-front-cavalier-pant-men-choir.html>
 Unisex Black Shoes \$54 <https://sepapparel.com/unisex-shoes-choir.html>
 Total - \$161.00



- **Canzona Choir Uniforms**

- Girls
 Round Neck Black Jumper from French Toast \$22.98 - \$25.98
<https://www.frenchtoast.com/girls-round-neck-jumper/p/1688?>
 White Short Sleeve Peter Pan Shirt \$8.98 <https://www.frenchtoast.com/short-sleeve-peter-pan-polo-girls-toddler/p/1638?>
 White Tights \$10 (no image)
 Black Flat Mary Janes \$25 (no image) - can be purchased locally

Claret Floppy Bow Tie \$8.95

<https://www.tiemart.com/collections/claret-ties/products/claret-floppy-bow-tie>

Total - \$75.91 - \$78.91



- Boys (White shirt, with claret bow tie, black pants, shoes, socks, belt.)
White Shirt \$20.50 <https://sepapparel.com/dress-shirt-men-choir.html>
Color Claret Bow Tie \$8.50
<https://sepapparel.com/satin-banded-bow-tie-choir.html>
Flat Front Cavalier Black Pants \$29 <https://sepapparel.com/flat-front-cavalier-pant-men-choir.html>
Unisex Black Shoes \$54 <https://sepapparel.com/unisex-shoes-choir.html>
Total - \$112.00



Special note regarding black pants: May NOT be low rise, knit, jeans, skinny legged, extremely baggy, or have any decorations on them. They must be straight-legged, flat front, zip fly with belt loops.

Informal Uniform (Girls & Boys - ALL choirs)

ACC red polos, approximately \$30, (additional cost depending on size) are to be ordered through the ACC Office)

ACC Red Polos Order Link: <https://forms.gle/CEG5Mh1rJS79gvWi6> **Order by Aug 30**

Black docker style pants (**no jeans**) with black belt (Tuck polo shirt into pants.)

Black shoes & black socks

Note: The black pants for the informal uniform are individually bought by the families.

Concert Attire and Grooming

As the ensemble's sound is important, so is the ensemble's appearance. A well-groomed and neatly uniformed group is essential for a truly professional and artistic experience. Formal concert uniforms should always be steamed or pressed to eliminate unsightly wrinkles. Polos and shirts are tucked into pants. Pants are pulled up to the waist and worn with a belt. Clean, combed hair is expected. Hair (for both boys and girls) should be groomed away from the face. **DO NOT** wear the following: obvious make-up or cosmetics, jewelry, big or elaborate hair bows, dangly earrings (only stud earrings will be allowed), accessories, watches (unless they are plain and do not have alarms). Also, do not wear any perfume, fragrance or scent of any kind. In close confines, these smells could adversely affect another child. No tears, rips, or cuts in pants worn as part of formal concert attire. A chorister who fails to dress appropriately or is not groomed properly for an event may not participate.

**Please
make certain your chorister comes to rehearsals and performances well groomed.**

XV. DRESS CODE FOR REGULAR WEEKLY REHEARSALS

Rehearsal and Casual Attire: Neat and clean clothing; no low-rise pants or shorts; no baggy pants dragging on the floor; no bare midriffs; no bra straps or underwear showing; no spaghetti straps or tank tops; no sandals or flip-flops. Shirts or blouses must cover the entire torso. No dresses or shorts to be above the chorister's mid-thigh. No head covering of any kind (i.e. ball caps or hats) unless it is required for religious purposes.

XVI. REHEARSAL SCHEDULES

If school is canceled due to weather, your choir MAY HOLD REHEARSAL! Please make every effort to attend if conditions permit safe travel. However, your safety is our utmost concern. Check with your choir assistant to verify if rehearsal will be canceled. Make sure we have the best method for contacting you if we need to cancel.

Transportation to and from rehearsals and concerts is the individual responsibility of the parents/guardians.

Please make sure to report your child's absence using the Google form if he/she/they will not be able to attend a rehearsal.

Concert Choir

Tuesday from 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 pm

Christy Dietz, Director

Saturday rehearsals

- Once a month from 10:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.
- Check schedule for dates

Camerata Choir

Mondays from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Danielle Coleman, Director

Canzona Preparatory Choir

Mondays from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Dionne Canterbury, Director

Rehearsal Location:

All Regular Rehearsals: Southeast Church of the Nazarene, located 5102 MacCorkle Avenue SE, Charleston

XVII. ATTENDANCE

- Membership in ACC is a **commitment to faithful, consistent and punctual attendance**. Rehearsals should take a **high priority** in each chorister's life. Each chorister is a valuable part of the choir (team) and each chorister's voice is an important entity to the choir.
- Missing a performance: If a child must miss a performance, the family **MUST** talk to the director about this absence, not the choir assistant. This should be done as soon as possible.
- **All rehearsals are required!** All performances are **mandatory!** If a chorister misses **three (3) rehearsals per semester, for ANY reason**, their membership and participation in the upcoming concert is at risk. Again, prompt communication is paramount.
- Unless otherwise notified, **even if there is no school, there will be rehearsal**. Check your choir's calendars for specific exceptions.
- Absences beyond an allotted number require **the director to assess a student's knowledge of the repertoire** before being allowed to perform in an upcoming program. Excessive absences may cause the chorister to be denied the privilege of performing in the next concert, and continued participation.
- **Report all planned and unplanned absences on the designated Google forms link. Once the absence report has been submitted, it will automatically notify the director, the choir assistant, and administration.**
 - **Concert Choir Absence Link:** <https://forms.gle/bPgsvSveMR72sq2q9>
 - **Canzona Choir Absence Link:** <https://forms.gle/fQTeGfU7ivxeGRZGA>
 - **Camerata Choir Absence Link:** <https://forms.gle/CG7nEF9uWMpgBvNu6>
 - **Cambiata Choir Absence Link:** <https://forms.gle/S5g6kDYVGarh1u3QA>
- **Unavoidable school or church conflicts:** In these situations, we appreciate advanced notice. A **Google forms report** should be submitted **soon as** you become aware of a conflict.
- **There are NO excused absences.** When a chorister is absent from a rehearsal they miss all the content and artistic direction taught at that rehearsal. Reasons for an absence must be given in advance.
- **The final rehearsals in the concert hall prior to concerts are REQUIRED.** If missed, participation in the concert will be at the director's discretion. **If the chorister misses the final rehearsal before a concert, he/she should not arrive at the concert expecting to perform.**

Tardiness or Early Dismissal

Literally every second of our rehearsals is important, and planned to maximize our rehearsal time. Should a chorister be tardy, the parent needs to submit a Google forms report for each **tardiness or early dismissal**. If a chorister is tardy or leaves more than 30 minutes before the end of rehearsal, the rehearsal he/she/they will be considered tardy. Three tardies equal one absence.,

Punctuality

Our motto is "to be early is to be on time, to be on time is to be late, and to be late is unacceptable."

Our directors attempt to begin and end on time. Choristers should be **in their seats 5 minutes** before rehearsal is scheduled to begin in order to get their music organized and be prepared to begin at the appointed time. This means with pencil sharpened, water bottle filled, and restroom needs completed.

Resignation

We expect each chorister, who has made a commitment to sing for the entire season, to live up to the commitment. However, if an **extremely** unusual circumstance occurs that prohibits a chorister from fulfilling his/her/they commitment, a personal conference with the choir director and parent is required before resignation is final.

XVIII. REHEARSAL PROCEDURES

The following procedures help us achieve the discipline and professionalism that the Appalachian Children's Chorus is striving toward. They are enforced for the choristers' safety, for ensuring orderly rehearsals, and out of respect and courtesy for each other.

1. Arrive not more than 15 minutes before the designated rehearsal time. Go directly to the choir assistant to check-in and proceed to their assigned seat. Late arrivals must always check-in immediately upon arrival. A Google forms report is necessary for late admittance to or early dismissal from a rehearsal.
2. Turn in all paperwork, attendance notes, permission slips, memorization sheets, etc., to the choir assistant.
3. Take a bathroom break **before** rehearsal begins.
4. **Do not roam around the building at any time.** Choristers should only be in the rehearsal area or right outside the rehearsal area. If a bathroom visit is necessary, older choristers may take a friend while younger choristers will be accompanied by an adult.
5. Everyone must bring their folder, ACC bag, music, and a sharpened pencil to **ALL** rehearsals.
6. Choristers should **bring a water bottle** to long rehearsals.
7. Choristers should be in their seats **5 minutes prior to the beginning of rehearsal.**
8. Do not bring food or drink (except water) to the rehearsal area. Try to eat dinner or a nutritious snack before arriving at rehearsal. This is especially important before concerts. There will be snack breaks where snacks are provided. Choristers with allergies may choose to bring their own.
9. At all times **show respect** for each other, parent volunteers, and the facilities.
10. Do not talk, do homework, or distract other choristers during rehearsals. All attention must be on the rehearsal and especially the director.
11. Running, loud voices, and/or rowdy behavior are not permitted in the rehearsal rooms or on the grounds.
12. If, for any reason, a child cannot actively participate in a rehearsal, he/she should bring a written note and observe quietly and attentively. Non-covid illness like laryngitis, or seasonal allergies are not reasons for missing.
13. All rehearsal spaces and concert venues are to be kept in order. Our motto is to ***leave things/places better than we found them.***
14. Choristers are **NOT** permitted to use cell phones during rehearsals (even during break) or at performances. Focus must stay on the choir, and building interpersonal skills.
15. **Choristers are responsible for giving their parents any handouts that are distributed at rehearsals.** Parents should check with their child following each rehearsal to make sure they get all information.

Visitor Policy

Visitors are not permitted in rehearsals unless approved/invited by the director.

XIX. PERFORMANCES

Attendance is **MANDATORY** at all performances. **The choir's director MUST be personally notified, preferably far in advance, by the parents/guardians if the chorister is going to be absent from a performance.** The Google absence form only applies to rehearsals, not performances.

Performance Schedule Conflicts

Every effort must be made to avoid conflicts. A written acknowledgment of any unavoidable conflict **must be** submitted as far in advance as possible and a conference with the director should be scheduled. Decisions are based on the degree to which such absences would compromise the integrity of the ACC program and the chorister's participation in it. If the director does not receive notice of such conflicts in advance, the absence *may* jeopardize the chorister's membership in ACC.

XX. PERFORMANCE PROCEDURES

Performances require the very best in conduct, appearance, and musicianship. Always eat a nutritious meal and get plenty of rest before a concert. Be sure to use the restroom prior to arrival at the concert site.

1. Arrive 10 minutes before the performance call and immediately check in with the Choir Assistant. Tardiness at a performance may exclude a chorister from participation at that performance.
2. Arrive in proper concert dress. Failure to wear a proper uniform will result in non-participation in the concert.
3. Conduct yourself in a calm, polite, and professional manner and always give your undivided attention to your Choir Director and Choir Assistant.
4. Know the music! Each chorister must have a confident command of the repertoire. Failure to demonstrate this at the final rehearsal may result in the chorister not being allowed to participate in the concert or sitting out on certain pieces.
5. Choristers should ALWAYS let the choir assistant or a chaperone know if they are feeling ill. If they feel ill during a performance, quietly sit down and rest for the remainder of the program. The choir assistants and chaperones are always watching and will help if necessary.
6. **Remember! At all times you represent your families, the Appalachian Children's Chorus, and the state of West Virginia.**
7. Choristers are NOT permitted to use cell phones during rehearsals or at performances. They are permitted to have them as long as they do not use them until excused from rehearsal or the performance.

XXI. HOME STUDY

Practice at home is expected of each singer every day for a minimum of twenty minutes. Practice includes breathing, vocalization exercises as well as work on specific literature. From time to time, specific learning assignments are given involving memorization of text and/or music, which may or may not require a parent's signature. Completion of these assignments will be tested on an individual basis or in small groups at the discretion of the choir director. Parents are asked to "sign off" on the memory sheet after they have tested their child for that memory lesson.

XXII. MUSIC

ACC issues folders and music to each chorister. It is the chorister's responsibility to take good care of them and not to lose them. All folders and music must be turned in by the last performance in the spring. If music or folders are lost, irreparably damaged, or not returned, an additional fee will be charged to cover replacement costs. The fee will be \$3 per piece of music or \$55 for a folder and music. Please remember that music and folders are to be used, not abused.

Handling and Care of Music

1. Music must be brought to all rehearsals unless you are notified otherwise.
2. Never fold or roll music.
3. All markings should be done lightly, in pencil, and only at the discretion of the choir director. A sharpened pencil should be brought to each rehearsal.
4. If for any reason a piece of music is in need of repair, please do so properly with clear tape.
5. Students are responsible for lost music or folders.

XXIII. FUNDRAISING

Tuition for ACC ranges from \$350 and \$550. The actual cost per student is about \$2,500. The reason we can charge a reduced amount is due to donations and fundraisers. ACC holds several fundraisers a year. We ask all families to participate to help ACC continue to provide the lowest rate possible for tuition.

ACC Fundraising Policy

In our fundraising efforts, ACC asks that each chorister participate in the following ways:

1. Program Advertising (Ad Sales)

Each year ACC produces a concert program, which is distributed at concerts throughout the performance season. Besides listing the program of songs for the performance, it also contains

information about ACC, photographs of choir activities, a list of contributors, advertisements sold by choir members, and chorister bios. We strongly urge each family to sell program ads. Sixty percent of the profit made will be placed in the child's travel account.

2. Ticket Sales

ACC asks each family to try to **sell at least 10 tickets** for both the Christmas and Spring Concerts. Tickets for each event are offered as a "pre-sale" to families at a reduced rate. After the pre-sale period, tickets are sold at a higher rate to the public or to those who did not make the "presale" deadline.

3. Poinsettia and Spring Flower Sales

Poinsettias and spring flowers are sold not only to raise money for the choir, but also to raise money for the choristers' travel accounts. Poinsettias are sold in the fall while the spring flowers are sold in the spring months. Sixty percent of the profit made will be placed in the child's travel account. **We ask choristers to try to sell at least 10 poinsettias and 10 spring flowers (flats or baskets).** *NOTE: For more about Travel Accounts, see Section XXIV.*

4. Chick-fil-a Pop Up

We raise money for ACC by pre-selling Chick-fil-a meals. On the day of the event, a pop-up tent will be provided where the meals that were sold can be picked up and others sold to walk-up customers. **Choristers are asked to sell at least ten meals.**

5. Kroger Rewards Program

Support the choir by using your Kroger Plus Card! To enroll, simply visit the rewards website at: www.kroger.com/communityrewards and click the "create account" button. Select ACC as your designated charity. It is a simple and easy process. Then, all you do is use your Kroger Plus card as you normally would, and a percentage of every dollar placed on the card raises money for the choir.

6. Corporate Sponsors

If you have contacts that might be willing to support ACC (sponsoring a concert, providing support for choristers, donating auction items, etc.) please contact the ACC office. Employers sometimes wish to support the communities where they are located. Often, a children's choir is just the type of organization they may support. Please help us by checking your employer's policies. If you are a business owner, please consider the choir for your support.

Tuition only covers about 20% of each chorister's music education. The success of our fundraising efforts enables ACC to continue to keep tuition as low as possible. If we do not meet our goals, we will have to raise tuition. **It is the responsibility of all of us to work together to raise the funds to meet the additional 80%.**

While the main purpose of fundraising is certainly to raise needed funds, it is also an important opportunity to:

- Raise the profile of the ACC in Charleston and surrounding areas
- Promote our concerts
- Let people know about the musical excellence that has been achieved by ACC.

XXIV. TRAVEL

Concert Choir: Concert Choir may take several short trips during the season and trips are required for all choristers. When traveling for these performances, we represent ACC and West Virginia as their ambassadors of music. It is the expectation of every member of the choir to participate. **Every two years, we plan a major trip** for the Concert Choir. These trips, which can be domestic or international, are scheduled every two to three years. These trips cost approximately \$2,700 to \$4,900 and are highly recommended, but not mandatory. Some financial assistance will be available for those who qualify; however, it is expected that those who receive financial assistance demonstrate great effort by earning half of their trip costs through fundraising efforts and parental contributions.

Camerata Choir Camerata Choir may take part in overnight travel experiences either through ACC's Appalachian Festival of Young Voices, held every other year, or a semi-local event the other years. The festival cost is between \$120 and \$180 with out-of-town trips being about \$250 to \$400. Overnight travel is mandatory

for choristers hoping to graduate to Concert Choir.

Travel Accounts Each chorister has an opportunity to raise money for their travel expenses. It may be done through ACC fundraising events (see section XXIII) AND individual choir opportunities. ACC maintains individual travel accounts for each chorister based on their fundraising participation. Please have your chorister take full advantage of these opportunities. The money built up in the travel accounts may be used toward a trip, Concert Choir Retreat, or AFYV festival fees. Travel funds cannot be used for deposits on trip expenses. They also cannot be used for a parent's trip fee. Some choristers work hard enough at these fundraisers that they have almost paid for their trips in full with the funds raised. Funds in a chorister travel account are applied as the final payment(s) toward the trip after deposits, and scheduled payments have been made. ***When a chorister leaves ACC, the remaining balance in their account is transferred to the ACC Travel Assistance Fund. This is the same in the case of graduation or resignation.***

Chaperone Policy Interested parents must fill out, and have on file, a Chaperone Application as well as a signed copy of the Chaperone Guidelines found on page 24. All chaperones must pass a background check. Once completed, this report is good for three years. Chaperones will be requested to cover the cost of the background check.

Brief Chaperone Rules

1. **No other siblings/children**, other than performing choir members, may accompany you. Chaperones have a group of choristers for which they are responsible. It is our experience that additional children divide the chaperone's attention and could create a security issue or unnecessary inconvenience for the group.
2. A chaperone is **not** permitted to chaperone his/her own child's group.
3. All **chaperones** wishing to assist with a **Concert or Cambiata Choir trip** must have previously chaperoned at least two choir events—preferably one overnight and one day trip.
4. To **chaperone other choirs'** overnight trips, a parent must have served as a chaperone at least once during the season.

There may be occasions when ACC allows parents to bring additional **school-age siblings/children** with the **approval of the director**. These parents may **NOT serve as chaperones** but will be considered companion travelers only. **ACC will NOT assume responsibility for the companion adult nor additional siblings/children.**

The Appalachian Festival of Young Voices – June 12-16, 2026

This event is a national children's choir festival hosted by ACC. It begins on Friday evening and culminates with a special concert featuring all the children involved in an event on Monday evening. The Festival's purpose is to embrace, celebrate, and educate children around the country as well as those from West Virginia about the music and culture of Appalachia.

Children's choirs from around the country attend this event and join voices with some of ACC's choirs. Concert, and Camerata (5th – 8th grade) choir may participate in this event. As stated above, this will qualify as an overnight trip. Children can attend our festival which is an event they will not want to miss. This is a rewarding and educational experience. ACC choristers always look forward to the festival. A world-renowned children's choir conductor, Dr. Rollo Dilworth, has been a frequent conductor for this event. He is sought after and conducts festivals around the world but says the Appalachian Festival of Young Voices is his favorite festival.

XXV. ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF INFORMATION

The Appalachian Children's Chorus' phone number is 304-343-1111. Please feel free to call at any time, and leave a message if we are not in the office. We will return your call as soon as possible.

Artistic Director:

Christy Dietz, oversees all aspects of the organization. She is also the director of ACC's top choir, the Concert Choir, as well as the Cambiata Choir. She can be reached at christy@wvacc.org

Executive Director:

Blaine Hess, is responsible for the general operations of the organization including marketing, development, and administration. He can be reached at blaine@wvacc.org

Office Assistant:

Suzette Dunn, handles the clerical aspects of the organization. Please refer any account questions to 304-343-1111 or accinfo@wvacc.org.

Choir Assistants: They are a vital part of the ACC staff and family. If, for any reason, the director is not present with the children, the ACC choir assistant is to be considered in charge and respected as such. The choir assistant is considered second in command and his/her primary focus is the safety and well-being of all our choristers. Please follow his/her requests just as if it was from the director. They are responsible for communication and assignment of chaperones (with director's approval), inspecting uniforms of choristers, maintaining order and discipline, and providing support for the director.

The Choir Assistants

<u>Concert Choir</u> Stephanie Adkins, Choir Assistant Cell: 304-553-1540 Email: TSAdkins5@gmail.com	<u>Camerata Choir</u> Liz Bonar, Choir Assistant Cell: 304-550-6603 Email: liz.bonar@outlook.com	<u>Canzona Choir</u> Annabeth Keller, Canzona Assistant Cell: 304-951-0968 Email: annabethakeller@gmail.com
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XXVI. ARTISTIC STAFF BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Christy Dietz - Artistic Director, Director of the Concert Choir

Christy Dietz is a music educator with numerous years of experience teaching in public schools in Greenbrier County, WV, Columbia, SC and at Cross Lanes Christian School in Cross Lanes, WV. She holds a Bachelor of Music Education degree from Radford University – Vocal/Choral Music ages Pre-K through 12th grade. While at Radford she was a vocal major and minored in piano. She performed with the University Chorus, Women's Chorale, Radford Singers and Madrigal Singers. She has also performed as a member of the Greenbrier Valley Chorale in Lewisburg and womanSong Chorale here in Charleston. She has been actively involved with ACC for over 12 years. She has served as a choir mom, choir assistant, choir director under the tutelage of Selina Midkiff, ACC office assistant, ACC Board member, and ACC Board President. While at ACC, she has accompanied the choir on trips to Ohio, Tennessee, Pennsylvania, Hawaii, Canada and Portugal. She has been involved in numerous retreats, performances, and workshops. Mrs. Dietz is a member of WV Music Educators Association, the National Association of Music Education and the American Choral Directors Association. She began singing at the age of four and began playing piano at age nine. She has been singing and/or playing piano in church her entire life. She has been active in worship ministry for over 33 years and currently serves on the worship ministry team at Southridge Church. Christy is married to her wonderful husband, Dr. Paul Dietz and they are proud parents of a beautiful daughter, Hannah.

Blaine Hess - Executive Director

Blaine Hess holds a Bachelor's Degree in Music Education from Alderson-Broaddus College and a Master's Degree in Educational Leadership from the Marshall University College of Graduate Studies. Mr. Hess received the Lee Music Award while at A-B, and was student conductor of the Tour Choir. He also has served as bass soloist for Handel's Messiah performances in the area for over 25 years. He served as band director at George Washington High School, where he was named WV Bandmaster of the Year in 1992. Mr. Hess served as Superintendent of Jackson County Schools for 16 years prior to his retirement. He was named WV Superintendent of the Year on two occasions, in 2011 and 2020. He was also named the WV Superintendent of the Year in 2017 by the WV Music Educators Conference for his support of the Arts. Mr. Hess currently serves as the Chairman of the Board of Governors for WVU-Parkersburg.

Danielle Coleman - Director of the Camerata Choir

Danielle Coleman is a music educator with nearly fifteen years of experience with Kanawha County Schools. Originally from Huntington, she earned her BA in Music Education from Marshall University where she performed with the MU Chamber Choir and other various ensembles. Actively working with schools, her church, and other local organizations throughout her life has provided her the opportunity to help children find their voice and achieve their ambitions. Ms. Coleman feels extremely blessed to have the unwavering support of her parents, husband, and two daughters as they endeavor all of life's grand adventures.

Dionne Canterbury - Director of the Canzona Preparatory Choir

Ms. Canterbury holds a Bachelor's degree from the University of Charleston and is the Children's Choir director at Village Chapel Presbyterian Church. Ms. Canterbury is also a certified Kindermusik educator. She teaches private voice and piano lessons as well. Dionne has had an active singing history in Charleston, both as a choir member and soloist in such groups as WomanSong, OPUS, and the Light Opera Guild. She has also performed as a choir member/soloist in America's longest running outdoor drama, "The Lost Colony". Dionne is the proud mother of daughter Vivien and twins, Annabel and Isaiah.

Mary Beth Norman - Concert Choir Accompanist

Mary Beth Norman is an accomplished pianist with extensive experience. Ms. Norman has a Bachelor of Science in Music Education from West Virginia Institute of Technology and a Master of Arts in Music Education from Marshall University, specializing in accompanying both vocalists and instrumentalists. Her experience includes being a faculty member of WV State University, The University of Charleston, and as an adjunct instructor at Marshall University. Her resume includes being an accompanist for the Huntington Symphony Chorus, WV State University Choir, The University of Charleston Choir, Marshall University Senior and Graduate Recitals (both for instrumentalists and vocalists), WV All County choirs, and numerous worship ministries. Ms. Norman has performed in the WV Symphony, Ohio Valley Symphony, and is currently the accompanist for the Concert Choir for the Appalachian Children's Chorus.

Selina Cosby Midkiff - Founder and Director Emeritus

A native of the Charleston area, Mrs. Midkiff attended West Virginia University where she received a Bachelor and Masters of Music Education. She taught in public schools for 20 years and served as adjunct faculty member of the University of Charleston and WV Tech where she taught music education to music majors and non-majors. In 2014 Midkiff received an award from the Community Music Association for her service to WV with ACC. In 2015 she received the Spirit Award from the WV Music Hall of Fame. In 2015 she was named one of WV Wonder Women by the *WV Focus Magazine*. In 2016 she received an Honorary Doctor of Music degree from the University of Charleston and was recognized by the Union Mission Board of Directors as a Woman on a Mission. At the end of the 2021-2022 season, Selina retired as the Artistic Director after 31 years at the helm. Mrs. Midkiff is the wife of Gary Midkiff, the proud parent of four wonderful sons, and grandmother to Aidan, Silas, Everly, and Micah.

XXVII. VOLUNTEERS

In order to organize and carry out the many events, fundraisers, and other opportunities for ACC's children, we greatly rely on volunteers. Volunteer opportunities abound and include everything from rehearsal assistance to concert management. Choristers and their families will be made aware of opportunities to volunteer for events, performances, and fundraisers throughout the year through the Parent Fan Club and via email. The hundreds of vital volunteer hours that have been given by board members, parents, choristers, and community members are appreciated and recognized at the annual end of year banquet.

XXIX. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Appalachian Children's Chorus' Board of Directors exists to establish policies, maintain fiscal integrity, and oversee the business of the corporation. Board member emails are provided below in the event you feel the need to contact them for any reason. While they are not involved in the day to day operations of ACC, they want to be accessible in the event you have an issue you wish to bring to their attention.

Board of Directors

Eddie Bucklen, President	ebucklen415@aol.com
Lisa Hamrick, Vice President	lisa.hamrick@encova.com
Jane Fouty, Secretary	jane.fouty@aol.com
Shana Clay, Treasurer	shanaclay@hotmail.com
Rachel Cipoletti	rcipoletti@wvdc.org
Jeff Cox	wvhunter@gmail.com
Christy Dietz	christy@wvacc.org
Mary Lee Dunn	mlwhat@aol.com
Gail Forsythe	gforsythe@arrayasolutions.com
Jean Hawks	fthill@aol.com
Jessical Lambert	jess.lambert02@gmail.com

XXVIII. ACC PARENT FAN CLUB

The mission of the Parent Fan Club of the Appalachian Children's Chorus is to support the children and artistic staff of ACC by involving all families in the activities of ACC. The Parent Fan Club wishes to encourage and support the atmosphere of accepting each child as an individual and support ACC's stand that we are a safe place for children. It is the purpose of the ACC Parent Fan Club to assist the ACC staff in organizing activities associated with choristers. They also help suggest and organize fundraising activities to support the choir and the children's travel accounts.

XXIX. CONCERT DATES

ACC Major Concert Dates: The major ACC concerts are listed below. These are the tentative dates and times.

Christmas Concert	Friday, December 12, 2025 @ 7 p.m. Charleston Baptist Temple
Spring Concert	Sunday, May 17, 2026 @ 3 p.m. Charleston Baptist Temple

CHORISTER GUIDELINES FOR TOURING WITH ACC CONCERN FOR SAFETY, RESPECT FOR THE LAW AND CHAPERONE AUTHORITY

1. Choristers must do the following:
 - Cooperate with chaperone instructions especially regarding security and safety in public places.
 - Avoid physical abuse, kicking, punching, and fighting.
 - Follow the chaperone's instructions within their group. Since chaperones are responsible for the safety of choristers and for adherence to tour schedules and plans, each chorister must stay with his/her assigned chaperone group at all times when not in rehearsal or performance or with home stay families.
 - Be friendly to other choristers in the choir environment at all times.
 - **DO NOT** talk to strangers outside of the choir situations/rehearsal/concert unless a chaperone is with them.
2. Chaperones reserve the right to check chorister's personal belongings and confiscate any item in the possession of a chorister deemed a potential risk to the safety of that chorister or any others in the group.

RESPECTFULNESS, COOPERATION, ATTENTION, PARTICIPATION and PUNCTUALITY

- Be respectful, caring, and courteous, at all times, to all people in every circumstance. This includes other ACC members, chaperones, people in the host organizations, tour managers, other touring musicians, hotel, restaurant

staff, bus drivers, etc.

- Recognize and respect the authority of the directors, choir assistants, chaperones, tour guides, staff members, and host families.
- The “Ooo” sound is very important for ACC choristers. Once heard, everyone joins in.
 - a. ALL TALKING IS TO STOP AND EYES ARE ON THE DIRECTOR. THERE SHOULD BE ABSOLUTE SILENCE.
 - b. It ensures everyone has his or her attention on the director and is listening to all the information given by the director or other ACC staff member in charge.
 - c. On tour, there is limited rehearsal time. Every minute is critical. There are times when we need to change plans or when we suddenly need the attention of the choristers. Pay full attention, listen, and cooperate.
- Cooperation is important throughout the tour. This includes respecting each other’s need for sleep, whether at quiet times on the bus or in sleeping quarters.
- Choristers must **be on time** for scheduled events, gatherings, bus departures, and any call issued by chaperones or staff so as not to delay others.
- Personal items are YOUR responsibility. If you leave them behind, they will be lost.
- Use appropriate language. Foul language and talking back will not be tolerated!
- When asked to do something. DO IT! Leave your “bad attitudes” at home.
- No girlfriend/boyfriend behavior is acceptable. Boys and girls are not allowed to be in each other’s hotel/dorm room without a chaperone.
- Cell phones can only be used for emergency purposes. During rehearsals, when traveling or staying in hotel rooms, or when in chaperone groups, cell phones should not be used. They can prohibit proper interaction with others. If you are found using your cell phone, it will be confiscated and returned to you at the judgment of the director.

UNIFORM & APPEARANCE

- **Formal Uniform:** You will wear the uniform specified for your choir on pages 9-12 of this handbook. Hair must be pulled back from face with a neutral clip or rubber band. No big flowers or bows allowed! Light make-up and neutral nail polish only. Choristers may wear small rings, earrings, and a watch (non-alarm variety) only.
- **Informal Uniform:** Black slacks, ACC red polo, black socks, and black shoes.
- **Casual & Free Dress:** Neat & clean clothing; no low-rise pants or shorts; no baggy pants dragging on the floor; no bare midriffs; no bra straps or underwear showing; no spaghetti straps or tank tops; no sandals or flip-flops. Shirts or blouses must cover the entire torso. No dresses or shorts to be above the chorister's mid-thigh. No head covering of any kind unless it is required for religious purposes.

HEALTH

- Touring is not fun if you are sick, nor can you perform well, so take necessary precautions to stay healthy the week before a trip.
- Get plenty of rest before you leave.
- Vocal health is an important concern. Drink lots of water, and do not yell.
- Eat at mealtimes, so you will not get sick.
- See your chaperone, medical personnel, or director if anything is bothering you.

TRANSPORTATION

- Bring a healthy snack and bottled water along for the bus or plane.
- Check in with your chaperone and board the bus in chaperone groups. ***Must be done every time!***
- KEEP NOISE LEVELS AT A MINIMUM. Have quiet conversation and use earphones with your music players.
- Pick up your trash and keep your area tidy.
- Remain in your seat unless getting up to use the restroom. Do not stand on seats or climb over them.
- Do not stand around in the aisles.

RESTAURANT ETIQUETTE

- During travel, stay in your seat unless going to or from the restroom.
- Keep your voice at a low level when talking; be polite.
- Do not order dairy products or caffeinated beverages before a performance.
- Do not throw anything or play with food.
- Leave the area neat and clean. Remember: we always leave things **BETTER** than we found them.
- Check for belongings before leaving the restaurant.

LEGAL/ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES

Alcohol and tobacco ARE NOT permitted. Absolutely NO drugs or illegal substances allowed. **If this rule is broken, we will call home and remove the chorister from all programs and activities.** He or she will be placed with a chaperone for the remainder of the trip. If illegal substances are found, serious consequences will result. Depending upon the severity of the offense, the chorister ***may be sent home at the parent's expense. The child will also be removed from the ACC Program.***

RESPECT FOR PROPERTY

Property of other choristers, transport companies (bus), hotels, restaurants, and all event sites will be treated with respect and will not be abused, damaged, or vandalized in any way. Choristers are expected to dispose of trash properly, leaving any area used ***BETTER*** than they found them. You must obtain the owner's permission before any personal property is used or borrowed, including that of a roommate.

CONSEQUENCES

We will NOT tolerate any violation of the guidelines listed above. Violations will result in a conference with the chaperone and/or director. Depending upon the severity of the infraction, the following actions may be taken:

1. missing fun activities,
2. "time out",
3. clean up duty or something comparable,
4. pulled from all activities, or
5. possibly sent home at the family's expense.

A signed copy of these guidelines MUST be submitted to the Choir Assistant before leaving on tour.

I have read this document to my child, and we understand that travel guidelines of the Appalachian Children's Chorus.

Child's Name: _____ Choir: _____

Traveling To: _____ Date(s) Traveling: _____

Child's Signature

Parent's Signature

The Appalachian Children's Chorus Chaperone Guidelines

The primary purpose of the chaperones for ACC tours is to ensure the children, have a safe, memorable, and successful trip.

1. Parents are responsible for the same financial cost as the choristers.
2. The primary purpose of the chaperones for ACC tours is to ensure that the children have a safe, memorable, and successful trip.
3. When serving as a chaperone, no other siblings/children (other than performing choir members) may accompany chaperones on choir events. Chaperones have a group of young people for which they are responsible. It is our experience that additional children divide the chaperone's attention and could create a security issue or unnecessary inconvenience for the group.
4. For reasons established after years of travel and recommendations from other children's choirs, parents will **not** be permitted to have their own child in their daytime chaperone group.
5. There are several personal expectations of the chaperones:
 - Be at least 25 years of age.
 - Refrain from the use of any tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, or inappropriate language in the presence of the children.

- Chaperones may not be alone with any single child.
- Refrain from touching the children, except to prevent bodily harm.
- Set an example of respect for others, especially if your patience is being tested.
- Do not complain or listen to complaining from the children or the other chaperones. When the children complain, try to distract them by speaking of positive things. When the other adults complain, suggest they think of positive things. If the issue is severe, have them discuss the problem with the director.

6. The responsibilities of the tour chaperones:

- Arrive fifteen minutes prior to “call time” with your group of choristers.
- Enter buses, airplanes, and buildings with your group of choristers and sit together when possible.
- When walking with your group, always keep the group at your side or close behind you. Be especially careful of children racing ahead to crosswalks and of cars making corner turns. Walk no more than two abreast or side by side. Keep to the right in lines. Don’t fill the whole sidewalk!
- If the whole group is walking together in concert formation, make sure chaperones are walking at the front, middle, and the end of the lines.
- Be sure children do not go alone to public restrooms.
- Be willing to assist in any manner. Anticipate what may happen or be needed in any given situation.
- Help choristers feel organized about their time, money, and belongings. This means being aware of the daily schedule. Get to buses and meals on time and supervise “free time” of unstructured activities. Keep track of their spending, exchanging currency, or using prepaid travel cards.
- Some choristers have never been completely responsible for packing their own suitcase and keeping their belongings together. They may need help getting out of their rooms on schedule, especially the first few times. Plan to check the rooms (under beds, in drawers, and in bathrooms, etc.) **after** they have packed their luggage.
- Feel free to speak quietly and calmly to any chorister about small discipline issues, and especially to those in your chaperone group. Refer serious discipline problems to the director and/or choir assistant should this become necessary. Notify the choir assistant and/or director of any area where there would be a need for extra support or intervention.
- Be aware of social interactions and watch for individuals who may be shy or left out of the groups.
- Be available to choristers who may feel stressed from the pace or schedule, or may become “homesick”, feel faint, etc. In other words, be alert to any health problem along the way. Try to be discreetly aware so that intestinal irregularities do not become a problem.
- Encourage choristers to send cards and letters home.
- Notify the choir assistant if any room assignments need to be changed.
- Do not be afraid to offer suggestions in a positive manner. This is your tour, too and you are to have a good time, as well! We all want this to work.
- You are to be with the children **at all times** except for rehearsal. You are to escort the children to rehearsals, concerts, excursions, etc. You will have free time when the children are in rehearsals.
- As the tour progresses, there will be various responsibilities for chaperones that arise; keep in mind that you may be called upon at any time for assistance with the children.
- Parents are to assist the staff in enforcing the rules detailed in the Chorister Guidelines.
- Choristers are not to use cell phones. Please do NOT allow your child or any other child to use your cell phone. Cell phones will be confiscated and returned when we arrive home.

Background checks: The ACC Board of Directors instituted a policy that ALL chaperones undergo a background check. This is for the safety and security of our children. Once a background check is performed, it covers the chaperone for three years.

Chaperone applications are good for one season. A new form will be required each season (or for a new event) even if your background check has already been performed. This is to ensure we have current contact information, etc.

I have read and understand the guidelines for touring with ACC. As a chaperone of the Appalachian Children's Chorus, I am aware of and agree to abide by the above guidelines while on tour.

Chaperone's Name (please print): _____

Chaperone's Child's Name: _____ Choir: _____

Traveling To: _____ Dates Traveling: _____

Chaperone's Signature

Date

This form MUST be returned before you leave on tour.

STATE LEGISLATION – SUSPECTED ABUSE/NEGLECT

Please be advised that West Virginia law requires staff of the Appalachian Children's Chorus (ACC) to notify law enforcement and/or the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources if a staff member or volunteer suspects or observes:

- A child being physically or sexually abused;
- Child neglect; and/or
- Conditions likely to lead to abuse or neglect.

Depending on the circumstances, ACC staff may or may not consult with and/or notify parent(s) of a child suspected to be abused/neglected. Rather, ACC staff will comply with all directives of the respective reporting agency as to notifications/consultation with a child's parent(s).