

The Arlington Children's Chorus
Member Handbook 2015-2016

The Arlington Children's Chorus (ACC) presents choral performances of distinction. Our goals are to foster the musical growth of our members; increase knowledge and appreciation of choral music in Arlington and surrounding communities; and help the public understand that exposure to high-quality musical arts is an essential element of a comprehensive education. The members of the ACC are elementary-through high school-aged children with a passion to serve their community through vocal music.

This handbook is distributed annually in searchable PDF format to parents of all current members of the ACC.

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Attendance:

Attendance at all rehearsals and concerts is required. Rehearsals are held on a weekly basis. The typical schedule is Tuesday evenings from 6:00 – 7:00 p.m. for the Dolce tier and from 7:00 – 8:30 p.m. for the Bel Canto tier. Additional rehearsals may be scheduled in advance of performances. These may be held on weekends or week nights in addition to the standard weekly rehearsals. Additional rehearsals may be held at sites other than the typical rehearsal venue. The Director will provide advance to all ACC families regarding additional rehearsal times and locations.

Please inform the Artistic Director via email or phone call prior to the rehearsal if an absence is necessary. Parents and choristers may email the Artistic Director (carr5130@cox.net) prior to noon on the day of rehearsal regarding an expected absence.

It is the responsibility of the absent chorister to find out what was covered during a missed rehearsal. If a chorister misses **three or more rehearsals** during a term, s/he may be asked to re-audition for the Artistic Director to demonstrate his/her knowledge of the music. If the music is not learned in a satisfactory manner, the chorister may be asked to withdraw from a particular performance.

Unless the Artistic Director has given specific permission, a missed dress (final) rehearsal will mean that the chorister may not participate in the upcoming performance. The dress rehearsal is a mandatory event where ALL choristers are required to attend. Non attendance of the dress rehearsal means they are not permitted to sing in the concert

Auditions:

The ACC is a treble-voiced chorus, open to all children and youth in the second grade and above living in Arlington, Virginia, and the Washington, DC-Metropolitan Area. Acceptance as a member of the chorus and placement in a specific choral tier is determined by audition with the Artistic Director. Auditions are by appointment and routinely held in June, September, and January. Specific dates are posted on the ACC website (www.arlingtonchildrenschorus.org).

Choral Tiers:

The ACC is composed of three choral tiers: the Dolce Chorus and the Bel Canto Chorus.

The **Dolces** are comprised of elementary school students in the second grade and above. These young singers focus on basic vocal production, music reading, solfeggio, and rudimentary rhythmic training. The repertoire includes predominantly arrangements in English with texts suitable for the age group. Singers are introduced to the concept of ensemble rather than solo singing. The Dolces appear in self-sponsored concerts and occasionally sing in

independent concerts when opportunities for their special talents arise. Students spend an average of one to three years in this chorus before moving to the Bel Canto Chorus.

The **Bel Canto Choristers** represent the ACC at regional and national events, as well as at special engagements with professional performing groups, including the National Symphony and the Wolf Trap Opera Company. Bel Cantos perform complex music that represents numerous styles and cultures in several foreign languages. These youngsters work to achieve superior sound as they become proficient in the highest level of artistic musicianship.

Each member of every chorus is expected to remain active and committed to the program throughout the entire season.

Choristers are invited back the following year, without audition, if they have met the expectations of the chorus during the previous year. This includes excellent discipline, deportment, participation in fundraising, and care of chorus music.

Communications:

- Email:
 - Artistic Director: Arlingtonchildrenschorus@gmail.com
 - President, ACC Board: Colleen_Holland@fws.gov
- Facebook: Arlington Children's Chorus
- Mailing address: PO Box 7724, Arlington, VA 22207
- ACC Office Phone: 703-531-1050
- Director's Phone: 703-328-9535
- Website: www.arlingtonchildrenschorus.org

Rehearsal notes and updates are sent via email every Thursday morning (no later than Friday) following the weekly rehearsal.

Our calendar is maintained on the chorus website under the **Schedules** tab. Notice of changes or updates to the calendar will be provided via email and posted on the website (with comments).

Deportment:

The ACC is a safe, open, and academically rich musical environment.

Choristers are expected to fully participate in all rehearsals and concerts. They are expected to contribute to a rising technical and artistic level throughout the academic year.

Membership Dues:

Membership dues for the current season are defined in the annual registration packet provided to choristers upon acceptance to the group for new members and as part of the paperwork

required for returning members. Payment by check is due in accordance with the dates in application packet received at the time of audition or re-enrollment.

Membership dues waivers and alternative payment plans for appropriate and approved reasons are granted by the ACC Board. All information provided is kept in strict confidence.

If a parent decides to terminate membership, there will be no refund of membership dues.

Music:

The music for the chorus is commonly derived from many traditions and will be performed in a variety of settings. It is essential that all choristers be willing to sing all selections.

Music and other materials issued at rehearsal are the property of the ACC and must be maintained in good condition. Appropriate markings in the music should be neat and must be written only in pencil at the Artistic Director's direction. Music and all other materials must be returned to the Artistic Director or secretary at the end of the season at the conclusion of the final performance.

At least one library binder with current music will be available to check out and use during rehearsal. If music is lost, replacement music is available for a fee of \$5.00 per piece.

Performances:

The dates of performances are posted on our website. Notification of changes or additions to the schedule will be sent to parents by email with as much advance notice as possible.

All choristers will be invited to sing at some events. However, other times only a representative group will be able to participate due to venue size, security measures, or other factors. The Artistic Director will choose the choristers for each performance.

Unless the Artistic Director has given specific permission, a missed dress (final) rehearsal will mean that the chorister may not participate in the upcoming performance. The dress rehearsal is a mandatory event where ALL choristers are required to attend. Non attendance of the dress rehearsal means they are not permitted to sing in the concert

Rehearsals:

Musical concepts such as melody, rhythm, harmony, timbre, dynamics, form, style and performance practice will be taught at each rehearsal. We will also work to develop musical skills such as singing techniques, theory, and sight reading.

Rehearsals are routinely held on Tuesday evenings unless otherwise noted in advance. The schedule is posted on our website.

- Dolce: 6:00-7:00 p.m.
- Bel Canto: 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Choristers should arrive 5-10 minutes before the beginning of rehearsal and sign themselves in. Sign in does not require the presence of a parent or other adult.

Choristers should bring a sharpened pencil with eraser, a water bottle, and their music binder. Electronic devices, other than a cell phone, which must be silenced during rehearsal, should not be brought to rehearsals.

An emergency contact file is kept onsite at all times. Only individuals specifically authorized by the Board of Directors (for example, the Parent on Duty) have access to this information.

Choristers may sign themselves in, but must be signed out by a parent/guardian (including a carpool driver or other chaperone). Choristers will not be released from a rehearsal until a parent/guardian has come in to the building to pick up the chorister. Arrangements for choristers to arrive early or stay late must be made in advance with the Artistic Director or secretary.

In the event of inclement weather, we will notify parents as soon as possible via email, the ACC FaceBook page and website, and on WTOP. If Arlington County schools are closed, or if after-school activities are cancelled, then rehearsal will be cancelled. In addition, ACC may cancel practice due to inclement weather even if the school system does not cancel evening activities.

Uniforms:

The ACC has a standard uniform for both girls and boys. All uniform pieces must be ordered or purchased by the first Tuesday in October. Parents will be responsible for acquiring the proper uniforms for their children. Information about the uniforms will be at **attachment A** of this handbook.

Casual Uniform for boys and girls:

White polo shirt and khaki shorts, white socks, and white tennis shoes.

- Formal Concert Uniform for boys:
 - Black Dress Trousers
 - White tuxedo shirt and white undershirt
 - Black cummerbund and bow tie

- Black socks and black dress shoes
- All boy items except shoes are available at Burlington Coat Factory, Sears, JC Penny, Macy's.
- Formal Concert Uniform for girls:
 - Black sweetheart neckline blouse*
 - Black elastic-waist skirt, hemmed to ankle length*
 - Black stockings (opaque)
 - Black closed-toe flat or low heel dress shoes

* Please note these are special order items; Attachment A has all the order information for the girls concert uniform. <http://www.concertattire.com/>

Choristers must wear their hair pulled back neatly from the face and must not wear any jewelry, perfume, or cologne.

Volunteering and Fundraising:

The ACC is a 501c(3) organization. We strive to keep membership dues as low as possible while continuing to provide the choristers and the community with opportunities to share in the delight of performing and listening to choral music at its best. To this end, each family should volunteer and/or fundraise to the best of their ability.

We ask that each family contribute a minimum of 20 (10 hours per semester) hours throughout the season.

The ACC needs your support. Below are some ways you may help us in our mission!

- Direct monetary contributions:
Direct monetary contributions may be mailed to our Post Office Box, which is listed on page 2 of this handbook. Upon request, an end of year statement acknowledging contributions made will be sent for tax purposes.
- General Support:
We are seeking assistance in managing performance publicity, the music library, and other ad hoc needs as the season progresses.
- Grant finding/writing:
We ask all parents to help the ACC identify potential grant and donor dollars. We also need several people who can help prepare and submit grant applications.

- Note-taker: We need several rotating note-takers per tier each season. This is a straight-forward task. Sit in on your chorister's rehearsal. Write down Mr. Carr's words of wisdom and homework assignments. Type and email the notes to the Artistic Director by early Wednesday morning for inclusion in the weekly email update.
- Set up duty (Dolce)
 - Arrive 15 minutes early to ensure that the room is set up and ready. We need to set up the piano, chairs, music stands, and any other materials.
- Parent on Duty (POD): We need approximately six rotating PODs per tier per season

The Dolce POD will:

- Arrive 10 minutes early to begin the sign-in process
- Ensure each Dolce is signed in
- Ensure that any Dolce who needs to be excused from the room for any reason is accompanied by an adult
- Stay in the room during practice to distribute pencils and other materials, as needed
- Place any paperwork received in the registrar's envelope
- Remain until the last Dolce has been signed out by a parent or guardian (such as a carpool driver) or a transfer of responsibility has been made to the Bel Canto POD.

The Bel Canto POD will:

- Arrive 10 minutes early to ensure that the Bel Canto choristers enter the room quietly upon arrival
 - Ensure each Bel Canto is signed in
 - Ensure that any Bel Canto who needs to be excused from the room for any reason is accompanied by an adult
 - Stay in the room during practice to distribute pencils and other materials as needed
 - Place any paperwork received in the registrar's envelope
 - Remain until the last Bel Canto has been signed out by a parent or guardian (such as a carpool driver).
 - Choristers who have a driver's license and have driven themselves to rehearsal may sign themselves out
- Breakdown (Bel Canto)
 - Arrive at least 10 minutes before the end of rehearsal
 - Help put supplies and equipment back in the supply closet
 - Rehearsal Volunteer Coordinator
 - Coordinates the PODs, note-takers, and any other assistance needed on a weekly basis using the Volunteer Spot website
 - Reports the volunteer status to the Artistic Director by noon each Tuesday

- Puts in place a back-up plan in case of absence or cancellation
- Uniform Coordinator
Serves as a FAQ person for all things Uniforms.
- Valentine-grams Fundraiser
Volunteer choristers from all tiers gather on a Saturday in February to deliver singing Valentine-grams via telephone to recipients of your choice. In previous years, ACC has charged \$5.00 for each Valentine-gram.

*Thank you in advance for your participation and support of the ACC.
We look forward to enjoying a very enriching musical year with our ACC families!*

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have questions or need clarification on any information contained herein.

The Arlington Children's Chorus is partially supported by the Virginia Commission for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts.



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BUST	30 - 33	33 - 36	36 - 39	39 - 42	42 - 45	45 - 48	48 - 52	52 - 56
WAIST	23 - 26	26 - 29	29 - 32	32 - 35	35 - 38	38 - 41	41 - 45	45 - 49
HIPS	32 - 35	35 - 38	38 - 41	41 - 44	44 - 47	47 - 50	50 - 54	54 - 58

For shaded area: sizes 2XL and 3XL add \$5.00 and for 4XL add \$10.00. Add an additional \$16.00 for extra long sizes.

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BUST	22 - 24.5	24.5 - 27	27 - 29.5	29.5 - 32
WAIST	20 - 22.5	22.5 - 25	25 - 27.5	27.5 - 30
HIPS	25 - 27.5	27.5 - 30	30 - 32.5	32.5 - 35
HEIGHT	up to 4'5"	up to 4'8"	up to 4'11"	up to 5'3"

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Description Description

GALS - CHART C								
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BUST	30 - 33	33 - 36	36 - 39	39 - 42	42 - 45	45 - 48	48 - 52	52 - 56
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HIPS	32 - 35	35 - 38	38 - 41	41 - 44	44 - 47	47 - 50	50 - 54	54 - 58

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YOUTH GALS - CHART E				
SIZE	X-SMALL	SMALL	MEDIUM	LARGE
BUST	22 - 24.5	24.5 - 27	27 - 29.5	29.5 - 32
WAIST	20 - 22.5	22.5 - 25	25 - 27.5	27.5 - 30
HIPS	25 - 27.5	27.5 - 30	30 - 32.5	32.5 - 35
HEIGHT	up to 4'5"	up to 4'8"	up to 4'11"	up to 5'3"

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