



The Arlington Children's Chorus Member Handbook (2018-2019 Season)

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 children from elementary through high school with a passion to serve their community through vocal music.

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

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.

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Communications

- **Email:** Artistic Director and ACC Board President: Arlingtonchildrenschorus@gmail.com
(This account is checked by both Kevin Carr and the current board president.)
Treasurer: ACchorusTreasurer@gmail.com
- **Mailing address:** PO Box 7724, Arlington, VA 22207
- **Artistic Director's Cell Phone:** 703-328-9535
- **Website:** www.arlingtonchildrenschorus.org

Rehearsal notes and updates are sent via email following the weekly rehearsal. The Chorister is responsible for knowing and doing the weekly homework.

Our **calendar** is maintained on the chorus website (www.arlingtonchildrenschorus.org). Notice of changes or updates to the calendar will be provided via email and posted on the website.

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 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 \$30 per notebook.

Choral Tiers

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

The Dolce Chorus is 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 another level.

The Troubadour Chorus is the ACC's intermediate level tier. Building on skills acquired in the Dolce Chorus or another choral group, children are introduced to a higher level of musical and vocal development and learn music featuring more sophisticated musical structure, texts, voicing, and languages. The Troubadour Chorus can expect to perform four or more times during the year including ACC's schedule of seasonal concerts and other community events. On occasion, individual students may be called upon to perform with the Bel Canto Chorus in major orchestral, operatic, and choral productions.

The Bel Canto Chorus represents the ACC at regional and national events as well as at special engagements with professional performing groups including the National Symphony and the Washington Ballet. Bel Cantos perform complex music that represents numerous styles and cultures in several foreign languages. These singers 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, professional behavior, participation in fundraising, and care of chorus music.

Auditions

The ACC is a treble-voiced chorus, open to all children and youth in the second grade and above living in Arlington, VA, and the Washington D.C 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).

Non-Discrimination

ACC does not discriminate with regard to race, gender, creed, ethnicity, or sexual orientation in the hiring of staff or selection of singers. Musical factors may be a factor in decision making.

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 Wednesday evenings unless otherwise noted in advance.

Standard Rehearsals: Wednesdays	
Dolce & Troubadour tiers	6–7 p.m.
Bel Canto tier	7–8:15 p.m.
Arlington Forest United Methodist Church 4701 Arlington Boulevard, Arlington, VA 22203	

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

Choristers should bring a sharpened pencil with eraser, a water bottle, and their music binder to rehearsal. 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 on site at all times. Only individuals specifically authorized by the Board of Directors (for example, the Parent on Duty) have access to this information.

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.

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.

At some events, all choristers will be invited to sing. At 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 that ALL choristers are required to attend. Non attendance of the dress rehearsal means they are not permitted to sing in the concert.

Attendance

Occasional absences are assumed for illness and/or irreconcilable schedule conflicts during the semester. However, to build a cohesive choral ensemble, it is necessary for all the singers to be present. Individuals with excessive absences – even if for good reasons – undermine the ensemble and may be asked to sit out the concert for which those rehearsals were preparation. When the singer is prepared to attend regularly, he or she can be re-admitted to the chorus.

Promptness Is Essential. Please be **On Time** to each rehearsal and event.

If you know you will be absent or late to a rehearsal or event, email arlingtonchildrenschorus@gmail.com.

Frequent absences may result in the child being 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 an upcoming performance.

Winter and Spring concerts: Attendance at all rehearsals and ACC Winter and Spring concerts is required.

Standard Rehearsals: Wednesdays	
Dolce & Troubadour tiers	6–7 p.m.
Bel Canto tier	7–8:15 p.m.
Arlington Forest United Methodist Church 4701 Arlington Boulevard, Arlington, VA 22203	

Additional rehearsals may be scheduled in advance of performances. These rehearsals may be on weekends or weeknights in addition to the standard weekly rehearsals. Additional rehearsals may be held at sites other than the typical rehearsal venue. The Artistic Director will provide advance notice to all ACC families regarding additional rehearsal times and locations.

Parents and choristers should inform the Artistic Director via email (arlingtonchildrenschorus@gmail.com) prior to rehearsal regarding an expected absence or early departure.

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 that ALL choristers are required to attend. Non attendance of the dress rehearsal means the child is not permitted to sing in the concert.

It is the responsibility of the absent chorister to find out what was covered during a missed rehearsal.

Code of Conduct

Chorus members are expected to be on their best behavior at all times, thus requiring no need for disciplinary measures. If a child has a problem, the Director will discuss it with the individual and will contact a parent only if the problem persists. Continued disruption of any nature, whether by student or parents, that is deemed detrimental to the mission of ACC, constitutes grounds for dismissal.

Rehearsal notes and updates are sent via email following the weekly rehearsal. The Chorister is responsible for knowing and doing the weekly homework.

To ensure the safety and welfare of all participants at ACC, we require every member to follow our ACC Code of Conduct during all ACC activities to ensure the highest respect and courtesy towards one another. Violating the Code of Conduct can result in the immediate disciplinary action at the discretion of the Artistic Director and/or board, up to and including dismissal.

- Appropriate attire must be worn when attending an ACC function. Vulgar language or images on clothing is not appropriate.
- Bullying is prohibited. Bullying is intentionally aggressive behavior including verbal, physical, social, relational, or emotional abuse or a combination of these. Bullying can consist of one person bullying another, a group of people ganging up against one lone person, or one group of people targeting another group.
- Removal or destruction of ACC property or the property of someone else without his or her prior consent constitutes theft of property.
- Lack of respect to staff, parents or other members of the chorus is not acceptable and will result in suspension and/or termination of membership privileges.

Membership Dues

Membership dues for the current season are as follows:

Membership Dues	
Whole Year (<i>Sept 2018-May 2019</i>)	
Early Bird special: Postmarked by September 19 th , 2018	\$ 600*
After September 19 th , 2018	\$ 700*
Spring Semester (<i>Jan-May, 2019</i>)	\$ 400*
Note: * Payment by PayPal includes an additional fee.	

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

Tuition Assistance (Financial Aid)

For alternative payment plans, contact the Treasurer (ACchorusTreasurer@gmail.com) or a Board Member (arlingtonchildrenschorus@gmail.com). Waivers of membership dues and alternative payment plans for appropriate, approved reasons are granted by the ACC Board. All information provided is kept in strict confidence. ACC will help qualified families on a sliding scale ranging from partial to full tuition assistance and may be limited based on available resources.

To request assistance, the parent or legal guardian should submit a letter to the Artistic Director asking for financial assistance prior to or at the time of registration. Briefly describe the financial circumstances and reduction amount requested, along with any pertinent documentation.

A request is valid for one year only. A written request is required for each year. Select members of the ACC Board and the Artistic Director will review the applications and, in each case, make a determination together based on ACC's financial resources. The ACC Board President will inform each family in writing of the reviewing committee's determination.

Upon receipt of tuition assistance, the child will be expected to fully participate at all rehearsals, required concerts, and most other performances. If these requirements are not met, ACC has the right to collect tuition in the amount of the financial assistance granted and all fees associated with the administration of recovery of tuition.

Volunteering and Fundraising (Parent Involvement)

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. Parents are vital to success of ACC. Their most important duty is to have their child at every rehearsal and performance on time and fully prepared.

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

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

Donations: Direct monetary contributions may be mailed to us at Arlington Children's Chorus, PO Box 7724, Arlington, VA 22207. An end of year tax statement will be sent upon request.

General Support: We need assistance managing the music library, bake sale donations, volunteer sign-ups, and other general support.

Grant finding and writing: Help us identify potential grant and donor opportunities. We also need people to help prepare and submit grant applications.

Marketing and Communications: Help us get the word out about auditions and performances. We need people to help with marketing, communication, and graphic design of our programs and flyers.

Parents on Duty (PODs): We need several parents at each rehearsal to assist with arrivals and departures, help keep children secure, and take notes on the rehearsal. ***Please sign up using the Parent Volunteer link in the Member Resources section of the ACC website.*** We also seek Parents on Duty for our performances using a signup link typically distributed by email. See the following handbook section for Parent on Duty responsibilities.

Valentine-gram Coordinator and Volunteers: Volunteer choristers from all tiers gather on a weekend date in February to deliver singing Valentine-grams via telephone. In previous years, ACC has charged \$5 for each Valentine-gram. We need parents to help children sell Valentine-grams to neighbors, teachers, relatives, and friends – anyone looking for a unique Valentine present to give. We also need parents to assist by making calls with their cell-phones on the delivery day: This is an event where many helpers make things go quickly and smoothly. We need a coordinator early in the new year. A call for parent phone delivery helpers will go out closer to the date.

Website Upkeep: We use our website to keep families of choristers informed and to reach potential choristers, audience members, and groups seeking performances. Please help us keep it current, attractive, and user-friendly.

To volunteer, please email arlingtonchildrenschorus@gmail.com or speak to a board member.

Parent on Duty (POD) Responsibilities

Dolce and Troubadour weekly rehearsals:

- PODs arrive by 5:45 p.m.
- Begin the sign-in process by 5:50 p.m.
- Ensure each chorister is signed in.
- One POD should stay near the chorus during practice.
- One POD in the room should help maintain order during rehearsal as asked by the attending Director. The POD may need to remove a chorister from the practicing group if asked by the attending Director.
- Ensure that any chorister excused from the room is accompanied by an adult.
- Remain until the last Dolce or Troubadour has been signed out by a parent or guardian (such as a carpool driver) or responsibility has been transferred to a Bel Canto POD.

Bel Canto weekly rehearsals:

- PODs arrive by 6:45 p.m.
- Begin the sign-in process by 6:50 p.m.
- Ensure each Bel Canto is signed in.
- Ensure that arriving Bel Canto choristers wait quietly without disturbing practice.
- Stay with any Dolce or Troubadour chorister not collected by 7:15.
- Ensure that any chorister excused from the room is accompanied by an adult.
- One POD should stay near the chorus during practice.
- One POD in the room should help maintain order during rehearsal as asked by the attending Director. The POD may need to remove a chorister from the practicing group if asked by the attending Director.
- Remain until the last chorister has been signed out by a parent or guardian (such as a carpool driver). **Note:** Choristers who have a driver's license and have driven themselves to rehearsal may sign themselves out.

Uniforms (concertattire.com)

The ACC has a standard uniform for both girls and boys. All uniform pieces must be ordered or purchased by the first Wednesday in October. Parents will be responsible for acquiring the proper uniforms for their children. **Please note:** these items should be ordered as soon as possible.

- **Formal Concert Uniform for boys:** (concertattire.com)
 - 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 Penney's, and Macy's.*
- **Formal Concert Uniform for girls:** (concertattire.com)
 - Black sweetheart neckline blouse* (Item 2203)
 - Black elastic-waist skirt, hemmed to ankle length* (Item 2220)
 - Black stockings (opaque)
 - Black closed-toe flat or low heel dress shoes

Information about uniforms is on the last page of this handbook.

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

Ordering and Size Information for Uniforms concertattire.com

**2203:
Daphne Short-Sleeve Sweetheart Neckline Blouse**

Short-sleeve sweetheart neck pullover in easy-care matte jersey stretch knit. Machine washable.

Product Code: 2203y or 2203



**2220:
Tatiana Floor-Length Concert Skirt**

Wrinkle resistant, easy-care matte jersey stretch knit with elastic waist.

Product Code: 2220y or 2220



GALS – CHART C								
SIZE	X-SMALL (0/2)	SMALL (4/6)	MEDIUM (8/10)	LARGE (12/14)	XL (16/18)	2XL (20/22)	3XL (24/26)	4X (28/30)
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.

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"