



**Alaska Youth Choir
2018-2019
Membership Handbook**

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Vision

Alaska Youth Choir (AYC) enriches children's lives and advances the art of choral music through vocal artistry, musical experience, and self-pride, representing Alaska as youth ambassadors of its artistic future.

Mission

The Mission of Alaska Youth Choir is to develop, nurture, and encourage a life-long learning, enjoyment, and love of music through choral singing for all youth ages 6 and up in the community of Juneau.

Goals of the choir are to:

- Provide a choral music program of excellence that includes vocal training, ear training, sight singing, theory, music history, varied repertoire and performances.
- Build self-esteem and strengthen confidence through singing in a positive and supportive environment.
- Provide opportunities for youth to create beauty, explore their humanity, and find the source of artistry within them.
- Broaden young peoples' view of the world's diversity, build community, and promote inclusion through exposure to music from different cultures, time periods and styles.
- Support and supplement the music program offered in the Juneau School District.
- Perform choral music with school and community choirs, instrumental groups and vocal soloists.
- Provide opportunities for youth to serve in the community of Juneau through performing music concerts.
- Participate in local, national, and international choral festivals to broaden music education and experience.
- Be ambassadors for Alaska and promote its cultural diversity when performing at national and international choral events.
- Host children's choirs from other states and countries.

The Alaska Youth Choir is a non-profit, 501(c)(3), tax exempt, Alaska corporation governed by a Board of Directors.

Chorister Membership Requirements

Youth, ages 6 years and up, are eligible for membership in AYC. Recruitment and auditions will occur annually (and may occur semi-annually). The Music Director looks for love of singing, natural ability, a positive attitude, and a cooperative demeanor. AYC will attempt to work with families of all interested children, but cannot guarantee that full accommodations can be made.

Choir Year

The choir year runs concurrent with the school year in Juneau, Alaska. The annual performance tour may take place in the summer or at other times of the year depending on tour destination and other factors.

AYC Structure

Board of Directors

AYC is governed by a Board of Directors that meet once a month to oversee and administer the business of AYC pursuant to the Alaska State Statutes 10.20, the AYC Articles of Incorporation and AYC Bylaws. Positions on the Board include President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and additional members as needed. The Business Administrator and Music Director are ex-officio members of the Board. The Board will be made up of a diverse membership to include parents and community members.

Staff

AYC staff is made up of the Music Director, Business Administrator, and Accompanists.

Choir Structure

Preparatory Choir

The Preparatory Choir is generally made up of choristers ages six through eight years old. At this level choristers learn the basic foundation for healthy singing, which includes good posture, proper breathing technique and use of the entire vocal range with emphasis on the development of the head voice. Advancement to the next level is determined by successful mastery of the musical requirements below in addition to commitment and maturity.

- Bel Canto vocal production with emphasis on vowel placement, and freedom and beauty of tone color.
- In tune unison and two-part singing.
- Repertoire to include masterworks from all periods of music history, art songs, folk song, spirituals, gospel and jazz.
- Introduction to languages to include Latin and possibly one or two others.
- Recognize and clap simple rhythms.
- Sight read simple intervals to include major second, major third, perfect fourth and perfect fifth.

Intermediate Choir

The Intermediate Choir is generally made up of choristers ages nine through eleven. Advancement to the next level is determined by successful mastery of the musical requirements at this level in addition to commitment and maturity.

- Bel Canto vocal production with emphasis on vowel placement, and freedom and beauty of tone color.
- Repertoire to include masterworks from all periods of music history, art songs, folk songs, spirituals, gospel and jazz.
- Languages to include Latin, German, French, Hebrew and possibly one or two others.
- Recognize and clap rhythms dotted half, dotted quarters, single eighth and syncopa.
- Sight read letter note names and major scales; major and minor intervals.
- Sing comfortably in two parts and begin to achieve success in three parts.
- Based on skill and maturity level, may be invited to tour with the Advanced Choir.

Advanced Choir

The Advanced Choir is generally made up of choristers ages twelve and up.

- Bel Canto vocal production with emphasis on vowel placement, and freedom and beauty of tone.
- Repertoire to include masterworks from all periods of music history, art songs, folk songs, spirituals, gospel and jazz.
- Languages to include Latin, German, French, Hebrew, Italian, Spanish, Russian.
- Recognize and clap rhythms sixteenths, triplets and dotted eighths.
- Sight read intervals 4ths and 5ths, order of sharps/flats; and various key signatures.
- Sing comfortably in two and three parts and recognize major and minor triads.
- Participate in the annual choir tour.

Choir structure will be adjusted based on enrollment each Season.

***Note:** Students will be assigned in respective choir levels based on audition, year-end evaluation or placement by the director.

Performance, Rehearsal, and Attendance Policies

Rehearsals

AYC holds rehearsals weekly and extra rehearsals are scheduled prior to performances. Transportation to and from choir activities is the responsibility of the parent. Membership rosters are available to assist with ride sharing. **Choristers should arrive at rehearsals 10 minutes prior to starting time, but no earlier. Parents will be responsible for providing adult supervision for early arrivers.** Choristers must be picked up promptly after rehearsal.

Choristers will wear modest clothing at all rehearsals. No spaghetti straps, plunging necklines, jeans/pants with holes, or revealing clothing is allowed.

AYC may hold rehearsals when schools are closed on holidays or in-service days (please refer to AYC calendar). If rehearsals are cancelled for any reason (i.e. inclement weather), AYC will attempt to notify choristers via e-mail, telephone and Facebook. AYC's attendance policy applies to all additional scheduled rehearsals.

Performance

If a chorister misses rehearsals or dress rehearsals his/her participation in performances will be at the discretion of the Music Director. Choristers will arrive at performance locations 60 minutes before concert time or as otherwise directed.

Attendance

Success of AYC is dependent on consistent attendance by choristers. AYC expects that attendance at all rehearsals and performances will be a priority. AYC requests that parents call the Business Administrator or email alaskayouthchoir@gmail.com at least one day in advance of a planned absence.

In the case of an illness or family emergency, parents will call or email the Business Administrator in advance to report the reason for the missed rehearsal or performance.

If a chorister reaches three absences for other than illness or family emergency in a three-month period, the Business Administrator will send a letter home indicating that the limit of missed rehearsals has been reached. To remain in the choir, the chorister and the family will meet with the Music Director. A determination of readiness and participation in performances will be at the discretion of the Music Director.

Tardiness

If a chorister arrives late to rehearsal by five minutes or more or leaves the choir rehearsal early without permission, then this is counted as a "tardy." Three tardies are equivalent to one unexcused absence.

Choristers or their parents will arrange for excused tardies or early dismissals by calling or emailing the Business Administrator before rehearsal, or talking with the Music Director.

Music

AYC will provide each chorister with music throughout the choir year to be returned at the end of each semester. Choristers will keep music in good condition. Choristers will keep a No. 2 pencil with an eraser with

their music folder.

All music is the property of AYC. Each chorister is responsible for his or her music. Music must be returned in good condition at the end of the choir season. Choristers who fail to return music in good condition will pay a replacement fee (fee varies).

Tuition, Expenses, and Refunds

Please refer to Tuition Agreement for specific tuition and expense information.

AYC tuition is on a graduated scale for the Preparatory, Intermediate, and Advanced choirs to reflect differences in the amount of instructional time and performance opportunities available for each choir.

Choristers are also responsible for purchasing certain items that are part of the AYC uniform (see the Uniforms section for more details) and for providing items that are necessary for rehearsals (i.e. water bottle).

Families with more than one child in AYC pay full tuition for the first child and receive a \$50 discount on total due for each additional child enrolled in the choir.

Each family's share of tuition is due per the guidelines outlined in the "Tuition Agreement."

Late payments will incur a fee of 10% of the balance due per month. In the event that a family misses two scheduled tuition payments, the AYC chorister will not be able to participate in rehearsals or performances until back in good financial standing with the choir. A letter will be mailed to the family as notification. Any questions regarding tuition payment should be directed to the Business Administrator.

Refund Policy

If a chorister has to withdraw it must be done in writing to the Business Administrator. The refund policy will be as follows (with 1st rehearsal being counted as the 1st day). If written withdrawal is received within:

- 10 days of the 1st rehearsal then 100% on the Tuition Agreement Amount for the chorister will be refunded minus a \$50 administrative Fee.
- 20 days of the 1st rehearsal then 75% on the Tuition Agreement Amount for the chorister will be refunded minus a \$50 administrative Fee.
- 30 days of the 1st rehearsal then 50% on the Tuition Agreement Amount for the chorister will be refunded minus a \$50 administrative Fee.

*The AYC depends on reliable and timely tuition payments. The Refund Policy is structured in such a way that payment may be further due depending on the day of withdrawal and payments made. AYC will not refund any tuition after the 30th day.

Financial Aid

For families needing assistance with choir costs, there are four potential sources of financial aid.

1. The Grace Akiyama AYC Scholarship Fund offers full or partial tuition scholarships. Applicants are required to pay tuition due or make other payment arrangements with the Business Administrator if Scholarships have not been determined by 1st payment due date. Tuition amounts paid will be reimbursed to the applicant upon approved disbursement of any scholarship monies. Please see the Alaska Youth Choir Grace T. Akiyama Scholarship Application Form for more details and due date.

2. The City and Borough of Juneau Parks and Recreation Department provides Youth Activity Grants. The CBJ application must be sent directly to the city.
3. Juneau Arts & Humanities Council Student Scholarship Awards are available for youth ages 13 and up.
4. Some programs for home-schooled children will cover AYC costs as part of the child's curriculum; please check with your home school administrator.

Uniforms

A **Uniform Guide** is available at the Parent Orientation Meeting and on AYC's website at www.alaskayouthchoir.com/uniform-information.html.

There are some used AYC polo uniform shirts for rent depending on availability. There is a required rental of the AYC black formal dress uniforms for advance choir. Please see Uniform Rental Form for rental fees.

New Uniforms need to be purchased through Lands' End Uniform Store (www.landsend.com/school or 800-356-444) using preferred school number 9001-2198-9.

Please see Uniform Coordinator to see what uniforms are available for rent and for other uniform related questions.

Grooming Standards

Girls:

- Hair will be neatly groomed off the face either secured with black hairpins, a black headband. If hair is of suitable length, French-braiding is preferred.
- No jewelry or wristwatches will be worn with the exception of small stud earrings
- No makeup will be worn with the exception of light mascara and clear or light pink lip gloss.
- No nail polish will be worn with the exception of clear or light pink in color.
- Underclothes will be comfortable and not shown.
- Long dresses will be neatly hemmed to two inches from the floor when worn with dress shoes.
- **Black** tights/stockings will be worn.

Boys:

- Hair will be neatly groomed and off the face.
- No jewelry or wristwatches.

General:

- All shirts will be tucked into pants or skirts and a black belt will be worn.
- Good hygiene is expected at rehearsals, performances, and tours.

Parent Membership and Participation

The success of AYC depends on parental involvement.

All parents are also voting members of the Alaska Youth Choir. There are numerous duties that parent members can do for Alaska Youth Choir to be successful. We ask parents/guardians to volunteer during the year to assist with choir events and activities. (Volunteer requests are sent out via Signup.com)

Examples of parent member duties include:

- Helping to collect and file sheet music.
- Serving as parent monitors during rehearsals or concerts.
- Assisting with set-up or technical aspects of concerts.
- Assisting with post-concert receptions.
- Posting AYC fliers around town.
- Serving on the Board of Directors of AYC.

General Fundraising

Choristers and their families will support and participate in fundraising events (bake sales, car washes, advertising sales, raffle sales, etc.).

The annual raffle is our largest fundraiser, and supports general operations of the choir and enables tuitions costs to remain as low as possible. Each AYC member is required to fundraise \$200 in raffle ticket sales. Should an AYC member opt out of this fundraising requirement, \$200 will be billed to the chorister's account to meet general operation costs of the choir.

Choristers may sell advertisements for the AYC Spring Program. Instructions and more information for ad sales will be distributed in February.

Tour

Touring Choristers

Alaska Youth Choir will strive to provide touring opportunities outside of Juneau each year. AYC will strive to take extended tours in the summer following the regular choir season. Advanced Choir members are eligible to travel. Intermediate Choir members may be eligible to travel by invitation.

Tour Fundraising

Although AYC will schedule fundraising events, each chorister that is invited to tour will be responsible for tour expenses. AYC will also apply for grants to help with tour expenses. The City and Borough of Juneau's Youth Activities Grant and Juneau Arts and Humanities Council have made tour contributions in the past.

Payment for the tour must be made in accordance with the payment schedule established for the tour, or the chorister will not travel.

If a chorister and his/her family choose not to participate in these fundraisers, the family will be responsible for the entire expense of sending the chorister on tour. Tour fundraisers sponsored by AYC may include but are not limited to: Spring Concert Program ad sales and the Spring Tour Dinner.

Discipline Policy

Choristers will be put on probation, suspended, or expelled from the AYC for the following:

1. Using tobacco, alcohol, or drugs at any time during the choir year whether or not associated with AYC activities.
2. Using profane language or obscene gestures.
3. Exhibiting excessive romantic behavior during any choir activity.
4. Any behavior unbecoming to the Alaska Youth Choir.

5. Uncooperative behavior while performing, representing the AYC, or at rehearsals.

A written notice will be sent to the parents when any of the above occurs or an impending enforcement of these rules is anticipated. Parents will have the opportunity to discuss the incident before the Board of Directors makes an official decision.

Communications

Take Note Newsletter:

AYC will email the Take Note newsletter to parents monthly. Parents should read the Take Note newsletter, as it is the primary means of communication regarding upcoming AYC rehearsals and events. Other important events may be emailed as needed.

Web Page and e-mail:

You may access information about AYC through our website: www.alaskayouthchoir.com.
AYC's email address is alaskayouthchoir@gmail.com.

Please check your email regularly.

AYC frequently sends updates regarding rehearsal and event information via email, but if changes are time sensitive, phone or text communication will be attempted as well.

Social Media:

Facebook - AYC maintains a Facebook page and regularly posts events and other information there. Please feel free to share these events on your own Facebook page as a way to help us spread the word about upcoming AYC events. Search for us @AlaskaYouthChoir.

Instagram:

You can find us at @AlaskaYouthChoir feel free to tag us in your choir photos with #AlaskaYouthChoir