



**Milwaukee**  
**Children's Choir**  
*Building Noteworthy Character*

# CHORISTER HANDBOOK

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The Milwaukee Children's Choir is a private, non-profit community organization serving Greater Milwaukee since 1994. The entire contents of this handbook is for Milwaukee Children's Choir use only.

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## **Welcome to Milwaukee Children's Choir!**

Milwaukee Children's Choir is a community program that offers children the opportunity to participate in extraordinary world-class experiences. The Choir works to bring out the best in the young people served by our programs. Choir members learn about great music and the transforming power of musical expression by singing well. Through fine repertoire, vocal and musical skills, excellent performances, outstanding opportunities, and a positive learning environment, choir members develop life-long values which enhance their lives.

This handbook contains the information you should know as you enroll your child in the Choir program.

## **Mission**

Milwaukee Children's Choir provides children, ages 4-18, with exceptional choral music education and performance experiences that foster creativity, personal expression, and social growth.

## **Guiding Principles**

Milwaukee Children's Choir is a performing arts organization that prides itself on artistic excellence and audience-pleasing performances. But as a children's choir, Milwaukee Children's Choir is about much more. It fosters life-long values including the love of music; the pursuit of excellence; self-discipline and teamwork; self-expression and self-confidence; and a greater understanding of oneself, the world and its people.

Concert seasons and the rehearsals and performances that become part of those seasons are structured to address the following elements:

### Overarching concepts:

Provide quality music education

Teach through performance

Learn through experience

Build Noteworthy Character

### Leads to:

Excellent music teachers using recognized/proven methods

All work leads to age-appropriate and enriching performance experiences

Provide a variety of enriching opportunities and experiences

The Choir teaches more than songs and focuses on the whole child

## **Program Overview**

Milwaukee Children's Choir is Southeastern Wisconsin's premier children's choir. It has programs for children ages 4 through 18. Rehearsals are educational, child centered, age appropriate, and fun, and teach not only music but also important life skills such as poise, self-confidence, self-discipline, focus, memory, problem solving, and teamwork.

## **Membership**

### **The Audition**

Admission into Milwaukee Children's Choir begins with a brief audition. Auditions are held throughout the year at selected schools and/or after a performance. Auditions may also be arranged by calling Milwaukee Children's Choir at 414.221.7040. The audition process is simple and only takes a few minutes. No preparation is necessary. Membership into the Songbirds Program (grades K4-K5) does not require an audition.

### **First Rehearsal**

Following a successful audition, the child and his or her family will be invited to visit and partake in a rehearsal. Parents will have an opportunity to visit with the conductor of the child's assigned choir before and after the rehearsal.

## Becoming A Chorister

After a successful first rehearsal, the child will be offered membership into Milwaukee Children's Choir. Although most children begin their enrollment in September, the Choir is able to integrate new choristers at periodic points throughout the season.

## Choral Structure

The choral structure is designed so that each child will receive the opportunity to train, sing, and perform with other students of their age grouping before entering the more frequently performing choirs. Rather than placing a student in a choir based solely upon their age or grade, this new structure blends a chorister's age, musical knowledge and abilities together so that each chorister can be placed at a level and ensemble where they will feel the most successful. This new structure also permits each child to "graduate" out of each choral level after only two years of participation at each level. This gives the children a great sense of accomplishment and ensures them that they are indeed growing in their knowledge and skill. Each level will also carry with it more opportunities for performances and other exciting experiences.

The choral structure is as follows:

*Each choir in the Preparatory Department and Training Department will have multiple rehearsal sites throughout the Greater Milwaukee area however each site will function as an independent choir, performing their own repertoire at concerts and other performances.*

Levels	Grades	General Description
<b>PRELUDE CHOIRS</b> <i>East Site: Milwaukee Youth Arts Center</i> <i>Tuesdays, 5:45 – 6:45 PM</i> <i>West Site: Mt. Carmel Lutheran Church</i> <i>Wednesdays, 4:45 – 5:45 PM</i>	1-2	This beginner level choral ensemble will advance each child's knowledge of choral singing and vocal techniques as well as musical theory. Repertoire will consist of primarily Unison and simple 2-part choral music. Performances will include recitals, annual concerts, holiday caroling and other small events.
<b>TRAINING CHOIRS</b> <i>East Site: Milwaukee Youth Arts Center</i> <i>Tuesdays, 5:30 – 7:00 PM</i> <i>West Site: Mt. Carmel Lutheran Church</i> <i>Wednesdays, 6:00 – 7:30 PM</i>	3-6	This intermediate level choral ensemble will continue to advance their knowledge of choral singing and vocal techniques as well as musical theory. Repertoire will consist of advanced unison works, advanced 2-part choral music, and simple 3-part works for young singers. Choristers will also be introduced to music in foreign languages. Performances will include recitals, annual concerts, holiday caroling, and 1-2 weekend tours within the area.
<b>RESIDENT CHOIRS</b> <i>Resident Choir East- Milwaukee Youth Arts Center</i> <i>Tuesday: 6:00 – 8:00 PM</i> <i>Resident Choir West- Mt. Carmel Lutheran Church</i> <i>Wednesdays: 6:00 – 8:00 PM</i>	5-8	This is the secondary training choir of the MCC program. This ensemble serves as a training choir for students in grades 5-8 who are first or second year students to MCC or for students who will find success with another year of training before entering the Performing Department. Performances include recitals, annual concerts, symphonic concerts, and tours throughout the state of Wisconsin and the Midwest USA. Repertoire consists of music in 3-4 parts and in foreign languages.
<b>VOICES OF ETERNA</b> <i>Rehearsals: Sundays 7:00 – 9:00 PM</i> <i>Tuesdays, 7:00 – 9:00 PM</i> <i>Site: Cathedral Church of All Saints, Milwaukee</i>	5-10	Voices of Eterna is the primary performing choir of the MCC program. This fully treble voiced ensemble serves as our primary touring ensemble; performing concerts throughout the world and in many children's choral festivals. The choir consists of students ages 11-15 (5 <sup>th</sup> -9 <sup>th</sup> grades and/or until the beginnings of the vocal expansion). The choir performs music of the highest caliber often in multiple parts and in foreign languages. Performances include annual concerts, symphonic performances, television/radio, national & international tours, etc.
<b>MILWAUKEE YOUTH CHORALE</b> <i>Rehearsals: Sundays, 6:00 – 8:00 PM</i> <i>Site: Cathedral Church of All Saints, Milwaukee</i>	9-12	Milwaukee Youth Chorale is the high school component of the MCC program. Choristers will be introduced to major works for SATB (mixed) choir and orchestra as well as other SATB choral works. MYC performs music of the highest caliber often in multiple parts and in foreign languages. Performances include annual concerts, symphonic performances, television/radio, national & international tours, etc.

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## Curriculum

The *VOICE FOR LIFE* curriculum is designed by the Royal School of Church Music and is utilized by choirs throughout the world. This program is specifically designed for choirs that meet only once or twice per week. As an all-inclusive vocal music education program, the *VOICE FOR LIFE* curriculum has four levels. Each level corresponds with a color: Light Blue, Dark Blue, Red, and Yellow. Within each level are four distinct learning modules which include: Module A: Learning the Voice Well, Module B: Musical Skills and Understanding, Module C: Repertoire and Module D: Belonging to the Choir. Each module contains learning targets. Here are a few examples of the learning targets within each module:

	<b>Module A: Using the Voice Well</b>	<b>Module B: Musical Skills &amp; Understanding</b>	<b>Module C: Repertoire</b>	<b>Module D: Belonging to the Choir</b>
<b>Prelude Choirs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understanding the need for regular practice</li> <li>Stand and sit with good posture</li> <li>Demonstrate good breath control</li> <li>Sing with focus and concentration</li> <li>Following the conductor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identification of their part in a score</li> <li>Identification of bar lines</li> <li>Understanding common music symbols</li> <li>Understand basic dynamic markings</li> <li>Match pitch of not played on piano</li> <li>Sing five notes up and down by step on solfege</li> <li>Identification of which two notes is higher or lower in pitch</li> <li>Sing back a simple one-bar melody with a five-note range</li> <li>Clap in time to a familiar song</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identification of composer</li> <li>Basic Text Analysis</li> <li>Make simple observations about the mood of the piece</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attend rehearsals regularly and punctually</li> <li>Make a positive contribution to the choir</li> <li>Meet all disciplinary targets assigned by choir trainer</li> </ul>
<b>Training Choirs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Prelude Level</li> <li>Posture</li> <li>Breath Management / Singing With Even Tone</li> <li>Singing octave: ascending &amp; descending</li> <li>Diction</li> <li>Group Vocal Technique</li> <li>Sing with clear diction, projection, even tone, and continuity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Prelude Level</li> <li>Pitch Names</li> <li>Basic note/rest values</li> <li>Concept of scales &amp; pattern of diatonic scale</li> <li>Accidentals</li> <li>Key signatures C, F, &amp; G Major</li> <li>Concept of measures &amp; simple time signatures</li> <li>Basic dynamic markings</li> <li>Melodic and Rhythmic Memory</li> <li>Meter Identification</li> <li>Sight-read simple rhythm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Prelude Level</li> <li>Make simple observations about the meaning of the text</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Prelude Level</li> <li>Being Focused and cooperative during rehearsals and concerts</li> <li>Understand that Choir is a team</li> <li>Meet all disciplinary targets assigned by the choir trainer.</li> </ul>

	between the notes of a phrase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sight-read a simple melody</li> </ul>		
<b>Resident Choirs &amp; Lake Country Children's Choir</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Training Choir Level</li> <li>Control Dynamics</li> <li>Appropriateness of where to breath in music</li> <li>Singing with Resonance</li> <li>Clear diction and vowels</li> <li>Sing short song, a cappella while maintaining good intonation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Training Choir Level</li> <li>Sixteenth Notes &amp; Dotted Notes</li> <li>Minor Scales: Natural, Harmonic, and Melodic</li> <li>Concept of Relative Minor key</li> <li>Key Signatures Up to 3 Sharps / Flats</li> <li>Characteristics/Names of Basic Intervals: Unison, octave, major/minor 3rds, perfect 4ths and 5ths.</li> <li>Performance Directions</li> <li>Identification of Triad as Major or Minor</li> <li>Looking at two bars of music: Name Key, pitch of first note, after hearing first chord- sing first note.</li> <li>Identify rhythmic pulse</li> <li>Sight-read rhythm</li> <li>Sight-read a melody with dotted values and leaps of 3rds, 4ths, 5ths.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Training Choir Level</li> <li>Explain mean of text</li> <li>Undertake simple musical analysis</li> <li>Find biographical information on composer</li> <li>Describe context of piece</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Training Choir Level</li> <li>Assist less experience singers in choir.</li> <li>Meet all disciplinary targets assigned by the choir trainer.</li> </ul>
<b>VOICES OF ETERNA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Resident Choir Level</li> <li>Mechanics of Breathing including stagger breathing practice &amp; concept</li> <li>Advanced mechanics of sound production</li> <li>Accessing different vocal registers</li> <li>Vowel Modification</li> <li>Further develop range and resonance</li> <li>Sing accurately and musical a short prepared solo</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Resident Choir Level</li> <li>Identify pitch names of treble and bass clefs and ledger lines</li> <li>Time values of notes/rests</li> <li>Key signatures up to five sharps/flats, major and minor</li> <li>Compound meter</li> <li>Characteristics/Names of major/minor/perfect intervals up to one octave &amp; sing them.</li> <li>Basic Analysis of music composition.</li> <li>Sight-sing a simple song demonstrating dynamics, phrasing, expression, pitch and rhythmic accuracy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Resident Choir Level</li> <li>Identify author and dates of text</li> <li>Source of Text</li> <li>Discuss relationship between music/text/mood using musical analysis</li> <li>Identify why the piece was composed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Resident Choir Level</li> <li>Lead others by example with attendance, singing, behavior.</li> <li>Understand difference between solo and choral singing</li> <li>Meet all disciplinary targets assigned by the choir trainer.</li> <li>Understand appropriate forms of communication, table manners, and appropriate manners for billet stays.</li> <li>Respect for all student leaders</li> <li>Successfully accomplish all job</li> </ul>

				tasks assigned by head choristers.
<b>Milwaukee Youth Chorale</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All ETERNA Level</li> <li>• Understanding posture can assist with physical &amp; mental readiness.</li> <li>• Sing without jaw/tongue tension</li> <li>• Blend vocal registers</li> <li>• Sing with variety of tone colors</li> <li>• Perform from memory contrasting pieces with a range over one octave demonstrating agility, good articulation, diction, good breath control, intonation and vocal color.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All ETERNA Level</li> <li>• Identify all major/minor key signatures</li> <li>• Difference between harmonic and melodic minor</li> <li>• Double sharps/flats</li> <li>• Characteristics of all intervals including diminished and augmented.</li> <li>• Name and know differences between primary and secondary chords; root, first, second positions</li> <li>• Function of cadence</li> <li>• Concept of Irregular Time Signatures</li> <li>• Concept of Modes</li> <li>• Sing any interval.</li> <li>• Sight Sing a moderately difficult piece which includes triplets, duplets, dotted notes, changing time signatures, syncopation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All ETERNA Level</li> <li>• Discuss Themes of text</li> <li>• Discuss Word Painting</li> <li>• Look at events surrounding composer's life; historical/political background, and connections to music</li> <li>• Discuss characteristics of musical period of composer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All ETERNA Level</li> <li>• Understanding balance between giving strong musical lead and blending with others.</li> <li>• Understand that Choir is team and running team is important: setting up rehearsal rooms, stage set up, collection music, etc.</li> <li>• Take responsibility for less experienced singer.</li> <li>• Meet all disciplinary targets assigned by the choir trainer.</li> </ul>

## “Exceptional Choral Music Instruction”

### Repertoire Selection

Milwaukee Children's Choir Directors:

1. choose a variety of repertoire representing historically significant and new compositions—repertoire that has stood the test of time as well as those that are new, interesting, and representative of world cultures.
2. choose repertoire with well written, age appropriate lyrics that will challenge the singers to interpret, relate to, and portray the poetry to an audience. Lyrics that children can connect with and spur thoughts and conversations of the world and how it affects them.
3. know the vocal range of the ensemble. They choose repertoire that sits in that range comfortably but also will occasionally challenge the choir to strengthen the high and low vocal registers as well.
4. make sure the accompaniment adds artistic merit to the work.
5. choose repertoire with educational value that strengthens musicianship skills, vocabulary, and historical exposure.
6. when possible, commission new works and allow singers the opportunity to meet and work with composers.

### Assessment

Milwaukee Children's Choir directors evaluate the quality of their choir's singing in both rehearsals and performance. Through consistent evaluation and critique, both directors and singers discuss the quality of their performance by analyzing their tone, intonation, balance, technique, interpretation, musical effect, diction, and general stage presence. They also analyze whether the performance demonstrates the historical context and style of the piece.

Singers are assessed on their musical skills during rehearsals and performances. All children are also given written assessments to assess their understanding of music literacy and theory. Parents will be given a progress report twice per year that will disclose information assessing their child's growth and participation in the Choir program. Parents will also be given a bi-annual choir report card from the director that will give information on how their specific choir is performing.

In addition to the music curriculum, all Milwaukee Children's Choir singers are assessed on their confidence, social skills and ability to work as a team during rehearsals, performances, and social activities. Signs that children and youth are fully engaged include good posture while singing, confident singing, watching the conductor, class participation, stage presence, energy, body language, and facial expressions. Professional, age-appropriate behavior is expected of our singers at all times to uphold our outstanding reputation in the community. Milwaukee Children's Choir prides itself on artistic excellence and audience-pleasing performances. We foster life-long values including the pursuit of excellence; self-discipline and teamwork, self-expression and self-confidence; and a greater understanding of oneself, the world and its people.

## **Code of Conduct**

### **Background and Purpose**

This Code of Conduct is meant to guide our young singers and their families as they matriculate through choir membership.

### **Basis**

The basis for the Code of Conduct is MCC's mission: "to provide exceptional choral music education and performance experiences that foster creativity, personal expression and social growth."

### **Code of Conduct – General**

We treat others with respect, trust, honesty, fairness and kindness. We follow the golden rule, and do unto others as we would have them do unto us. We act in a sensitive and considerate manner and respect the rights of others.

We take MCC membership seriously, are committed to MCC, and do our best to participate fully in rehearsals and performances.

We are and act as a team. When we are in rehearsals, performances, and together in public, we represent MCC and all that it is and aspires to be. We follow established rehearsal and performance practice and always try to be the best that we can be.

### **Code of Conduct – Specifics:**

While every subtlety of proper behavior cannot be detailed, the following rules must be adhered to strictly:

1. MCC members and their families respect others. We do not exhibit verbal or physical conduct that demeans others because of age, race, gender, ethnic background, religion, or sexual orientation.
2. MCC members and their families make a one year commitment to membership.
3. MCC members and their families respect the property of others. This includes MCC property (music, music folders, instruments, etc.), rehearsal and performance sites and any property of others at those sites, and the property of other singers, MCC staff, and their families.
4. MCC members regularly attend rehearsals and MCC performances, are committed to being ready at the rehearsal call time, and inform MCC in the event of an absence.



5. MCC members bring to their rehearsal seats only what they need for rehearsal. Homework, electronic devices, and other items not related to MCC remain in backpacks, bags or other places out of sight—and use—during rehearsal.
6. MCC members participate fully in rehearsals and performances. We respect rehearsal time, are not disruptive, work as a team, display our best musicianship, and respect our peers and MCC staff. We try to do our best and demonstrate pride in ourselves and MCC.
7. MCC members keep their uniforms clean and in good repair, and remember to wear them on concert days.

MCC members and their families follow this Code of Conduct and are responsible for their own actions. Failure to abide by this Code will be dealt with immediately and may lead to reprimand, suspension, probation or expulsion, based on the gravity of the inappropriate conduct. Students who fail to uphold the Code of Conduct will be given a written notice or “demerit” document indicating the specifics of the infraction. This notice will also be sent to the child’s family. After three infractions and demerit documents have been given, the child will be released from MCC. If a member drops membership during the year for any reason or is suspended or expelled from MCC, including disciplinary action, no portion of fees or tuition will be refunded.

## **Membership Expectations**

Milwaukee Children’s Choir singers will:

- ♪ wear their membership t-shirt to all rehearsals and other Choir events
- ♪ eat a nutritious snack before coming to rehearsal, and get a good night’s sleep
- ♪ always bring their music, a pencil, and a re-sealable water bottle to every rehearsal and performance
- ♪ be in their seat 5 minutes before rehearsal starts
- ♪ check in with the rehearsal assistant prior to being seated
- ♪ give attendance notes, payments, permission slips, etc. to the rehearsal assistant at the attendance table during check in. Because rehearsal assistants must put together a rehearsal site report for the office while singers are rehearsing, handing paperwork to them at the end of rehearsal poses a problem.
- ♪ take all notices home and give them to their parents
- ♪ be responsible for all information and music placed in their folders
- ♪ report for performances one hour before the performance starts
- ♪ understand, respect, and abide by the MCC attendance policy
- ♪ refrain from texting and using their cell phones during rehearsal
- ♪ put away books or homework during the rehearsal
- ♪ be absolutely silent and attentive while their directors are talking and rehearsing
- ♪ write their conductor’s markings and suggestions into their music in pencil
- ♪ sit and stand with good posture during rehearsals
- ♪ work on their parts outside of rehearsal and listen to the practice music files (if provided) on their choir’s web page on the Milwaukee Children’s Choir website
- ♪ put their chair away at the end of every rehearsal
- ♪ wait until after rehearsal to ask any questions regarding the seating chart or voice assignment
- ♪ not bring candy, snacks, gum or beverages (except for closed water bottles) to rehearsal
- ♪ tell the conductor before rehearsal begins, if he/she cannot sing in that rehearsal. This singer will then observe the rehearsal quietly and attentively, and make markings in the musical score (pencil only) so as not to miss the conductor’s instructions.

- ♪ show respect for each other, parent volunteers, staff and the facilities at all times
- ♪ pay attention to the conductor at all times and do not talk or in any way distract other choristers
- ♪ respect and follow directions given by MCC directors, MCC staff, or by another adult placed in an MCC leadership role

### Care of Music

- ♪ All folders and all music must be returned at the end of each semester! If music or folders are lost, irreparably damaged or not returned, an additional fee will be charged to cover replacement costs. Printed music is a major MCC expense. Please help keep it in fine condition for generations of MCC members!
- ♪ Choir members are to treat their music and music folder with care and respect. Treat your music as you would treat a friend! Never fold, roll, or punch holes in music; do not attach stickers or other decorations.
- ♪ All assigned music is the responsibility of the choir member.
- ♪ Bring your music to all rehearsals unless you are notified otherwise.
- ♪ Music is always to be kept and carried in folders. Single copies of music are NOT to be brought separately to rehearsal; bring the entire folder.
- ♪ The ONLY markings on your music should be **musical indications** given by the conductor. **Use ONLY a sharpened #2 pencil.** (Do NOT use pen, highlighters or colored pencils. Please do not make other marks or drawings in your music.)
- ♪ If for any reason a piece of music is in **need of repair**, ***please talk to the rehearsal assistant.***
- ♪ **Report lost music** to the rehearsal assistant immediately.
- ♪ Lost or damaged music will result in a fine of \$5.00 per damaged or lost musical score.

### Pick-up and Drop-off Policies

Please be on time when bringing your singer to and picking your singer up from rehearsals. Plan to arrive at rehearsal about 10 minutes early so there is time to check in and be ready to sing PRIOR to the rehearsal start time. Prelude Choir, Training Choirs, and Resident Choir children should be walked to and from rehearsal halls and warm-up rooms at concert venues. Occasionally, we change this plan at different venues, but any changes will be communicated.

Transportation to and from rehearsals is the individual responsibility of the parents, as are car pools, etc. MCC does publish a choir roster to assist families in setting up carpools. This roster is to be used for MCC purposes only.

Choir members are not supervised outside of rehearsal times. Members should not arrive more than 15 minutes prior to a call time and should be picked up promptly at the stated pick up time.

Singers in all choirs except MYC are not permitted to wait outside or in parking lots for their ride.

### Security Measures at the Milwaukee Youth Arts Center (MYAC), 325 W. Walnut, Milwaukee

The Youth Arts Center Board of Directors is proactive on security in the facility. The Board strives to make the Youth Arts Center the warmest and safest place possible, so we can meet and study our art. The MYAC security initiative includes a system that allows all individuals entering the facility to be clearly recognized.

All **participants** and **parents** must wear a program badge that should be clearly visible when entering the facility. Parent and staff badges need to be worn at all times when in the facility, so facility and program staff can assess whether there are any individuals who should not be in the building. Everyone entering the facility will be asked to

show badges. If you do not have a badge, you will need to identify yourself to the front desk staff who will confirm your reason for being in the facility and then give you a temporary visitor badge or MCC logo sticker. If given a visitor badge please return it to the front desk at the end of your rehearsal.

Parents and other adult guests, along with children under their supervision, are always welcome to observe MCC's rehearsals when they are open and/or wait in the commons area during MCC activities, but they are required to wear or obtain a visitor badge at the Milwaukee Youth Arts Center front desk. Singers' siblings, relatives and friends under the age of 18 who are not registered as program participants at the Center are not permitted in the building without a parent or guardian with them AT ALL TIMES. Please communicate this important information to any adult relatives or friends that may drop off or pick up your MCC member on any given evening.

When MCC singers from non-MYAC rehearsal sites gather at the Center for combined rehearsals and special events, MCC staff will provide MCC logo stickers for them to wear while on site.

We are committed to maintaining a fun and secure environment for our children when they visit the Milwaukee Youth Arts Center for MCC activities. Thank you for your cooperation as we proactively follow security policies to ensure that the safe and positive atmosphere at the Center remains that way!

### **Facility Use Guidelines for Milwaukee Youth Arts Center**

Allow extra time for travel and parking. Please give yourself plenty of time for travel and parking before choir rehearsals. Make good use of the alternative parking available on the city streets around the building (watch for school zones, most of which expire at 4 pm). After school hours, we have access to the Milwaukee Public School parking lot at the southwest corner of Galena and 4<sup>th</sup> Street. Enter the parking lot off of Galena. Please **DO NOT PARK** in the angled parking between MYAC and Golda School. Cars parked there will be towed.

Drop-off and pick-up should take place on Walnut Street only. **Parents, do NOT drive into the parking lot to drop off or pick up your children.** This causes an unsafe back-up of traffic. Waiting cars can line up SAFELY along the east side of 4<sup>th</sup> Street and around the corner on Walnut Street, as well as on the West side of King Drive. Making meeting arrangements with your child in advance will speed up and simplify the process. There is a spacious windowed area at the front of MYAC where students can wait inside for parents to pull up in front of the building. Children are not allowed to wait outside for pick-up.

Obey all parking regulations in the MYAC parking lot and on the street. There is no parking in the reserved spots clearly marked in the parking lot. Failure to follow the signage will result in a ticket or your car being towed. There are 6 spots on the west side of the lot that are reserved 24-7. All others are reserved only Monday-Friday and are marked with the reserved times. All unmarked spots may be used anytime. Do not park in the no parking zone, even if you are just running in for a moment. This causes some traffic flow issues.

Traffic in the parking lot should flow in a counter-clockwise direction for safety. When entering the lot, turn right only.

Between 3 pm and 10 pm, there is NO LEFT TURN out of the parking lot. Left turns are dangerous and cause backed up traffic in the lot. We ask that as you leave our parking lot that you make a right turn and go around the block before heading north. Both MLK Drive and Walnut Streets are very busy. Turning right helps in two ways: First, it keeps the flow of traffic leaving the parking lot moving, and second, it makes exiting much safer.

Be respectful of other people's rehearsals. The Milwaukee Youth Arts Center is a community facility, which is shared with many other groups and people. It's critically important that we respect everyone's needs for a quiet setting. When you are on break in the Commons, the hard surfaces and the openness of the space can make it extremely loud, unless you make a special effort to keep your voices down. We need to be very careful not to interrupt other people's work.

Do not use the Upper Commons area. The use of the Upper Commons is for Center Staff and FSCT Actors in rehearsal only; please respect their space.

Check in at the reception desk during the day. Between the hours of 8 am and 3:30 pm, all guests and staff (except those of First Stage and MYSO administration) must check in at the front desk before going into the building. This is for security reasons.

Do not move furniture. MYAC has electrical outlets in the floor of the Commons for use by parents, staff and students in plugging in laptops, etc. Please do not move furniture around in the Commons or hallways. This includes the benches, large chairs, tables, etc.

Food and Drink. In order to protect the wood floors, please do not bring food or drink into MYAC rehearsal halls. Covered water bottles are allowed and encouraged in order for singers to keep hydrated during rehearsals.

Wi-Fi. MYAC is set up for Wi-Fi use. While relaxing and surfing the internet, don't forget that MCC has a fabulous website: [www.MilwaukeeChildrensChoir.org](http://www.MilwaukeeChildrensChoir.org) where you can read the weekly newsletter, check rehearsal dates, and even verify proper uniform and call time for concerts and special events, etc.

### **Open Rehearsals**

We are proud of the education we are providing your singer, and invite you to observe our teaching and rehearsal methods during any advertised open rehearsal. We ask parents to please be respectful by observing open rehearsals quietly and not bringing very young siblings with them. If parents must bring siblings with them, it is their responsibility to leave the room when/if the sibling becomes at all disruptive.

### **Closed Rehearsals**

Dress rehearsals are always closed to the audience, including families, as are many weekly rehearsals. Only designated chaperones will be allowed in the rehearsal area prior to a performance. This allows the singers to concentrate on the music, the director, and any necessary final instructions.

### **Attendance Policy**

Membership in Milwaukee Children's Choir (MCC) is a commitment to faithful, consistent and punctual attendance. It is expected that rehearsals take a very high priority in each child's life. Each child holds a valuable place in his/her choir. All rehearsals and performances are mandatory unless otherwise indicated. Graded school music events are the only form of excused absence at Milwaukee Children's Choir. This does NOT include school or civic theater events/shows, school social activities, jobs, or other extracurricular activities. Any violation to the policies listed below will result in a disciplinary demerit being issued to the student. More information regarding demerits maybe found in the Chorister's Handbook.

#### **How to Report an Absence**

We encourage each singer to maintain a perfect attendance record. In order to report your absence, your MCC rehearsal assistant must be notified via the "Report Singer Absence" button on your individual choir's page of the MCC website ([www.MilwaukeeChildrensChoir.org](http://www.MilwaukeeChildrensChoir.org)). Families without internet access may phone the MCC office at 414-221-7040 to report their child's absence. Absence reports on the website or emails sent one hour before rehearsal or less may not be received before rehearsal, but should be sent anyway. Poor attendance could result in dismissal from MCC. Notice as far in advance as possible is appreciated. Please note that special requests for absences from mandatory attendance events such as performances, concerts, retreats, and dress rehearsals must be submitted in writing directly to the chorister's choir director no later than two weeks prior to the anticipated absence. Submitting this request does not guarantee that the absence will be excused.

#### **Attendance**

##### **for Prelude, Training, Resident, & Lake Country Children's Choir and Milwaukee Youth Chorale**

Students are allotted 3 (three) absences, excused or unexcused, per semester. More than 3 (three) absences will result in probation, suspension, or possible dismissal from MCC pending the circumstances. Probation, suspension, or dismissal from MCC shall be at the sole discretion of the Artistic Director. These absences may only be used for regular weekly rehearsals and NOT for dress rehearsals, retreats and/or performances.

##### **for Voices of Eterna**

Students are allotted 5 (five) absences, excused or unexcused, per semester. More than 5 (five) absences will result in probation, suspension, or possible dismissal from MCC pending the circumstances. Probation,

suspension, or dismissal from MCC shall be at the sole discretion of the Artistic Director. These absences may only be used for regular weekly rehearsals and NOT for dress rehearsals, retreats and/or performances.

### **All Choirs: Dress Rehearsals & Concerts**

An absence, for any reason, from a final rehearsal (dress rehearsal) before a performance on the choir calendar may result in the singer being excluded from the corresponding concert. (If a final rehearsal has been missed, singers should not arrive at the concert expecting to perform unless prior arrangements with the director have been made.) If singers miss more rehearsals than what is acceptable to their choir director during a concert cycle, they may not be allowed to perform in that concert. Furthermore, missing a final rehearsal, dress rehearsal, concert, retreat, or any other performance may result in suspension, probation, or dismissal from MCC pending the circumstances. Disciplinary action for missing such an event will be at the sole discretion of the Artistic Director. All performances, concerts, retreats, and dress rehearsals are mandatory and all choristers are required to attend.

### **Excused Absences & Absence Requests**

Only graded school music events will be considered excused absences. Any other requests for absences from performances, concerts, retreats, and dress rehearsals must be submitted in writing to the director of the chorister's choir no later than two weeks prior to the absences. Such requests must be directly submitted to the director of the chorister's choir and should that request be granted, that absence must be submitted as an absence on the "report an absence" log. Please note that merely submitting your absence request from a mandatory attendance event does not guarantee that such request will be granted.

### **Leave of Absence**

Should your chorister require a leave of absence from MCC, please request a leave of absence in writing through your child's director or through the "Report Singer Absence" button on your child's individual choir page of the MCC website ([www.MilwaukeeChildrensChoir.org](http://www.MilwaukeeChildrensChoir.org)). Families without internet access may write a letter and mail it to the MCC office at 427 E. Stewart St., Suite 100, Milwaukee, WI 53207. Your choir director will then contact you with any questions or concerns they may have regarding your leave. A leave of absence may not be taken during mid-semester. A leave of absence will be allowed for an entire semester. Any chorister who takes a leave of absence may return to MCC without completing another audition for their respective ensemble. Should the chorister be prepared to enter a new MCC ensemble, the chorister will be required to complete that ensemble's audition requirements. Membership into that ensemble will be at the sole discretion of the ensemble's conductor or the Artistic Director.

### **Tardiness or Early Dismissal**

All singers are expected to arrive 10 minutes prior to the beginning of rehearsal to allow time to check in, say "hello" to friends, and be in their seat and ready to sing 5 minutes before rehearsal begins. All singers are expected to stay for the full rehearsal. Early dismissals are not allowed. Three tardies are equivalent to one absence. Singers arriving 20 minutes or more late to rehearsal will be considered absent from rehearsal.

### **Rehearsal Cancellation Policy**

It is very unusual for Milwaukee Children's Choir to cancel rehearsals due to inclement weather. That said, let's review MCC's closing procedures.

If you feel the roads are unsafe for travel, please know that your opinion is the one that counts. MCC staff members don't want anyone getting hurt on the way to a rehearsal. An absence due to slippery or unsafe road conditions will never be counted against your singer. ***Please follow standard absence procedures, however, and report your singer's absence through your child's individual choir page on the MCC website.***

If MCC staff members feel that a rehearsal should be cancelled, we will do the following to get the word out:

- Post a notice of cancellation on the home page of the MCC website at [www.MilwaukeeChildrensChoir.org](http://www.MilwaukeeChildrensChoir.org).
- Post a notice of cancellation on the MCC Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/MilwaukeeChildrensChoir](https://www.facebook.com/MilwaukeeChildrensChoir).
- Send out an email cancellation notice to all current families with email addresses registered in our system.

### **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. (Avoid sugary foods and soda pop. Avoid drinking large quantities of milk right before you sing, as it can cause excess phlegm.)
- ✓ Arrive at the appropriate call time and immediately check in with your rehearsal assistant. **Parents**, please accompany your Prelude Choir, Training Choirs, or Resident Choir child at check-in; make sure they're in the right place at the right time.
- ✓ All performers must arrive wearing proper concert dress. Failure to wear specified concert dress may prevent a chorister from participating in the concert. Singers should remain in their complete uniform until they have left the performance site.
- ✓ Conduct yourself at all times in a calm, polite, professional manner. Give your undivided attention to the conductor(s), administrative staff, and chaperones at all times. Respect for adults and each other is always expected.
- ✓ Know the music. Each chorister must have a confident command of the concert repertoire. Failure to demonstrate this at the final rehearsal may result in release from the corresponding concert commitment and probationary status.
- ✓ Always let a chaperone know if you are feeling ill. If you feel ill during a performance, quietly sit down and rest. Do not leave the stage unless there is no other option. Chaperones are always watching and will help when needed.

### **Permission Slips and Performance Contracts**

*PLEASE reply by email to all permission slips, ON TIME, even when you cannot participate!* In order for the Choir to provide for your child's logistical safety and needs, we **MUST** hear from you. Your promptness makes an enormous difference to those planning the event!

Permission slips and performance contracts are to be:

- Carefully read
- Printed for your use at home
- Replied to by email or returned to the rehearsal assistant
  - No later than the date specified (the earlier the better)
  - Even if the chorister is unable to participate in the event. (We need a response from you!)

Please take responsibility for information contained on permission slips. All permission slips can be found on our website, [www.MilwaukeeChildrensChoir.org](http://www.MilwaukeeChildrensChoir.org), on your child's individual choir page. If you have questions, please check the slip first (before calling the Office).

### **Concert Dress**

Just as the ensemble sound is important, so is the ensemble appearance. A well-groomed, neatly uniformed ensemble is essential for a truly professional and artistic experience. Our concert dress wardrobe allows for versatility and practicality, and is visually pleasing but not distracting.

Good personal hygiene is a must for all choristers. Clothing should be neat, wrinkle-free and fit properly. Pants and dresses should be properly hemmed to within 1 inch of the floor. They should neither drag on the floor nor be too short. Clean teeth and clean, combed hair are always expected of each chorister whenever a specific concert dress is required. No perfume is to be used. Please use deodorant. Female singers are allowed to wear small earrings but should avoid wearing necklaces or other large jewelry items.

A choir member who fails to dress or groom properly for an event (i.e., performances, special rehearsals, and trips) may not be allowed to participate in that event.

- ALL applicable concert dress must be purchased well in advance of any performance date! Please see that you have all items your child will need by either October 1<sup>st</sup> or the first scheduled performance whichever comes first.
- Choir members and their families are responsible for the care of concert dress.
- When not in use, all concert dress should be covered and hung. It is recommended that all concert dress be stored in a garment bag so that it will be easily located when needed for concerts.

- Regarding hair, jewelry, make-up:
  - Hair should be worn simply and off the face. Unobtrusive hair bands or barrettes that match your hair color may be worn. (No colors please.)
  - No unusual colored hair dye.
  - No jewelry except small earrings, please.
  - No make-up or light make-up (using muted colors) is preferred. Please remember we are supposed to look like young people.
- The MCC office coordinates the opportunity to buy pre-worn concert dress during parent meetings in the fall.
- MCC also greatly appreciates donations of any gently used concert dress pieces.
- Labeling: Please clearly write your child's name on ALL clothing. Mark all other items that he/she will be bringing to Choir events.

## Tuition

Tuition covers approximately 25% of a chorister's expense in the Milwaukee Children's Choir and is necessary to ensure the quality of the program. Fees pay for approximately 32 weeks of high caliber musical instruction and vocal training per season, choir activities and materials including music and folder, supplies, mailings, notices, rehearsal space, rehearsal assistants, conductor, accompanist and office staff.

Tuition rates are approved by the Board of Directors annually. Parents are asked to follow one of the suggested tuition plans or call the MCC office to make special arrangements. Payment may be made with cash, check, Visa, Master Card, or Discover charge cards.

### Penalty charges

- There will be a \$30 fee charged for each check that is returned by the bank for insufficient funds. All future payments must be paid by money order, certified check or cash.
- There will be a \$25 late fee charged for payments which are received more than 30 days after the due date, unless other arrangements have been made with the MCC office in advance.

## Tuition Assistance

MCC is committed to making our programs available to any interested child, and to not let personal finances prevent a child from participating. Tuition assistance is made available to choristers in need at the beginning of each season. Parents are asked to obtain a tuition assistance application form from the MCC office and submit it to the office along with a non-refundable \$30 application fee **no later than September 1**, to be considered for a scholarship for that season. Choristers begin attending rehearsals right away. By signing the tuition assistance application, parents/guardians confirm that the information, to the best of their knowledge, is accurate and complete. MCC may verify this information as it sees fit.

Assistance decisions are made as applications are received, so we advise families to file EARLY! MCC receives many requests for tuition assistance, and requesting it does not automatically guarantee that aid will be given.

Tuition assistance is granted on the basis of financial need. Factors such as a chorister's commitment, attitude and attendance are also considered. A Board committee meets to evaluate all applications and determine scholarship allocations. Families will be notified by mail or email. In accepting financial assistance from MCC, parents/guardians agree to consistently and fully participate in MCC during the entire choral season, as well as fulfill all volunteer obligations. They also understand that, if they do not fulfill this obligation, that they may be asked to repay scholarship funds which have been awarded.

To keep money from becoming a barrier to participation, MCC sets its tuition rates much lower than the actual cost per singer. Even then, some families need tuition assistance.

### We have two basic beliefs about financial aid

1. We believe MCC's programming should be available to all children dedicated to our program, regardless of a family's financial position; and

2. We believe that people generally value what they pay for, and that all MCC families should show commitment by making some form of payment for MCC's programming.

In keeping with these beliefs, each year we put aside funds to distribute as tuition assistance. We also urge all families to pay a portion of their music education costs. The actual amount should be in keeping with the family's ability to pay.

### **Late Payment Policy and Fees**

Milwaukee Children's Choir (MCC) is funded by tuition, fundraising, donations, and grants with tuition covering approximately 25% of the total cost per child. As a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization with the aim of providing the best choral experience possible, it is important that payments be made on time to ensure a consistent, positive experience for all choristers.

- Please contact MCC's Membership Manager immediately if it becomes necessary to deviate from the payment arrangements you formalized through the Tuition Agreement at the beginning of the season.
- Payments received more than 30 days after their date due will incur a \$25 late fee. This applies to all monies due including payments for tuition, uniform, tours, and camp fees.
- Accounts late more than 30 days may be given a one-time opportunity for a special payment plan as long as a portion of the payment is put on a credit card immediately. If payments are made on time in accordance with this plan, the singer will be allowed to continue participating in rehearsals and events. Any further late payments may result in cancellation of the special payment plan and the singer's removal from the program. Any remaining balance of tuition and fees will be due and payable in full at the time of termination.
- If payment on an account is late more than 45 days and no special payment plan is in effect, the singer will be removed from the program. Any remaining balance of tuition and fees will be due and payable in full at the time of termination.
- More than one late payment in a year may result in a requirement that the family submit payments in advance.
- Failure to pay any required balance due in all circumstances will result in the account on file being charged and/or collection efforts pursued.
- RETURNED CHECKS: A \$35.00 return check fee will be charged for each returned check and subsequent payments will only be accepted in cash or by credit card.

### **Resignation**

Families not intending to COMPLETE a season for any reason must talk personally with the choir director as well as give notice in writing to the MCC office. Music and folder must be returned to the rehearsal assistant or MCC office immediately.

### **Withdrawal, Termination, and Refund Policy**

In order to terminate a student's enrollment in the Milwaukee Children's Choir ("the Choir"), a student's parent/guardian must complete the **Membership Withdrawal Form** (accessible on the MCC website under *Members/General Information/Forms*, available upon request from the office via email at [Membership@MilwaukeeChildrensChoir.org](mailto:Membership@MilwaukeeChildrensChoir.org) or U.S. Mail at 427 E. Stewart St., Suite 100, Milwaukee, WI 53207) and return it to the office. (For purposes of this policy, enrollment is established when all required, completed paperwork and a tuition payment plan is received by the office). Any remaining balance of tuition and fees will be due and payable in full at the time of termination.

There are three situations in which the student's parent/guardian may be eligible to receive a prorated refund upon withdrawing from the Choir. Even in the three situations (listed below), the Choir will not refund the \$30 nonrefundable enrollment fee (if applicable) and the nonrefundable \$50 portion of tuition.

*The three situations in which a student's parent/guardian may be eligible for a prorated refund are as follows:*

1. The student's parent/guardian provides the completed Membership Withdrawal form to the office by **June 30, 2016** or, if later, through the 14th day after enrollment of the student in the Choir. In this situation, the Choir will refund any amounts paid in excess of the \$30 nonrefundable enrollment fee (if applicable) and the nonrefundable \$50 portion of tuition within 30 days of its receipt of the completed Membership Withdrawal form.



2. The student's parent/guardian provides the MCC office written documentation from a health care professional of a health condition that prevents the student's continued participation in the Choir, along with the completed Membership Withdrawal form. In this situation, the Choir will refund a prorated amount (based on the number of remaining rehearsals in the season) of the amount paid in excess of the \$30 enrollment fee (if applicable) and nonrefundable \$50 portion of tuition within 30 days of its receipt of the completed Membership Withdrawal form and documentation of a health condition.
3. The student and his/her parent/guardian move outside of the Greater Milwaukee area ("Greater Milwaukee area" means Milwaukee, Racine, Waukesha, Ozaukee, and Washington counties) and provides written notice of this to the office, along with the completed Membership Withdrawal form. In this situation, the Choir will refund a prorated amount (based on the number of remaining regular rehearsals in the season) of the amount paid in excess of the \$30 enrollment fee (if applicable) and the nonrefundable \$50 portion of tuition within 30 days of its receipt of the completed Membership Withdrawal form and documentation of the move.

In all three situations listed above, if the prorated amount of tuition calculated results in additional amounts due to the Choir by the student's parent/guardian, the additional amount will be due and payable in full at the time of termination.

If the student must take a Leave of Absence, as laid out in the Choir Handbook, and it does not fall into one of the three situations above, the amount of tuition is still due in full to the Choir in accordance with the payment plan established on the tuition agreement.

If, in the rare circumstance, the Choir must terminate enrollment of a student for any one or more of the reasons provided in the Choir Handbook, the student's parent/guardian will not be eligible to receive a refund of any tuition or fees paid, and any remaining balance of tuition and fees will be due and payable in full at the time of termination. Failure to pay any required balance due in all circumstances will result in the account on file being charged and/or collection efforts pursued.

If at any time the student's parent/guardian's contact or account information changes, the student's parent/guardian must contact the Choir via email at [membership@MilwaukeeChildrensChoir.org](mailto:membership@MilwaukeeChildrensChoir.org) or U.S. Mail at 427 E. Stewart St., Suite 100, Milwaukee, WI 53207.

## **Family Participation**

Full development of each child's potential is possible only through the regular and active involvement of the family.

**Family participation and cooperation is essential to the quality of the learning experience for the child.**

Each choir family is responsible for contributing approximately 10 hours of volunteer help over the course of the year. If a family wishes to waive this requirement, a volunteer waiver fee in the amount of \$75 is payable with tuition.

**As with any not-for-profit organization, financial and volunteer contributions are also essential.**

## **Parent Expectations**

Parents are asked and expected to:

- Attend a parent meeting in September.
- Read weekly newsletters which are sent via email. If you don't have access to email, it is the parent's responsibility to request a hard copy from the rehearsal assistant.
- Attend an occasional open rehearsal each season to better understand the process of music learning in a choral context, and to observe your own child's experience.
- Honor the closed rehearsal policy which states that all combined and dress rehearsals, and many weekly rehearsals, are closed to audience.

- Encourage and monitor home practice and assist when necessary.
- Check email frequently AND check your choir member's folder! Both choir members and parents are responsible for communications. Staying on top of this information is critical to the wellbeing of choir members and MCC itself as well as its administrative staff!
- Reply to all requested forms and permission slips ON TIME.
- REPLY via email by the due date or return a printed copy to the rehearsal assistant at the attendance table before rehearsal begins. Please do not give paperwork to the conductor. Generally, copies may be printed from the website, [www.milwaukeechildrenschoir.org](http://www.milwaukeechildrenschoir.org) on the Members Only page under your choir-level's section.
- **Volunteer your time** and expertise to assist in one or more of the committees described on the Family Participation Form and/or chaperone.
- Support the Choir's critical fundraising efforts. Tuition only covers approximately 25% of total Choir expenses. Please participate in our auctions, plant sales, and other fundraising activities. Please contribute to MCC's annual giving campaign—our goal is 100% participation!

### Family Volunteer Activities

The Milwaukee Children's Choir depends on the dedication and energy of volunteers, and opportunities for involvement exist in a variety of areas. All volunteer activities are coordinated by the MCC office. We enthusiastically welcome all interested parents, alumni, and members of the community to share in the choristers' experience, to make friends and to help keep MCC growing. All parents are encouraged to become involved.

Below are some parent volunteer opportunities:

- **Riser Hauler** – Do you have a large truck or enclosed trailer that could be used to haul choral risers to and from performance venues? If so, we need you!
- **Office Helper** – Assist with office work on a fairly consistent basis or be on call for special projects throughout the year; perhaps 2-4 hours per week or bi-weekly. Parents will work with bulk mailings, copying, collating, answering phones, making calls, etc. Timing is very flexible.
- **Rehearsal Assistant** – Help at weekly rehearsals taking attendance, supervising singers, dismissing singers to parents, distributing and collecting music, collecting forms for the office, etc. Please make a commitment for the entire choral season. (This volunteer position fulfills ALL of a family's volunteer hours for the entire year.)
- **Music Folders and Music Library Helper** - Help distribute, fill and collect music folders. Need help several times a year: late August/early September, mid-December, early January, and late May/June. Mark and shelve choral music on special library days or, once trained, work as your schedule permits.
- **Marketing Table Helper** – Market MCC at various events throughout the season. Offer brochures; talk with families that are interested in MCC. Set-up, man work stations, clean up.
- **Concert Poster and Brochure Distribution** - Spread the word in your community about MCC membership and concerts and events. Help is needed to hang posters/flyers, and distribute brochures to schools covering suburbs in a 5-county area.
- **Concert Assistance** - Help greet and seat audience, staff the box office and clean-up at our self-produced concerts.
- **Chorister Fundraiser Committee Member** - Help plan/coordinate fundraising events including Spiritwear Sales: All Year Long; Silent Auction: November and December; Spring Plant Sale: April and May and other fundraisers as scheduled.
- **Food** - Provide for refreshments, setup and cleanup at visiting choir dinners and other events.
- **Chaperones** - Volunteers are requested on each event's permission slip.

- **Photographer/Videographer** – Take photographs/video footage at MCC events and rehearsals as assigned and share photos with the MCC office. Use your own equipment or borrow ours.

### **Singer Service Hours**

Concert Choir and Milwaukee Youth Chorale singers, do you need to gather service hours for National Honor Society, church or school? Contact the MCC office to be put on a list for the many opportunities that arise at MCC during the choral season, holiday breaks from school, or the summer!

### **Ticket Sales**

Milwaukee Children's Choir is a performance-based music education program. Our self-produced concerts are an integral part of our curriculum, giving choristers the opportunity to present the culmination of their work to an appreciative audience of family, friends and community members. Because these concerts are an important part of what we do, we encourage you to purchase tickets to all concerts and support MCC by selling tickets to your family and friends. Doing so (1) shows the community "what we do", (2) directly benefits the children by providing an enthusiastic, large audience, and (3) provides a revenue source which helps to keep tuition rates lower.

Season ticket order forms are available in October. Season ticket holders purchase their tickets for MCC-produced concerts up front at a reduced price and enjoy preferred seating at season concerts. Approximately one month prior to MCC concerts, individual concert tickets will be available for sale through rehearsal assistants at your child's rehearsal site, or through the concert venue box office.

### **The MCC Tour Experience**

#### **MCC's Tour History**

#### **Examples of Past Regional, National, and International Tours Include:**

- ♪ **2016 Western Expansion Tour** – Voices of Eterna and Milwaukee Youth Chorale travels to Missouri, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, and California
- ♪ **2016 Wisconsin Tour** for Training Choirs; **Minnesota Tour** for Resident Choirs
- ♪ **2015 American Homeland Tour** – Voices of Eterna travels throughout Wisconsin and Illinois
- ♪ **2015 Chicago Tour** for Training Choir; **Queen City Children's Choir Festival** for Resident Choirs
- ♪ **2014 East Coast Tour**- Concert Choir and Milwaukee Youth Chorale travel to Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, and Washington D.C.
- ♪ **2013 Appleseed Children' Choir Festival** — Cantabile members traveled to Fort Wayne, IN. May 3-5, 2013.

#### **Why We Tour**

Touring is an integral part of the MCC experience. It offers choristers a special opportunity to perform throughout the nation and the world while engaging upon educational programming and cultural experiences.

Touring is an important auxiliary to MCC's basic music education program, both financially and logistically. It is included as an outstanding way to provide choristers with powerful and memorable musical, cultural and interpersonal experiences. It is an opportunity which heightens each musician's understanding of himself/herself, of music and of one's relationship to others. It allows singers a chance to perform for a wide variety of audiences in a wide variety of venues. It provides cultural experiences and growth opportunities which cannot be achieved at home.

MCC touring experiences include a balance of activities which focus on concerts, demonstrations, workshops, and musical exchanges with other youth choruses as well as sight-seeing activities and relaxation time.

Travel and performance venues identified as rewarding touring opportunities will lead to travel plans organized by the Artistic Director. Over the course of membership with MCC, singers will be offered a

diverse program of local, regional, national (in the continental USA), and international tours. International tours will be well-spaced in order to allow for advance financial planning by families.

## **Touring Program**

### **Prelude Choirs Tour Goals:**

Due to their age and experience level, Prelude Choir members do not tour.

### **Training Choirs Tour Opportunities:**

1. Continue to participate in experiences such as community performances. They will also collaborate with other youth choir organizations such as the Madison Youth Choirs, Chicago Children's Choir, etc.

<b>Training Choirs Events</b>	<b>Number of days</b>	<b>Transportation</b>	<b>Meals</b>	<b>Lodging</b>	<b>Chaperones</b>
Local	1-2	Charter or school bus	All meals included	Hotel	Parent chaperons and MCC faculty accompany children on this tour. 1:5 Adult to student ratio

### **Resident Choirs and Lake Country Children's Choir Tour Opportunities**

1. Collaborations with other youth choirs and participation in children's choral festivals.
2. Performance Tours featuring educational and cultural advancement opportunities

<b>Resident Choirs Events</b>	<b>Number of days</b>	<b>Transportation</b>	<b>Meals</b>	<b>Lodging</b>	<b>Chaperones</b>
Local & Regional	3-5	Charter Bus	All meals included	Hotel and/or Host Families	Parent chaperons and MCC faculty accompany children on this tour. 1:10 Adult to student ratio

### **Voices of Eterna and Milwaukee Youth Chorale Tour Opportunities:**

Voices of Eterna members will:

1. Participate in choir exchanges locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally

<b>Voices of Eterna &amp; Milwaukee Youth Choral Events</b>	<b>Number of days</b>	<b>Transportation</b>	<b>Meals</b>	<b>Lodging</b>	<b>Chaperones</b>
Local & Regional	5 – 14 days	Charter Bus, Airplane, Cruise Boat	All meals included	Hotel and/or Host Families	Parent chaperons and MCC faculty accompany children on this tour. 1:10 Adult to student ratio

## **Fundraising**

Milwaukee Children's Choir tuition covers less than 25% of the cost to run our program. As a result, we look to other income streams which allow us to provide our music education programming. MCC is grateful to the many foundations, corporations, and individuals that provide much-needed dollars to cover our programming expenses.

Fundraisers are another vital part of our income stream. Each year, MCC offers a wide variety of fundraising opportunities—some to help offset the cost of tuition and others to reduce the cost of choir

tours. All fundraising is optional. However, MCC families are highly encouraged to participate to assist in making choral music education and touring experiences accessible to all children.

### **Why MCC Choristers Tour**

Touring is an important auxiliary to MCC's basic music education program, both financially and logistically. It is included as an outstanding way to provide choristers with powerful and memorable musical, cultural and interpersonal experiences. It is an opportunity which heightens each musician's understanding of himself/herself, of music and of one's relationship to others. It allows singers a chance to perform for a wide variety of audiences in a wide variety of venues. It provides cultural experiences and growth opportunities which cannot be achieved at home.

### **Tour Financial Information**

Milwaukee Children's Choir requires that all travelers be up-to-date on all fees including tuition, uniform, music, and any other miscellaneous fees prior to applying for a tour. Tours are self-funded. We envision a day when all tours will be accessible to all MCC members. But today, for financial reasons, we can extend tour opportunities only to those who can fund their own participation. However, tour fundraising helps to reduce the cost of touring for all children.

### **Questions**

The MCC office staff maintains regular office hours and is happy to assist parents and choristers, answer questions, and serve as the focal point for all MCC activities. You may also arrange to talk to the directors or members of the board. Experienced parent volunteers are also available and glad to talk to you.

#### **Questions related to rehearsals or the music program**

Individual questions and concerns with regard to rehearsals, concerts, evaluations, Choir assignment, etc., should be discussed with your child's ensemble director. Questions, concerns, suggestions about the music program in general may also be discussed with the Artistic Director. Appointments with the Artistic Director are made by calling the MCC office, 414.221.7040.

#### **Questions about choir logistics organization or parent volunteer activities**

Concerns and questions related to notices, permission slips, concert dress, performance logistics, bus and travel arrangements, etc. should be directed to the administrative staff at the MCC office. Located at 427 E. Stewart Street, Suite 100, Milwaukee, WI the office is the "home base" for business, information and all activities. (Please review MCC website, [www.milwaukeechildrenschoir.org](http://www.milwaukeechildrenschoir.org), before you call.)

#### **Questions related to legal, financial and policy issues**

The Board of Directors is made up of business people, members of the community and parents who meet regularly to deal with the legal governance, fiscal management, fundraising strategies, long-range planning, personnel and business underpinnings of the Choir. Board members are happy to discuss questions with parents. Please call the MCC office for contact information.

### **Faculty and Staff**

The artistic faculty manages all music related activities, including choosing the repertoire, teaching and/or accompanying, choosing performances, conducting at performances, etc.

The administrative staff manages the logistics of rehearsals and performances, markets the Choir, works with parent volunteers, manages finances, etc.

The staff is always available to answer questions and to assist parents and choristers. MCC's primary staff are listed below. Contact information is given to individual choir members at the beginning of each season, and is also available online at [www.milwaukeechildrenschoir.org](http://www.milwaukeechildrenschoir.org).

**MCC Administrative Staff**

Donna Brady, Executive Director  
Lorinda Liongson, Membership Manager  
Cecilia Davis, Development Manager

**MCC Artistic Faculty**

Marco Antonio Melendez, Artistic Director  
Rachel Beeksma, Associate Artistic Director  
Lisa Maxfield, Associate Music Director  
Jessica Zelenack, Associate Music Director  
Steven Joyal, Assistant Music Director  
Dr. Elizabeth Green, Staff Accompanist  
Catherine Fettig, Staff Accompanist  
Laura Blanco, Staff Accompanist  
Dr. Kai-i Tien, Accompanist  
Julie Maurer, Harmony Instructor

**Board of Directors****Officers:**

Robert Fichtner, President  
Katie O'Neill, Vice President  
Ikenna Achi, Treasurer  
Bridget DeLoge, Secretary

**Directors:**

Samantha Amore  
Karin Buckholdt  
Sarah Fowles  
Kelley Karakis  
Leonard Martin  
Jacqueline Roush