



CHILDREN'S CHORUS

H A N D B O O K

2026-2027

Arkansas Symphony Orchestra Children's Chorus
(ASOCC)

Website:

<https://www.arkansassymphony.org/childrens-choir/>

ASOCC

As a member of the ASOCC (Arkansas Symphony Orchestra Children's Chorus), you will have numerous opportunities to develop your talents in an atmosphere of musical excellence. We hope you will find it to be a most rewarding and enjoyable experience musically, socially, emotionally, and intellectually. Like professional musicians, you will be expected to be present and on time for all rehearsals, dress rehearsals, and performances. The commitment is a major one, but the benefits can be enormous. We are sure you will find the investment of your time and talent very worthwhile.

Parents and students: Please read the material in this handbook carefully. Keep it handy and accessible. You will find it a useful resource throughout the year. Feel free to [email](#) or call the Director of Education and Community Engagement at (501) 666-1761, ext. 116, for clarification and elaboration of any of the policies listed in this handbook.

ENROLLMENT

Enrollment in the program should be completed before the first scheduled rehearsal of every year. Enrollment may be completed [online](#) following notification of audition results.

COMMUNICATION

It is very important that the ASOCC staff have current, up-to-date information on each student through the online enrollment database. Any deviation from what is printed in the Handbook is communicated directly by e-mail. Rehearsal schedules are posted online and updated as needed. **If you are not receiving frequent e-mails from the Attendance Parent, then something is wrong.** Please notify them of any problems or changes with your e-mail.

STAFF CONTACTS:

Director of Education and Community Engagement:	Beth Robison	brobison@arkansassymphony.org (501) 666-1761 ext. 116
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CHILDREN'S CHOIR CONTACTS:

Co-Director:	Shea Barham	k.shea.williamson@gmail.com
Co-Director:	Satia Spencer	msspencer143@gmail.com

Attendance:

Ruth Peterson

ASOCC@arkansassymphony.org

TUITION

Tuition is \$200 per year. Payment plans are available upon enrollment. Tuition per school year is due in full by November 15. Members may be prohibited from performing in concerts if tuition is not paid in full by the deadline.

A student is not allowed to enroll if tuition remains unpaid from a previous enrollment.

Tuition is non-refundable if the student withdraws for any reason.

SCHOLARSHIPS

[Scholarship applications](#) are available on the Children's Chorus page of the ASO website.

Submit the online scholarship application immediately upon notification of acceptance and prior to enrollment, and await further instructions before enrolling. Scholarships do not carry over from year to year. *A new application must be completed each year.*

REHEARSALS

Rehearsals are on Monday evenings from 6:00-8:15 pm. There may be occasional rehearsals on other nights as needed, which will be communicated well in advance. Rehearsal reminders are emailed weekly.

REHEARSAL ETIQUETTE

Chorus members are expected to be **in their seats and ready to sing at least 10 minutes prior to the scheduled rehearsal time.** If you are on time, you are late.

- Bring your music, a pencil, and a water bottle with a lid.
- Be early! Take care of personal needs during this time. (i.e., restroom, filling water bottles, etc.)
- Be attentive! If your conductor is speaking, you should not be.
- Watch the conductor/director when rehearsing and performing.
- Remain silent if the director is working with another section.
- Maintain an open mind with regard to the music selections.
- Respect and encourage others.
- Cell phones are not allowed in the rehearsal space and should be left in the rack in the lobby. They can be accessed at break.
- Sit with feet flat on the floor. Keep your hands to yourself.
- No one is excused early from any rehearsal.
- No hats shall be worn during rehearsals.
- No chewing gum or candy.
- Breaks are scheduled for getting water, using facilities, etc. Snacks are provided at the break - take one, leave enough for others, and clean up after yourself.
- Do not leave your seat during rehearsal unless there is an emergency.
- Parents, pick up your children promptly at the end of rehearsal.

Consequences for displaying inappropriate etiquette may be one or more of the following: 1) Loss of solo opportunities; 2) Restriction from participating in concerts; 3) Removal from the chorus.

PREPARATION

Review the rehearsal schedule carefully and have your music well prepared. If able, bring your music to a private lesson teacher or your school music teacher. Plan to devote at least 15 minutes of practice time each day to ASOCC music. Bring only necessary supplies, such as music and water, to each rehearsal and concert.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance at all rehearsals, dress rehearsals, soundchecks, and concerts is **REQUIRED**. Only **1** absence per concert cycle is allowed. More than **1** absence per concert cycle will result in suspension from the performance(s). Missing the soundcheck prior to a performance will result in suspension from the performance.

If an absence is due to illness, it is considered an excused absence. School concerts and sports events, *where advance notice has been given*, may be excused. Sports practices and absences without advance notice (not illness) are generally unexcused. If a student has more than one unexcused absence during a concert cycle, they are ineligible to perform in the concert. Any extenuating circumstances that affect attendance should be discussed in a timely manner with the Attendance Parent and/or Director(s).

Late arrival to rehearsal (arrival after scheduled start time) will result in a tardy. 3 tardies = 1 absence.

Please refer to our ASOCC schedules before making travel or vacation plans. You are responsible for notifying the Attendance Parent of any conflicts that affect your attendance. ***Please notify the Attendance Parent by email as soon as an unavoidable absence becomes apparent.***

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

In the event of inclement weather, students will be notified of the rehearsal or concert cancellation at least two hours prior to the normally scheduled start time via email from the Attendance Parent.

SCHOOL MUSIC PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

It is important that Children's Chorus members participate in their school music choir, band, or orchestra programs. Our student participation in these school ensembles strengthens the school's music program, and as a result, strengthens music programs district-wide and statewide. Part of the ASO's mission is to promote music education throughout Arkansas. Critical to this effort is our students' participation in those programs that DO exist in order to perpetuate their existence and make them stronger.

ASOCC attendance policies apply regardless of extra-curricular involvement or commitment to a school music program. Each ASOCC member, parent, or caregiver is solely responsible for managing his or her schedule and negotiating terms of involvement with other ensembles.

PERFORMANCES

Carols at the Capitol

December 1, 2026 5:00 pm Arkansas State Capitol rotunda

ASO Home for the Holidays Pops Concerts

December 18, 2026 7:30 pm Robinson Center Auditorium

December 19, 2026 7:30 pm Robinson Center Auditorium

December 20, 2026 3:00 pm Robinson Center Auditorium

ASOCC Spring Concert

April 26, 2027 6:30 pm Morgan Hall, ASO Stella Boyle Smith Music Center

Additional performances may be scheduled at the discretion of the conductors and will be communicated via email. Any additional performances will not be subject to the attendance policy, but may be contingent on having adequate participation.

CONCERT DRESS

Our dress code is not intended to be gender-specific or restrictive. Wear the option that is most comfortable and feels most appropriate for you.

Black *ankle-length or below knee-length* dress or skirt; black button-up dress shirt; black dress pants; black dress shoes with black hosiery or socks. Bare legs are not permissible. Please no leggings, jeans, or casual pants. **Hair is to be clean, neat, and styled so that the face and eyes are visible.**

ASOCC T-shirts will be provided to all students. On occasion, students may be asked to wear t-shirts to rehearsals or performances.

AUDITIONS

All audition requirements, including application and \$20 audition fee, are outlined on the ASO Children's Chorus page of the ASO website. Following auditions, students will be informed of their status, and the student should enroll, pay tuition, and download the ASOCC Handbook. Auditions are held yearly after school has started. All students must audition annually for membership.

ASO CONCERTS

TICKETS TO ASO CONCERTS

The ASO offers, exclusively to ASOCC parents and students, the following:

Any student of the ASOCC can attend a mainstage concert, EXCLUDING specials, for free with a Bank OZK Kids Ticket. The Bank OZK Kids tickets are for all children Kindergarten – 12th grade. **How to secure free Bank OZK kids tickets?** Call the box office at (501) 666-1761 ext.1!

For other adults attending the concert, the ASO offers the following promo code for online transactions for \$10 tickets to mainstage concerts, EXCLUDING specials: **ASOCC10**

This code may be used in the Promo code field online. Promo code seats are Purple (C Level), Orange (B Level), and Blue (A Level) seating.

Lobby Pre-Show Performance or Mainstage Performance

All students performing in an ASO mainstage concert (either on stage or a lobby performance) are eligible for **two complimentary tickets for that concert series**. These tickets can be booked by calling the ASO box office, (501) 666-1761 ext. 1. **If you know your child is performing, do NOT buy tickets before securing your complimentary tickets, as all ticket sales are final.**

Contact the Box Office for help or information regarding tickets to ASO Concerts:
(501) 666-1761 ext. 1.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

CONCERT VOLUNTEERS Older students and parents in the Chorus are encouraged to volunteer as ushers at ASO Concerts. Email your interest in ushering to ASO Director of Sales -Brian Wolverton, bwolverton@arkansassymphony.org.

Volunteer letters can be provided by the [Director of Education and Community Engagement](#).

CHILD SAFETY POLICY

The Arkansas Symphony Orchestra is committed to providing a safe and protective environment for children participating in ASO programs. The ASO will not tolerate abuse, neglect, or harassment of any child by staff members, volunteers, or other children.

DEFINITIONS:

Abuse, neglect, or harassment – any act or failure to act that results in imminent risk of serious harm, death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation.

Suspected abuse, neglect, or harassment – involves observation of a child that results in the observer having an uneasy feeling or concern that the child has been or is subject to an act or failure to act that could result in imminent risk of serious harm, death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse, or exploitation.

Responsibilities to parents – The ASO will provide a safe and protective environment for all children participating in ASO programs. Parents may visit ASO programs in which their children are participating at any time and are encouraged to visit with the [Director of Education and Community Engagement](#) about any concerns they might have regarding their child's participation.

If a parent or volunteer feels that a child has been placed at imminent risk as per the definitions outlined above, they should inform both the [Director of Education](#) and the [Executive Director](#) of the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra Society. If the complaint involves either of the above-named individuals, the parent or volunteer may go directly to the [ASO Board Chair](#).

Complaints will be promptly investigated, and the complainant will be advised of the findings and conclusions. All ASO employees and volunteers are expected to cooperate fully in such investigations. To the extent feasible, all internal investigations and/or actions taken to resolve complaints of abuse, neglect, or harassment shall be confidential.

Please help us make your child's musical experience a positive one and support each conductor not only in their efforts to help your child grow musically, but in strength of character as well.