

## What is ETC?

ETC Heid's All American Youth Show Choirs, Inc. was formed in 1977 to provide musical education, performance training, and varied performance opportunities to its members. Although the ages and geographic boundaries have changed over the years, the overall goals remain the same. Students will develop a positive attitude towards self, family and community, as well as an understanding of excellence and professionalism that will strengthen their character and better prepare them to meet the challenges of the future. Through the efforts of the staff and visiting consultants, ETC strives to meet these goals.

Presently the group consists of four groups of boys and girls between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade:

New Generation Chorus, 3<sup>rd</sup>- 5<sup>th</sup> grade

Main Street Singers, 6<sup>th</sup>- 8<sup>th</sup> grade

All Americans Show Choir, 9<sup>th</sup>- 12<sup>th</sup> grade

Rouge, 8<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade girls

Students come from the greater Akron area and beyond, including Summit, Portage, Stark, Medina and Cuyahoga counties.

Though ETC incorporates choreography in its performances, choral singing is by far the most important aspect of the organization. We expect all members to make the most of every opportunity to develop their vocal strengths and members can expect this to be the determining factor during evaluation for auditioned groups.

ETC attempts to plan its schedule with consideration for the many school activities in which the members are involved. Though conflicts may occur, ETC encourages its members to be part of their school programs as time permits. ETC also expects its members to perform in school with the same professional attitude as is expected on stage. High grades are not a requirement, but certainly are anticipated for all members. Students are expected to discuss participation in any outside performance ensembles with a director BEFORE auditioning. **Because show choir is a team activity and having all students present at each rehearsal is essential for maximum progress, we strongly discourage participation in other community events such as theater and community choral groups if they don't interfere with ETC's regular rehearsals or performances.** We feel this is too great a drain on the student's time and is a detriment to all performers. Members must make some choices with regard to these activities.

ETC works to provide many and diverse performance opportunities to its members, through singing and dance, large and small performance venues in local and remote locations, in both competitive and exhibitive situations. All members are encouraged to participate to the fullest extent possible and are expected to grow as musicians, performers and citizens.

## Membership

No audition is required for the New Generation Chorus. Admittance to the Main Street Singers, Rouge, and All American Show choir is through audition and may continue uninterrupted until the end of each year. However, members may be required to re-audition each year to continue their tenure with the group. The first two months for new members should be considered a probationary period. Should a problem arise and the director deem it necessary, he/she will hold a conference with a member and/or his/her parents to attempt to remedy the problem. If this is unsuccessful the member may be asked to resign his/her position with the group. Under these circumstances, the member parents should request the Board release them from the contract. Directors will maintain

an anecdotal record and yearly evaluation for all members, including attendance and rehearsal attitude and behavior. These records are confidential and can be shared upon request of a member and his/her parents.

### **Parent Organization Personnel**

The parent organization consists of an elected Board of Trustees and support committees for the New Generation, Main Street Singers, Rouge and the All Americans. The Board of Trustees is elected annually by the entire parent organization and meets monthly to discuss and carry out the plans of the group. The Board of Trustees includes an Executive Committee (President, VP, Treasurer, and Secretary), at-large members, the performing group chairs and a fundraising chair.

Standing committees will be formed at the discretion of the Executive Committee and are responsible for activities of the organization outside the bounds of normal operations. Chairpersons will be chosen by the Board president and will report the activities of their committee to the Board of Trustees as needed.

Chaperones for trips are selected from parents who volunteer on a first come, first served basis, attempting to allow all who would like to chaperone the opportunity to do so. Chaperones and all parents who travel with the group agree to enforce all travel rules and pay their own trip expenses.

### **Financial**

ETC is a non-profit organization as chartered within the state of Ohio. As such, we have no affiliation with any other group and must provide all the funding necessary to maintain a group such as ours. Although a portion of the money needed is raised by the group and donated by foundations and corporations, some individual responsibility lies with the families of the members.

Parent participation in ETC fundraisers can help raise money for the organization and the ETC scholarship fund. We are aware of the cost to members and have attempted to keep costs to a minimum. This is a major purpose of our overall fundraising effort.

ETC maintains a scholarship fund with money awarded based on need and availability. Any member may apply; decisions are made by the scholarship committee. Generally, all scholarships are partial and must be applied for annually.

At any time we can find our financial situation changing and obligations becoming difficult. Our tuition is an integral part of our operating budget. If you experience any difficulties during the season, please discuss them with the Executive Director or Treasurer to determine alternate methods of meeting your obligations. In the event your account becomes three months in arrears, the member will be subject to temporary dismissal from the group. This dismissal will remain in effect until arrangements for payment have been made. In the event no arrangements are made, the account may be forwarded to a collection agency and the member dismissed.

### **Communication**

One of the most difficult tasks of ETC is communication because our members are from so many different communities. Each group sends out a monthly newsletter. This includes the calendar for the upcoming months, updated information, directions for events and more. The deadline for getting information in this newsletter is the night of the parent support committee meeting. Also included in the newsletter will be news and information important to the members and their

families. In addition, students may receive handouts at rehearsals containing additional information. Please read all correspondence carefully.

Each group will also maintain a Facebook page where information is posted. Students will contact parents via cell phone approximately one hour before arriving back at the studio following trips. Sometimes our schedule can be hectic: Accurate, efficient communication is essential to the functioning of the group. *If you have questions or concerns at any time regarding any aspect or operation of the organization, including policies, procedures, and/or the actions of any individual, please do not hesitate to call the group support chair, musical director or executive director.*

Given the technological climate in which we live, information can be spread quickly and easily. However, all members and family members are expected to do so with integrity. The sharing of unconfirmed or unauthorized information (i.e., gossip, rumors) is expressly forbidden and will not be tolerated. We ask that all members refrain from sharing or soliciting information in regards to any person or event that would not be considered beneficial to the individual and the organization.

In addition to ETC related communications, networking websites (including but not limited to Facebook, twitter and showchoir.com) can be valuable tools. However, all members are expected to use such sites responsibly, keeping in mind that any posts may be viewed by members of ETC and other show choirs. We ask that all online posts be respectful of ETC and other people and organizations, and that they convey a positive message about ETC and its members. In the event that a member posts any comment that may be construed as negative toward ETC, its staff, students, or any other entity or event related to ETC, the member may be immediately suspended for a period of 30 days. In the event of a subsequent offense, the member may be immediately dismissed from the group.

### **Staff Personnel**

Executive Director:

1. Public Representative
  - a. Promotions
  - b. Spokesman at public concerts
2. Serve as Ex-Officio member of Board
3. Present for the board's approval candidates for employment
4. Plan and submit budget for approval by Board
5. Liaison between ETC and Landlord (Pinetop)
6. Advise Board as to ETC activities and future planning
7. Advise and present to Board all travel plans with the staff and parent group
  - a. Overall travel plans to be submitted in writing
  - b. Should be completed prior to Fall Show
8. Advise and approve all costume decisions with the staff and parent group
  - a. Design to be completed by musical director, choreographer and parent representatives
  - b. Should be completed by August
9. Advise and approve all musical decisions
  - a. Musical director will submit a list of numbers, possibly with recording
  - b. Preliminary as soon as possible, complete prior to June 1
10. Supervise and approve all non-musical decisions for performance pieces
  - a. Props
  - b. Sets
  - c. Staging

### Musical Director – All Americans

1. With advice of choreographer and arranger plan and choose musical selections for ensemble
  - a. Should be completed as soon as possible, submit to Executive Director at least by June 1
  - b. After approval, music should be prepared by first rehearsal and workshop
2. Conduct auditions for incoming members and make selections
3. Provide advice as to the selection of sets, props, and staging
4. Choose appropriate accompaniment for show. Select, direct and coordinate rehearsals with accompanists.
5. Work with choreographer in design and execution of show
6. Work with arranger to plan and adjust arrangements for show
7. Advise Exec. Director and parent committee as to travel/competition plans
8. Advise Exec. Director and parent committee as to costuming

### Musical Director – Rouge

1. With advice of choreographer and arranger plan and choose musical selections for ensemble
  - a. Should be completed as soon as possible, submit to Executive Director at least by June 1
  - b. After approval, music should be prepared by first rehearsal and workshop
2. Conduct auditions for incoming members and make selections
3. Provide advice as to the selection of sets, props, and staging
4. Choose appropriate accompaniment for show. Select, direct and coordinate rehearsals with accompanists.
5. Work with choreographer in design and execution of show
6. Work with arranger to plan and adjust arrangements for show
7. Advise Exec. Director and parent committee as to travel/competition plans
8. Advise Exec. Director and parent committee as to costuming

### Musical Director – Main Street:

1. With advice of choreographer and arranger, plan and choose musical selections for ensemble
  - a. Should be completed as soon as possible and submitted to Executive Director, at least by June 1
  - b. After approval, music should be prepared by first rehearsal and workshop
2. Conduct auditions for incoming members and make selections
3. Provide advice as to the selection of sets, props, and staging
4. Choose appropriate accompaniment for show. Select, direct and coordinate rehearsals with accompanists.
5. Select and supervise dance assistants
6. Work with choreographer in design and execution of show
7. Work with arranger to plan and adjust arrangements for show
8. Advise Exec. Director and parent committee as to travel plans
9. Advise Exec. Director and parent committee as to costuming

### Musical Director – New Generation

1. With advice of choreographer and arranger plan and choose musical selections for ensemble
  - a. Should be completed as soon as possible, at least by January 1
  - b. After approval, music should be prepared by first rehearsal
  - c. Provide advice as to the selection of costumes, sets, props, and staging
2. Work with choreographer in design and execution of show
3. Advise Exec. Director as to costuming

### Associate Director

1. Assist the Executive Director in any areas as needed
2. Serve s Ex-Officio member of Board
3. Coordinate any publicity or promotional activities
4. Serve as liaison between ETC and any performances, including competitions
5. Coordinate the choice, purchase and distribution of logo clothing, both for sale and informal costuming.

### Executive Committee

#### President

1. Conduct regular meetings of committee; including presenting an agenda in advance of the meeting for members and ex-officio members of the board (Executive Director and Associate Director)
2. Advise Executive Director on issues concerning staff, property, equipment, etc.
3. Organize and select potential members of committee and board for nomination and election to the board each season
4. Conduct a General membership meeting annually to elect the board for the upcoming season and approve the budget
5. Act as liaison between parents and staff as needed
6. Organize and direct the range of fund raisers for the season
7. Oversee the evaluation of staff members throughout the season
8. Assist the Executive Director in the selection of new staff members
9. Advise the Executive Director and Treasurer in the development of the budget

#### Vice President

1. Assist the President in any auxiliary duties as they may be presented during the season
2. Conduct any Board meeting that the President may be unable to attend

#### Treasurer

1. In conjunction with the Executive Director, prepare and present a budget for approval of the board and general membership
2. Supervise the activities of the bookkeeper, in relation to collection and distribution of ETC funds
3. Coordinate the development of the 990 with ETC staff and accountant
4. Work with the Scholarship Committee for the allocation of scholarship funds to the appropriate recipients.

## Secretary

1. Attend all ETC Board meetings and take minutes
2. Distribute minutes to the appropriate personnel and board members
3. Present the minutes of past meetings for revision and approval
4. Handle any correspondence as deemed necessary by the Board President

## Group Booster Committees

1. Work with Musical and Executive Directors to support student activities.
2. Plan and implement activities to improve student morale.
3. Liaison between parents and staff.
4. Collect and maintain all student information and fees.
5. Advise directors regarding travel and costumes.

## Equipment Manager (2)

1. Oversee maintenance and operation of ETC vehicles.
2. Oversee the operation and maintenance of ETC musical and sound equipment.
3. Be responsible for the overall operation of workshop area and storage.

## Building Maintenance (2)

1. Be responsible for the general upkeep of ETC property to include:
  - a. Restrooms
  - b. Trash
  - c. Mirrors
  - d. Floors, including the large dance room and any casual use of smaller rooms.
  - e. Outside areas (driveway, planted areas, windows, locker area, etc.).
  - f. Flexible scheduling, so facility can be maintained throughout the week.
2. Replace light bulbs.
3. Advise Executive Director of any larger maintenance concerns to be discussed with owners.

Please note the specific roles of these positions and direct your concerns accordingly.

## **Rehearsals and Workshops**

Music and folders are the property of ETC and are provided for the members at no additional cost. Replacement of lost folders will be at the expense of the member. Members are expected to bring their music and a pencil to every rehearsal. Rehearsals will be held once weekly, and additionally at the discretion of the director. Members are expected to be present and participating fully at each rehearsal.

## **Performances**

Members are to arrive at performances as notified by the director. For local performances, members are responsible for providing their own transportation, and may organize carpools if they choose. Buses or other group transportation will be used for most performances and competitions farther than 35 miles. Performers are to arrive at the performance site in attire chosen by the director, either in performance costumes or informal attire.

## **Physical Conditioning**

Singing and dancing are demanding, both mentally and physically, especially at the level at which ETC members are expected to perform. Regardless of natural talent, all members will commit to the hard work and dedication required to perform successfully.

Members are expected to eat a well-balanced diet and avoid excessive amounts of low-nutrition, high-calorie foods. Additionally, members are expected to stay in good physical shape, outside exercise being strongly encouraged.

Tremendous social pressure challenges today's students to fit in and be accepted, sometimes with the use of tobacco, drugs or alcohol. Members of ETC are expected to conduct themselves with regard to their health, as well as the law. Possession or use of tobacco, illegal or unauthorized drugs or alcohol on the ETC property or at any ETC event may result in immediate and permanent dismissal from the group.

### **Rehearsal Dress Code**

As members of a dance ensemble, all performers are expected to attend rehearsal in the proper attire to allow for freedom of movement. Only members who abide by the dress code will be allowed to participate.

1. Dance shoes are to be worn for all practices and rehearsals. Dance shoes should be changed into upon arrival to the studio. No street shoes should be worn on the rehearsal hall floor. No bare feet or socks without shoes allowed. Dance shoes should only be worn for rehearsals and performances, not as street shoes or outside the studio. Dance clothing is to be worn. No khaki, denim, skirts or button down/collared shirts. Clothing is to be in good taste and not overly revealing. Tights must be worn with shorts that fall above the knee. Any questions about the acceptability of a garment should be addressed with the director prior to rehearsal.
3. Hair, including bangs, is to be up and off the face and neck (ladies and gentlemen). Those with short hair need to have hair pinned up and back. No hats.
4. All jewelry other than ear studs is to be removed.
5. No gum, food or beverages on the dance floor. Water will be permitted.

### **Attire and Costumes**

Members must wear the appropriate ETC logo wear or ETC costume, both formal or informal, while attending ETC sponsored functions. The official informal costume is a designated ETC logo wear shirt, tucked in at all times, khaki pants or shorts, white socks, white sneakers and the ETC travel jacket, if indicated or desired. Pants are to be clean, neat, without excessive rips or tears, and properly fitting. Shorts are to be at least fingertip length. ETC logo wear shirts are to be clean, neat, and tucked in at all times while at ETC activities. Personal clothing including hats, scarves, or other accessories are not to be worn when in ETC costume, both formal and informal. When wearing personal clothing, such as at rehearsals, these guidelines apply: clothes should be clean, neat, appropriate, not too tight fitting or revealing, and without objectionable print or graphic designs.

Costumes (formal and informal), hangers and garment bags will be distributed at the beginning of the season and are the responsibility of each member. Members are to follow instructions for care and laundering. Most costume items that require laundering will be collected and laundered together, so members should not launder individual costume pieces unless specifically told to do so. Lost pieces will be replaced at the member's expense. Costumes must be clean and wrinkle free for

all performances. Members must purchase, maintain and wear the appropriate accessories that are part of the costume such as undergarments, tights, and socks. Costumes are not to be left at the studio for any reason, with the exception of the night prior to departure for a competition. No eating food or drinking anything but clear water is allowed when in costume. Shoes should be kept clean and polished if necessary. Put your name in an inconspicuous area on all shoes and costume pieces. Performers are expected to be in full costume when on stage. If a performer comes on stage during a performance with an incomplete costume, staff personnel may require the performer to skip a subsequent performance.

### **Appearance**

Show choir relies heavily on visual uniformity for its effectiveness. Members will adhere to the following guidelines for performances:

Gentlemen:

1. Hair is to be neatly groomed, out of the face and one natural color.
2. No earrings or other jewelry are to be worn.
3. Faces must be clean-shaven, with side burns no longer than to the bottom of the ear.
4. Nails must be natural color. No nail polish allowed.

Ladies:

1. Hair is to be out of the face, one natural color, styled as specified for each season, and must match hairpiece color when applicable. Hair ties must match hair color. Personal hair accessories or ornaments are not allowed when in costume, formal or informal.
2. No earrings or other jewelry are to be worn unless part of the costume.
3. Nails must be natural color. No nail polish allowed.
4. Girls must purchase and use the assigned make-up for the season, and apply it as directed for performances.

### **Conduct**

During the course of rehearsal at the studio, members are expected to focus their complete efforts on the improvement of group repertoire. All singer/dancers will remain on the dance floor unless dismissed. Combo members are to remain in the practice area. All members are expected to adhere to the rules that follow.

All students are expected to adhere to the Code of Conduct as follows:

1. Students are expected to demonstrate good character, judgment, honesty, respect, and integrity at all times including, but not limited to, at rehearsals, community performances, competitions, social gatherings, at the student's school, in social media and electronic communications, and in the community in general. These behaviors are expected in all interactions with directors, parents, and other students.
2. Rehearsal and warm up times are not for socializing. Full attention must be given to the directors and dance captains during rehearsal. Conversations should not take place during rehearsal, only before or after.
3. Students are not allowed to leave the rehearsal area or the studio without notifying a director or parent in charge. While attending all ETC activities, members are expected to stay with the group and only be in permitted areas.
4. No rough housing. No physical games unless specifically permitted.
2. Food and drink are not allowed on the raised dance floor area of the studio. Water is the



only drink allowed in the studio. Food may be eaten in the lobby or side rooms as specified, but food IS NOT permitted in the dance studio or locker area.

3. Only directors and accompanists are to use any musical equipment, including the keyboards and drums.
4. All students will be issued a locker at the beginning of the season. Students are permitted to store only their dance shoes, an empty water bottle and their music. Any food, clothing or other materials stored in lockers will be discarded weekly.
5. Gaffer tape is expensive and is not to be used to hang signs or on the bottom of shoes, or for any other purpose without permission from staff.
6. The copy machine is for ETC documents only.
7. All students are responsible for the upkeep and professional appearance of the studio and lobby. Ensembles will be expected to tidy the common areas weekly following rehearsal.
8. No student will possess or consume alcohol, tobacco products or illegal drugs.

Violation of *any* ETC policy or other behavior that reflects poorly on an individual, group of individuals or the ETC organization may result in disciplinary action including but not limited to the following:

1. Conference with the student.
2. Letter, phone call or conference with parent.
3. Removal from any performance(s) or travel event(s).
4. Dismissal from the group. Actions that result in the recommendation of dismissal of a student will be approved by the Executive Board.

## **Attendance**

### **Rehearsal Attendance**

1. Notification of missing a rehearsal or a performance is the performer's responsibility, and should be provided as soon as a member is aware of an absence, late arrival or early dismissal from rehearsal. Text message notification is *not* acceptable except in the case of emergencies that occur on the day of the rehearsal or performance. "Purple slips" will be available in the studio to report late arrivals, early departures or absences, and must be signed by both the performer and a parent.
2. Students who will be missing all or part of any rehearsal must provide written notification no less than one week in advance. Failure to provide one week notice constitutes an unexcused absence and may result in removal from part or all of the next performance. Three occurrences arriving to rehearsal late or leaving early will constitute one absence.
3. Students missing 2 or more rehearsals in a row may be subject to removal from the next performance.
4. The 2 rehearsals prior to any major show (Competitions/Showcases, Fall Show, Spring Gala) are mandatory. Missing any part of these rehearsals may result in the member being removed from any or all numbers.
5. Students who suffer from extended injury or illness will be addressed on a case-by-case basis, and may be expected to successfully complete multiple rehearsals following a leave before performing.
6. Students must display consistent rehearsal attendance throughout the course of the season. A pattern of missing rehearsals for any reason (sickness, vacation, other obligations) shows a lack of commitment or ability to participate in the group and may result in a student's removal from part or all of the show for part or all of the remainder of the season.

### **Performance Attendance**

1. Students who will be missing all or part of any performance must provide written notification no less than two weeks in advance. Notification will be expected for arrival more than 15 minutes after call, or departure before the scheduled time.
2. Members who fail to attend a performance without notice will be subject to removal from an upcoming show at the discretion of the director.
3. Members who are soloists for the group and fail to attend a performance without notice will be subject to revocation of solo privileges for the remainder of the season. This extends to solos within a show, solo competitions and standalone solo performances at any ETC event.

### **Leadership**

Students will find their time with ETC more fulfilling through taking leadership roles. Many opportunities are available to fulfill this niche. Each group will have at least one dance captain who will assist in teaching and cleaning choreography, and in maintaining a professional environment.

In addition to these formal leadership positions, all students are encouraged to take an active role in the leadership of the group. This includes such behaviors as prompt arrival to rehearsal, bringing all required materials (including attire, shoes and music) to all rehearsals, showing respect and a positive attitude at all times, and being supportive and encouraging to all members.

### **Handbook Agreement**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, and my parent/guardian  
(member)

\_\_\_\_\_ have read this handbook. We understand and agree to  
(parent or guardian)

abide by its provisions for the 2013-2014 show choir season.

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

This handbook may be amended at a future date. You will be provided with a draft of any changes and the ability to discuss and understand any changes.