

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Welcome

Welcome to membership in Hamilton - Gibson Choirs (HGC). We hope that your association with Hamilton - Gibson will be a long and fruitful one. This handbook has been created to help you better understand the mission, purpose, and organization of the choir. It has also been designed to give everyone involved a common understanding of their own roles and responsibilities toward the goal of making HGC a positive, enthusiastic and effective musical organization. Parents and singers alike should thoroughly read this handbook before each season begins and keep it handy for reference throughout the year.

B. Background

The HGC program was organized by and remains under the auspices of Hamilton - Gibson Productions and its governing Board of Directors. Membership includes singers throughout Tioga County and beyond drawn from grades two through twelve and includes girls and boys.

C. Mission

The HGC program is a community music education and performance program for children emphasizing individual understanding and development of musical skills. Our primary mission is to provide quality music instruction resulting in the highest level of artistic excellence in choral performance. The program endeavors to enrich the lives of children from all religious, racial, cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds. H-GC activities also help singers grow personally and socially through promotion of their own sense of self-esteem, accomplishment and confidence.

D. Goals

- To foster the personal, musical, and social growth of choir members and promote their sense of self-worth, accomplishment, and pride.
- To expose children to the music of other cultures and societies.
- To maintain choir membership open to children of all religious, racial, cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds.
- To provide significant, worthwhile, and beautiful choral performances for the greater Tioga County community and beyond.

II. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Hamilton - Gibson Productions is governed by a Board of Directors who guides all facets of this community arts organization. The directors, accompanist, and parent volunteers direct the day-to-day activities.

III. CURRICULUM

A. Repertoire Used

The H-GC program provides a special learning environment designed to give each child a rich and rewarding musical experience. The children study and perform a variety of musical styles.

Masterpieces of treble and mixed choral music from all styles and periods form a solid foundation for musical learning and serve as

the basis for our curriculum. Because the best musical experiences for children are inherent in great music, the HGC's repertoire includes the music of master composers. Folk, popular, gospel, spirituals and multi-cultural music are also included.

B. Concepts Taught

Concepts about music (melody, rhythm, harmony, timbre, dynamics, form, style and performance practice) and musical skills (singing, theory, sight reading, etc.) are systematically taught throughout the rehearsals. The music's relationship to the text is also emphasized. These concepts are taught through singing, listening, and analysis.

Singing is the major focus of the musical experience in the program. Because singing is such a powerful personal means of musical expression, we hope this experience will form the foundation of a life-long relationship with music for the singers and their families.

Musical recreation through vocal performance is a way of experiencing and expressing music unlike any other activity. The ability to hear music, to conceptualize music, and to perceive and respond musically develops naturally from the human voice. Singing skill and musical understanding are essential components of the creative process and a fundamental resource basic to music education.

IV. MEMBERSHIP EXPECTATIONS

A. Auditions

Open auditions are held at specified times during the year. Special auditions may be arranged at any time by calling the HG Office at 570 - 724 - 2079.

B. Year Long Commitment

The members of the choir are expected to commit for the entire school year.

C. Resignation

If a singer resigns, the parent is still responsible for the entire year's tuition fee.

V. FINANCIAL MATTERS

A. Tuition Policies

1. Tuition (\$140.00 for Children's Choir, TOO) or \$200.00 for Children's Choir, Young Men's Choir and Young Women's Choir for 2007 - 2008) is due by the first rehearsal.
2. Possible payment plans may be worked out with the treasurer.
3. Tuition for the entire year is due even if a singer drops out of the program at any time during the season. Written requests for a waiver of this policy will be reviewed by the board on a case-by-case basis.
4. Families with more than one singer enrolled must pay full tuition for the eldest singer, and \$50 off the regular tuition for each additional child.
5. Any singer joining the program after January 1 will pay the

full tuition.

6. Non-payment of fees may jeopardize a singer's place in the program as well as participation in any concerts or tours. Fees must be kept current at all times during the choir year.
7. All checks returned to HGC will be charged a \$30.00 processing fee per item.
8. All payments should be made by check or money order payable to "Hamilton – Gibson Choirs" and sent or delivered to the office at 29 Water Street, Wellsboro, PA, 16901.
9. Please include the following information on any payment made:
 - A. Reason for payment
 - B. Singer's first and last name
10. A \$25 music deposit is required before any music is distributed to a singer. When all music is returned, the deposit will be refunded.

C. Financial Aid

A limited amount of financial aid is available to singers. If you need financial aid, please request scholarship form. Requests will be reviewed and assistance granted at the discretion of the finance committee of the Board of Directors. Our goal is to assure all singers will be able to participate regardless of their ability to pay.

VI. REHEARSALS

A. Rehearsal Attendance Policy

All singers are expected to be faithful, consistent and punctual in their attendance.

Please notify the director of any pending absence.

If more than three (3) absences per term are expected, the singer should wait until their schedule allows for participation.

Transportation to and from the rehearsals is the individual responsibility of the parents, as are arrangements for car pools, etc.

B. Rehearsal Procedures

The following procedures help us develop discipline and professionalism. They are enforced for the singer's safety, for ensuring orderly rehearsals, and out of respect and courtesy for one another.

1. Arrive not more than 30 minutes before the scheduled rehearsal time. Go directly to the rehearsal room.
2. Show respect for each other, parent volunteers and the facilities at all times. Unkind or disrespectful behavior may result in immediate dismissal from rehearsal.
3. Always bring your music folder and a sharpened pencil to rehearsal.
4. If, for any reason, a child cannot actively participate in a

rehearsal, he or she should observe quietly and attentively.

5. Singers are responsible for taking home any handouts that are distributed at rehearsals. These notices are important sources of information and should be requested by the parents from the singer each week.
6. Parents and interested members of the community are always welcome and encouraged to quietly observe rehearsals. However, visitors should not talk and other children must remain quiet.
7. All singers must be picked up no later than 10 minutes after the rehearsal.

C. Dress Rehearsals

All final rehearsals are mandatory unless otherwise indicated on the choir calendar. An absence, for any reason, from a dress (or final) rehearsal before a performance will result in the singer being excluded from the concert. If the final rehearsal was missed, the singer should not arrive at the concert expecting to sing. Membership in HGC program may be revoked if more than one dress rehearsal is missed during a season.

D. Special Workshops

HGC often hold special rehearsals during the year. These experiences give the singers an opportunity to develop relationships within the choir and are essential in reaching the learning goals.

VII. PERFORMANCES

A. Performance Attendance Policy

Attendance is expected at all scheduled performances. Please be aware that there may be up to 4 performances scheduled during the school day per year. Singers are expected to notify their school of their pending absence and to make arrangements for all missed work.

B. Performance Procedures

Performances require the very best in conduct, appearance, and musicianship.

1. Singers should eat a nutritious meal and get plenty of rest before a concert. Be sure to use the restroom prior to arrival at the concert site.
2. Singers should arrive forty-five minutes before the performance and immediately check-in with the director.
3. Tardiness at a performance may exclude a singer from participation in that performance.
4. All performers must arrive attired in proper concert dress as noted in Performance Attire below.
5. Singers should conduct themselves at all times in a calm, polite, and professional manner. They must give their undivided attention to the director at all times.
6. If a singer feels ill during a performance, he or she should quietly sit down on the riser and rest for the remainder of the song.

Then, if feeling better, the child may stand and sing again; or if not, quietly leave the stage. Chaperones are always watching and will help if necessary. Once a singer leaves the stage, he or she should not return to the risers.

clean and hair should be neat and groomed away from the face. If necessary, singers should have a handkerchief or tissue in a pocket or tucked in a sleeve.

All oxford shirts are to have button down pointed collars and long sleeves. There should be no embroidery or decorations.

C. Performance Attire

For a truly professional experience it is important for each singer to be well groomed and neatly uniformed regardless of specific concert dress. Good personal hygiene is a must for all singers. Shirts are to be clean, pressed, and tucked in. Teeth should be

A singer who fails to dress or groom properly for any event will NOT be allowed to participate.

Performance Attire

Casual Dress –

	Pants	Shirt	Shoes	Belt
Children’s Choir	Blue jeans/blue jean shorts	H-G burgundy polo shirt	Sneakers	Dark
Choir, Too	Blue jeans/blue jean shorts	White shirt	Sneakers	Dark
Young Women’s Choir	Blue jeans/blue jean shorts or skirt	H-G burgundy polo shirt	Sneakers	Dark
Young Men’s Choir	Blue jeans/blue jean shorts	H-G burgundy polo shirt	Sneakers	Dark

Concert Dress – Shirt

	Pants	Shirt	Belt/Shoes
Children’s Choir	Black dress pants	White oxford button down pointed collar long sleeves	Dark
Choir, Too	Black dress pants	White oxford button down pointed collar long sleeves	Dark
Young Women’s Choir		Long Black dress : see the director to order	Black
Young Men’s Choir	Black dress pants	White oxford button down pointed collar long sleeves	Black

VIII. TRIPS

On occasion the choir embarks on a tour. In the past the choir has traveled to New York City, Toronto, Canada, Washington D.C., Prague, Czech Republic, and Brazil. Performances are scheduled, often with other choirs, and sightseeing is planned. Although families may have visited these areas before, participation is necessary for the choir to be able to perform to its greatest ability. These trips are an important time for the choir members to spend time together as well as observe and interact with other choirs. During the fall and spring, fundraisers are planned so that choir members can earn the money needed for the trip. A great deal of time and effort is spent planning and organizing the trips and fundraisers. As committed and responsible members of HGC each singer is expected to go on the trip and participate in the planned activities.

Handling and care of music

- Music must be brought to all rehearsals unless you are notified otherwise.
- Never fold or roll music.
- All markings should be done lightly, in pencil, and only at the direction of the director. A sharpened pencil should be brought to each rehearsal.
- If for any reason a piece of music is in need of repair, notify the director.

Financial Aid

If necessary, financial aid for the trip may be requested in writing to the Tour Coordinator. If aid is requested, the singer will be expected to participate in fund raising activities to help raise funds for their trip. Fundraisers are for choir members only, not family members.

B. Development

Several times throughout the year the HGC sponsors special fundraising activities to help meet the choir’s budgetary needs. Tax-deductible contributions are accepted on a continuing basis as well. Grant requests are continually submitted to corporations and foundations for specific needs of the HGC throughout the year. If you know of a potential funding source, please forward the information to the director.

C. Public Relations

Hamilton - Gibson Productions Board of Directors and staff work hard to promote all of its activities in order to build awareness of and participation in all of its events. A list of media contacts is continually being updated in the office.

IX. MISCELLANEOUS

A. Issuing of Music and Folders

It is the singer’s responsibility to take good care of all folders of music issued to them. All folders and music must be turned in by the last performance in the spring. A Music Deposit of \$25 is required before any music is distributed. If music or folders are lost, irreparably damaged, or not returned, the Music Deposit will not be returned.

X. VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Each parent is expected to actively participate in the management of the choirs. Each parent is expected to provide snacks at least one time each year. Following are brief descriptions of some of the opportunities for service:

1. Chaperone

Assist Choir at performance locations with management of singers, uniform check, sign-in, and general chaperone duties.

2. Telephone work

Participate in a phone tree. When emergencies arise or information is needed quickly, phone trees may be activated by the director.

3. Fund Raising

Can provide contacts in the community for corporate or private donations, event planning, project coordination, etc.

4. Visual / Graphic Artist

Desktop publishing / graphic design capabilities. Some layout assistance helpful.

5. Poster / Flyer Distribution

Take posters and / or flyers around to various locations to publicize concerts.

6. Ushering / Product Sales at Concerts

Ushering and / or managing a ticket table.

7. Parent Coordinator

Coordinates many aspects of the choir and communications with parents as needed by the director.

8. Refreshment Coordinator

Coordinates weekly snacks for concert choir and Choir TOO.

9. Community Concert Reception Coordinator

Coordinates refreshments for the four Community Concert Series performances.

10. Music Librarian

Coordinates distribution and re-filing of music.