

LENOIR~RHYNE UNIVERSITY

Lenoir-Rhyne Youth Chorus 2025-2026 Handbook

Contacts

Kassandra Hutcheson, Community Music Coordinator

kassandra.hutcheson@lr.edu

Alexandria McNeely, Artistic Director

alexandria.mcneely2@lr.edu

Jenna Waters, Accompanist

Lenoir-Rhyne Youth Chorus (LRYC) Groups

Minnesingers is a choir for young singers who have demonstrated the ability to match pitch. This choir provides a foundation for progress and development in vocal music. Attention span and quiet concentration are points of focus, as well as practice and development in vocal technique, basic note reading, solfege, and unison to two-part music. *Rehearsals are on Tuesdays from 5-6:15 p.m.* in the band room of the Mauney Music Building.

Meistersingers is a choir comprised of treble singers who have demonstrated advanced vocal technique and music reading skills. The dedicated young artists of the ensemble present a season concert series in Hickory and the surrounding areas. This is also the primary touring choir of the organization. Emphasis is placed on more advanced vocal technique, music reading skills, performance, teamwork, and leadership. *Rehearsals are on Tuesdays from 7-8:30 p.m.* in the choir room of the Mauney Music Building.

Chamber Singers is a small ensemble designed to work with more mature treble voices that are self-motivators and independent singers. This ensemble focuses on small-group and advanced literature. Singers should have spent time developing healthy vocal skills as a Meistersinger before auditioning, but exceptions can be made for advanced students that are new to the ensemble. *Rehearsals are on Tuesdays from 8:30-9 p.m.* in the choir room of the Mauney Music Building.

Program Overview

The Lenoir-Rhyne Youth Chorus is an educationally based choral ensemble program. Participants learn healthy vocal technique, sight-reading, and music theory while experiencing performance excellence. The learning environment is creative, challenging, and fun. The students form lasting relationships with others and develop a lifelong appreciation of music.

Auditions

Auditions for LRYC can be scheduled by emailing the Community Music Coordinator Kassandra Hutcheson. Open auditions for singers are held in the fall and spring of each year. Auditions may also

be scheduled throughout the season by special request. Individually scheduled auditions incur a fee of \$15, which is then applied to the student's tuition if they are accepted and join LRYC.

Membership

Singers are invited to participate in the choir based on the skills demonstrated in audition. Students in grades 3-12 are eligible and invited to audition. The Lenoir-Rhyne Youth Chorus welcomes young people of all races, backgrounds, and abilities to be a part of the program. A limited amount of tuition assistance is available for those demonstrating financial need.

It is expected that members of Lenoir-Rhyne Youth Chorus understand the meaning of commitment and responsibility in a choral setting. Each child and parent should consider membership in the choir as an honor. Dedication to the program will enhance the singer and their family's personal experience and will foster a strong foundation of responsibility for the singer. Membership in Lenoir-Rhyne Youth Chorus is for one full season which runs August through May. Each singer is expected to remain active and committed for the entire season. Tuition is to be paid in full even when a child is unable to fulfill their commitment and resigns mid-season.

Resignation

Each singer who has made a commitment is expected to sing for the entire season to honor that commitment. However, if an unusual situation arises which would make it impossible for the singer to fulfill the season commitment, a letter of resignation is requested documenting the reason for discontinuing participation in the program. *If a student resigns, the parent is still responsible for all fees.*

Registration and Tuition

- Administrative fees (\$25 per student) are based on one-year involvement in the Lenoir-Rhyne Youth Chorus. This administrative fee includes LRYC-provided performing attire accessories, rehearsal supplies, and other materials.
- Tuition for each semester is \$130 and is due by the first rehearsal of each semester.
- *Tuition does not include the cost of other festivals and tours.*
- Payments may be made online at www.lr.edu/lryc-payment-form or in person with cash. We cannot accept personal checks. Online payments are preferred.
- A \$25 late fee will be assessed to bills that have not been paid by the third rehearsal of each semester. Participation will be suspended for any account that becomes 30 days past due unless special arrangements have been made with the Community Music Coordinator.

Uniforms

In addition to sounding professional and artistic, it is important to appear professional and artistic. Upon arrival at a concert venue, all singers should be clean and well-groomed with no obvious make-up, hair accessories. Jewelry, earrings (except earring studs) and other accessories will not be permitted. Singers who are not in designated concert attire will not be allowed to perform in the concert. Please refrain from wearing perfume or cologne because it can cause other singers to have reactions.

Performance Dress Code

- Black dress shoes.
- Black dress socks/hose.
- Floor length solid black dress pants or skirt or dress. (black hose must be worn).
- Solid black 3/4 or long-sleeve dress shirt.
- No logos, patterns, or designs should be visible.

Commitment to School Music Programs

The Lenoir-Rhyne Youth Chorus is grateful to and reliant upon the support of the dedicated music teachers in Hickory and surrounding areas. Therefore, we strongly encourage that each of our singers be leaders in their school choirs. Exceptions may be considered in circumstances such as when the school music program requires that students choose between instrumental ensembles and choir, or when the singer's advanced education schedules do not allow time for participation, therefore leaving LRYC as the only alternative for choral study. We also consider it a privilege to provide music instruction for our Homeschool students.

Attendance Policies

It is an honor to be a member of one of the choirs of the Lenoir-Rhyne Youth Chorus. Singers (and their parents) are expected to demonstrate commitment by being punctual and consistently attending all rehearsals and performances. Each child is independently important to the success of the program. Just as with any other team effort, the success of the choir is reliant on the attendance of all its members. Therefore, the child and family should make participation a priority in the child's life and schedule. We understand that there will be unavoidable conflicts from time to time, so please consult school calendars, sports calendars, and family calendars early in the year to avoid as many as possible.

To make our attendance expectations consistent among all members, we will adhere to the following attendance policy:

1. Any conflicts that the student has with rehearsal dates must be communicated in writing as soon as possible, but not less than two weeks prior to the missed rehearsal. Whether or not the submitted absence will be "excused" is left to the discretion of the Director.
2. Students will be granted up to a maximum of three "excused" absences per semester. Absences beyond the three "excused" absences will require the singer to pass off his/her music for the Director to be eligible to perform at the concert at the end of the semester.
3. Singers with more than one (1) "unexcused" absence per semester may be dismissed from the program, pending a review and conference with the Artistic Director and the choir administrators. If a student is dismissed from the program, tuition will not be refunded.

Each singer should make attending weekly rehearsals a priority. The LRYC calendar provides dates months in advance. Because of this, LRYC singers should make all effort to respect the policy: *"If LRYC is first on the calendar, LRYC is first priority."*

School-Related Absences

LRYC members are expected to treat school choral and/or instrumental performances as a priority over a LRYC performance unless otherwise negotiated between a LRYC conductor and the school director. School performances are identified as performances for which a grade in school will be given (orchestra, band, choir concert); not an extracurricular activity (school plays, musicals etc.).

Dress Rehearsals and Performances

All dress rehearsals and performances are mandatory. An absence for any reason from a final rehearsal may result in the singer being excluded from the following concert, at the discretion of the conductor. Punctuality is imperative, especially on concert days. Students arriving after the concert doors open may not perform. **Any conflicts with the Dress Rehearsal should be reported within the first two weeks after rehearsals begin.**

Weather Policy

The Lenoir-Rhyne Youth Chorus will generally follow the decisions of Catawba County Schools for closings due to weather unless there has been a substantial change in the weather after the school announcement. We will attempt to post our closings on our Facebook page and send e-mails and text messages when practical.

Singer Procedures

The following policies will be enforced for the children's safety and to achieve productive, professional quality rehearsals out of respect for each other.

1. Arrive no more than 10 minutes before the scheduled rehearsal time and immediately check in. Late arrivals must always check in before taking their seat.
2. All payments should be given to the Community Music Coordinator. Do not hand any payments to the director.
3. Do not roam the building or campus at any time. Students should check in and go directly to the rehearsal area.
4. Do not bring food or drinks into the rehearsal area. A tightly sealed water bottle containing water will be permitted.
5. At all times, show respect for each other, parent volunteers, and the facilities.
6. Singers are not to use cell phones during rehearsal. Doing so will result in the device being confiscated.
7. Always pay attention to the conductor and do not talk or in any way distract other singers.
8. We are guests of Lenoir-Rhyne University and any other venue in which we rehearse or perform. Do not run, yell, or demonstrate any other disrespectful behavior.
9. Be prepared for every rehearsal: bring music, pencil, and any other hand-outs given by the Director for the singers' use.
10. All folders/music will be kept at Lenoir-Rhyne. They will be distributed and collected at each rehearsal. If folders and music are lost or irreparably damaged, the student will be responsible for the replacement costs of the music.

Disruptive Behavior

Removal from a rehearsal will result in a requisite meeting with the choir's conductor immediately following the rehearsal which may involve, at the conductor's discretion, the student's parents, and/or the Choir Administrator. Severe or repeat offenses will result in a leave of absence from the program, the length to be determined on an individual basis. It may also result in removal from the program. Any singer found with alcohol, cigarettes, drugs, drug paraphernalia, or any type of weapon (including pocket knives) will be immediately dismissed from the program.

Every singer is entitled to participate in LRYC free from harassment, threats, or fear. Singers harassing, threatening, or making it difficult for others to participate will be subject to consequences.

Expectations of Parents

1. Parents are responsible for collecting and reading any handouts, emails, and letters from their child after rehearsals or via e-mail regularly. **Do not leave your child unattended on the college campus.** Additionally, parents are responsible for promptly picking up their singers. Failure to comply will jeopardize the safety of the singer and participation in the program.
2. Parents, please respect that rehearsals take place in a professional, artistic, and learning environment. Noise in the hallways by groups of adults or young children can be very disruptive to rehearsals and to other university faculty in nearby offices.
3. Parents, teachers, and anyone else interested are always welcome to observe regular rehearsals. Please remember that it is imperative that the choir's surroundings be quiet so that the singers can concentrate. If disturbances occur, the Director reserves the right to close rehearsals to observers.
4. Final dress rehearsal and pre-performance warmups are closed to the audience, including families. Only the Choir Administrators will be allowed into the rehearsal area prior to a performance. This will enable the singers to concentrate on the music, the Director, and any final instructions free from distractions.
5. Performance halls will remain closed to all audience members, including parents, until 30 minutes prior to a scheduled concert.
6. For their safety, be sure your child knows who is picking them up from rehearsal. Children are asked to let the Choir Administrators know if someone shows up that they were not expecting.

Cell Phones

All cell phones must be turned off prior to entering the rehearsal space. There will be no texting, photography, or playing with phones during rehearsal, unless expressly permitted by the Director. Cell phones that are used during rehearsal may be confiscated, and the singer may be dismissed from the rehearsal. Repeat offenders may be considered for removal from the choir program.

Tour Policy

Tours establish lasting friendships in a unique way and assist the program with national and international recognition and networking. Singers are highly encouraged to participate in any tour scheduled for their choir. Occasionally, additional openings for singers with the group will be opened to members of Minnesingers when accompanied by an adult family member. During the year, LRYC

assists with fundraising opportunities for tours to reduce the singers' costs as much as possible.

Public Relations

The Lenoir-Rhyne Youth Chorus staff works to promote our organization and to build awareness of and participation in LRYC. If you would like us to make sure a particular resource, such as your community newspaper, is on the list, please email the Artistic Director with the appropriate information. All public contact must be coordinated by the LRYC staff.

Privacy & Disclosure Statement

All official LRYC information will be distributed through the LRYC Office, Facebook, email and text message (via Remind). Any other communication should not be trusted as accurate unless otherwise stated.

Email, Postal Addresses, Telephone Numbers

We will not trade, rent or sell any of these to other parties. The only time these items will be distributed is if a LRYC family requests a carpool list of people in their area. If you do not wish to appear on these lists, please contact our Choir Administrators.

Membership Registration Forms

Every LRYC singer must have an up-to-date Membership Registration Form on file in our office in case of an emergency. This information will remain confidential and only available to LRYC staff and LRYC chaperones in extenuating circumstances.

Emergency Medical Forms

Every LRYC singer must have an up-to-date Medical Release Form on file in our office in case of an emergency. This information will remain confidential and only available to LRYC staff and LRYC chaperones in extenuating circumstances.

Permission to Photograph

Every LRYC singer must have an up-to-date Permission to Photograph form on file in our office in case of an emergency. This information will remain confidential and only available to LRYC staff and LRYC chaperones in extenuating circumstances.