



Adams County School of Musical Theatre

Find Your Stage Door...And Open It!

STUDENT AND PARENT HANDBOOK

Revised February 1, 2010

Welcome to the Adams County School of Musical Theatre. We are a non-profit organization committed to providing quality musical theatre education to the youth in our area. The Executive/Artistic Director and ACSMT Board of Directors have created this handbook, in which you will find important information regarding our policies and procedures.

Musical theatre is a collaborative art form that combines acting, singing, and dancing into one performance. Musicals are fun and they also offer young people the opportunity to develop performing skills, social skills, build self confidence, and learn valuable life lessons at the same time. In a musical, everyone's contribution is important and everyone must work together to achieve a great production, encouraging collaboration and teamwork.

Auditions

Auditions are held prior to the start of a new semester. **Everyone that registers for a class is accepted into our program**, however all students are encouraged to attend one of our auditions, if possible. Students do not need to prepare a song for auditions, instead they will be taught a song and dance as a group in a relaxed, informal and supportive setting. Audition experience is very valuable and in some cases, auditions will be used to determine specific casting.

Registration

A student's enrollment in classes or summer camp guarantees casting in our production(s) for that semester. We will perform two different musical productions each semester. Students may choose to be in one or both productions based on the classes or camps they register for at the beginning of the semester. Each class will rehearse assigned music and choreography for the designated production. More classes equals more stage time in our productions. Students cast in leading/principle roles may be requested to attend additional rehearsals outside their regularly scheduled classes. These production rehearsals, as well as the full cast/dress rehearsals do not have any additional tuition or participation fees.

Our class semesters each year are similar to a school year. The fall semester runs from late August to December and the spring semester runs from February to May. The classes are divided by age groups and productions. Within each age group, classes are divided by production "A" or "B". If a student wishes to participate in both productions for the semester, he/she must enroll in at least 1 class for production A and 1 class for production B. During the summer semester, we offer several week-long day camps, and students must enroll in at least one of the designated day camp weeks to participate in the corresponding summer musical production.

A registration form must be completed for each student and mailed to the office by the specified date **each** semester. There is a non-refundable \$25.00 registration fee per student to hold the student's spot and process the registration. Late registrations will be charged a \$35.00 late registration fee and will only be accepted if there is space remaining in the class(es). A student wishing to change classes after his/her registration form is submitted must receive written approval from the Executive/Artistic Director prior to making the change.

Classes

Our classes are taught by a professional instructor(s). We may also invite professional guest instructors to teach classes and master classes, when possible, to enhance the creative learning environment.

Dress code for **ALL** classes and **ALL** full cast/dress rehearsals and performances includes: solid black jazz dance shoes, solid black sweatpants/jazz pants (must be ankle length), solid black t-shirt (for boys) and solid black spaghetti strap leotard (for girls). Additionally, an ACSMT shirt or ACSMT "show" shirt may be worn during classes but not during full cast/dress rehearsals and performances. Girl's hair should **ALWAYS** be pulled back from the face and jewelry should not be worn during class. If a student comes to class/rehearsal without the proper attire, he/she may not be allowed to participate in the class/rehearsal.

Please do not send your child to the theatre if he/she is ill. If your child will be missing class/rehearsal/performance for any reason, please call the office prior to the class/rehearsal/performance and leave a message. In the case of extended illness or injury, ACSMT may require a doctor's consent for return to and/or continued participation in classes. ACSMT reserves the right to decline to accept or retain any person as a student/cast member or parent/volunteer should such a person's medical, emotional, or physical condition and/or attitude and behavior jeopardize the rights, welfare, or enjoyment of other members.

Even though our classroom is a theatre, we are providing an educational experience and treat our "classroom" the same as a classroom at school. At times, having parents in the classroom can be disruptive to students and hinder the creative process. Therefore, classes and rehearsals are **closed** to parents and visitors except upon invitation by the class instructor or prearrangement with the Executive Director. (Cases of students with special needs should be discussed with the Executive Director at the beginning of the semester.)

We do make every effort to invite the parents into the classroom/theatre as frequently as possible and parents are often invited to watch during the last few minutes of class so the students have an opportunity to "perform" their newly learned material. We also have "parent week" each semester when parents are invited to stay for the student's entire class session and observe the student's progress. This is also the only time that cameras are allowed in theatre.

The Class Instructor or Executive/Artistic Director is not to be approached with questions or comments before or after classes or rehearsals. Please email him at executiveartisticdirector@acsmt.org. Please direct your questions to the Office Assistant or Stage Manager. You may also call or email the office with questions or request a parent conference with the Executive/Artistic Director. Questions regarding class schedules, registrations, volunteer coordination, administration etc should be directed to the Managing Director, Tracy Selby. Questions regarding finances, facilities or building maintenance should be directed to the Business/Facilities Manager, Bruce Selby.

In the case of inclement weather, we will follow the policy of the Gettysburg School District. If the Gettysburg SD cancels school or dismisses school early due to inclement weather, classes/rehearsals will be cancelled at ACSMT for that day. If you have a question, a general message will be left on our answering machine, as well as on our website www.acsmt.org, however staff will not be in the building to answer or return phone calls.

Tuition

The tuition rates are listed on the current registration form. The tuition rates are based on the number of classes in which a student enrolls for the semester. (Students within the same family base their tuition rate on the **total** number of classes taken by both/all family members.) Tuition fees help to cover the cost of classes and instruction during the class semester, however they do not cover the costs involved in putting on productions at the end of the semester. We strive to keep our tuition fees as reasonable as possible and we do not add any extra mandatory tuition or production fees after classes have begun.

During the Fall and Spring semesters, there are two different payment options. Payment in full by the specified due date at the beginning of the semester earns a 10% discount. Tuition may also be paid in two installments, with the first payment due at the beginning of the semester and the final payment due mid-semester. Summer tuition is due one week in advance of the camp week in which the student is enrolled. Cash and checks are accepted. (There is a \$30.00 fee for returned checks.) We are unable to accept credit card payments.

There is a \$30.00 late fee added to any tuition payment received after the specified due date. Tuition must be paid up to date. Unpaid tuition will result in the student's suspension from classes until payment is received. A student is considered enrolled and thus responsible for tuition until the office is notified in writing of his/her withdrawal. Tuition rates are not pro-rated for classes missed and there are no make-up classes.

There are no refunds given unless the class is cancelled for the entire semester. Withdrawals for medical reasons may be discussed with the Executive/Artistic Director.

Productions

Parents should note that students are encouraged, but not required, to participate in our productions. The goal of rehearsing and presenting a musical production is to provide students with the opportunity to culminate their learning experience, to develop valuable life skills, and have lots of fun!

Participation in our productions will involve extra rehearsal time, but will not require any extra cost. Typically, the extra rehearsal time, outside of regularly scheduled classes, comes the week prior to the performance dates. This is known as "Production Week" and consists of full cast staging, tech, and dress rehearsals. Production week rehearsals are the first time that the entire cast is able to rehearse together on the stage and it is the final chance to prepare for the performances. This is the time when the "students" become "cast members" and experience all the excitement and "details" involved with presenting an actual musical theatre production.

For students/cast members participating in the production, all production week rehearsals are **MANDATORY**. For that reason, a complete production schedule is provided at the beginning of the semester. Students are expected to review the production schedule immediately and adjust his/her personal schedule as necessary to attend the mandatory rehearsals and performances.

The Director will be as flexible as possible with unavoidable conflicts during the semester, however **all** schedule conflicts for the entire semester **must** be submitted in writing on the Schedule Conflict Form by the specified date. Unavoidable conflicts that arise after the Schedule Conflict Form has been submitted must be submitted to the Executive/Artistic Director in writing. Other than illness, absences that have not been previously cleared by the Director will be considered unexcused. Three unexcused absences may result in the cast member being replaced in certain scenes or the role being re-cast. ACSMT may not always have understudies for all roles and if a cast member misses classes/rehearsals or performances, it negatively affects the progress of students.

In the event that a student does not wish to participate in the production, he/she must notify the Director in writing as soon as possible and no later than six weeks after classes have begun so that costume and other production expenses are not incurred by the theatre. Please be sure to read the required class/rehearsal/performance attire listed above under **Classes** and adhere to our dress code during the entire production and entire semester.

Scripts/Costumes/Props

Scripts, music, costumes, and props will be provided, at no extra cost, to all students participating in the production. The students are responsible for any items loaned to them for the production and must return the designated items in good condition at the completion of the production. Upon receiving a script or sheet music, the student should write their name on the material in pencil. **Students are to bring their script, music, and a pencil to every class and rehearsal.** It is requested that students have a 3-ring binder with their name on it to keep all their class/rehearsal materials together.

Casting

All casting decisions are at the discretion of the Executive/Artistic Director and are not to be questioned. A great deal of thought is given to every casting decision with many factors being taken into consideration, none of which is personal! Casting decisions at ACSMT are handled similarly as at professional theatres in New York and across the country. Not all casting decisions will please everyone, however, it is imperative that all students and parents accept the decisions and respect the thought and consideration that produced them.

Remember that **every** role is important and **every** cast member's contribution is valuable in creating a wonderful performance. The Director is casting an "ensemble", not just a few "lead" roles. It is important for the cast to understand the importance of working together as an ensemble and to see the production as a whole, not as individual parts. "There are no small parts, only small actors." We want to promote that same value among our students at ACSMT in order to enhance their theatrical experience. We also hope that every student will take advantage of all possible learning opportunities during the production process, including listening to staging directions, accepting the Director's critiques/feedback, and learning from others in order to maximize their own personal training and educational experience.

The Callboard/E-Newsletters

The callboard is located in the entrance hallway, across from the restrooms. All important information including rehearsal schedules, performance information, activities, upcoming events, and new updates will be placed on the callboard. Please make it a habit to check the callboard **every** time you are in the building. Professional actors do this on Broadway, so we are promoting that same experience here at ACSMT. Additionally, please be sure that you are receiving e-newsletters from acsmt.org and email updates/reminders from the Executive/Artistic Director so that you are well informed on everything here at ACSMT. If you are not receiving these e-newsletters and email blasts, check your spam/junk mail folder and mark us as safe so that you will receive them or check with the Managing Director to be sure we have the correct email on file for you.

Photography and Video/Audio Recording

Cameras are **only** permitted in the classroom and theatre during times designated by the director. You will be notified in advance of these times. Photography and video/audio recording are **never** allowed during full cast, dress rehearsals, or any performances. Recording published performances, such as a musical, is in violation of Federal Copyright Laws. We do have a professional photographer (Leer Photography) who will be present at dress rehearsals to take individual and cast photos. You are able to purchase photos directly from the photographer. Ordering information will be available in our lounge and office.

Tickets

Tickets for our productions are available for advance sale at our ticket office/lounge during classes/rehearsals several weeks prior to performances. Parents will be notified as soon as ticket sales begin. If there are seats remaining, tickets will also be sold at the door beginning 1 hour before a performance.

It is highly recommended that tickets are purchased well in advance. Tickets may be purchased in advance during classes OR by calling the theatre office with the performance date and the number of tickets needed and mailing in payment. Tickets ordered by phone must be paid by one week prior to performances and will be held at "WILL CALL". Will call tickets will be held at the ticket office/lounge until 30 minutes before show time. Any tickets that have not been picked up by that time will be sold. **There are no ticket refunds or exchanges.**

We have taken into consideration that family members may wish to attend several performances and have made our ticket prices as low as possible. However, there are significant costs involved in presenting a musical production, including costs for scripts/music, costumes, props, theatre expenses, and royalty expenses which we must pay for **every** performance. These production costs exceed several thousand dollars per production. Tuition fees do not cover production costs and we do not want to charge students for costumes and additional show expenses, therefore we rely heavily on ticket sales, sponsorships, and donations for production costs. **As a non-profit organization, we appreciate your patronage and continued support.**

Volunteer

ACSMT truly believes that our students and our volunteers are our greatest assets and we could not operate without you. We greatly appreciate the donation of time, energy, talent, creativity, ideas or muscle to fulfill all aspects of our many volunteer positions. We have regular volunteer/parent meetings and fundraising committee meetings monthly so that everyone is well informed of what we are in need of and how they can be of help. Be sure to ask for a Volunteer Handbook that will have more information on the specifics of our many volunteer opportunities in sets, costumes, props, front of house, concessions, publicity, computer technology, building maintenance, and lights/sound. Volunteers are ALWAYS needed at ACSMT!

Discipline Policy

All students are expected to demonstrate respectful and appropriate behavior at all times when on the premises or when representing ACSMT off premises at community events/performances. If a student's attitude or behavior becomes disruptive and is interfering with the rights, safety, learning or enjoyment of others, the following discipline policy will be used:

First level - verbal warning

Second level - note sent home to parents regarding the incident/accident

Third level - parent - director conference

Fourth level - removal from the program

All students should enjoy an environment free from all forms of discrimination and harassment. Offensive or harassing behavior will not be tolerated.

If a student/parent/guest/volunteer's behavior at any ACSMT event is deemed as inappropriate and/or is jeopardizing the rights, safety, learning, or enjoyment of others in the program, he/she may be restricted from future involvement in the program.

Building Rules

At no time are students, parents, volunteers or guests to be in unauthorized parts of the building that are identified as restricted areas with "Do Not Enter"/"Private Property" signs. These doors go into areas of the building that we do not occupy. Violators will be removed from the program.

Smoking is not allowed inside the building or on the premises. In addition, students may not use/be in the possession of/under the influence of tobacco products, alcohol, other drugs or illegal substances while on the premises or while representing ACSMT at other functions off the premises.

ACSMT has a zero tolerance policy for tobacco, drugs, alcohol, harassment, and violent/aggressive behavior.

Food and drinks must be consumed only in designated areas, such as the Lounge, Lobby, and Green Room. Cast members should never eat or drink (other than bottled water), while in costume. **No food or drinks, with the exception of bottled water, are allowed in the theatre, dressing rooms, or backstage areas at any time.**

No cameras are allowed in the theatre, dressing rooms, or backstage areas! Cell phones should be turned completely OFF when inside the theatre, dressing rooms, or backstage areas! This policy is for students, parents, patrons, and volunteers.

At no time when classes/rehearsals/performances are taking place are parents or guests to be in cast/crew areas such as the theatre, classrooms, dressing rooms, backstage, and/or technical areas without specific permission. Volunteers that have been scheduled to work at specific times and are permitted in these areas will be given a badge to wear during the time they are volunteering. Volunteer badges should be returned before leaving the building.

While in the building, we ask that students/cast members, parents, siblings, volunteers and guests act respectfully, by not running, not playing with any props/scenery that may be on stage, sitting in the chairs properly to avoid injury, not putting feet up on the chairs, remaining quiet, and turning off cell phones.

Children under the age of 15 are to be escorted in and out of the building by an adult at all times.

Upon arrival at the building, students under the age of 15 must be signed in by a parent/guardian or a designated adult. Students 15 and older must sign themselves in, if a parent is not present. After classes/rehearsal, students 15 and older must sign themselves out and students under the age of 15 must wait in the designated area until a designated adult arrives to **sign out** and **pick up** that student. **A Parent/Guardian must call the theatre office if anyone other than those named on the sign in/out form will be coming to pick up their child before their child will be released. At no time are students**

younger than 15 permitted to leave the building without being signed out and escorted by a parent/guardian or a designated adult. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause, but safety is our first priority. The Executive Director and the Board of Directors of ACSMT take this policy very seriously and appreciate your cooperation.

Parking

The non-metered lot directly behind our theatre building is reserved for ACSMT Staff Parking Only. Please do not park in this lot at any time, even if just dropping off a student. The parking spaces marked with “reserved” signs are reserved for the Executive/Artistic Director, Managing Director, and Business & Facilities Manager. The parking spaces marked with “staff” signs are reserved for the use of the remaining staff members (Class Instructors, Office Assistants, House Manager, Stage Manager, Technical Director, Facilities Maintenance Staff, Costume Designer, and Scenic Designer) on a first come first serve basis at times when they are working at ACSMT.

Parents, students, patrons and guests are asked to park in designated public parking lots or available street parking with meters. There are metered parking lots near our building and the Gettysburg Borough Parking Garage is on Race Horse Alley behind the Majestic Theatre. When parking be sure to carefully read meters and take note of any signs. There are a few parking spaces in the lot beside our building that are clearly marked for resident parking only. You could be towed if you park in those spaces.

Questions/Suggestions

As it is important to set an example for our students, we ask that parents show respect for the Director and the students’ time by calling or emailing to schedule a conference with the director to discuss any questions and/or concerns. Parents may also feel free to email the Executive Director at any time at executiveartisticdirector@gmail.com. We ask that you not approach the class instructor or Director before, during, or after class time/rehearsals/performances. We look forward to working with your child to help him/her realize their dreams and goals...by opening their own "stage door".

Mission Statement – To inspire creativity and confidence, provide cultural enrichment, and instill a love of the theatre arts in young people through quality education, training, and performing experiences in the theatre arts, with specific emphasis on the art of musical theatre.

Vision Statement – To provide a fostering environment to train a well-rounded young theatre artist to succeed in all aspects of the discipline while enriching the region’s artistic culture.

We sincerely appreciate your adherence to these rules and policies. Our goal is to provide a fun, safe, and PROFESSIONAL atmosphere that promotes a good learning environment so that we may provide the best program possible! Disregard for any of these policies may result in immediate conference with the Executive Director and possible removal from the program.

Respectfully,
Chad-Alan Carr
Founding Executive/Artistic Director
717-334-2692
executiveartisticdirector@acsmt.org

Tracy Selby
Managing Director
717-334-2692
managingdirector@acsmt.org

Bruce Selby
Business & Facilities Manager
717-334-2692
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Find Your Stage Door...And Open It!

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Production Stage Manager

Greg Gesell
Technical Director

Don Bergman
Scenic Designer

Cindie Leer
Photographer

FACULTY

Michael Baker
Acting

Chad-Alan Carr
Musical Theatre

Mary George
Music/Voice



Adams County School of Musical Theatre

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Policy Agreement

We have received and reviewed the Adams County School of Musical Theatre Student & Parent Handbook. By signing below, we agree to abide by the policies therein.

Student Name (Print)

Student Signature

Parent/Guardian Name (Print)
(If student is under the age of 18)

Parent/Guardian Signature
(If student is under the age of 18)

This form should be completed and received by our office before returning to class/rehearsal.