



**CHIKU AWALI AFRICAN DANCE, ARTS &
CULTURE, INC.**

Organizational Manual for Students

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CHIKU AWALI AFRICAN DANCE,
ARTS & CULTURE, INC.
August 2010**

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Letter from the Founder and Chairman of the Board

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to Chiku Awali African Dance family. You are very important to us and we look forward to working with you and providing you with a rewarding and supportive environment. As part of our team, we encourage all students to continue our tradition of excellence and integrity. Furthermore, we value our student's loyalty and honesty and encourage open communication. We are confident that we will provide you with a rewarding learning environment and we welcome you to the Chiku Awali team.

This manual is intended as a means of communicating our policies and procedures to you in order for you to better understand how we operate. The information contained in this manual applies to all students of Chiku Awali uniformly and supersedes all prior policies and procedures.

Please familiarize yourself with this manual and keep it accessible for easy reference. These policies are not intended to be restrictive but, rather, to assure all students the opportunity to work and learn in any environment of fairness, safety and cooperation. If any questions arise regarding the application of the information contained in these guidelines, the final decision regarding interpretation rests with executive management.

We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,



Alexadreena Dixon
Founder and Chairman of the Board

Organizational Overview and Mission Statement

Chiku Awali African Dance, Arts & Culture, Inc. was created in January 2003 as a not-for-profit entity to enrich its community, particularly its youth. Chiku Awali's mission is to promote, encourage and project civic and cultural programs and activities in Rockland County that are representative of African dance and culture. We also provide community outreach programs to local libraries, nursing homes, and rehabilitation facilities.

In addition to African dance, Chiku Awali provides modern and tap dance classes for children, teens and adults when funding is available. We also provide African drums, percussion instruments and flute classes. Classes are available on a sliding fee scale based on income eligibility.

Additional programs include African mask-making, Rites of Passage for Young Men and a Healthy Snack Program in partnership with the Spring Valley Youth Bureau and sponsored by the Rockland County Department of Health Eat Well, Play Hard Program. Chiku Awali sponsors trips to African events in and around the tri-state area.

I. ORGANIZATIONAL PRACTICES, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Organizational Policies that Pertain to Students

Students with Disabilities

Chiku Awali is firmly committed to complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other federal and state legislation designed to ensure equal employment opportunities to persons with disabilities. Chiku Awali prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in regard to all students. Consistent with this policy and applicable law, Chiku Awali will make reasonable accommodation to the known physical or mental limitations of qualified students, unless to do so would cause an undue hardship on the operation of its business.

Religious Accommodation

Chiku Awali will make reasonable efforts to accommodate the religious practices of our students. Whenever a student requests an accommodation, Chiku Awali will consider such possibilities. The requested accommodation, however, must be reasonable. We will not make any accommodation that would create an undue hardship on the conduct of Chiku Awali. Based on the particular facts in each case, we will determine whether a requested accommodation would create an undue hardship.

Policy Against Harassment

Chiku Awali expects that all employees and students will treat each other with fairness and respect. Harassment on the basis of race, religion, color, gender, age, national origin or disability or as otherwise provided under state or local law, will not be tolerated and is strictly prohibited. Harassment of this type is illegal and contrary to the policy of Chiku Awali. The company strives to foster a work environment free of harassment, discrimination, intimidation and insult. Harassment is a form of misconduct that undermines both

personal and professional relationships in the workplace. Every staff member and student must be assured that he or she can work in an environment that is free from unwanted and unwelcome harassment and discrimination.

Harassment creates unacceptable stress for the entire organization, adversely affecting morale, demeans the individual so treated, and could cause potentially devastating costs to the Company. Chiku Awali believes that courteous, mutually respectful, pleasant, non-coercive interactions between employees and students will best serve the well-being of each individual and Chiku Awali.

Any person who believes that he/she is the victim of any type of discriminatory conduct, should bring that conduct to the immediate attention of his/her supervisor/teacher or any member of management. The company will conduct a prompt and thorough investigation of all the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident in a confidential nature. If the investigation discloses that an individual has committed an act of discrimination, that individual will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Retaliation in any form against an employee who complains of discrimination or harassment is strictly prohibited and will result in appropriate disciplinary action. Any supervisory employee to whom an employee brings a complaint of harassment but who fails to take appropriate action to resolve it will also be disciplined.

Open-Door Policy

We strongly believe in an open-door, open-communication policy and feel it is an important benefit to us, as well as to other employees and students. This policy, we believe, will allow employees and students to come forward and discuss their problems with their direct supervisor, in order to resolve the issues quickly and efficiently. However, if your immediate supervisor is not able to satisfy your questions regarding the interpretation or application of this manual or any other issue, then you are free to contact the next higher level of supervision.

Sexual Harassment Policy

Sexual harassment as well as gender based discrimination is illegal and contrary to the policy of Chiku Awali. The organization strives to foster a work environment free of sexual harassment, gender based discrimination, intimidation and insult. Chiku Awali prohibits any employee from making unwelcome and unsolicited sexual advances, unwelcome, offensive or inappropriate comments regarding an employee's gender or engaging in other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual or gender-offensive nature, when an individual's submission to that conduct is made explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of that individual's employment, or when that conduct creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment. Harassment based on gender is a form of misconduct that undermines both personal and professional relationships in the workplace. Every staff member and student must be assured that he or she can work and learn in an environment that is free from unwanted and unwelcome harassment and discrimination.

Sexual harassment creates unacceptable stress for the entire organization, adversely affecting morale, demeans the individual so treated, and could cause potentially devastating costs to Chiku Awali. Chiku Awali believes that courteous, mutually respectful, pleasant, non-coercive interactions between employees will best serve the well-being of each individual and Chiku Awali.

All employees and students, both male and female, are strictly prohibited from sexually harassing or making improper advances toward other employees or students or harassing other employees as a result of their gender. Sexual harassment includes unwelcome or unsolicited verbal, physical or sexual conduct, that is made a term or condition of employment, or is used as the basis of employment or advancement decisions. Sexual harassment also includes conduct that has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with work or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

Sexual harassment includes but is not necessarily limited to:

- Unwelcome or unwanted sexual advances.
- Requests or demands for sexual favors.
- Verbal abuse, kidding, or physical contact that is sexually oriented and considered unacceptable by the target of the abuse.
- Any type of sexually oriented conduct that interferes with another's work performance.
- Sexually oriented conversations or activities that create a work environment that is intimidating, hostile or offensive to any staff member or student.
- Verbal abuse, kidding, remarks or comments that intimidate, ridicule, and maliciously demean the status of an individual's gender.

Any person who believes that he/she is the victim of any type of discriminatory conduct, including sexual harassment, should bring that conduct to the immediate attention of his/her supervisor, the Chairman of the Board or any member of the board. The organization will conduct a prompt and thorough investigation of all the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident in a confidential nature. If the investigation discloses that an individual has committed an act of discrimination, that individual will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Retaliation in any form against an employee who complains of discrimination or harassment is strictly prohibited and will result in appropriate disciplinary action. Any supervisory employee to whom an employee brings a complaint of sexual harassment but who fails to take appropriate action to resolve it will also be disciplined.

Harassment Policy

Chiku Awali expects that all employees and students will treat each other with fairness and respect. Harassment on the basis of race, religion, color, gender, age, disability or national origin, or as provided under state or local law, will not be tolerated and is strictly

prohibited. Offensive language is viewed as harassment and will also not be tolerated and is strictly prohibited.

Any person who believes that he/she is the victim of any type of discriminatory conduct should bring that conduct to the immediate attention of his/her supervisor or any member of management. The company will conduct a prompt and thorough investigation of all the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident in a confidential nature. If the investigation discloses that an individual has committed an act of discrimination, that individual will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Retaliation in any form against an employee who complains of discrimination or harassment is strictly prohibited and will result in appropriate disciplinary action. Any supervisory employee to whom an employee brings a complaint of harassment, but who fails to take appropriate action to resolve it will also be disciplined.

Personal Conduct Policy

The efficient operation of Chiku Awali requires that employees and students maintain proper standards of personal conduct. Fortunately, the vast majority of our employees have the desire and self-discipline to follow common sense rules. These rules are necessary to protect Chiku Awali and our employees and our students, as well as provide a high quality of service.

While every situation cannot be anticipated, the following regulations specify impermissible conduct which may result in disciplinary action including immediate discharge. In all instances, Management will determine the appropriate discipline to be imposed. Commission of any of the following or similar acts is considered serious and provides grounds for disciplinary action, which may include dismissal.

Without limiting Chiku Awali's right to discharge a student at any time, with or without cause, the following acts of misconduct are provided as nonexclusive examples of unacceptable activity:

- Theft or unlawful possession of stolen, lost or mislaid property of Chiku Awali or its employees or students. Destruction or defacing of property of Chiku Awali or fellow employees or students. Theft or unauthorized removal of machinery, tools, equipment, records, or other Company property or the property of employees, students, customers, or visitors.
- The possession of weapons, firearms or ammunition on Chiku Awali property.
- Failure to follow safety rules.
- Engaging in any unethical conduct.
- Possession, use, distribution or being under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol at any time while conducting Chiku Awali business or while on Chiku Awali property.
- Refusal or failure to perform assigned work, to follow a supervisor's instructions, or any act of insubordination.
- Engaging in any act of discourteous conduct, using abusive language, rudeness, or similar acts, to Chiku Awali or fellow students
- Deliberately or through gross negligence causing injury to another person.
- Gambling on Company property.
- Excessive tardiness, failure to report to your supervisor, or absence from class without proper permission or notification is prohibited.
- Uttering, publishing, or distributing false, vicious, or malicious statements concerning Chiku Awali or any of its employees or students.
- Fighting on organizational property or property surrounding premises or in connection with circumstances with work outside the organization.
- Violation of Chiku Awali sexual harassment rules.
- Defacing, damaging or unauthorized removal of Chiku Awali's property or property belonging to a student or another employee.

- Insubordination or refusal to obey instructions of a supervisor.
- Violation of any policies or procedures contained in this document.

II. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR CHIKU AWALI STUDENTS AND FAMILIES

POLICY AND CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STUDENTS

Dress Code: Acceptable dress for female African dance students is a lappa and tights or African pantaloons. Male students are requested to wear head and waist-bands. Students not having the proper attire will only be allow one infraction. First time students will be exempt from this policy. A lappa or bands may be rented for \$1.00 for the evening. Modern dance students may wear leotards and tights or other body fitting dance attire. Tap students may wear regular or dance attire that is narrow at the legs and stops at the ankle. Students must have tap shoes. A limited number of tap shoes are available on loan to students.

Eating/Drinking: There is to be no food or drink, except water, allowed in the dance area of any establishment that Chiku Awali has classes. Children may not leave the building to purchase snacks from the surrounding stores while in attendance with Chiku Awali. As dancers, as well as drummers, snacks should be healthy. There is no chewing gum during class or at performances. Repeated infractions (three) will result in suspension from classes for one week.

Lateness: Students who are more than 15 minutes late to the class must have the instructor's permission to join. Students arriving 30 minutes late will not be permitted into the class.

Warm Up: Late arriving students must warm up for at least five minutes before joining the class.

Comportment: Students must not engage in any noisy chatter, laughter, horseplay or any disruptive behavior that would be a

distraction to the instructor. Repeated infractions will cause the student to be suspended for two weeks of classes. Continued infractions will result in the student being terminated from the Chiku Awali program. Parents are expected to reinforce these rules with their children.

PARENTAL EXPECTATIONS

Parental Supervision: Parents must supervise small children not attending class and not allow them to interfere with the dancers or drummers. Parents must wait for students in the ante-room of the class area. At the Kurtz Center Building this is the adjoining Card Room. At the Cultural Arts Building this is the lobby of the theater. At Rockland Community College this is the hallway outside of the gym. No children may be in any of these areas without the parent. Parents must pick up their child(ren) promptly at the end of class or make arrangements for transportation of their child.

Instruction Placement: Chiku Awali will place students in classes that are both age and skill level appropriate. Parents questioning such placement may appeal to the Board of Directors for a change of status. Income eligible children taking other dance being offered must also take an African dance class or be enrolled in the Chiku Awali Youth Ensemble.

Payment: Students who are income eligible must submit a current signed income tax statement prior to beginning sessions and each year thereafter for continued eligibility. Students must also pay a membership fee to enroll in Chiku Awali. If not income eligible, payment for lessons must be made at the end of each class without exception. Students will not be admitted to the next class unless payment is made. See the income eligible list on the application form.

Costumes: An annual fee may be required for costumes. Students can purchase costumes at cost without having to pay an annual fee. Students are required to return their costumes in the net bags assigned to them. Failure to do so will result in the student having to pay the cost price of the costume.

Performances: Students may be asked to perform dances learned throughout the year for various organizations and civic institutions. It is understood that these performances are a part of the community experience for African dance. No monetary compensation will be offered for these performances. Students must attend the three preceding rehearsals/classes before a performance. The instructor/director determines whether the student will perform the piece presented to the public.

Other Dance Classes: Children must enroll in African dance classes in order to take other dance classes offered by Chiku Awali.

Income Eligibility: See side two of the Chiku Awali application.

These rules and procedures are subject to change without notice.

POLICY ON NUTRITION AND CELEBRATIONS

Introduction

The Eat Well Play Hard concept is intended to prevent childhood obesity and reduce long-term chronic disease risks through the promotion of physical activity and improved dietary practices in children over the age of two. The three core messages are:

- Increase age appropriate physical activity
- Increase consumption of fruits and vegetables
- Choose low-fat and fat free dairy products

Chiku Awali strives to provide positive models for children and their families. This policy will explain our philosophy on nutrition as well as the social environment surrounding food. The eating environment at Chiku Awali is designed to acknowledge individual differences while recognizing that group settings offer educational opportunities, challenges and experiences that are not always present within a single household.

Meals and Snacks

Chiku Awali participates with other civic and community organizations and institutions in functions and activities that will enrich its community, particularly its youth. In its relationship with the Rockland County Department of Health it acknowledges the importance of healthy eating habits and enforces the following:

- Participants and staff shall refrain from sending in or consuming candy, gum, chips and soda at any time.
- Participants must not bring food or drink into the dance performance area.
- Participants may not leave the building to purchase snacks from the surrounding stores while in attendance with Chiku Awali.
- All snacks are to be healthy and may include fruits, vegetables, 100% juice, low-fat dairy products, low sugar content cereals, nuts, granola, etc. Please check the labels.

Celebrations

Occasionally, Chiku Awali celebrates holidays and prepares food for various rites of passage workshops. These celebrations shall be in keeping with the RCDOH Healthy Meeting Guidelines and promotes a healthy lifestyle diet. See attached Guideline. Although we welcome the cultures of all the families and staff we serve in our program, we do not encourage the use of food that is inappropriate in a child's development or lacking in nutritional value to be used in these celebrations. In keeping with our nutrition philosophy, we endeavor to serve fresh fruits and vegetables, 100% juice and low fat dairy products at the time of special celebrations. We encourage parents to do the same. We also ask that staff and parents when preparing celebrations outside of the Chiku Awali structure to use other activities such as music and games to reflect the importance of these special celebrations.

Birthdays

Parents may wish to share their children's birthday with the other children by providing a nutritious snack. Parents are reminded of our nutrition policy and our staff can provide assistance to them with a list of recommended ideas for this special event. (See parent information below). Parents are reminded that cake and ice cream are not always necessary for a birthday party celebration. We encourage family members to send in items that commemorate the child's birth and share a little about the day, first outfit, pictures, baby book, etc. A healthy snack as indicated above is appropriate.

Below is a list of options to celebrate a birthday.

Foods

Vegetable sticks with dip
Fresh fruit
Yogurt
Cupcakes (with thin icing)

Beverages

100% juice drinks
Low or no fat milk
Bottled water

Tossed salad
Whole grain crackers with salsa

Other

African mask
Decorated plates

You may also make a donation to Chiku Awali in your child's name as a birthday remembrance

Performances Offsite

There are occasions that Chiku Awali performs in the community and a meal is provided afterwards at an eating establishment. In remaining consistent with our nutrition policy, we recommend that students choose healthy options as follows:

Grilled chicken in wraps
Tossed salad
Low or no fat milk
Fresh fruit or fruit cups
Water
Fruit smoothies

Staff will make every effort to find eating establishments that offer these healthy eating alternatives.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COMPANY RULES

As a member of Chiku Awali my signature below attest to the fact that I have read, understand and accept the rules of the Company. I am aware and understand that repeated infractions will result in my termination from the Company. I accept enrollment in the Chiku Awali African Dance Ensemble. I understand that I will be involved in advance training in African dance. I agree to take the required dance classes to maintain enrollment in the Company. I understand that I must maintain a passing academic grade level to remain in the Company. I understand that I may not miss more than two class sessions in a month to remain in the Company. Likewise, for a performance I must attend the preceding three rehearsals/classes. I also understand that the instructor/director determines whether I will perform the dance piece presented to the public or accompany the Ensemble to a venue for a performance. Each of the following rules below also apply:

- Members must advise the dance instructor, dance director or dance captain if she/he will be absent.
- Members must report for scheduled classes and rehearsals on time.
- Members may not join the class after it has been in session for 15 minutes without prior approval.
- Members must wear dance attire or other loose fitting clothing and females must wear a lappa for classes and rehearsals. No jeans are permitted.
- Members must not chew gum during class instruction, rehearsals, or during performances.
- Members must not bring food or drink into the dance performance area.
- Members must maintain a passing academic grade level if still in school. Report cards must be turned in each quarter.
- Members must not engage in any noisy chatter, laughter, horseplay or any disruptive behavior that would be a

distraction to the instructor during class or during performances.

- Members should wait until the class has ended to drink water unless instructed to do so by the dance instructor.

I have read, I understand, and I accept the above rules of Chiku Awali.

Company Member

Date

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COMMUNITY CLASS RULES

As a member of Chiku Awali, my signature below attest to the fact that I have read, understand and accept the rules of community classes. I am aware and understand that repeated infractions will result in my termination from Chiku Awali. I understand that I must maintain a passing academic grade level to remain in community classes. I understand that for a performance I must attend the preceding three rehearsals/classes. I also understand that the instructor/director determines whether I will perform the dance piece presented to the public or accompany Chiku Awali to a venue for a performance. Each of the following rules below also apply:

- Students must report for scheduled classes and rehearsals on time.
- Students may not join the class after it has been in session for 15 minutes without prior approval.
- Students must wear dance attire or other loose fitting clothing and females must wear a lappa for classes and rehearsals. No jeans are permitted.
- Students must not chew gum during class instruction, rehearsals, or during performances.
- Students must not bring food or drink into the dance performance area.
- Students who are income eligible must maintain a passing academic grade level if still in school. Report cards must be turned in each quarter.
- Students must not engage in any noisy chatter, laughter, horseplay or any disruptive behavior that would be a distraction to the instructor during class or during performances.
- Students should wait until the class has ended to drink water unless instructed to do so by the dance instructor.

I have read, I understand, and I accept the above rules of Chiku Awali.

Student

Date