



PARENT / STUDENT  
HANDBOOK

2017-2018 SEASON

“Building a Musical Future  
for New Jersey”

## OVERVIEW

The New Jersey State Youth Orchestra (NJSYO) exists to promote learning and love of music for our student musicians. Since its founding in 1977, the organization has grown to include three orchestral ensembles (Preparatory String Orchestra - PSO; Concert Youth Orchestra - CYO; and Symphonic Youth Orchestra - SYO) and a Chamber Ensemble program. Supervision of these ensembles by the Conductors, section coaches, the Board of Trustees, and parents is required for the NJSYO to run smoothly. The goal of the NJSYO is to provide an extraordinary musical training and performance experience for all of our student musicians. This Handbook provides guidelines to help facilitate this goal.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

All NJSYO participants must register online before the beginning of each season (e.g. September). Early bird registration is generally available in the early summer. Please see the official website ([www.njsyo.org](http://www.njsyo.org)) for details.

All new students must register and complete an audition. Orchestral placement is based on a student's audition and grade level and is at the discretion of the Conductors. Current

participants who wish to "move up" in position or to change to a higher-level orchestra or to join the Chamber Ensemble must also audition.

PSO student musicians must be in at least 2nd grade. PSO students must be picked up in their classrooms following rehearsal.

CYO student musicians must be in at least 5th grade.

SYO student musicians must be in at least 9th grade.

Chamber musicians must be at least 13 years old.

Each student will be issued a folder and is responsible for maintaining it and its contents in a concert-ready condition.

The Conductors are responsible for discipline in their orchestras, with assistance from the section coaches and approved parent volunteers. All student musicians shall respect the privilege rendered to them by the host rehearsal or performance venue and shall not cause any disturbance in or of the facility. Parents shall be

responsible for students' conduct and assume responsibility for any facility damage.

## VOLUNTEERS AND COMMITTEES

### **Committee Membership**

The NJSYO is managed and operated by parent and community volunteers. Accordingly, the NJSYO has several committees that oversee the administration of the orchestra. Each family is encouraged to help with the vital projects which keep the organization alive. There are many volunteer opportunities, which include serving on the following committees:

**Fundraising** - develops individual and corporate donations to the NJSYO organization

**Marketing** - works to raise the public profile of the NJSYO through contacting newspapers, designing flyers and brochures, redesigning and updating our website, and managing its social media accounts

**Program Guide** – solicits and collects ads from businesses and individuals for printing in our concert program

**Hospitality** - provides refreshments for students and audience members and flowers for Conductors and guest artists

**Orchestra Coordinators** - Each ensemble (PSO, CYO, SYO, and Chamber Program) should have **at least one** Orchestra Coordinator (OC). The OC assists the Conductor during rehearsals to help to ensure that they run smoothly. The OC may also be asked to help coordinate stage and rehearsal setup with the Conductor and Board of Trustees. At least one OC must be available at all rehearsals and all concerts.

Volunteers are also needed to serve on the Board of Trustees.

***These committees are extremely important to the life of the NJSYO. They ensure that our students get the best possible training in the best possible environment, and that the NJSYO continues to prosper.***

To volunteer, or to ask questions about NJSYO operations, speak to any Board member or email [njsyo@njsyo.org](mailto:njsyo@njsyo.org).

**The 2017 – 2018 Board of Trustees:**

***Executive Board***

|                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Frank Ascone</b>   | <b>President</b>      |
| <b>Eugenia Yue</b>    | <b>Vice President</b> |
| <b>Gayle Topper</b>   | <b>Secretary</b>      |
| <b>Michele Fields</b> | <b>Treasurer</b>      |

***At-Large Board Members***

|                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Gayle Smith</b>    | <b>Past President</b> |
| <b>Yumi Choi-Bose</b> |                       |
| <b>Michael Hou</b>    |                       |
| <b>Frank Su</b>       |                       |
| <b>Robert Topper</b>  |                       |

**PROGRAM GUIDE AND  
SPONSORSHIP PARTICIPATION**

The NJSYO produces a program guide each year for its concerts. One of our most important fundraising activities is to solicit program ads and sponsorships. All students are expected to provide **at least one** program guide ad or sponsorship, from any source (a minimum of a quarter-page sized ad or \$25 sponsorship). The ad/sponsorship forms are available on the website ([www.njsyo.org](http://www.njsyo.org)); copies of these forms will also be distributed. Please return the completed forms with any artwork (business cards, photos, etc.) and the appropriate payment.

Artwork can also be emailed to [njsyo@njsyo.org](mailto:njsyo@njsyo.org).  
The deadline for submission will be announced.

## ATTENDANCE AND CONDUCT POLICY

The NJSYO is committed to providing a superior music education and performance experience to all NJSYO students. Absence, lateness, or early departure disrupts the learning environment and detracts from the performance level of the entire orchestra. Each student musician is strongly urged to attend all rehearsals and performances, to arrive promptly, to behave professionally, and to remain throughout.

Perfect attendance and comportment of all musicians is our goal. In the event of serious or continuing misconduct or disruptive behavior the Conductor, in consultation with the Board of Trustees, is empowered to exercise appropriate disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the orchestra.

The NJSYO recognizes that occasional absences may be necessary due to unforeseen situations, although they are acceptable only in extenuating circumstances. Therefore, the NJSYO has adopted the following Attendance Policy.

## **Rehearsals**

**Absences** are to be used only for unavoidable situations, such as religious obligations, serious illness, injury, or other emergencies. The Conductor is responsible for taking attendance, with assistance as needed from the OC and/or section coaches. When the Conductor is notified of such circumstances the absence will be considered to be an excused absence; otherwise the absence will be considered unexcused. More than two unexcused absences is a violation of the Attendance Policy and may result in disciplinary action, including a seating demotion for the concert, not being allowed to perform in the concert, or other action at the discretion of the Conductor or Board of Trustees. Late arrivals or early departures of 15 minutes or more will be recorded as an absence.

**Notification:** Musicians are required to notify their Conductor in advance for any scheduled absence that can be reasonably be anticipated. Each Conductor will notify their students how they should be contacted.

**Lateness:** Musicians are expected to arrive for rehearsals 15 minutes before the scheduled start time of their first activity. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of rehearsals. Musicians

must be in their seats, ready to play their instruments, 5 minutes before the rehearsal begins. Prompt return from rehearsal breaks is also required.

### **Rehearsal Cancellation**

In the event of a rehearsal cancellation due to weather or other emergencies, the NJSYO will notify students with a notice on the website and via email. The Middletown Arts Center (MAC) can also be reached at (732) 706 - 4100.

### **Performances**

**Attendance** at all scheduled concert performances is mandatory. Absence from or late arrival for a scheduled concert in the absence of extenuating circumstances (e.g., illness) is a serious violation of the Attendance Policy and will result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the NJSYO, and ineligibility to re-audition in subsequent seasons. Excellent conduct is expected at all concerts, including conduct backstage and in waiting rooms. The Conductors, in consultation with the Board of Trustees, are empowered to exercise appropriate disciplinary action, including expulsion from the orchestra.

## **Community Service**

The NJSYO can certify community service work for students. However, the policies for what hours can be counted depend strongly on the school district or organization that needs the documentation. Some will allow rehearsal time as well as performances, others will only allow time spent in performance, and so on. Accordingly, students must sign in with the Conductor and / or the Orchestra Coordinator (OC) at the beginning of the season and notify them of their desire to receive credit. This notification consists of a Community Service form from the school district (and if the information is not on the form, a letter from the school district or organization is required which describes what the rules are for counting rehearsals and performances towards Community Service).

These forms may only be signed by the Conductor or the OC for your group (s). Credit will not be given to students for a rehearsal involving arriving late (15 minutes or more) or departing early. Please allow a minimum of one week for the form to be signed and returned so that it can be checked against attendance records.

## CONCERT ATTIRE

*In general, concert attire should be formal and conservative.*

Failure to abide by the dress code requirements may result in not being allowed on stage for the performance.

ALL MEMBERS: NO sneakers or flip flops  
NO black jeans or casual pants  
NO leggings or yoga pants

GIRLS: NO strapless tops or dresses  
*Skirts and dresses should be knee-length or longer*

GUYS: Dress shirts must be tucked in

### **Symphonic Youth Orchestra**

**Girls:** Black blouse and black skirt or black dress pants, or long black dress

Black dress shoes, black socks/stockings

**Guys:** Black Tuxedo with bow tie, white button-down shirt or tuxedo shirt

Black dress shoes, black socks

## **Chamber Ensemble**

**Girls:** Black blouse and black skirt or black dress slacks, or long black dress

Black dress shoes, black socks/stockings

**Guys:** Black dress pants, black dress shirt, long black tie

Black dress shoes, black socks

## **Concert Youth Orchestra**

**Girls:** White blouse and black skirt or black dress pants

Black dress shoes, black socks/stockings

**Guys:** White shirt, long dark tie (no bow ties), black dress pants

Black dress shoes, black socks

## **Preparatory String Orchestra**

**Girls:** White blouse and black skirt or black dress pants

Black dress shoes, black socks/stockings

**Guys:** White shirt (no tie), black dress pants

Black dress shoes, black socks

***Picture night will be announced early in the fall season. Please arrive for rehearsal on picture night in full concert attire.***