



PARENT / STUDENT  
HANDBOOK

2018-2019 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 must

assume full 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

**Marketing** - raises the public profile of the NJSYO through contacting newspapers with feature articles, 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

**Performance** -helps backstage during performances and assists with the organization of the music library

**Volunteers are also urgently 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 2018 - 2019 Board of Trustees:**

***Executive Board***

<b>Gayle Topper</b>	<b>President</b>
<b>Eugenia Yue</b>	<b>Vice President</b>
<b>Gayle Smith</b>	<b>Secretary</b>
<b>Michele Fields</b>	<b>Treasurer</b>

***At-Large Board Members***

<b>Yumi Choi-Bose</b>	<b>Frank Su</b>
<b>Ashley Kussman</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 families 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, disruptive behavior, or early departure from rehearsal 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 the rehearsal or performance.

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 maintains Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts. All musicians and their families are responsible for strictly refraining from online harassment or “cyberbullying” in connection with the NJSYO accounts. Violation of this requirement will result in serious consequences up to and including expulsion from the NJSYO, at the discretion of the Executive Board.

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:** Attendance at rehearsals is required and so only a limited number of absences are permitted. These 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 section coaches and/or a designated parent volunteer. When the Conductor is notified of legitimate circumstances for an absence in a timely manner (see **Notification** below), the absence will be considered to be excused; 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, or an absence may be considered unexcused. 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.

**Pickup:** Musicians should be picked up promptly at the end of rehearsal and are not permitted to wait outside until picked up. All musicians must wait in the lobby for pickup.

### **Rehearsal Cancellation**

In the event of an unscheduled rehearsal cancellation due to weather or other emergencies, the NJSYO will make every effort to notify students with a notice on the website, email and social media. The Middletown Arts Center 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 Hours**

The NJSYO can certify community service work for students. **Plan ahead. You must allow a minimum of one week for the form to be signed and returned so that it can be checked against attendance records. No exceptions will be made.** In the past, parents and students have requested that forms be signed immediately upon presentation to board members. This is not permitted.

You must completely fill out and present the appropriate form(s) for your school district to the Conductor for signing, including the number of hours you are claiming. You are responsible for filling out the form in a manner which follows your school district's rules. Please ask your Conductor or the NJSYO President for help if you have questions.

## 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 Attire:**

**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 Attire:**

**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 Attire:**

**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 Attire:**

**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.***