



PARTICIPANT HANDBOOK

2019 - 2020 SEASON

“Building a Musical Future
for New Jersey”

OVERVIEW

Since its founding in 1977, the New Jersey State Youth Orchestra (NJSYO) has grown to include three orchestras and an ensemble program as well as an optional summer education program. Close supervision of the orchestras and ensembles by the Conductors, Section Coaches, the Board of Trustees, and parents and guardians 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.

The NJSYO Board of Trustees (2019-2020)

Executive Board

President	Gayle Topper
Vice President	Frank Su
Secretary	Donna Fiore-Willson
Treasurer	Michele Fields

At-Large Board Members

Jacquie Fiorito	Lakshmi Nadiminti
Vibha Jawa	Robert Q. Topper

GENERAL INFORMATION

All NJSYO program 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) for details. Also, note that the NJSYO does not issue refunds for cancelled registrations, a policy required by our fiscal and contractual obligations to our Conductors and Coaches.

All new members must register and complete an audition. Current participants who wish to change positions within an orchestra; to change to a different orchestra; or to join the Chamber or Wind Ensembles must also audition.

Orchestral placement is based on a student's audition and grade level, and is at the discretion of the Conductors. Our Conductors are professional musicians and accredited music educators whose expertise should be fully relied on when it comes to appropriate placement of musicians within an orchestra or ensemble. The NJSYO Trustees request that you respect their professional assessments and recommendations.

As described below, there are minimum age requirements for all of the orchestras.

PSO members must be in at least 2nd grade. **PSO students who are below the 5th grade must be picked up in their classrooms following rehearsal.**

CYO members must be in at least 5th grade.

SYO members must be in at least 9th grade.

Chamber Ensemble and Wind Ensemble musicians must be at least 13 years old, or at least in the 8th grade.

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

The Conductors and Coaches are responsible for discipline in their orchestras, with assistance from the Trustees and approved parent / guardian volunteers. All members 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 / guardians shall be responsible for

members' conduct and must assume full responsibility for any facility damage.

CONCERT PROGRAMS AND SPONSORSHIP PARTICIPATION

The NJSYO produces a special program each year for its Winter and Spring Concerts. One of our most important fundraising activities is to solicit program ads and season sponsorships. **All families are expected to provide at least one program guide ad or donation, from any source (a minimum of a quarter-page sized ad or \$50 sponsorship).** You may make an equivalent donation in place of this requirement, or convince a business to either buy a program ad or become a season sponsor.

The ad/sponsorship forms are available on the website (www.njsyo.org). 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. The annual deadline for program submission will be announced; sponsorships or donations may be submitted throughout the season.

VOLUNTEERS AND COMMITTEES

The NJSYO is managed and operated by parents, guardians, and approved community volunteers.

Committee Membership

The NJSYO has several key committees of volunteers who provide essential service to the NJSYO. **Each family is expected to help with the vital projects which keep the organization alive.** There are many volunteer opportunities at all levels of commitment, which include serving on, or assisting, the following committees. Many of these involve highly flexible hours and can fit into any busy schedule.

Public Relations and Advertising Committee

Assist with event flyers, press releases, advertising in print and online; work with Social Media committee.

Hospitality Committee

Parent night, pizza party, Fall and Winter Concerts, yearbook signing event. Solicit food/materials from families, local businesses.

Program Committee

Solicit ads, help design program and inserts used for Winter and Spring concerts, arrange printing, help assemble programs.

Membership Committee

Organized and run auditions, help with online registration system, communicate results.

Sponsorship Committee

Solicit businesses and organizations to underwrite our programs and concert season; assist with grant applications.

Merchandise Committee

Keep and maintain inventory, supervise online and event sales.

Yearbook Committee

Work with photographer to set dates for photo sessions and help run them; solicit photos from parents; arrange candid photography throughout season; proof yearbooks; work with interns as needed to create event pages and collages for each group; coordinate yearbook orders and distribution.

Social Media Committee (board only)

Actively maintain NJSYO online presence; keep web site and online calendar up to date; post all events and news on social media platforms; keep up with inquiries on social media; maintain email system and assist with other electronic resources.

Assistance Committee (board only)

Maintain application for financial assistance program; coordinate with

Treasurer to make recommendations to Board based on available resources; review attendance of members receiving assistance; investigate and lead efforts for non-financial assistance for members as needed; help solicit external support.

These committees and the Board 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. Please don't wait to be asked to volunteer! To volunteer, or to ask questions about NJSYO operations, speak to any Board member or email njsyo@njsyo.org.

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.

Conduct

Perfect attendance and perfect comportment of all musicians is our goal. Each musician is required to attend all rehearsals and all scheduled performances as a condition of membership. Members are expected to arrive promptly, to behave professionally, and to remain throughout the rehearsal or performance unless special permission is given.

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,” particularly of other NJSYO members and/or in any connection with the NJSYO social media 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.

Attendance

The NJSYO recognizes that **occasional** absences may be necessary due to unforeseen situations. Therefore, the NJSYO has adopted the following Attendance Policy.

Rehearsals

Absences: Attendance at rehearsals is required and only a limited number of absences are permitted (see Violations). 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 / guardian volunteer.

If a student must miss a rehearsal, the Conductor must be notified in advance of the rehearsal if that is possible. Each Conductor will notify students as to how they should be notified.

More than two absences from rehearsal for a particular concert is a violation of the Attendance Policy, whether or not advance notification is given. Absences without prior notification are more serious violations than otherwise would be the case.

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. **Late arrivals or early departures of 15 minutes or more will be recorded as absences.**

Pickup: Musicians must be picked up promptly at the end of rehearsal and are not permitted to wait outside until picked up. All students in 4th grade or below must be picked up by a parent or guardian in the rehearsal room. All other 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 which is due solely to a scheduling conflict is a serious violation of the Attendance Policy (see “Violations” below).

Excellent conduct is expected at all concerts, including conduct backstage and in waiting rooms. The Conductors, Coaches, and Board members, in consultation with members of the Executive Board, are empowered to exercise appropriate disciplinary action for disruptive conduct at performance venues including summary expulsion from the concert. Disruptive conduct or property theft or venue damage may result in suspension and/or expulsion from the NJSYO at the discretion of the Board of Trustees.

Violations

Violations of the Attendance and Conduct Policy as outlined above may result in a seating demotion for subsequent concert(s); not being allowed to perform in subsequent concert(s); not being allowed to progress to advanced seats, groups, sections or programs; or other actions at the joint discretion of the Conductor and the

Board of Trustees, based on the number of violations and their severity.

Community Service Hours

The NJSYO can certify community service work for students. **If you need certification, you must 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. Generally your form will be signed by your Conductor. Your form may only be signed by an NJSYO Executive Board member if they are able to first confirm your attendance and participation with the Conductor. 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. Detailed requirements are given below.

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

ALL MEMBERS: NO sneakers, sandals, flip flops
NO jeans or sweat pants
NO leggings or yoga pants
NO t-shirts
NO athletic wear of ANY kind
NO strapless tops and no strapless dresses.

Skirts and dresses must be knee-length or longer

Dress shirts must be tucked in

***Picture night is scheduled for
October 10.***

Please arrive for rehearsal on picture night in full Orchestra concert attire, whether or not you plan to purchase pictures.

Symphonic Youth Orchestra Attire:

Girls: Black blouse and black skirt (knee-length or longer) or black dress pants, or long black dress. Black dress shoes and black socks / stockings. **Guys:** Black tuxedo with bow tie, white dress shirt or tuxedo shirt. Black dress shoes and black socks.

Chamber and Wind Ensembles Attire:

Girls: Black blouse and black skirt (knee-length or longer) or black dress pants, or long black dress. Black dress shoes and black socks / stockings. **Guys:** Black dress pants, black dress shirt (no tie). Black dress shoes and black socks.

Concert Youth Orchestra Attire:

Girls: Long black skirt (knee-length or longer) or black dress pants, white shirt, black dress shoes and black stockings/socks. **Guys:** Black dress pants, white dress shirt, long black tie (no bow ties), Black dress shoes and black socks.

Preparatory String Orchestra Attire:

Girls: Long black skirt (knee-length or longer) or black dress pants, white shirt, black dress shoes and black stockings/socks. **Guys:** Black dress pants, white shirt (no tie). Black dress shoes and black socks.