



georgia youth
symphony orchestras

Georgia Youth Symphony Orchestras

Student Handbook

2025-2026 Season

2025-2026 REHEARSAL SCHEDULE

The 2025-2026 GYSO calendar will be posted in June 2025.

The regular rehearsal schedule is posted below. *Rehearsal times and locations are subject to change throughout the season. For the most current schedule, please visit <https://www.georgiayouthsymphony.org/schedule/>.*

ENSEMBLE	TIME	LOCATION
Symphony	2:30-5:00 PM (Sun)	KSU Bailey Center, Morgan Hall
Philharmonic	3:00-5:30 PM (Sun)	KSU Bailey Center, Scott Hall
Camerata	1:00-3:00 PM (Sun)	MPAC, Stage & Orchestra Room
Harmonia	2:30-4:00 PM (Sun)	MPAC, Orchestra Room
Concertino	4:15-5:15 PM (Sun)	MPAC, Orchestra Room
Honors String Quartet	6:45-8:00 PM (Sun)	KSU Bailey Center, Morgan Hall
String Symposium	5:30-6:30 PM (Sun)	KSU Bailey Center, Morgan Hall
Jazz	5:30-7:00 PM (Wed)	KSU, Brandsmart Building

All performances take place in Morgan Hall at KSU's Bailey Performing Arts Center unless otherwise noted.

Rehearsal Sites

Morgan Hall - The Bailey Center, KSU
488 Prillaman Way
Kennesaw, GA 30144

Scott Rehearsal Hall - The Bailey Center, KSU
488 Prillaman Way
Kennesaw, GA 30144

KSU "BrandSmart" Building (formerly BrandSmart USA)
3305 Busbee Dr.
Kennesaw, GA 30144

"MPAC" The Marietta Performing Arts Center, Marietta High School
1171 Whitlock Ave. NW
Marietta, GA 30064

HEALTH, SAFETY, & POLICIES

These policies are subject to change due to changing health and safety guidelines and recommendations.

Adherence to these policies by students and parents is required for GYSO membership.

The safety and health of our students, parents, patrons, musicians, and staff is of the utmost importance. GYSO will comply with all applicable CDC, OSHA and Georgia safety and health requirements and maintain safety and health standards that equal or exceed the best practices of our host facilities.

GYSO Ensembles

GYSO's core ensembles are our five orchestras--Symphony, Philharmonic, Camerata, Harmonia, Concertino--GYSO Jazz!, String Symposium, and Honors String Quartet.

When warranted by demand, GYSO may expand its offerings to include other ensembles, such as Percussion Ensemble, Clarinet Choir, and Honors Brass Quintet.

GYSO CONCERT TICKETS

- Concert tickets will be available for purchase online or in person 1 hour prior to the performance start time. If you purchase tickets online, they will be sent to the email address associated with your ticket purchase.
- GYSO students each have access to 1 free ticket to every GYSO performance using promo code **GYSO1**. This free ticket is for the student to use when visiting other GYSO ensemble concerts, not for family members. If your student is purchasing a ticket at the box office, please mention the code to receive your free ticket.
- All tickets are accessible through the [GSO website](#) or through the GSO office at 770-615-2908. Seating is not reserved for GYSO performances.
- Parents that volunteer for a GYSO performance attend that performance for free and do not need to purchase a ticket.

PARENT VOLUNTEER ROLES

As students prepare to rehearse and perform, parents can play a part too!

The GYSO parent committee supports the activities of GYSO staff and directors to further the program's mission. Throughout the school year, committee members may:

- Chaperone at dress rehearsals and the annual boot camp
- Assist in developing social media and GYSO newsletter content
- Assist box office and will-call staff at student performances
- Assist with the sale of GYSO merchandise at GYSO performances
- Organize and execute holiday and year-end celebrations
- Aid in securing GYSO community sponsorships and concert program advertisements
- Assist at the annual parent meeting
- Take candid photos at GYSO rehearsals and events
- Assist with GYSO outreach communications

[**GYSO Volunteer Signup Click Here**](#)

If you have any questions regarding volunteering in our box office, please contact our Box Office Coordinator, Ann Stoskopf, at anns@georgiasymphony.org or at 770-615-2908.

PROGRAMS

Our concert programs are digital. In addition to information about the production, artistic and director's notes, stay tuned for more content (which may include behind-the-scenes materials!). Programs will now be available on the Georgia Symphony Orchestra and GYSO websites.

MEMBERSHIP POLICIES

Auditions

Digital Audition Submissions for the 2025-2026 season will be accepted until 11:59pm on May 31, 2025. Information regarding audition procedures and placement is available [on our website](#).

School Participation

Participation in a school music program is required, provided one exists. We believe wholeheartedly in supporting our community of music educators by supplementing (and not replacing) their music programs. The School Program Participation form--found at the end of this document--is due August 17, 2025. Any student who has not submitted this form--or the Parent Guardian Exception Form, also found at the end of this document--by the due date will be prohibited from participating in GYSO activities until the requisite completed form has been received by GYSO.

Any submissions of the School Program Participation form found to be fraudulent will result in immediate dismissal from the GYSO program without refund.

Code of Conduct and Expectations

Students are expected to arrive on time to all scheduled events, attend both rehearsals and concerts musically prepared, and adhere to the attendance policy stated below.

GYSO maintains a zero-tolerance policy on bullying or harassment of any kind. Students found bullying or harassing other students may be suspended from GYSO pending an investigation of the incident. Depending on the outcome of the investigation, consequences can range from a warning to possible expulsion from GYSO without refund.

Attendance Policy Introduction

Regular attendance by all members is essential for the success of any ensemble. GYSO members are typically involved in a myriad of activities, all of which have value. Active participation in GYSO must be a priority for all members.

Reporting An Absence

1. If you know you will be absent, you should complete the [absence notification form](#) as soon as you are aware of the absence. The [absence notification form](#) allows a quick report to be provided to directors to identify if there will be any major holes within a section during a rehearsal. **Emails will not be accepted for absence notifications.**
2. All planned absences should be communicated with as much notice as possible. For any unforeseen circumstances (emergencies), please submit an [absence notification form](#) as soon as possible.

3. Communication of an absence is important to help keep members in good standing and aid in situations that require discretionary decisions regarding student participation.

Attendance Policies

Attendance policies vary by ensemble based on the number of concert cycles. Please refer to the policy that corresponds to your ensemble. GYSO administration and ensemble directors retain ultimate authority over all attendance policy decisions. Members may appeal attendance policy decisions by contacting the GYSO Operations Manager via email at gysinfo@georgiasymphony.org.

Symphony, Philharmonic, String Symposium, GYSO Jazz, Honors String Quartet

1. These ensembles perform three concert cycles per season. Students may have no more than two (2) absences during any one concert cycle. A concert cycle is defined as the first rehearsal on repertoire to be performed on a given concert through that concert performance. Students who accrue two (2) absences in a given concert cycle may not be permitted to perform that concert; however, the student will retain their seat for future concert cycles. Refunds will not be issued for concert cycles missed due to non-compliance with the attendance policy.
2. GYSO defines being on time as being in your seat ready to play with your instrument, music, pencil, and any other necessary accessories at the posted start time. Members arriving after that time will be considered tardy. Members arriving 20 minutes or more after the posted start time will be considered absent.
3. Two (2) instances of tardiness at any point during a concert cycle will be counted as one (1) absence.
4. Absences are not permitted at either the last regular rehearsal before a performance or the dress rehearsal on the day of the performance. Students must seek special permission in advance from the GYSO Operations Manager who will communicate with their respective ensemble director if they need to miss either of these rehearsals. Excused absences from dress rehearsals are not guaranteed.

Camerata, Harmonia, Concertino

1. These ensembles perform two concert cycles per season. Students may have no more than three (3) absences during any one concert cycle. A concert cycle is defined as the first rehearsal on repertoire to be performed on a given concert through that concert performance. Students who accrue three (3) absences in a given concert cycle may not be permitted to perform that concert; however, the student will retain their seat for future concert cycles. Refunds will not be issued for concert cycles missed due to non-compliance with the attendance policy.
2. GYSO defines being on time as being in your seat ready to play with your instrument, music, pencil, and any other necessary accessories at the posted start time. Members arriving after that time will be considered tardy. Members arriving 20 minutes or more after the posted start time will be considered absent.
3. Two (2) instances of tardiness at any point during a concert cycle will be counted as one (1) absence.

4. Absences are not permitted at either the last regular rehearsal before a performance or the dress rehearsal on the day of the performance. Students must seek special permission in advance from the GYSO Operations Manager who will communicate with their respective ensemble director if they need to miss either of these rehearsals. Excused absences from dress rehearsals are not guaranteed.

Seating and Part Assignments

All seating and part assignments are at the discretion of each individual director and do not necessarily reflect audition rank. Seating may change throughout the season.

Our seating philosophy is intended to provide fair opportunities, new musical perspective, and the greatest learning experience for all players. Rotational seating is a commonly used tool intended to promote student growth and enhance the ensemble as a whole. These assignments are based on a myriad of factors such as technical ability, musicality, maturity, leadership skills, and rehearsal habits of the player. At their discretion, ensemble directors may require reseating hearings.

Rehearsal Preparedness

Arriving punctually and well-prepared to rehearsals will help the entire ensemble succeed. Each director will specify exactly what is needed for their ensemble, but general guidelines are as follows:

- **Instrument:** This includes bow, mouthpiece, working reeds, sticks and mallets, valve oil, extra strings – anything that you need to insure that you will be able to play.
- **Music:** Do not rely on your stand partner or section mates. If you lose or forget your music, we cannot guarantee a replacement part will be available for that rehearsal.
- **Pencil:** Bring one to every rehearsal.
- **Accessories:** Brass and string players should have mutes, cellists should have rockstops, oboists should have tuners. Everyone should have any equipment needed to fulfill their duties.
- **Water:** A closed container (no straws or open tops) of room temperature (no ice due to condensation) water is permitted in rehearsals. **No other liquids or foods of any kind are permitted in the rehearsal halls.**

Music

With the exception of concert cycle 1, music will be distributed approximately two weeks before the first rehearsal of a given concert cycle by the GSO Library, facilitated by the GYSO Operations Manager and GYSO Interns. All music should be marked only in pencil and returned in good condition immediately after the concert cycle ends. It is the responsibility of the student to be accountable for their music at all times. Lost music will be replaced only in person (no digital copies), once without charge. Additional replacements will cost \$20.

Copyright Laws

The Georgia Symphony Orchestra and GYSO comply with all national and international copyright laws. Photocopying of music is expressly prohibited unless said photocopying is done within the educational use parameters of copyright law or with the copyright holder's permission. As part of this compliance, sheet music will not be distributed digitally.

Rehearsal Attire

Students should wear comfortable clothing that does not restrict their ability to perform.

Performance Attire

Students may choose one of the following options:

- All black: black shirt (with collar and long sleeves), black dress pants, black shoes, black socks or full-length black skirt with black long sleeve top with modest neckline, or a black dress that goes past the knee with modest neckline and long sleeves. If sleeves are short, a matching jacket or black sweater with long sleeves must be worn as well. Black, closed-toed dress shoes with black tights or black hose (no patterns) should be worn with skirts or dresses. Bare midriffs are unacceptable.
- Tuxedo, white shirt with a black bow tie, black dress shoes and black socks.
- Black jeans or corduroy pants are not acceptable.
- **No perfume, cologne or aftershave during rehearsals or performances.**

ANNUAL TUITION

Membership in GYSO is for the entire season, from the initial acceptance at the beginning of summer through the final concert in May. Musicians are expected to remain active and committed for the entire season. Visit gyso.org to make tuition payments.

2025-2026 Season Tuition

- \$550 Yearly Primary Ensemble Tuition (Symphony, Philharmonic, Camerata, Harmonia, Concertino, GYSO Jazz)
- \$275 Yearly Secondary Ensemble Tuition (In Addition to primary Ensemble) (i.e.-String Symposium)
- Subject to demand and minimum enrollment, additional primary and secondary ensembles may also be offered. Tuition details will be made available in the event these ensembles are offered.

Payment Schedule

- **50% Deposit due to secure spot (due in June based on acceptance letter)**
- **Tuition paid in full by August 1, 2025**

If you are unable to follow this payment schedule, please contact the GYSO Operations Manager to request approval for an alternate payment plan.

Tuition Refunds

Students that elect not to continue participating in GYSO may only receive a tuition refund prior to August 1st. After this date, all tuition payments are non-refundable. Students unable to continue participating due to policy violation are not eligible for a refund at any point in the season. Members may appeal tuition refund decisions by contacting the GYSO Operations Manager via email at gysoinfo@georgiasymphony.org.

Scholarships & Financial Aid

Our philosophy is to serve *all* musicians - no student should be turned away for financial reasons. Scholarships are available for partial or full GYSO tuition. [Click here to apply](#) for a partial or full scholarship application form and submit supplementary materials. All financial information submitted is kept strictly confidential. **Scholarship applications are due by May 31, 2025.**



2025-2026 SCHOOL ENSEMBLE PROGRAM PARTICIPATION FORM

The school ensemble program standing portion must be completed by the GYSO member's school ensemble program director. In the event the member's school/homeschool program does not offer an ensemble program, the member's parent/guardian must complete the exemption portion of the form.

Any submissions of this form found to be fraudulent will result in immediate dismissal from the GYSO program without refund.

SCHOOL ENSEMBLE PROGRAM STANDING PORTION

(to be completed by the ensemble program director of the GYSO member's school)

GYSO provides an opportunity intended to augment, not replace, ensembles in the schools. To that end, GYSO requires that all members are in "good standing" with their school's corresponding ensemble program—band for woodwinds/brass/percussion/jazz and orchestra for strings—provided one exists. "Good standing" means that members are either active participants in their ensemble program or are excused from active participation for a reason approved by the school's ensemble program director (e.g. an unavoidable scheduling conflict with an AP class.) Please complete the form below to share the GYSO member's status in your ensemble program. (Note: If you have any questions or concerns about this policy, form, or the listed student's standing in your program, please contact GYSO at gysinfo@georgiasymphony.org.)

GYSO Member's Name (print): _____
(select one)

- **IS** in good standing with my school's ensemble program.
- **IS NOT** in good standing with my school's ensemble program.

School Ensemble Director Name (print): _____

School Ensemble Director Email: _____

School Ensemble Director Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

EXEMPTION PORTION

(to be completed by the GYSO member's parent/guardian, only if relevant)

By signing below, I affirm that a corresponding music ensemble program—band for woodwinds/brass/percussion/jazz and orchestra for strings—is not offered by my student's school/homeschool program.

GYSO Member's Name (print): _____

Parent/Guardian Name (print): _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ **Date:** _____