

samohi:orchestras

2025/2026 Orchestra Course Syllabus

String, Concert, Sinfonia, Intermezzo, Philharmonic, Symphony and Chamber

(310) 395-3204 x 71401

samohiorchestras.org

Jason Aiello, Director jaiello@smmusd.org

Emily Taylor, Director emilytaylor@smmusd.org

Welcome back!

Essential information that you need to know is in this syllabus. Please bookmark this link or have the file digitally accessible as a reference. **You are required to keep this syllabus at the beginning of your orchestra binder.** Our goal for each ensemble is to work as a team and to learn to the best of our group's ability a wide range of quality orchestral literature. Every musician must meet the following criteria to achieve this goal, and they are the basis for the grading policy of this class.

Grade breakdown: **Technique and Skill Development** (Sectional and Rehearsal Assignments: **40%**);
 Performances (Concerts and Individual Playing Assessments: **40%**);
 Classwork (Sectional Participation, Written Assignments, Preparation: **20%**)

1. Proper Rehearsal Conduct – As your instructors, we will not allow you to do anything that is not in your best interest or the best interest of this ensemble. That means we will not allow you to stop anyone from learning or stop us from teaching. Please refrain from talking and playing out of turn during rehearsals.

2. Musical Preparedness – You need to have the following: (*If you need any of these supplies, please see Mr. Aiello or Ms. Taylor.*)

- Black 1" 3-ring binder
- Pencils
- Musical supplies relevant to the instrument; e.g., rosin, strings, reeds, valve oil

It is crucial to have all materials at all rehearsals, don't rely on your stand partner to bring the music! By doing so, you will miss important phrasings, bowings, fingerings, etc. Everyone must have their binder to make appropriate markings. Please organize the music in your binder alphabetically so you can find pieces quickly. Binder checks will occur periodically during the school year without warning.

Recommended Materials

Above are the recommended materials for students taking orchestra. These materials are not required, and full participation in the course does not require the purchase of any of these materials. State law requires us to provide a public education free of charge. Subject to certain limited exceptions, the right to a free public education means we cannot require students or their families to purchase materials, supplies, equipment, or uniforms for any school activity, including school-sponsored extracurricular activities, to pay security deposits for access, participation, materials, or equipment, or to make donations to a class activity or program. For more information, go to <http://www.smmusd.org>.

3. Playing tests – will be live or submitted recordings via Google Classroom. We will accept late submissions up until the relevant performance; however, late submissions may affect seating. Below are details for your first test.

Symphony – All State Scales and Excerpts, due in Google Classroom by Sunday, 9/7.

There will also be a sight-reading portion of the first test done live. You will be assigned a time in the afternoon or evening for sight-reading on Sept. 3 (violin, viola, bass) or Sept. 4 (cello, woodwind, brass). We will post a schedule on the bulletin board outside the orchestra room and on Google Classroom.

Philharmonic – CODA String Orchestra Scales and Excerpts, due in Google Classroom by Monday, 9/8.

There will also be a sight-reading portion of the first test done live. You will be assigned a time in the afternoon or evening for sight-reading on Sept. 10 (violin) or Sept. 11 (viola, cello bass). We will post a schedule on the bulletin board outside the orchestra room and on Google Classroom. Philharmonic Wind auditions (for new members) will be due in Google Classroom on Tuesday, Sept. 2.

Intermezzo/Sinfonia – CODA String Orchestra Scales and Excerpts due in Google Classroom by Friday, 9/19.

The first test for Intermezzo and Sinfonia will be a video assessment turned in through Google Classroom. Intermezzo students will be assigned to play the CODA Honors String Orchestra scale and the two CODA String Orchestra excerpts. Sinfonia students will be assigned to play the CODA Honors String Orchestra scale and one CODA String Orchestra excerpt.

Concert and String Orchestras – We will schedule the first test for Concert and String Orchestras once school starts.

4. Punctuality in class and rehearsals – Once you have entered the orchestra room, all students should prepare for rehearsal by taking out their instruments, music, and pencil. Please be mindful that students will already be in the process of tuning once you arrive.

5. Attendance in class and at sectionals – Missed rehearsals impact the entire ensemble and count towards your final grade. Sinfonia and Intermezzo will have rehearsals during Flex-Time, and Philharmonic, Symphony, and Chamber will have rehearsals after school. Please try to avoid making doctor or dentist appointments during rehearsal time. You may make up the absence if you are on a sports team and a game conflicts with rehearsal. Please try to work out a schedule with your coach and explain that after-school rehearsals are required. If you have an excused absence for illness, you will be able to make up this weekly assignment.

6. To Make Up a Missed Rehearsal for SINFONIA, INTERMEZZO, PHIL, SYMPHONY & CHAMBER – The procedure for excusing a missed rehearsal outside of class is to submit a practice recording reflecting work that was completed during rehearsal. Check the rehearsal log for your class to find specific passages you'll need to record and musical elements that were focused on. Rehearsal logs will be updated within 24 hours following each rehearsal and posted in Google Classroom. While there won't be a time requirement, practice should be completed to a proficient level prior to recording and submitting. Consistent practice should be a part of your routine.

- **If you miss rehearsals due to a sports conflict, having at least one in-person rehearsal grade is essential during a grading period. Please talk with Mr. Aiello or Ms. Taylor if you cannot make at least one rehearsal during a six-week grading period.**
- To submit your practice recording, upload it to the designated "Rehearsal Make-Up" assignment in Google Classroom

7. Participation at Concerts – Performances are a significant part of your grade and are excused only for illness or family emergency. A note, email, or phone call is needed if you miss a performance. Before and after concerts, it is everyone's responsibility to set up and take down. Concert duties will be done on a rotating basis and handled by our orchestra board representatives.



Sectional Schedule

M, T, F	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Per. 1 Sinfonia 8:30-9:25	Vln 1 – Taylor Vln 2 – Bordal Vla – Shapouri Cello – Aiello Bass – Shetzen		Per. 2 Philharmonic 8:55-10:24	Per. 1 Sinfonia 8:30-9:59	
Per. 2 Philharmonic 9:34-10:38	Vln 1 – Bordal Vln 2 – Taylor Vla – Moerschel Cello – Aiello Bass – Shetzen		Per. 4 Symphony 10:35-12:04	Per. 3 Intermezzo 10:10-11:39	Full Orch Every Friday
Per. 3 Intermezzo 10:49-11:44	Vln 1 – Nakano Vln 2 – Taylor Vla – Moerschel Cello – Tyler Bass – Shetzen		FLEX 12:13-1:03	Intermezzo Rehearsal	
				Symph Winds Sectional	
Per. 4 Symphony 11:53-12:48	Vln 1 – Nakano Vln 2 – Taylor Vla – Zakzook Cello – Tyler Bass – Shetzen	Chamber- Aiello Symphony Strings- Taylor	Phil Winds Sectional (Piano Rm)	FLEX 11:48-12:39	Sinfonia Rehearsal (if needed)
Per. 5 Concert/String 1:32-2:27	Concert/String Vln – Taylor Vla – Zakzook Cello – Aiello Bass – Shetzen		Per. 6 1:47-3:16	Per. 5 Concert/String 1:23-2:52	
“Per. 8”				Chamber 3:30-5:30 Aiello	
5:00-7:00 PM		Symph Full* Aiello	Phil Full* Taylor		

8. Written Assignments – Written assignments include reflections, music theory, and history. Additionally, memos that go home and have to be signed and returned are always graded assignments.

Assignment 1: Together, you and your parents must fill out the online registration, which will be due on Friday, Aug. 29, 2025, for a grade. <https://tinyurl.com/SamohiOrchestraRegistration>

Assignment 2: Sign up for google classroom by Friday, Aug. 29, 2025, for a grade AND have a guardian added to receive summary emails.

Per. 1 Sinfonia Orchestra	cpanm5il
Per. 2 Philharmonic Orchestra	ggfuptrh
Per. 3 Intermezzo Orchestra	srdhu7uy
Per. 4 Symphony Orchestra	aoxztptu
Per. 5 Concert/String Orchestra	lr477uot
Per. 8 Chamber Orchestra	2dpu5zp5

Assignment 3: Turn in the syllabus verification (last page of syllabus) by Friday, Aug. 29, 2025, for a grade.

9. Proper care of Equipment – Always be responsible enough to put away your instrument and music. **You must always lock lockers!** The orchestra room is frequently rented out to outside groups, so locking is imperative. Please keep your locker clean and free of heavy books. Food should never be kept in your instrument locker, as it will attract insects and other creatures. Loosen your bows and clean the rosin off of your instrument daily. Cello and Bass players will be assigned one instrument to use. Please do not use another instrument. All instruments go back into the assigned cabinet and should be locked after use. Failure to properly take care of school instruments or to secure personal instruments will adversely affect your grade.

10. Participation in the Solo and Small Ensemble Festival – is required of Philharmonic and Symphony students. Students who do not perform in this festival may work a shift at this festival for partial credit. Your growth as a musician will be remarkable if you put forth the effort. Do not procrastinate in preparing for Solo and Small Ensemble. NOW is the time to plan. You may do a solo, duet, trio, quartet, quintet, etc. Check online (IMSLP.org) for literature ideas. Another good source is the UCLA Music Library and the LA Public Library (main branch) for music. We are available at lunch and after school to assist you in finding appropriate literature. You can use flex time to practice in small ensembles. You may also consider participating in JCM (Junior Chamber Music) or Chamber Music programs through Elemental Music and Sol-La Music Academy. All programs will group you with musicians with similar abilities, and you will receive coaching as a group. You can obtain more information from their websites:

<http://www.juniorchambermusic.org/los-angeles-county.html>

<https://www.elementalmusic.org/chamber-music-institute>

<https://www.sollamusicacademy.org/programs/chamber-music-institute>

11. Senior Gala Information:

- Seniors who would like to perform at the Senior Gala will be participating in a solo and small ensemble competition and heard by two independent judges on the same day as the Solo and small ensemble Festival. There will be a separate application to be a performer at the Senior Gala. Please fill out the regular Solo and small Ensemble application if you do not wish to perform at the Senior Gala.
- The adjudicators will pick the **top 3 or 4 soloists or ensembles** who perform pieces with orchestral accompaniment. These senior soloists will have the opportunity of playing with the full orchestra at the Senior Gala.
- If a soloist is chosen to perform at Senior Gala and is also a part of an ensemble that is selected, the student must choose.
- Additional Senior soloists and ensembles will also be selected to perform with piano accompaniment based on the judges' scoring.
- Soloists and Ensembles are responsible for accompanist fees. However, please let Mr. Aiello or Ms. Taylor know if you need financial assistance.
- A Senior Gala soloist must play the same piece performed at the Senior Solo and Small Ensemble Competition
- Senior Gala pieces should be a maximum of 10 minutes. Soloists should work out cuts if their piece is longer than this time frame.

Other things you should know

12. Stay informed:

- Check Google Classroom and the bulletin board outside the orchestra room frequently. We post a calendar that will keep you informed of rehearsals, concerts, important deadlines, etc.
- Check your email frequently for any changes, notices, etc. If you are not receiving emails, make sure you have registered online using a non-smmk12 email address.
- Use the orchestra website. The home page has a calendar with important dates and deadlines. Additionally, some of your music will be on the website. www.samohiorchestras.com

13. Samohi Orchestra Student Board:

- The Samohi Orchestra Student Board will be elected shortly
- Board members will assist in the everyday functions of the group.
- We will need to elect a President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Librarians (2), and Social Media Rep, as well as a representative from each orchestra. The President will also serve as a student member of the OPA Executive Board as described in the OPA Operating Procedures. This individual will be expected to attend OPA Executive Board Meetings representing all Samohi Orchestras students.

14. Eating during class time is not permitted.

15. The use of the Barnum restrooms is **not** allowed during normal school hours unless we are rehearsing in Barnum that day. The Barnum restrooms will unlock at the end of Per. 6. Restrooms in the choir room may be used between classes, before and after school. Other facilities near the music building are located in the locker rooms adjacent to the music building.

16. Orchestra Attire:

- *Option 1* – Long, solid, black attire. For example, dressy slacks, skirts (black stockings required if you wear a skirt), or dresses. If there is a slit in the skirt, it may not go above the knee. Spaghetti straps, tank tops, halter tops, low-cut necklines, bare midriffs, and backs are not appropriate concert attire. Black dress shoes or dressy sandals (no flip-flops)
- *Option 2* – Black dress shirt (collared, button-up, long-sleeve) and black dress pants (no jeans). Black dress shoes – no gym shoes – and black socks.

Please see Mr. Aiello or Ms. Taylor should you need assistance with concert attire.

17. General Statement – Students enrolled at Santa Monica High School are not required to pay any fee, deposit, or other charges for participation in an educational activity offered by the school or the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District, except as authorized by law and consistent with the California constitution and Hartzell v. Connell (1984) 35 Cal.3d 899. Donations are sought and accepted for various activities and supplies and are, at times, critical to the continued success of classes and activities. Still, donations are always voluntary, and no child will be denied the right to fully and meaningfully participate in any activity because they have not donated money or supplies. For more information, go to <http://www.smmusd.org>.

Honor Orchestra Opportunities



CALIFORNIA ORCHESTRA DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION HONOR ORCHESTRAS

December 5-6, 2025, University of the Pacific – Stockton, CA

<https://www.codaorchestras.org/coda-honor-orchestras/>

Audition materials:

Audition excerpts are on the CODA website www.codaorchestras.org. Please send an email to Mr. Aiello or Ms. Taylor from your personal email if you would like to audition so that we can set up your account. Audition recordings and application fee (\$45) are due online by Oct. 13th for our approval.

NATIONAL YOUTH ORCHESTRA OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

<https://www.carnegiehall.org/Education/Programs/National-Youth-Ensembles/NYO-USA/Apply/Orchestra>



- September 4, 2025: Application officially opens
- December 4, 2025: Application deadline
- December 15, 2025: Recommendation deadline
- February 5, 2026: Applicants notified of status; audition feedback provided shortly thereafter
- July 2026: Program begins

NYO2

<https://www.carnegiehall.org/Education/Programs/National-Youth-Ensembles/NYO2/Apply>



- September 4, 2025: Application officially opens
- November 28, 2025: Deadline for nominations
- December 9, 2025: Application deadline
- January 5, 2026: Recommendation deadline
- February 19, 2026: Applicants notified of status; audition feedback provided shortly thereafter
- July 2026: Program begins

CALIFORNIA ALL STATE MUSIC EDUCATION CONFERENCE CASMEC/ALL-STATE ORCHESTRA



January 15-18, 2026 – Sacramento, CA

www.codaorchestras.org www.cbda.org

CASMEC and CODA – hosts an honor String Orchestra and an honor Symphony Orchestra.

Audition materials:

For strings: Audition excerpts are on the CODA website www.codaorchestras.org. Please send an email to Mr. Aiello or Ms. Taylor from your personal email if you would like to audition so that we can set up your account. Audition recordings and application fee (\$55) are due online by Oct. 13th for our approval.

For Winds/Brass/Percussion: You can obtain your audition scale excerpts from www.cbda.org. On your application, you should indicate your preference of All-State Band, All-State Orchestra, or either. Turn in your application and fees to Mr. McKeown and Mr. Sakow.



SCSBOA HONOR ORCHESTRA

January 30-31 2026, Riverside, CA

www.scsboa.org

SCSBOA All-Southern Honor Orchestra audition materials are available online:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1GasHMMWAWH-H2nVPKC94JP4HdpBEoNKsR>. Please send an email to Mr. Aiello or Ms. Taylor from your personal email if you would like to audition so that we can set up your account. Audition recordings and application fee (\$35) are due online by Dec. 1st for our approval.



Samohi Orchestra Calendar



Dates may be subject to change.
Performance attendance is mandatory.
Italics – Parents, Bold – all Orchestras

Aug. 21	Thur	First Day of School
Aug. 29	Fri	Online Registration, Syllabus Verification, Google Classroom Enrollment due for a grade
Sept. 1	Mon	Labor Day – No School
Sept. 2	Tue	Philharmonic Wind Auditions due in Google Classroom
Sept. 3	Wed	Symphony Violin, Viola, Bass sight-reading auditions- time TBD
Sept. 4	Thur	Symphony Cello, WW, Brass sight-reading auditions- time TBD
Sept. 6	Sat	CODA Super Saturday, All-State Auditions Excerpts Workshop
Sept. 7	Sun	Symphony All-State Scales and Excerpts due in Google Classroom
Sept. 8	Mon	<i>Orchestra Parents Association (OPA) General Membership Meeting, 6:00pm, Samohi Cafeteria</i> <i>Symphony Tour Meeting, 7:30pm, Samohi Cafeteria</i>
Sept. 8	Mon	Philharmonic CODA String Orchestra Scale and Excerpts due in Google Classroom
Sept. 10	Wed	Philharmonic Violin sight-reading auditions- time TBD
Sept. 11	Thur	Philharmonic Viola, Cello, Bass sight-reading auditions- time TBD
Sept. 19	Fri	Intermezzo/Sinfonia Orchestras Scale and Excerpts due in Google Classroom
Sept. 23	Tue	School Holiday
Sept. 25	Thur	<i>Back to School Night</i>
Oct. 2	Thur	School Holiday
Oct. 4	Sat	Fall Benefit Concert (Sinfonia, Intermezzo, Philharmonic, Symphony). 4:00pm
Oct. 10	Fri	Jonathan Club Orchestra at the Ocean (Chamber)
Oct. 13	Mon	CODA Honor Orchestra and All-State Orchestra Auditions due online
Oct. 13	Mon	<i>OPA General Membership Meeting, 7:30pm</i>
Nov. 3	Mon	<i>OPA General Membership Meeting, 7:30 pm</i>
Nov. 11	Tues	Veterans Day – No School
Nov. 26-28	W-F	Thanksgiving – No School
Dec. 3	Wed	SCSBOA All Southern Auditions due online
Dec. 5-6	Fri-Sat	CODA Honor Orchestra, Santa Monica High School
Dec. 9	Tue	Winter Orchestra Concert – ALL ORCHESTRAS
Dec. 15	Mon	<i>OPA General Membership Meeting, 7:30 pm</i>
Dec. 20-Jan. 4		Winter Break
Jan. 12	Mon	<i>OPA General Membership Meeting, 7:30 pm</i>
Jan. 15-18	Th-Sun	CASMEC All-State Honor Orchestras and Bands, Sacramento, CA
Jan. 19	Mon	Martin Luther King Jr. Day – No School
Jan. 22	Thur	<i>Open House/Samo Experience</i>
Jan. 30-Feb. 1	Fri-Sun	SCSBOA All Southern Orchestra and Bands, Riverside, CA
Feb. 2	Mon	<i>OPA General Membership Meeting, 7:30 pm</i>
Feb 7	Sat	Spaghetti and Strings, (Intermezzo, Philharmonic, Symphony, Chamber)
Feb. 16	Mon	Presidents' Day – No School
Mar. 9	Mon	<i>OPA General Membership Meeting, 7:30 pm</i>
Mar. 13	Fri	SMMUSD Stairway Dress Rehearsal (Symphony)
Mar. 14	Sat	SMMUSD Stairway Concert (Symphony)
Mar. 17	Tues	Spring Orchestra Concert – ALL ORCHESTRAS
Mar. 23-Apr. 24		Orchestra Placement Auditions TBD
Mar. 27-April 4		Symphony Tour, South Korea
Mar. 30-Apr. 10		Spring Break
Apr. 20	Mon	<i>OPA General Membership Meeting, 7:30 pm</i>
Apr. 25/26	Sat/Sun	SMMUSD Solo and Small Ensemble Festival/Senior Gala Auditions TBD
May 1	Fri	Pops Concert – ALL ORCHESTRAS
May 11	Mon	<i>OPA General Membership Meeting, 7:30 pm</i>
May 25	Mon	Memorial Day – No School
May 30	Sat	Senior Gala – All Seniors, Phil and Symphony
June 8	Mon	<i>OPA General Membership Meeting, 7:30 pm</i>
June 11	Thur	Last Day of School

Acknowledgement Form

Please submit this acknowledgment page to Google Classroom by Friday, Aug. 29 for a grade. The preceding pages must be shared with your parents and **inserted at the beginning of your orchestra binder.**

I have read and acknowledge receipt of the Orchestra course syllabus. I will keep the preceding pages of this syllabus at the front of my orchestra binder for reference.

Per. _____ Student Name _____

Student Signature _____

Who was the first full-time female musician in the New York Philharmonic, and what was the title of the Netflix documentary about her?

For parents:

- ☐ ***I acknowledge that my student has shared the Orchestra course syllabus with me.***
- ☐ ***I have been to <https://tinyurl.com/SamohiOrchestraRegistration> and have completed the video/photo release online.***

Parents' Names _____
(Please print)

Parent Signature _____

Parent Email _____

State law requires us to provide a public education free of charge. Subject to certain limited exceptions, the right to a free public education means we cannot require students or their families to purchase supplies. Santa Monica High School will provide all necessary supplies for your child to have a quality educational experience.

Due to limited funding for necessary materials/supplies/coaching, we ask if parents/guardians can donate the orchestras, it will greatly enhance the program. Fundraising by the Orchestra Parents Association (OPA) and donations from orchestra families help pay for sectional coaches, instruments, replacement of worn instrument cases, instrument storage cabinets, risers, classroom technology, strings, rosin, shoulder rests, mutes, and scholarships for private lessons and tour expenses.

We are requesting a donation of \$350.00 per student, but your support of any amount, higher or lower, makes a difference. Donations are gratefully acknowledged in our concert programs by donor level. These funds will make the Samohi Orchestras better for all our students. You may send this donation by check made out *SMAPA – Orchestras* or go online to <https://tinyurl.com/OPAzeffv2526> to make an online contribution. We appreciate donations, but donations are always voluntary. No child will be denied the right to fully and meaningfully participate in any activity because they have not made a donation.

We thank you in advance for your willingness to help support the program.

Jason Aiello, Director of Orchestras

Emily Taylor, Director of Orchestras

Cindy Fitzgerald, President of the Orchestra Parents Association