



MEMBERSHIP HANDBOOK



Welcome to the Youth Symphony!

We are delighted to have you join us this season!

Mission Statement

The mission of the Rio Grande Youth Symphony Orchestra is to enrich, educate, and entertain diverse audiences of all ages in our communities through performances of orchestral music, offering a high caliber pre-college orchestra experience for student musicians while enhancing the vibrancy and vitality of the arts in the Rio Grande Valley. The Rio Grande Youth Symphony Orchestra features talented student musicians from the Rio Grande Valley and communities nearby. Members perform a wide variety of standard and newly composed orchestral repertoire, including full scale symphonies, solo concertos, and works by current composers. Students will have the opportunity to meet regularly for sectionals with distinguished members of the local professional music community, including UTRGV and STC music faculty as well as members of the Valley Symphony Orchestra.

Eligibility

There is no fee to participate in the Youth Symphony auditions. The Rio Grande Youth Symphony Orchestra is open to students ages 12 to 21 for all strings, woodwinds (flute, oboe, clarinet and bassoon), brass (French horn, trumpet, trombone and tuba) and percussion instruments. Applicants should have at least 4 years of orchestra and/or band experience and perform individually at a high level. Members will be selected through annual auditions which will take place in late summer.

Tuition Information

For students accepted into the Youth Symphony, tuition is \$150 for the entire year. All tuition payments must be done by check or money order either in person or sent by

mail. For mail-in or in-person payments please download and complete the tuition form and submit it along with your check.

A limited number of partial scholarships will be available and they will be based on the student's ability to pay and the orchestra instrumentation requirements. If you are in need of financial assistance, download and complete the scholarship application form and give it to the Youth Symphony conductor during rehearsal.

To download the tuition and/or scholarship forms go to: www.rgyouthsymph.org/forms.

➔ **PLEASE NOTE: there will be a late fee if tuition payments are not received by the deadline indicated on the tuition form.**

Youth Symphony T-shirts

Each Youth Symphony member will receive an orchestra t-shirt that is included in the tuition. Make sure to indicate your t-shirt size in the online registration form.

Rehearsal Schedule

All rehearsals will take place on Sundays from 2 pm to 4:30 pm beginning in early September, students are responsible for their own transportation to and from rehearsals. Students will receive the most up-to-date rehearsal schedule at the first rehearsal.

Attendance and Participation Policy

An orchestra is a unique team that requires consistent attendance by every one of its members, absences have a direct and adverse impact on the quality of preparation and performance of the ensemble as a whole. Please check for any possible schedule conflicts well in advance and notify the Youth Symphony conductor if an absence must occur. Abuse of the attendance policy is grounds for the member to be prevented from performing on a concert and even dismissed from the orchestra for the remainder of the season, without tuition refund. Please observe the following policies:

- Attendance at ALL rehearsals and concerts is mandatory.
- Unexpected illnesses or family obligations can happen at any time. However, multiple absences will likely result in ineligibility to perform in the upcoming concert, and repeated offenses may result in dismissal from the Youth Symphony. Only two unexcused absences are allowed per semester.
- To report an absence, please email the orchestra conductor as soon as possible.

- Arriving late or leaving early from rehearsals or performances can be just as detrimental to the orchestra's preparation as an absence. Being late after rehearsal break counts the same as being late at the beginning of rehearsal. Students must behave in a professional manner and respect the time of their peers and conductor.
- To be a part of the Youth Symphony students remain be members of their school's parent organization (school orchestra or band) in order to be eligible for membership (students from schools with no performing music ensembles and homeschool students exempted). Failure to adhere to this requirement will result in dismissal from the orchestra without tuition refund.
- Students in the Youth Symphony must complete the required Liability Release Form. This form must be handed to the Youth Symphony conductor during the first rehearsal.

About Performances

Typically, there will be a final rehearsal the same day of the performance prior to the concert. We will then take an hour and a half long break in which students will be provided with pizza dinner and can change into their concert attire. Students are REQUIRED to be at both the final rehearsal and concert. If a conflict is unavoidable, let the Youth Symphony conductor know immediately so s/he can plan accordingly. The Youth Symphony's concert attire is concert black (no jeans, t-shirts, tennis shoes, or extravagant accessories allowed) which consists of black or white long sleeve dress shirt or blouse (blouses with at least $\frac{3}{4}$ length sleeves with a modest neckline), black dress pants or below the knee length skirt or dress, black socks and black shoes.

Concert Admission and Venues

Youth Symphony concerts are open to the general public and admission fee is \$6.00. Please refer to the rehearsal schedule for dates, times, and venues. Youth Symphony members will receive two complimentary tickets for each concert.