

The Saratoga Springs Youth Orchestra

HANDBOOK

CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP AND GENERAL INFORMATION

SSYO is composed of the following ensembles, which will perform at concerts and community events throughout the performance year and over the summer as available:

SSYO Youth Orchestra: This is our advanced Orchestra under the direction of Maestro Gioacchino Longobardi.

SSYO Rock Orchestra: This new program is open to all strings, wind and percussion players. This ensemble will be under the direction of Amanda Meliosky.

In addition, SSYO members have the opportunity to participate in the SSYO Chamber Music Program.

All SSYO members are required to abide by the following conditions of membership:

MISSION OF SSYO: Our mission is to foster in young people excellence in the musical arts by giving them the opportunity for supervised study, rehearsal, and performance of a variety of types of music under the training of musical professionals and conductors. We also hope to complement the music programs of area schools by performance experiences that will enhance and improve the skills of participating members, and in turn, improving their school music programs.

COMMITMENT TO SSYO: In order for the Saratoga Springs Youth Orchestra to maintain a recognized level of artistic excellence requires dedication, self-discipline and cooperation on the part of each student.

This translates into assuming the responsibility for attending each rehearsal and concert, arriving promptly and being completely prepared.

SCHOOL MUSIC PROGRAMS: School music programs play a significant role in making this organization possible, so SSYO requires students to participate in their local school band or orchestra. Please realize that your for school music performances will take priority over SSYO. On the other hand, SSYO takes priority over elective school activities such as Pit Orchestra.

TUITION: Tuition is \$500 plus a \$50 music deposit may be paid in two installments. First payment is due at the first rehearsal in September. The balance is due October 17th, or the student may not be able to play until the balance of the tuition is paid.

SSYO SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION: A limited number of tuition scholarships are available each year. Contact the manager for more information.

MUSIC: SSYO members are entrusted with a great deal of valuable music, some of it expensive rental material. You are responsible for the care of all parts and their prompt return upon request. This year we are starting a \$50 deposit for music (including copies) that will be returned when all music has been returned in good condition.

The conductors expect parts to be learned for rehearsals. Repeated warning about being unprepared may result in loss of chair. Please work on any difficulty you are having with the music with your private teacher, or make arrangements to meet before rehearsal or during the break with the conductor.

SEATING: Seating will be at the sole discretion of the Conductors. Rotation of seating within sections may occur.

Duties of Concertmaster

The concertmaster is responsible for tuning the orchestra before the start of rehearsal. With regard to concerto soloists, the concertmaster or principal string players must be prepared to loan their instrument to the soloist in case of a broken string or other mishap. The concertmaster also works closely with the conductor and other duties will apply at his discretion.

CODE OF CONDUCT: Members of SSYO are expected to treat the rehearsal facilities with the utmost respect. SSYO members are required to behave appropriately at all times while representing the orchestra. Members are not to bring food into rehearsal areas nor chew gum. Cell phones must be turned off during rehearsals and concerts. Texting is not permitted during rehearsals or concerts

REHEARSAL INFORMATION: Rehearsals are held at Maple Avenue Middle School, Saratoga Springs, NY on Sundays. Occasionally Maple Avenue will not be available. You will be notified of any change in rehearsal venue. Bring instrument, music, and pencil to every rehearsal.

Please see the Rehearsal/Concert schedule in your Welcome Packet for details of this performance year.

SNACK: There is a 15-minute break between ensembles for restroom use and snack. Members are expected to provide snack twice during the year according the schedule provided by the manager.

HANDOUTS: During the year, SSYO members receive many written handouts during rehearsals. It is the easiest way for the SSYO staff to communicate with orchestra members and families. Students, in turn, are responsible for sharing this information with their parents. This is vitally important!! Each student has a music folder in which he/she can place these important handouts. **Parents are encouraged to check folders and email for weekly updates and important announcements.**

WEATHER: In the event of inclement weather, you will be informed directly by the Manger or a Board Member if the rehearsal is cancelled. We use the school closing network which uses area radio, TV and websites to announce closures.

ATTENDANCE: Attendance is mandatory for all scheduled rehearsals and concerts. We can only guarantee the quality of our program if our orchestra members are fully committed. You must be in your seat ready to warm up and tuned ten minutes prior to the downbeat.

ABSENCE POLICY: One absence is allowed per concert period (except First Night, when no absences are permitted.). This policy includes all excuses--illnesses, college music auditions or visits, sporting events, pit crew rehearsals and performances etc. Absences and tardiness exceeding the above policies may prevent you from performing in the affected concert period.

Please check your calendar now for any potential conflicts with the SSYO rehearsal and concert schedule.

Please report any conflicts immediately to the manager. You must contact the manager (429-3636) prior to any absence.

If your musician has forgotten their instrument or music ie: left it at school etc. they are still **REQUIRED** to be at rehearsal and sit in their chair during rehearsal.

ABSENCE FORMS: In the event of an anticipated absence, all students are required to fill out an absence form, and return it to the manager. The form must be returned at least two weeks prior to the anticipated absence. In the event of an unexpected absence, such as an illness, you are asked to call the manager at least one hour prior to rehearsal, then fill out and return the absence form either by mail or in person the following week.

IF YOU ARE ABSENT, IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO FIND OUT IF YOU MISSED ANY ANNOUNCEMENTS OR HANDOUTS

ATTENDANCE POLICY WITH REGARD TO REHEARSAL AND CONCERTS:

No absences are permitted for concerts or and scheduled rehearsals. Violation of this policy may result in not being able to perform at the concert affected by the absence.

DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICY:

The use of illegal drugs or alcohol is forbidden while engaged in an orchestra activity. The use of either substance will result in immediate suspension and dismissal from the orchestra. SSYO adopts a Zero Tolerance Policy toward the use of alcohol, drugs and tobacco. The manager also has the authority to temporarily suspend you from the orchestra at anytime he/she deems it necessary. No smoking at rehearsals or concert sites.

CONCERT DRESS CODE:

Ladies: Floor length black skirts or loose- fitting slacks, black blouses, black shoes.
Gentleman: Black Jacket, black pants, long-sleeved white shirt, black tie, black shoes and socks.

VOLUNTEERS:

As a non-profit organization SSYO depends on volunteers for several jobs, such as serving snacks, ushering at concerts, setting up and resetting chairs and percussion for rehearsals, raising funds, and several others as well. Please contact our manager if you have any skills that you would like to donate to SSYO.

PHOTO AND VIDEO RELEASE:

SSYO Orchestra members are required to submit an audio and video photo release. The form is found online.

As a not-for-profit organization, special events (fundraisers) play a very important role in the life of SSYO. Along with tuition, there are other opportunities to support the orchestra by helping out with special events. In this way, tuition can be kept as low as possible so that SSYO is accessible to all. Families are required to raise \$100 for fundraising per year. The Treasurer and Finance Committee provide several opportunities to fit your lifestyle as well as opportunities for program ads and music messages.