



METROPOLITAN YOUTH  
SYMPHONY ORCHESTRAS  
OF ATLANTA

# STUDENT HANDBOOK

2023-2024

# Mission Statement

The Metropolitan Youth Symphony Orchestras of Atlanta (MYSO) is dedicated to providing exceptional music-making in a supportive environment fostering creativity and camaraderie, to instill a life-long love of music in its members.

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*\*\* Please sign and return this document to MYSO Operations Manager by the first rehearsal. Scanned and emailed copies are preferable, however, hard copies may be submitted during check in for the first rehearsal.*

Welcome to the 2023 - 2024 season of the Metropolitan Youth Symphony Orchestras of Atlanta. We are excited about the season ahead with guest artists, which include jazz fusion band Misnomer and Colorado State University's Dr. Cayla Bellamy.

Many of our staff remain the same this season with our conductors, Dr. Cathie Hudnall and Carl Rieke, Megan Williams (Executive Director), and Barrie Herman (Operations Manager). Please welcome our newest staff member Jeffrey Rowser. Mr. Rowser will be MYSO's Philharmonia Winds conductor.

Our chamber music program is open to all MYSO members, and we will have coaches available for woodwind, brass, and string ensembles.

Financial Aid (student need based) and Tuition Scholarships (based on instrumentation needs of the orchestras) will once again be available for students. Completed applications for both of these are due by ***August 27, 2023***; application forms are on the MYSO website.

Please feel free to reach out to MYSO staff if you have questions or concerns.

Looking forward to having you with us this season!

The MYSO Team

# **The MYSO Team**

## **Board of Directors**

Kim Johnson, Chair  
Patrick Kinsella, Vice Chair  
Donnell Francis  
Michael Snell  
Ricky Saucedo  
Jason Bastow  
Luis Falcon  
Samuel Saavedra  
Stephanie Voss  
Jason Lichtstein

## **Artistic Staff**

Cathie Hudnall, Artistic Director and Symphony  
Conductor Carl Rieke, Philharmonia Conductor  
Jeffrey Rowser, Philharmonia Winds Conductor

## **Administrative Staff**

Megan Williams, Executive Director  
Barrie Herman, Operations Manager

## Contact Information

Email: [info@mysoatlanta.org](mailto:info@mysoatlanta.org)

Website: [www.mysoatlanta.org](http://www.mysoatlanta.org)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/mysoatlanta](http://www.facebook.com/mysoatlanta)

Absences: send email in advance to [info@mysoatlanta.org](mailto:info@mysoatlanta.org)

### Remind101 Text and Email Messages

Much of our member communication will be sent through the Remind app.

Please sign up to be a part of the message group by using one of the following methods:

**To sign up by text:** text @mysoparent to the number 81010

**To register for CutTime access** (email and payment invoices)  
please send an invitation request to [info@mysoatlanta.org](mailto:info@mysoatlanta.org)

### Staff Contact Information

Dr. Cathie Hudnall, Symphony Conductor  
[chudnall@mysoatlanta.org](mailto:chudnall@mysoatlanta.org)

Carl Rieke, Philharmonia Conductor  
[info@mysoatlanta.org](mailto:info@mysoatlanta.org)

Barrie Herman, Operations Manager  
[Barrie@mysoatlanta.org](mailto:Barrie@mysoatlanta.org)

## Rehearsal Location and Tentative Weekly Schedule

### **\*\*New Location\*\***

Drew Charter School  
300 Eva Davis Way  
Atlanta, GA 30317

### **Sinfonietta Orchestra**

1:45PM- 2:45PM (Sundays)

### **Philharmonia Orchestra**

3:00PM-5:15PM (Sundays)

### **Symphony Orchestra**

3:00PM-5:30PM (Sundays)

# MYSO HISTORY

MYSO is a non-profit [501(c)(3)] Georgia corporation that serves the entire metropolitan Atlanta area and its surrounding communities.

MYSO was co-founded in 1989 by Dr. James Middleton and Mrs. Julia Waugh. Initially composed of thirteen string musicians from two Gwinnett County schools, MYSO presented its debut concert on May 5, 1991. MYSO's first symphony concert, incorporating winds, was presented on May 3, 1992. In 1994 Mr. Dave Cady became President of the Board of Directors and Dr. Marilyn Seelman was appointed Music Director. In January 1995, MYSO expanded into a full orchestra. In 1997, following Mr. Cady's untimely death, MYSO created the Dave Cady Memorial Scholarship Fund, supporting students' musical enrichment, in his honor.

Another string orchestra was added approximately 10 years later. In 2016, that group was expanded into a second full symphonic orchestra, the Philharmonia. Carle Rieke has conducted that group for many years.

In 2014, after over 20 years of service, Dr. Marilyn Seelman retired as Music Director of MYSO and in 2018 Dr. Cathie Hudnall became the new Artistic Director and Conductor of the MYSO Symphony. Also in 2018, a new chamber music program was added to MYSO's offerings. Our relationship with Drew Charter School, which is our new primary rehearsal space, has expanded to engage several faculty members and students. We will continue our relationship with GSU faculty for sectionals and side-by-side rehearsals.

## **Notable Performances include:**

- Carnegie Hall 2019
- Georgia Music Educators Conference in Savannah
- 51<sup>st</sup> Annual Midwest Band and Orchestra Clinic in Chicago
- Spivey Hall
- Piccolo Spoleto Festival in Charleston, SC
- E-Trade Half-time Show of Super Bowl XXXIV
- 55<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the United Nations
- Gala performances with Cecil Welch (lead trumpeter and soloist for Henry Mancini) and the Irerra Brothers
- Carnegie Hall
- Honolulu, Hawaii, Pearl Harbor Performance on D-Day Anniversary
- Beijing, Nanjing and Shanghai China
- Costa Rica
- European Tour, including Budapest, Vienna and Prague
- Disney Entertainment, Millennium Orchestra

# Membership and Attendance Policies

## Code of Conduct

Members of MYSO perform locally and tour as a group. All participating musicians are representatives of the organization, and the behavior and dress of each musician reflects upon the entire group. It is essential to respect the rights and property of others. Each student is expected to use good manners, display common courtesy, and show consideration for others. MYSO strictly enforces a zero-tolerance policy with regards to the use of drugs and alcohol, smoking, any other illegal activities, and any form of harassment towards students and staff.

## School Participation

Participation in a school music program is required, providing one exists.

## Music

It is the musician's responsibility to maintain the music provided to them by MYSO. If the musician habitually arrives at rehearsal without his or her music and requests extra parts, music will no longer be provided. Music you print out from a digital document does not have to be returned.

## Attendance Policy

### Concerts

MYSO students are expected to make a yearlong commitment to participate in all MYSO concerts. *If you know at the beginning of the season that you have a conflict with our concert schedule, you should not accept a position with MYSO for the season.*

### Rehearsals

It is imperative that each member of the orchestra makes every effort to attend every rehearsal for each concert cycle. This continuity will enable the orchestra to develop and produce a musical product of the highest caliber. At virtual sessions, musician attendance will be noted by staff. For in-person activities, musicians will be required to sign the attendance form at the beginning of each rehearsal. No parent, sibling, or other musician will be allowed to sign in for another person.

**MYSO has an absence policy that allows no more than three (6) absences for the entire season, and no more than one (2) per concert cycle (see rehearsal/concert schedule). If a musician is absent more than (2) times in one concert cycle, they will not perform in the subsequent concert.**

### Notice of Advanced Absence:

Any member who will be absent from a rehearsal should advise the Operations Manager *in advance* by email sent to: [info@mysoatlanta.org](mailto:info@mysoatlanta.org)

### Excessive Absences:

After the 3<sup>rd</sup> absence, the musician will be asked to demonstrate that extenuating circumstances resulted in his/her excessive absences. It is the responsibility of the musician to keep track of their absences. No notification of excessive absences will be given to the musician. Continued or excessive absence may lead to dismissal from MYSO. If there are extenuating circumstances that resulted in the absenteeism, a written appeal may be made to the Executive Director. The Executive Director and Music Director will review the appeal, and their ruling on the appeal will be final.

### **Tardiness:**

Arriving late to rehearsal is disruptive and disrespectful to the conductor and fellow musicians. Please make every effort to arrive at rehearsal on time. You should be tuned and ready to play BEFORE the rehearsal start time. Leaving rehearsal before dismissal is also disruptive and is not allowed. The Artistic Director must be informed before rehearsal of any situation in which a student must leave early.

**Note:** A musician will be marked tardy if he/she arrives ten (10) minutes after the posted rehearsal start time. Two (2) times being tardy and/or leaving a rehearsal early will equal one (1) absence.

### **Words To Live By For Every EMPLOYED Musician**

If the musician arrives at 2:45 for a 3:00 rehearsal, they are ON TIME.

If the musician arrives at 3:00, they are LATE and  
if they arrive at 3:15 they are FIRED!

### **Materials for Rehearsal**

Each musician is responsible for the following items at in-person rehearsals:

1. Instrument in good playing condition. Percussionists need to bring sticks and mallets.
2. Assigned music folder with all MYSO music inside. DO NOT depend on your stand partner.
3. Pencil with erasers to make markings on your music. NO PENS.
4. Accessories such as rosin, shoulder rest, mutes, endpins, extra strings, extra reeds, valve oil, bass stool, etc.
5. **NO PHONES ARE ALLOWED IN REHEARSAL AND SHOULD BE EITHER TURNED OFF OR IN SILENT MODE.** Failure to obey this rule may result in disciplinary action.

### **Concert Information**

MYSO performs three formal concerts a year. Students are expected to perform at all MYSO concerts. The MYSO website contains the season schedule and other information on upcoming events. Any MYSO member who determines he/she will be unavailable for any of the scheduled concerts must contact the Operations Manager immediately by email at [info@mysoatlanta.org](mailto:info@mysoatlanta.org).

### **Concert Dress Code**

The goal of the orchestra concert dress policy is to present a unified appearance to the audience. Any member who comes to a performance in unacceptable attire will not be allowed to perform.

**Gentlemen in Symphony: Concert Dress:** black tuxedo trousers, black jacket or tux jacket, black cummerbund, white tuxedo shirt, and black bow tie, black dress shoes with LONG black socks. No sneakers, white socks, or tennis shoes are permitted.

**Gentlemen in Philharmonia: Concert Black:** black trousers, black bow (or straight) tie, black shirt, black dress shoes with LONG black socks. No jacket required. No sneakers, white socks, or tennis shoes are permitted.

**Gentlemen in Sinfonietta: Concert Black:** black trousers, black bow (or straight) tie, black shirt, black dress shoes with LONG black socks. No jacket required. No sneakers, white socks, or tennis shoes are permitted.



**Ladies in all performing groups:** long black dress, long black skirt, or black dress slacks; no side, front or back slits, no capri length pants, no jeans. Pants or skirts must be at least ankle length when seated; no skin-tight pants, tights or leggings; black dress top with long sleeves or three-quarter length sleeve. Black dress shoes; no heels, no sneakers.

## **Section Seating**

Preliminary seating will be assigned at the first rehearsal. However, students may be given new seating assignments at any time during the season and the Conductor's decision is final.

## **Tuition**

Membership in MYSO is for the entire season and tuition is non-refundable. Tuition payments are due IN FULL by **August 27, 2023** and can be paid through the CutTime database program (preferred) or by check mailed to: MYSO, PO Box 14163, Atlanta, GA 30324. (Mailed checks must ARRIVE by the deadline.) Exceptions to the tuition deadline must be approved in advance by the Executive Director.

**Payments MUST include the student's name in the notes section of the check or PayPal in order to ensure timely credit to a student's account.** Tuition can be tracked through CutTime, our online database program. Each student will be assigned an account where you can login, check tuition account balance and make payments. Login information will be provided by email with instructions on how to use the program.

## **Financial Aid**

A limited amount of financial aid is available for qualifying musicians based on demonstrated financial need. Requests for financial aid must be submitted to the Executive Director for consideration no later than **August 27, 2023**. Financial Aid forms are available on the MYSO website. Be sure to include all required forms and information in ONE email. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

## **Tuition Scholarships**

A limited number of tuition scholarships will be awarded, by invitation only, based on the needs of the orchestra ensembles to make sure all orchestra sections are fully staffed. Tuition Scholarship forms are available on the MYSO website and must be submitted by **August 27, 2023** for consideration.



## 2023 – 2024 MYSO Student / Guardian Pledge Due 9/10/23

I/We \_\_\_\_\_ have read the 2023-2024 MYSO Handbook and understand the contents. Additionally, I/we agree to adhere to the policies set forth in the handbook, most notably, the code of conduct and attendance policies. **I/We understand that I/we are responsible for paying all required fees by the deadline dates unless other arrangements have been made, in advance, with the Executive Director.** Failure to pay required fees could result in a student's dismissal from MYSO. **I/We understand that by signing below, I/we are granting permission for my student, listed above, to participate in all MYSO sanctioned activities, and in addition, I agree to assist my student with adhering to the policies set forth in this handbook.**

Student Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ | Date: \_\_ / \_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ | Date: \_\_ / \_\_ / \_\_\_\_

*Please sign and return to MYSO Operations Manager by the first rehearsal. Scanned and emailed copies sent to [info@mysoatlanta.org](mailto:info@mysoatlanta.org).*



**MYSO Atlanta 2023 – 2024 Photo Release Form Due 9/10/23**

I hereby grant the Metropolitan Youth Symphony Orchestras of Atlanta permission to use my likeness in photographs, videos, and other digital media (“Photos”) in any and all of its publications, including web- based publications. Additionally, I waive any right to any payment of consideration, royalties or other compensation that could arise or be related to the use of any Photos.

I understand and agree that all Photos will become the property of Metropolitan Youth Symphony Orchestras of Atlanta and will not be returned.

I hereby irrevocably authorize the Metropolitan Youth Symphony Orchestras of Atlanta to edit, alter, copy, exhibit, publish, or distribute these Photos for any lawful purpose. In addition, I waive any right to inspect or approve the finished product wherein my likeness appears. I hereby hold harmless, release, and forever discharge the Metropolitan Youth Symphony Orchestras of Atlanta from all claims, demands, and causes of action which I, my heirs, representatives, executors, administrators, or any other persons acting on my behalf or on behalf of my estate have or may have in any way related to MYSO’s use of Photos.

**I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE ABOVE PHOTO RELEASE. I AFFIRM THAT I AM AT LEAST 18 YEARS OF AGE, OR, IF I AM UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE, I HAVE OBTAINED THE REQUIRED CONSENT OF A PARENT/GUARDIAN, AS EVIDENCED BY THE SIGNATURES BELOW.**

Student Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ | Date: \_\_ / \_\_ / \_\_\_\_

**If under 18, a parent/guardian must also sign below:**

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ | Date: \_\_ / \_\_ / \_\_\_\_

*Please sign and return to MYSO Operations Manager by the first rehearsal. Scanned and emailed copies sent to [info@mysoatlanta.org](mailto:info@mysoatlanta.org) are preferable, however, hard copies may be submitted during check in for the first rehearsal.*

**MYSO Release of Liability, Agreement not to Sue,  
Indemnification, Hold Harmless Agreement  
Due 9/10/23**

We all know that these are uncertain times. The risks of COVID-19 and its transmission are not yet fully understood and not controlled. Even experts disagree as to how the virus spreads, and it remains difficult to determine whether anyone is infected with the virus or contagious at any time.

MYSO has no expertise as to COVID-19. MYSO is following expert recommendations, but it cannot ensure the safety of its students or their families from the risks of COVID-19. MYSO is willing to provide in-person coaching and rehearsals only if you and your student are willing to agree to accept any risk of contracting COVID-19 and to hold MYSO, and its officers, Board Members, agents (including, without limitation, those who own and/or operate rehearsal and concert venues), servants, employees, contractors, and their agents, successors, and assigns harmless for any transmission of COVID-19 related, in any way whatsoever, to MYSO coaching, rehearsals, and performances.

While MYSO takes the safety of its students and their families very seriously, and abides by safety and sanitation initiatives, MYSO cannot guarantee that any of these measures will completely protect your student, family, or household from COVID-19. In partial consideration for MYSO's provision of services, by signing below, you agree to accept all responsibility for the risk that your student and any member(s) of your family or household may contact COVID-19 at a MYSO in-person rehearsal or performance.

NOW THEREFORE, I agree that should my student, or any member of my family or household contract COVID-19, I agree to indemnify and hold MYSO, its officers, Board Members, agents, servants, employees, contractors, and their agents, successors, and assigns harmless from any and all claims for damages should any COVID-19 infection occur in any way related to in-person services, including, without limitation, coaching, rehearsals, or performances related, in any way, to MYSO.

I further agree that I will not file, nor cause to be filed, nor participate in any legal action against MYSO, its Board Members, agents, servants, employees, or any other person who may be in any way connected with coaching or rehearsal services or performances by MYSO, including, but not limited to MYSO's employees, agents, associates, or Board Members, for injuries and/or death as a result of my student or any member of my family or household contracting COVID-19.

I agree that if I take any steps to make a claim for damages against MYSO, its Board, agents, employees, or any other released parties arising out of my student's rehearsals, coaching, concerts, or other services related in any way to MYSO, I shall be obligated to pay all attorneys' fees and costs incurred by any and all parties as a result of such claim.

By signing this agreement, I acknowledge I freely and voluntarily chose to have my student participate, in person, at MYSO rehearsals, concerts, and other events. In addition, I agree that if any dispute or claim relating in any way to the services provided by MYSO pursuant to the terms of this agreement will be resolved by binding, individual arbitration, rather than court. I agree that arbitration shall be governed by the Federal Arbitration Act (FAA), including its procedural provisions in all respects.

Date	Parent/Guardian Printed Name	Parent/Guardian Signature
_____	_____	_____

MYSO Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship with MYSO Student \_\_\_\_\_

*Please sign and return to MYSO Operations Manager by the first rehearsal. Scanned and emailed copies sent to [info@mysoatlanta.org](mailto:info@mysoatlanta.org) are preferable, however, hard copies may be submitted during check in for the first rehearsal.*