



ALBUQUERQUE
YOUTH
SYMPHONY
PROGRAM

2010 - 2011
Student and Parent
HANDBOOK



AYS Program, Inc.

3315 Louisiana NE, #N-8, Albuquerque, NM 87110

P.O. Box 30961, Albuquerque, NM 87190

Office Hours: M – F, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

P: 505.875.1319 F: 505.875.9014 E: ays@aysmusic.org Web: www.aysmusic.org

Our Mission:

The Albuquerque Youth Symphony Program seeks to instill a lifelong passion for music in motivated young people in the greater Albuquerque area through the pursuit of excellence in orchestral musical performance.

General Information

Welcome to the Albuquerque Youth Symphony Program, Inc.'s 2010 – 2011 season! As a member of the AYS Program, you will have numerous opportunities to develop your talents in an atmosphere of musical excellence. We hope you will find it to be a most rewarding and enjoyable experience musically, socially, emotionally and intellectually.

Attention: new information regarding communications!

The AYS Program staff communicate with students and parents primarily **via email**. Students and parents will receive emails on a regular basis regarding rehearsal schedules, performances and other important event. Please be sure to keep the AYS Program office updates with any email address changes. If you feel you are not receiving all AYS Program emails, check your junk/spam folder as this is often where mass emails end up.

Please note: if you do not use email, please advise us on the best way to contact you.

BOOKMARK OUR WEBSITE!

www.aysmusic.org

Rehearsal & concert schedules, news events and more.

ELIGIBILITY

All public, parochial, private and home school students within a 50-mile radius of Albuquerque are eligible to participate in the AYS Program.

Age/grade requirements are as follows:

Albuquerque Youth Orchestra & Youth Symphony:

Students must be in grades 9 - 12 AND 14 years old as of August 15, 2010

Albuquerque Junior Symphony:

Students must be in grades 7 – 9 AND 12 years old as of August 15, 2010

Abq. Prelude String Orchestra, Abq. Junior Orchestra,

Abq. Junior Symphony and Abq. Junior Youth Band:

Students must be in grades 6 - 8 AND 11 years old as of August 15, 2010

Albuquerque Junior String Orchestra:

Students must be in grades 3 - 5 AND be 8 years old as of August 15, 2010

High school students may not participate in the AYS Program for more than four years, or after their 19th birthday, whichever comes first.

Requirements for Participation in the AYS Program

The AYS Program is an enhancement to, and not a substitute for, existing school music programs, each of which has independent rules and policies. The AYS Program will coordinate activities with school programs as appropriate, but will neither interfere with, nor participate in establishing the rules or policies of, any school music program.

Dismissal from any public or private school will be viewed as a failure to participate in school band or orchestra and will result in dismissal from the AYS Program.

School Band/Orchestra Enrollment Requirement

Students must be enrolled as regular members of their school band or orchestra, if offered. Students accepted into the program on a string instrument (violin, viola, cello, string bass and harp) must be enrolled in their school orchestra. Students who are accepted into the program on a wind, brass or percussion instrument must be enrolled in their school band.

Home School students who also elect to attend classes at a school are subject to the same AYS Program membership requirements as public, private or parochial school students.

A list of students will be sent to all Music Directors, Orchestra Directors and Band Directors verifying appropriate participation according to AYS Program policy in your school instrumental music program. If your school has no instrumental program, the school principal must sign this sheet, indicating that no instrumental program is offered.

Attendance Policy:

Attendance at all rehearsals, dress rehearsals, and concerts is MANDATORY.

All participating students must follow the AYS Program rehearsal schedule, regardless of individual school schedules, such as school vacations & holidays. Please refer to our AYS Program schedules before making any travel or vacation plans. Our attendance rules are strict because we can guarantee the quality of our program only if our orchestra members are fully committed. Your commitment to attend is not to the AYS Program staff, but to your fellow players.

Absence Procedure

Except in cases of emergency, where a phone call needs to be made to the conductor (see your acceptance letter for phone numbers), a written explanation to the conductor from the student's parent/guardian, including an explanation of reason for request, is requested by the following deadlines:

Regular Rehearsals - one week in advance

Dress Rehearsals/Concerts - at least one month in advance

With sufficient prior notification and compromise, the conductor may approve conflicts resulting from other organizational activities.

Absence from a required dress rehearsal or concert, as indicated in the schedule, without a justifiable excuse shall result in automatic dismissal of the member. Please

note that absence from a dress rehearsal or concert is very rarely approved under any circumstance.

Unavoidable conflicts with the following constitute justifiable excuses (contact the conductor immediately): Performances with school music organizations, curricular activities, confining illness, religious worship commitment or unavoidable family emergencies.

Note: Homework obligations, studying for exams and social events are not considered acceptable excuses for missing rehearsals.

Concerts, Tours and School performances

All concerts, including school performances, are a required part of the program and participation is mandatory.

The AYS and AYO tour each season, and **participation on the tours is a required part of membership**. There are fees in addition to the tuition. All families are expected to participate in fundraising events to support the annual tour. All forms of tobacco, alcohol and controlled substances are strictly forbidden on all AYS Program tours. This policy supersedes any local, state or federal law in any country visited, and regardless of the age of the student. Members of the opposite sex may not enter a student's hotel room on tour. Any violation of these policies will result in the student being sent home from tour at the parents' expense AND the student shall be dismissed from the AYS Program.

Missing a dress rehearsal or performance without a justifiable notice to the conductor (confining illness or family emergency) will result in immediate dismissal from the AYS Program.

Rehearsals

The AYS Program groups rehearse weekly during the school year, plus dress rehearsals for performances. Like professional musicians, you will be expected to be present and on time for all rehearsals, dress rehearsals and performances. The commitment is a major one, but the benefits can be enormous. We are sure you will find the investment of your time and talent very worthwhile. As a large musical family, we depend on every individual to do his or her share. With your cooperation, we will have a busy, exciting and productive year in the AYS Program.

Because conductors and staff often need to leave promptly, we ask that parents arrange to be at the rehearsal to pick up children as soon as the rehearsal or concert ends. The AYS Program does not assume responsibility for students and their instruments.

What to bring to all rehearsals:

1. Your instrument and all proper accessories (mutes, rockstops, extra strings, percussion mallets, etc.)
2. A pencil with an eraser. It is important not to use pen on music; it is often rented and cannot be returned with pen marks. Keep in mind that you will be responsible for all music checked out to you, and you will be billed for all music lost or returned late.

3. Your music in the proper music folder. Do not rely on your stand partner; bring your music to every rehearsal. Keep your music in the folder labeled with your name. (Please see discussion of music in this handbook.)
4. Emergency repair items (strings, reeds, etc.)
5. A snack

Please evaluate your yearly schedule (including musical and non-musical activities, in school, and otherwise) in order to be sure that you will be able to fulfill this time commitment.

High School Academic Eligibility Requirement

The AYS Program follows the guidelines for eligibility as outlined by the NMAA. A student shall have a 2.0 grade point average with no more than one (1) F, based on a 4.0 grading scale, or its equivalent, either cumulatively or for the grading period immediately preceding participation. If a student is academically ineligible, he/she cannot participate in rehearsals, concerts or tours during the period of ineligibility.

Behavior Expectations for all AYS Program Students

Reasonable standards of behavior and dress are expected while rehearsing, performing, or participating in any event or activity associated with the Albuquerque Youth Symphony Program.

1. Demonstrate appropriate, respectful behavior toward AYS Program staff, fellow students and at all performance and rehearsal venues.
2. Listen to instruction from your conductor. Do not talk while your conductor is speaking. **All electronic devices, including cell phones, should be turned off and put away during rehearsals and concerts.**
3. Use facilities properly, remaining only in the areas assigned to your orchestra (i.e., please do not wander the halls), keeping the buildings clean and displaying mature, appropriate behavior at all times.
4. All forms of tobacco, alcohol and controlled substances are strictly forbidden at all AYS Program events and activities.

PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES

- A. A student will not by any conduct, act, force or threat deprive another person of the exercise of personal rights and responsibilities, nor engage in any conduct which causes disruption of any lawful mission, process or function of any AYS Program sponsored program or activity.
- B. A student will not intentionally cause or attempt to cause damage to any school facility or private property, steal or attempt to steal from any AYS Program, school, or private property. If a student causes willful damage to any above-described property, then the AYS Program will seek restitution from the student and parent/guardian.
- C. A student will not intentionally cause or attempt to cause physical injury to any person or behave in such a way as could reasonably cause physical injury to another person or themselves.
- D. A student will not possess, handle or transmit any object that could reasonably be considered a weapon.

E. A student will not possess, use, sell, distribute, transmit or be under the influence of any substance capable of producing a change in behavior or altering a state of mind or feeling, including and without limitation, any alcoholic beverage or any item collectively referred to as a controlled or illegal substance. Use of any medication authorized by a written medical prescription from a registered physician, and in accordance with professional instructions, will not be considered a violation of this rule. Students taking medication should inform the appropriate AYS Program Conductor, staff member and/or chaperone.

F. Any violation of any applicable local, state or federal laws, or the applicable laws of other countries, or any AYS Program Rules or Policies now or hereafter adopted by the Board or Directors of AYS Program.

The parent/guardian and student understand and agree that if the AYS Program conductor, staff member and/or any AYS Program chaperone or any other agent determines that the student has engaged in any prohibited activities during any AYS Program sponsored program or activity, then:

A. The student will be sent home. If we are on tour, this will be at the expense of the parent/guardian;

B. The parent/guardian will be financially responsible for any damages or expenses that may result from the student engaging in any prohibited activity; and

C. The student will be dismissed as a participant in any programs or activities of the AYS Program, and tuition will be non-refundable.

Tuition Fees and Payment

Annual tuition is required for participation in all AYS Programs. Tuition may be paid in cash, check, Mastercard or Visa. If tuition is not paid in full by October 1 and a payment plan is not in place, the student may be dismissed from the program. Tuition is non-refundable after October 1.

Payments and forms of any kind should be mailed (P.O. Box 30961, 87190) or delivered directly to the AYS Program office (3315 Louisiana NE, #N8 – on SW corner of Comanche & Louisiana in the APS Montgomery Complex). To the greatest extent possible, payments should be in the form of a check (not cash) made out to AYS Program, Inc. Checks should be annotated in lower left corner with student's name and purpose of payment. Please consider your canceled check your receipt. **Please do not give any paperwork and/or payments to conductors.**

Monies raised through AYS Program fundraising events may not be designated for tuition. Funds in AYS or AYS student accounts may not be designated for tuition.

Financial Assistance

It is our policy that no child is discouraged from participating in the AYS Program due to financial need. Full details and application instructions for assistance are available. Please call the AYS Program office for information.

Financial support of the AYS Program

The AYS Program is a non-profit charitable organization that depends on the financial support of many individuals, corporations and foundations. If you would like to make a tax-deductible contribution to the AYS Program, please contact Kristine Purrington, Executive Director at 875-1319.

Refund Appeal Process

If a student leaves the program after the start of the season, for whatever reason, and parents feel there are extenuating circumstances which may warrant a refund, parents will need to communicate in writing to the AYS Program office explaining the special circumstances under which they feel a refund should be granted. If the withdrawal occurs on or before October 1 of the current season, you may receive one half of the tuition fee. If the student is dismissed from the AYS Program for any reason, there will be no tuition refund granted.

Auditions for middle and high school orchestras/ensembles

All students must audition each season, regardless of prior participation in the AYS Program. Acceptance and placement in an AYS Program orchestra is competitive and is based on the audition. Decisions of the conducting staff are final and may not be appealed. Students are not allowed to re-audition for a current season. There is an audition fee, which students should bring to their audition. If there is a financial hardship, the student may call the AYS Program for an audition fee waiver.

AYS Program members are required to play an audition in order to participate in the AYS Program during the subsequent season. Auditions for current members and prospective members of AYS Program take place annually, usually during the first three weeks in May. Auditions are short and informal, with an emphasis placed on making the audition a positive learning experience. Auditions for the Albuquerque Junior Youth Band are held in December.

Registration for the Albuquerque Junior String Orchestra takes place in the spring and summer. Students do not audition, but must have a recommendation from their private teacher.

Students may be required to perform a short prepared solo or etude (3-5 minutes), preferably with contrasting tempos and/or styles (no piano accompaniment) and scales. High school students must also prepare orchestral excerpts.

A great many factors go into placement of students into AYS Program orchestras. During the auditions, students will be judged on intonation, interpretation, tone, rhythm, technique and scale proficiency (and required excerpt for high school students).

All students will be notified of the next year's audition results by mail following the conclusion of the AYS Program current season. Results will also be posted on the AYS website: www.aysmusic.org.

Weather Cancellation Policy

In the event of severe weather conditions, we will record a message on the office voice mail if any rehearsals are cancelled. Please call 875-1319.

Parent Support

AYS Program parents supply critical support for the AYS Program. Assistance at rehearsals and concerts, helping with a large office mailing or orchestral communications are all things for which we might ask your help. Anyone who is eager to become involved in projects within the AYS Program is encouraged to volunteer. Please share your talents, interest, ideas and time with the AYS Program!

“Building” Campaign

The AYS Program is currently raising funds for a permanent facility for the Program. Our new facility will have rehearsal space, sectional rooms, a music library, percussion storage and administrative offices. For more information, contact Kristine Purrington, Executive Director at 875-1319.

Playathon

The AYS Program Playathon is our major fundraiser, but with an obvious musical focus. The funds raised through the Playathon support the AYS Program’s annual fund, which helps pay for the costs of running the program including: the rental of sheet music, outreach tours, concert venue rental and instructor salaries. A month of student fundraising culminates in an afternoon of performances. Each of the six AYS Program groups will participate by presenting a REQUIRED concert program during the day, and all members are also expected to do their share in soliciting donations. \$75 is the suggested individual Playathon goal, and students meeting that goal shall be rewarded with an AYS Program t-shirt with their orchestra’s roster screened on the back. More information regarding the Playathon and other fundraising activities will be discussed when rehearsals begin in September. The AYS Program always needs parent volunteers to help with the Playathon. If you are interested in assisting with this critically important project, please call our office at 875-1319 right away!

Music

Each AYS Program member is assigned a folder at the beginning of the season; keep your music in this folder. Every player is responsible for his or her own folder and the music issued. Any lost or damaged music may be charged to the student's family. Since replacement charges can run anywhere from \$5 to \$30 per part, you should handle your music carefully and return it on time, as announced in rehearsals. It is the student's responsibility to be certain that he or she has all the music that has been assigned.

Bring your folder and music stand (if requested by conductor) to every rehearsal. Do not rely on your stand partner, as he or she may be unexpectedly absent. AYO & AYS wind and brass students – it is your responsibility to send your music to a rehearsal if you must miss due to illness.

Communication

At least once each month, we prepare an emailed newsletter for members and families of the AYS Program. The e-newsletter will contain important information such as complimentary ticket vouchers, rehearsal time/location changes, concert schedules, important reminders, etc. It is very important for both students and parents to read every issue carefully, and keep the AYS Program notified of your email addresses.

Parents, be sure to ask your child about any flyers, letters, memos, etc. that may be handed out in rehearsals (you may find it useful to check your child's music folder regularly for such materials). Any questions or issues related to the policies set forth in this handbook should be submitted to the AYS Office and will be reviewed by the Music Director and the Executive Director.

Staff

Gabriel Gordon, Music Director

Kristine Purrington, Executive Director

Mary Strong, Chief Administrative Officer

Nancy Bangs, AYSPA Assistant

Anaïs Chakerian, Webmaster

If you would like to contact any of the AYS staff or conductors, please call 875-1319 or send an email message to ays@aysmusic.org.

Feel free to call the AYS Program office for clarification and elaboration of any of the policies listed in this handbook.

AYS Program, Inc.

P.O. Box 30961

Albuquerque, NM 87190

(505) 875-1319 voice

(505) 875-9014

ays@aysmusic.org

www.aysmusic.org

Rehearsal information (subject to change)

AYS, Mondays from 6:30 – 9:15 p.m. at Sandia High School (NE corner of Candelaria & Pennsylvania)

AYO, Mondays from 6:30 – 9:15 p.m. at the NM National Guard Armory (600 Wyoming Blvd. NE)

AJS, Saturdays from 9:00 – noon at Desert Ridge Middle School (8400 Barstow NE)

AJO, Saturdays from 9:00 – noon at Cleveland Middle School (6910 Natalie St. NE)

APSO, Saturdays from 9:00—12:00 a.m. at Jackson Middle School (10600 Indian School Rd. NE)

AJYB, Spring semester only, Saturdays from 9:00—11:00 a.m. at Jackson Middle School (1100 Texas St. NE) - auditions held in December

AJSO, Wednesdays from 4:30 – 6:00 p.m. at Sandia High School (NE corner of Candelaria & Pennsylvania) - registration takes place in the summer

Chamber Ensemble Program

This is a very special part of the AYS Program which allows highly motivated high school students to play in small or medium sized chamber ensembles coached by professional musicians. Ensembles perform on the KHFM radiothon in the fall and at a recital in March. We are currently able to offer this wonderful program for a modest tuition fee.

Office Hours

Generally, AYS Program office hours are 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Since our administrative staff is very small, there may not always be someone available to take your call. If you need to see us in our office, please call before you come, in order to be sure someone will be in the office. Our phone number is 875-1319, and we'll return messages promptly.