

AM I REQUIRED TO AUDITION?

The Albuquerque Youth Symphony Program holds auditions every spring for the upcoming school year's performance season for students in grades 6-12.

High school students are placed in one of AYSP's three high school full-orchestras (which includes strings, winds, and percussion): the Youth Symphony (YS), the Youth Orchestra (YO), or the Youth Concert Orchestra (YCO).

Middle school students are placed in one of two middle school full-orchestras (which includes strings, winds, and percussion) - the Junior Symphony (JS) or the Junior Orchestra (JO), or in the middle school string orchestra (which includes violin, viola, cello, and bass) - the Junior String Orchestra (JSO).

All returning students re-audition each year.

We do not hold auditions for our elementary school ensembles (for students who will be in grade 4 or 5 next school year), but there are certain eligibility requirements for participation in those ensembles. Visit <https://www.aysmusic.org/programs/> to learn more about all of AYSP's high school, middle school, and elementary ensembles.

WHEN ARE AYSP AUDITIONS HELD?

All auditions are held on various dates beginning the end of April through the middle of May. Audition dates and audition excerpts/etudes are announced before the APS Spring Break each year. Students may sign up for an audition through our website starting in March. Your audition date and time slot will be emailed to you the week after audition sign-up closes.

Preferred audition dates are assigned on a first-come-first-serve basis and are not guaranteed. Your audition may be scheduled for a catch-all day or time not shown on the audition schedule based on schedule availability, so be sure to sign up early.

WHERE ARE THE AUDITIONS HELD?

Unless otherwise specified, auditions are held at:
Dale E. Kempter Center for Music Education (the AYSP Facility)
4407 Menaul Blvd. NE
Albuquerque, NM 87110

HOW MUCH DO AUDITIONS COST?

There is a **\$15.00** non-refundable audition fee. Students who apply and qualify for financial assistance will have the \$15.00 audition fee credited toward their tuition upon being accepted into AYSP and registering for the upcoming season.

ARE THERE WARM-UP ROOMS AVAILABLE?

Yes. There are large communal warm-up rooms available for students.

Percussion students will receive a 7-minute, scheduled warm-up time where they will have access to percussion equipment. Additional warm-up time will be in the communal warm-up rooms, and it is recommended to bring a practice pad or other similar warm-up equipment for this time.

WHEN SHOULD I ARRIVE?

Plan to arrive 30 – 45 minutes before your scheduled audition time. It is very important to make sure you allow yourself extra travel time and look out for any possible traffic or weather delays.

You will not be able to warm up at the AYSP building earlier than 30 minutes before your scheduled audition time, so please plan accordingly.

WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT AT MY AUDITION?

Middle School: You will be playing in front of 2-5 judges. Judges are able to assist with tuning and answer questions. An audition lasts 5 minutes (7 minutes for percussion). During your audition, you may be stopped by the panel and asked to go on to another section of music. You may also be given instruction regarding what you just played and asked to play a section again. These situations are common and not a reflection of your playing or the result of your audition.

High School: Auditions are blind. 2-5 Judges will sit behind a screen and you are not permitted to speak once you enter, the audition room. An audition lasts 5 minutes (7 minutes for percussion). Due to time constraints, you may be stopped by the panel during your audition and asked to go on to another section of music. Students will have a proctor in the room to assist them. Judges do not know the name or grade of the student who is auditioning. Placement is based entirely on the student's audition score. Please play your audition in the order listed in the Audition Requirements.

For all grade levels: Students perform their audition solo, with no accompaniment. Parents and teachers are not allowed in audition room, but are welcome to wait in the lobby. Memorization of your music is not required. If you would like to memorize your solo, you are welcome to do so; however, it does not affect your audition score.

WHAT SHOULD I WEAR?

Middle school students should wear neat dress clothes that are comfortable to perform in. Remember that this is the first impression you will make on those who will evaluate you. It is also a good idea to practice in the clothes you are planning to wear at least once before your audition.

High school students should wear comfortable clothing to perform in. Since high school auditions are “blind,” you do not need to dress up.

WHEN WILL I FIND OUT THE RESULT OF MY AUDITION?

All audition results will be announced July 8th, after all AYSP summer programs have concluded. Results will be emailed to the email addresses provided at audition sign-up. **Be sure to enter your email address correctly during the online Audition Sign-Up process and make sure that your email account will accept mail from AYSP (not blocked by your spam folder).** Email is AYSP's primary mode of communication with students and parents.

IF ACCEPTED, WHEN DO REHEARSALS BEGIN?

Typically, rehearsals begin in early August. High school ensembles often start the weekend before area public schools (APS, RRPS) begin. The full rehearsal schedule will be emailed on July 8, 2026.

WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION IN AYSP?

To be a member of an AYSP ensemble, a student who plays a string instrument with AYSP agrees to play in his or her school orchestra and a student who plays a wind, brass or percussion instrument with AYSP agrees to play in his or her school band. If no school music ensemble is offered, this rule does not apply. A musician whose school does not have a music program for their instrument, or who is home schooled, however, is strongly encouraged to participate in additional musical ensembles.

IS FINANCIAL AID AVAILABLE?

Yes. The Albuquerque Youth Symphony Program is committed to supporting any student in need of financial assistance for tuition. Each application is assessed using a sliding scale of 25-90% of tuition cost, based on HUD Low to Moderate Income (LMI) Guidelines. Financial aid is awarded for the season, and families must reapply annually. The Financial Aid application form can be found at <https://www.aysmusic.org/tuition-and-fees/>.

FURTHER QUESTIONS?

For questions about audition sign-up scheduling, application fee, financial aid application, or general program tuition, please email Dorothy Whisler (AYSP Assistant Director) at dorothy@aysmusic.org or (505) 875-1319 ext. 127.

For questions about music selection, excerpts, the audition process, or AYSP participation requirements, please email Dan Whisler (AYSP Music Director) at dan@aysmusic.org or (505) 875-1319 ext. 105.