

Longmont Youth Symphony Orchestra Handbook 2012-2013

Introduction

Congratulations and welcome to the Longmont Youth Symphony (LYS). This season our orchestra will work together to improve our individual and collective musical skills. We want you to have fun, work hard, and produce music our community can enjoy. If we can do that, we will be successful.

The purpose of this handbook is to give members of the Longmont Youth Symphony information about our philosophy, policies, expectations, and procedures. Your input is necessary and welcome, so please let us know your suggestions.

General Information

The Longmont Youth Symphony is an orchestra committed to serving the young musicians of the St. Vrain Valley and outlying areas. Its purpose is to provide a resource for young people wishing to further develop their musical abilities under the guidance of professional musicians. In addition, LYS hosts the Longmont Youth Strings Ensemble and the Wind Ensemble Program.

Orchestra Philosophy

The LYS is unique in that it is committed to the development of its members' individual and collective musical abilities, and to the appreciation of and participation in the music and arts of the community.

The LYS is an honors orchestra. Acceptance is by audition. Committed to serving the young musicians of the St. Vrain Valley, members work under the guidance of professional musicians and members of the Longmont Symphony Orchestra (LSO). In return, and as part of that process, the LYS encourages and supports efforts by members to form ensembles and to share their expanding skills, ability, and talent through community service. The LYS fosters a climate that encourages members to develop a sense of responsibility and desire to participate in the life of the community. It is an important component of our program, and one that will enable our musicians to share their talents with a broad, varied audience while simultaneously experiencing the pleasure of giving of themselves.

All members of the LYS are required to participate in a school music program. We recognize that extenuating circumstances will sometimes occur. In such cases, we ask the student and parent to write a letter to the LYS Board explaining the reasons he/she may be unable to participate in such a program. The Board will review the letter, may ask to speak to the member directly, and will notify the member of its decision. LYS acknowledges the indispensable role the schools play in providing students with the desire, interest, and musical development necessary to participate in the LYS. To that end, it is the intent of the LYS to require that every member that attends a school that offers music programs will participate in those programs.

Musical Expectations

Music selections will be posted online on our website at least two weeks prior to each concert set. Please download the appropriate selections so that you may be well prepared for the first rehearsal. Technically difficult sections will be identified for special attention, and you are encouraged to take the music to your private teachers. In addition, professional orchestral players and/or college mentors will sometimes be hired to provide coaching at sectionals. Remember, rehearsal time is not when notes are learned, but rather ensemble is perfected and music is created.

Because of the difficulty of the music and the challenges that lie ahead for you this season, the Music Director urges you to get help with your parts from your private teacher. It is recommended that all members of the orchestra study privately with a qualified teacher. If you do not have private lessons now, LYS can refer you to one of the qualified teachers in the St.Vrain valley or surrounding areas.

Seating Philosophy

Principal and assistant principal players will be assigned their seats by the conductor at the beginning of the season on the basis of playing ability demonstrated at chair auditions. Strong players may be mixed throughout the section.

Occasionally, sectionals will be held during regularly-scheduled rehearsals to tighten ensemble and address technically difficult passages. These sessions will be lead by local teachers and/or members of the LSO, professional teachers, performers and/or college mentors, and will be announced at regular rehearsals. Seating placement will be addressed during these sessions, but they are primarily to address ensemble, bowing, and musical style. Section members missing these sessions will be seated at the back.

Members are urged to remember that all players are essential to the quality of the orchestra and that seating placement does not reflect a member's ability and value. However, if students wish to challenge for higher placement in the section, they may do so at times specified by the Music Director, or speak directly with the Music Director for consideration.

Players having any questions or problems with their seating should talk with the conductor. Every attempt will be made to resolve seating problems to the satisfaction of all involved parties. *The final decision on all seating matters rests with the Conductor.*

Concert Preparation and Responsibility

Our goal is to make great music. Any conversation during rehearsals must be kept to a minimum. Out of respect for your fellow members and the Music Director, please keep all talking to a minimum and only discuss the music being prepared.

Musicians are expected to come to rehearsal with their music and a pencil, and to have practiced their music prior to rehearsal.

An orchestra is sum of its participants -- individual musicians - - and each person must be committed to working together to make music. Behavior that supports and is conducive to the orchestra's endeavors is expected and is prerequisite for continued membership in the LYS.

Concerts and Dress Code

Concerts represent the culmination of our members' work. It is important that members have mastered their music and carry themselves in a professional manner. To that end, members are to be on stage and seated ten minutes prior to the concert.

Orchestra members are required to wear concert dress at all performances. Concert dress for LYS ladies: **long black dresses (not sleeveless) or slacks with black top**, without excessive accessories; **black shoes and black hosiery**. Concert dress for gentlemen: **black pants; white, long sleeve dress/tux shirt; black shoes and socks, bow tie and cummerbund**.

The Music Director will review concert etiquette (e.g., dress, tuning order, etc.) prior to each concert.

Attendance Policy

Attendance is expected at all rehearsals. The participation of all orchestra members in every rehearsal is critical in the preparation of the orchestra's performance. While it is recognized that there may be times where there is a scheduling conflict, all absences can adversely affect the preparation of the orchestra as a whole.

Two absences in a concert block will result in the musician having to re-audition for the Music Director for that concert. Three absences may disqualify the player from the upcoming concert. Late arrivals and early dismissals from dress rehearsals are not permitted.

Any student who misses a concert or dress rehearsal may be required to pay a \$75.00 fee to cover the expense of a professional substitute.

All absences, tardiness, or early dismissal for legitimate reasons must be presented to the Music Director in writing at least two weeks in advance. LYS provides these forms at all orchestra rehearsals and on the website. After the form has been signed by the Music Director, it should be given to the Administrator.

Absences due to illness or emergency must be reported to the Music Director before the beginning of said rehearsal:

LYS: Keynes Chen 303-908-6784

WEP: TBA

LYSE: Danielle Crisman 970-290-1382

More than two unexcused absences in a season may be grounds for dismissal from the orchestra. Note that tardiness or absence because you have misread (or not read) the schedule will be considered unexcused.

Volunteer Requirement

LYS is largely a volunteer organization and its success is dependent upon the work of parent volunteers. As a volunteer organization, the LYS will rely on parents to shape our vision, develop programs and implement objectives. LYS needs your participation.

Five volunteer hours are required and logged per season, per family. Volunteer hours can be paid through participation, as requested, in the following capacities:

- Notes & Noodles
- Silent Auction
- LYS Concert help
- Retreat chaperone
- Board of Directors membership
- Sub-committee involvement
- Other capacities as requested by an LYS official.

If you prefer to contribute monetarily, rather than donate your time, *one volunteer hour each* can be paid through providing the following:

- Notes & Noodles dessert donation
- Each Silent Auction donation valued at \$50 or more
- \$50 cash donation.

Fees

The LYS is overseen by a nine-member Board of Directors which meets monthly to determine policy, review the budget, and address questions.

1. The LYS Board of Directors sets a tuition amount which will be charged to all members of the orchestra. Fees for the full season will be \$425 for the first child, and \$375 for the second child in the same family. Once paid, this tuition is not refundable. Please note that tuition covers less than half of the expenses of the orchestra. The remainder of LYS funding comes from grants, donations, and fund-raising activities.
2. The LYS Board does not want its fees to prevent qualified students from playing in the orchestra. A limited scholarship fund is available to those who qualify. Students can request scholarship information from the LYS Administrator.
3. All fees are due in full at the beginning of the season. A payment plan is available, if requested. Please contact the Administrator for details.
4. When musicians are provided with a copy of the music, they will be held responsible for these parts. There will be a minimum of \$1.00 replacement fee for each lost and/or damaged part.

Important Phone Numbers

If you have any questions or concerns during the season, please feel free to contact a LYS staff member:

Music Director, Keynes Chen 303/908-6784*
keynesviolin@yahoo.com

* Phone is the preferred method of contact

Board Chairperson, Dmitri Routkevitch 303/774-9257
droukevitch@gmail.com

LYS Office:

Beth Robison, Administrator 303/351-1452
info@longmontyouthsymphony.org

www.longmontyouthsymphony.org