



Youth Orchestra Program

2025|2026

Member Handbook

CAPE SYMPHONY YOUTH ORCHESTRA PROGRAM

CSYOP consists of four levels of ensembles: Cape Symphony Youth Orchestra (Advanced), Repertory (Intermediate), Debut (Adv. Beginner), and Primary (Beginner). Each ensemble focuses on varying levels of musicianship and technique and aims to place students with similar ability together. All members of CSYOP will learn to rehearse and perform, like the Cape Symphony Orchestra, exploring the beauty and intricacy of history's greatest compositions while continuing to grow their musicianship and technical ability.

We welcome all young musicians who play orchestral instruments (up to age 21, generally) to audition for placement in one of our ensembles. It is our mission to inspire joy and we achieve that goal by sharing our love for music performance and education with the next generation of Cape Cod musicians. Each season begins in September and concludes in May.

CSYOP faculty includes professional chamber, orchestra, and solo musicians who have dedicated their careers to music performance and teaching. Our instructors, and frequent guests from the Cape Symphony Orchestra, will guide students in sectionals and provide support in rehearsals, often playing side-by-side with students while they learn to navigate the challenges of orchestral playing.

For all general questions or absence communication, please contact our Personnel Manager.

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Janice Paine
Personnel Manager
Cell: 508.737.2914
youthorchestra@capesymphony.org

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CSYO Program Director
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ARTISTIC STAFF

Mark Miller
Music Director & CSYO Conductor
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David Gable
Strings Coordinator & Conductor
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Elizabeth Doriss
Winds Coordinator &
Honors Chamber Winds Instructor
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Mark Prall
Percussion Coordinator &
Repertory Percussion Conductor
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Alison Heleen
Wind Ensemble Conductor
aheleen@capesymphony.org

CSYOP ENSEMBLES

CAPE SYMPHONY YOUTH ORCHESTRA, Conductor: Mark Miller

An advanced ensemble geared toward high school and college students. Members will rehearse together as a full symphony orchestra and prepare repertoire similar to that of a professional orchestra.

REPERTORY STRINGS, Conductor: David Gable

This ensemble serves as a training ground for students who aspire to play in the string section of CSYO, but need a bit more experience. Through the performance of chamber music, these young musicians will focus on developing musicianship while building a strong technical foundation on their instrument.

DEBUT STRINGS, Conductor: David Gable

An ensemble for advanced beginners who aspire to play in Repertory or CSYO but need more experience. Rehearsals will focus on building musicianship and technique to prepare members for the challenge of performing more advanced repertoire in the future.

PRIMARY STRINGS, Conductor: David Gable

An ensemble specifically designed for our youngest students (recommended for grades: K- 5). This program marks the start of our student's musical journey where they'll learn the basics of playing an instrument and participate in group performances.

HONORS CHAMBER WINDS, Instructor: Elizabeth Doriss

A select group of wind players who will learn to perform as a chamber ensemble. This ensemble may be asked to perform at special events and help with outreach/recruitment for CSYOP.

WIND ENSEMBLE, Conductor: Alison Heleen

An ensemble for intermediate-level woodwind and brass players who aspire to play in CSYO, but need a bit more experience. Rehearsals will focus on building musicianship and technique to prepare members for the challenge of performing more advanced repertoire in the future.

REPERTORY PERCUSSION, Conductor: Mark Prall

This ensemble will be devoted to preparing and performing percussion ensemble repertoire while learning to play a wide range of symphonic percussion instruments. The skills acquired in this ensemble will build students' musicianship, technique, and confidence to perform at their highest ability in their school music programs and CSYOP.

****All Percussionists will play in Repertory Percussion ensemble as well as assigned ensembles. CSYO Percussionists rehearse at BHS when not with Rep. Perc.**

LOCATIONS

Review your ensemble calendar for specific dates/locations of rehearsals.

CSYO REHEARSALS:

Barnstable High School (Band Room)

744 West Main St.
Hyannis, MA 02601

*Band room door is located nearest to the parking lot on the right side of the building (when looking at the front entrance).

ALL OTHER ENSEMBLES:

Cape Symphony West Barnstable Campus

2235 Iyannough Road
West Barnstable, MA 02668

CONCERTS (ALL ENSEMBLES):

Barnstable Performing Arts Center (@ Barnstable High School)

744 West Main St.
Hyannis, MA 02601

AUDITIONS

All new and current members must audition each season. This not only helps us place students in the appropriate ensembles, but helps our conductors choose repertoire that is both challenging and attainable for each group.

ELIGIBLE INSTRUMENTS:

- **Strings:** Violin, Viola, Cello, and Bass
- **Winds/Brass:** Flute, Clarinet, Oboe, Bassoon, Trumpet, Trombone, Horn, Baritone, and Tuba
 - Saxophone: Wind Ensemble only
- **Percussion:** Must audition on Timpani, Snare Drum, and Mallets
- **Harp:** may be asked to play with multiple ensembles

GENERAL TIMING:

Live auditions take place annually in June and September. Visit our webpage for details. Mid-Season auditions are typically offered in January.

REQUIREMENTS:

Specific requirements listed by instrument and ensemble, here:

<https://www.capesymphony.org/education/youth-orchestra/auditions>

RETURNING MEMBERS:

Members participating in the current season are automatically accepted into CSYOP for the following season, **but must re-audition in June to guarantee their current ensemble placement for the next season.** This also lets us know you are committed to returning and helps our team plan for the future.

PROMOTION:

Members who wish to “move up” to a more advanced ensemble mid-season must have a recommendation from their current ensemble director to request an audition.

TUITION

CSYOP is a full-season commitment. Tuition covers staff, guest musicians, special events, rehearsal spaces, concert venues, and much more for the full season. Thankfully, we are able to keep tuition low with the help of generous donations from individuals and charitable foundations.

All Ensembles: \$600 *unless enrolled in private lessons at the Cape Symphony, see details below. **Partial refunds will not be provided for students who decide to leave mid-season (or are dismissed due to poor attendance)**

All accepted members will receive a link to our pre-enrollment form. A registrar will help enroll your student from there.

All questions about payment should be directed to our registration team: 508.362.2772

MID-SEASON RECRUITMENT:

Tuition will only be prorated (\$300) for **new** students who successfully audition for and join mid-season (starting in or after January).

MARTHA'S VINEYARD STUDENTS:

Students traveling to rehearsals from Martha's Vineyard will not be required to pay tuition. Attendance expectations are outlined on page 8.

PRIVATE LESSONS/FINANCIAL AID

While it is not required to enroll in lessons at Cape Symphony, those who do may be eligible for financial aid and/or scholarship. All students enrolled in private lessons with a Cape Symphony teaching artist for the full academic year (Sept- June) will have their CSYOP tuition waived! We highly encourage every member to take weekly private lessons as it is vital to all young musicians' development.

In-person and remote lesson offerings vary by instructor. Call: 508.362.2772

Financial Aid Forms/information can be found on our website: [Financial Aid](#)

CAPE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA TICKETS

Members of the CSYOP will be first in line to receive free tickets to Cape Symphony concerts through our Tix4Music program. There may also be opportunities to attend Cape Symphony rehearsals throughout the season.

CSYOP MEMBER EXPECTATIONS

As a member of CSYOP, your personal progress as a musician and the collective progress/success of the ensemble depend upon your full participation. By joining CSYOP you make a commitment not only to yourself, but to each of your fellow musicians, to:

1. **Attend all rehearsals and concerts** (see Attendance Policy on next page). Our time together is limited and the music we are preparing to perform will be challenging; we must value every rehearsal. Concerts are the reason we rehearse; please put these dates in your calendars right away!
2. **Be on time:** Students are expected to arrive 15 minutes prior to the start of rehearsal to warm-up and prepare for rehearsal at the scheduled “down-beat”. Be in your seat, ready to play, at least 5 minutes before the scheduled start of rehearsal with all music and relevant equipment (mutes, pencil, reeds, etc.) within reach.
3. **Prepare/practice ensemble music before and between rehearsals:** The primary purpose of rehearsal is to grow together as an ensemble, not to learn your individual part. If there are issues observed with any student’s preparation, they may be asked on a week’s notice to perform excerpts of their ensemble music for their conductor or a faculty member.
4. **Engage in rehearsals:** pay attention, follow instructions, mark reminders and changes in your parts, and avoid distractions. Cell phones and other devices are to be turned off before rehearsal begins.
5. **Carefully read all emails** from the Personnel Manager. These emails contain essential information related to your ensemble. Please, respond to emails in a timely manner.
6. **Regularly study with a private teacher.** Private study is essential to the development of all musicians and will greatly assist with any technical challenges presented in our ensemble music. Information about lessons (and financial aid) can be found on p. 6.
7. **Participate in school music programs** (if available). One rehearsal per week is not enough to develop one’s ear, ensemble skills, and musicianship to its fullest potential. You are CSYOP’s greatest ambassadors; be a leader in your school program and inspire others to join!

ATTENDANCE AND LATENESS POLICY

1. All CSYOP members are allowed **no more than two unexcused absences per concert cycle**. Attendance at Dress Rehearsals and Concerts is required for all members.
2. Weather events may interfere with rehearsals, we will do our best to communicate 24 hours before rehearsal to announce any cancellations or campus closures.
3. All members must notify CSYOP Personnel Manager of any upcoming absences from rehearsal. Email is the preferred method of communication. Please look ahead and communicate absences early!
4. Once a student has exceeded the allowed absences, they may be asked to play excerpts from their music for their conductor. This is to ensure that frequently absent members are keeping pace with the rest of the ensemble, and should not be considered disciplinary.
5. Excess Unexcused Absences could lead to loss of membership/demotion and is at the discretion of the CSYOP Artistic Staff. Refunds will not be offered.

Excused Absences: must be communicated 24 hours in advance with the exception of sudden illness/injury (please call Personnel Manager in that case): Auditions, school music program performances (or required school rehearsals), college auditions, All-Cape Festival, and District Festivals are all examples of excused absences. In general, just communicate early!

Unexcused Absences include: family vacations, homework, sports, or other unrelated activities. Again, an event that qualifies as excused will not be excused if communicated late.

Lateness: Late arrivals are disruptive to the ensemble. Students who are repeatedly late will need to meet with the Personnel Manager. Students are expected to arrive at least 15 minutes prior to the start of rehearsal.

School Music Program Participation Policy: As CSYOP relies on its partnership with Cape school music programs, all members are required to participate in their school music program, if one is offered. At all grade levels, when scheduling conflicts arise between CSYOP and school music events (mandatory performances), participation in those school music events is given precedence, resulting in an excused absence.

School Musical Productions: Oftentimes, our members are asked to perform in the pit for their school musicals. Please try to avoid “double-booking” yourself and communicate any conflicts ASAP.

BEHAVIOR/REHEARSAL EXPECTATIONS

Reasonable standards of behavior and dress are expected while rehearsing, performing, or participating in any event or activity associated with CSYOP. No set of rules can cover every possible situation. The list below, along with common courtesy and respect, offers a guide to appropriate behavior:

1. Demonstrate respectful and polite behavior with CSYOP staff, guest musicians, and fellow students. **Be supportive of one another:**
2. Put trash in the appropriate containers. We are guests in our rehearsal/concert spaces; leave no trace behind.
3. During breaks from rehearsal, remain in the rehearsal space or in the area immediately surrounding the building.
4. Everyone must take care to avoid damaging instruments or any property in the building. Members are responsible for their own instruments. Do not leave instruments or bows unattended where they might be damaged accidentally. Instruments should be safely put into cases during breaks or when not needed.
5. Cell phones and other electronic devices are to be turned off during rehearsals.
6. Plan ahead and use the restrooms before the rehearsal or at the break. Leaving mid-rehearsal is disruptive, so please reserve this need for emergencies only.
7. Do not bring food or drink, except water, into rehearsal spaces. Refillable water bottles are recommended as they prevent spills and reduce waste. Please eat your snacks in the hallway or lobby before/after rehearsal/during breaks and remember to dispose of your trash properly.
8. Talk among musicians should be kept to a minimum during rehearsals, and should deal directly with issues related to the music at hand.
9. Books, homework, and other materials are not allowed during rehearsal. Musical scores are acceptable and encouraged (especially, if you are tacet for a movement).

PARENT SUPPORT

For members to fully benefit from CSYOP, we request that parents assist with their student's participation in the following ways:

1. Read all emails and materials from CSYOP staff. Respond in a timely manner.
2. Ensure prompt arrival and pick-up at/from rehearsals and concerts.
 - Students are expected to arrive at least 15 minutes prior to the rehearsal start time.
 - Students should be picked up no later than 10 minutes following the end of a rehearsal or performance.
3. Support full attendance to all rehearsals and events by avoiding conflicts with family vacations/events.
4. Encourage private lessons, practice routine, and participation in school music activities.
5. Provide a snack and water bottle for rehearsals.
6. Introduce family friends to CSYOP, especially parents of prospective students.
7. Communicate with CSYOP staff members regarding any concerns, questions, ideas. The sooner we are aware of your concerns, the better chance we have of resolving them successfully.
8. Attend all CSYOP concerts and invite your family!

Volunteering: At various points in each season, CSYOP needs assistance from parent volunteers. Typically, this includes helping at concerts or special events, serving as a chaperone for CSO Tix4Music Concerts, or carpooling. Parents are always welcome to contact our Personnel Manager to add their name to our list of volunteer contacts.

Donating: Please consider making a charitable gift to CSYOP to support accessibility through scholarship and continue the growth of the overall program.

ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY

CSYOP is committed to creating a safe and respectful environment for all participants, including students, staff, volunteers, and guests. Harassment, whether physical or verbal, is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated in any form. The following policy outlines our expectations for behavior and consequences for those who violate this policy.

Definition of Harassment:

Harassment includes any behavior that is unwelcome, intimidating, hostile, or offensive, and is based on a protected characteristic such as race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, disability, or any other legally protected status. Examples of harassment may include, but are not limited to: verbal abuse, physical assault, unwanted touching, sexual advances or comments, or any other behavior that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

Expectations for Behavior:

All participants in CSYOP are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that is respectful of others and does not infringe upon the rights of others. Specifically, participants are expected to:

- Refrain from any behavior that may be considered harassment (as defined above).
- Treat others with dignity and respect, regardless of their race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, disability, or any other legally protected status.
- Report any incidents of harassment to the CSYOP Personnel Manager.

Consequences of Violating this Policy:

Any participant who violates this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including immediate expulsion from the program. CSYOP reserves the right to take appropriate action to ensure the safety and well-being of all participants.

Reporting and Investigation:

Any participant who experiences or witnesses harassment is encouraged to report the incident immediately to CSYOP Personnel Manager. All reports will be taken seriously, investigated promptly and confidentially, and appropriate action will be taken to address the issue.

CONCERT ATTIRE

All black with shades of blue or purple ties (long) or scarves. Splashes of **BLUE** and/or **PURPLE** color are highly encouraged. Be creative!

Top: black, collared button-down shirt or black blouse (black or navy blue coat optional)

Bottom: black pants, slacks, dresses, or skirts. no yoga pants or jeans.

Black socks or leggings, Black shoes (no sneakers)

RECOMMENDED PRACTICE TOOLS

1. **Tunable (app):** Tuner, Metronome, Drone all in one.
2. **Chet** or **Perfect Ear (apps):** ear-training (intervals, chords, scales, etc.).
3. **Rhythm Trainer (app):** specific and progressive exercises for building rhythmic reading skills.
4. **Ella (app):** progressive sight-singing training app.
5. **musictheory.net:** explore the lesson/exercises tab.
6. **imslp.org:** a website that contains all public domain sheet music/scores.
7. **Korg:** tuners and metronomes (no smart-device required).
8. **Smart Device Camera/Voice Recorder-** record and listen to yourself!
9. **Genius Scan (app):** quickly digitize parts.
10. **Apple Classical Music/Spotify/Youtube:** for listening to your orchestra music!
11. **Fourscore (app):** for anyone who wants to read their music from an iPad/Tablet.

I have read and agree to follow the expectations set by the CSYOP Student Handbook:

Print Student Name:

Student Signature:

Parent Signature:

Please sign and return to the CSYOP Personnel Manager at the second rehearsal.