

# YOU ARE THE FUTURE OF MUSIC.

Modesto Symphony Youth
Orchestra Handbook 2023-2024



This handbook has been prepared as a guide to define the Modesto Symphony Youth Orchestra policies and procedures. If you have any questions, contact us at: msyo@modestosymphony.org. The dates included in this handbook are subject to change and are superseded by any subsequent correspondence throughout the season.

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#### INTRODUCTION

#### **WELCOME!**

#### **Welcome to the Modesto Symphony**

Youth Orchestra! The Modesto Symphony Youth Orchestra (MSYO) is entering its 48th successful season and serves over 100 young musicians and their families from public and private schools in the Central Valley. Led by a deeply engaged leadership team, the MSYO attracts a diverse group of young, outstanding musicians from all over our region. Members are presented with the opportunity to share their gift of music in a challenging and inspiring orchestral setting among their peers from all social, economic and cultural backgrounds. As a program within the Modesto Symphony Orchestra Association (MSOA), members also have the invaluable experience of interacting with our professional musicians, conductors and visiting conductors through coaching, workshops, side-by-side performances, and clinics.

#### **MSOA VISION**

The Modesto Symphony Orchestra Association strives to enrich lives and enhance our community's vitality and quality of life through music.

#### **MSOA MISSION**

We shall pursue this vision by producing and presenting music of the highest artistic caliber while fostering lifelong music education and appreciation.

#### **VALUES**

In pursuit of this vision the Modesto Symphony Orchestra Association shall be guided by these values.

**Creativity:** foster an environment conducive to innovation in the type, format and venue of musical performance and to the administration and governance of MSO.

**Excellence:** expect high levels of performance both on-stage and in MSO's administration and governance.

**Integrity:** be honest and expect a foundation of strong moral principles behind all actions.

**Collaboration:** look for opportunities to work with others on shared goals.

**Welcoming:** strive to meet the needs and desires of all segments of the community through music performance and education.

#### GENERAL EXPECTATIONS & CONDUCT

## SCHOOL MUSIC PROGRAMS

MSYO programs are designed to complement members' personal music development – not be a substitute for other means of instruction. **The MSYO strongly suggests that all members contribute their talents to their appropriate school instrumental program, where available.** This supports our school music curriculum and helps to provide strong leadership and musical role models in the school environment. We believe in the value of music education in collaboration with our community.

#### PRIVATE LESSONS

We strongly encourage students to take weekly private lessons to develop their individual technique and musicality to the highest level possible. The value of individualized instruction on one's instrument is unmeasurable. A list of private instructors is available upon request. It is in the students' best interest to study with a professional who has credentials and experience with the particular instrument.

## CHANGE OF PERSONAL INFORMATION

Please notify the MSOA Office

(msyo@modestosymphony.org) with any changes in personal information (i.e. email, address, phone number, school change, etc.) so records can be kept current and prevent members from missing important MSYO communications. We primarily communicate via email and MSYO's failure to contact a member due to out- of-date or incorrect information shall not constitute a valid reason for a member to miss a MSYO activity.

#### **CODE OF CONDUCT**

MSYO members are representative of the Modesto Symphony Youth Orchestra within the Modesto Symphony Orchestra Association at all times. Awareness that the general public may view actions of individuals as actions of the MSOA must be remembered. As ambassadors of the organization, members are expected to show responsibility and care in the use of the facilities and properties of host schools, concert halls and all other appropriate places and to abide by the dictates of common courtesy.

#### **HARASSMENT**

In alignment with federal, state and local laws, the MSYO prohibits any kind of harassment. The MSYO/MSOA is responsible for the enforcement of these laws among all its members and staff. Individuals with a grievance may make their concerns known by:

- Directly confronting the person engaged in the harassment and reminding that person that such harassment is contrary to MSYO policies and must be stopped immediately.
- **b** If the individual does not wish to communicate directly with the individual engaging in the harassment or if such attempts have been unsuccessful, the individual should contact his or her MSYO Music Director, Conductor, Intern, the MSYO Manager or the MSOA President & CEO.

## SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

It is the policy of the MSYO to maintain an atmosphere free of sexual harassment. Sexual Harassment is defined as unwanted sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct including sexually oriented comments from one member to another, or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment by unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Prohibited acts of a sexual nature in the above definition include, but are not limited to:

- Displaying at any event (rehearsal, concerts, tours, etc) sexually suggestive objects or pictures.
- Continual or repeated verbal abuses of a sexual nature, including commentaries, jokes or propositions of a sexual nature.
- Threats or insinuations that a person's placement or other conditions of membership may be adversely affected by not submitting or tolerating sexual advances.
- d- Unwelcome touching of a sexual nature. Individuals with a sexual harassment grievance may make their concerns known by following the grievance procedure outlined above.

#### GENERAL EXPECTATIONS & CONDUCT CONTINUED.

An investigation of all complaints will be undertaken promptly. The individual initiating the complaint may be required to put the facts surrounding the incident in writing and sign that writing. All complaints will be examined impartially and will involve a thorough investigation of the charge, including interviews with the charging individual and the accused individual.

Corrective action will be taken as warranted by the result of the investigation. Such action may include immediate discipline, up to and including termination of the individual from all MSYO programs. The specific penalty shall be determined on a case-by-case basis after review of all relevant facts. If warranted, information will be turned over to the appropriate authorities. Given the nature of this type of discrimination, the Modesto Symphony Orchestra Association also recognizes that false accusations of sexual harassment can have serious effects on innocent individuals. We trust all individuals will continue to act responsibly to establish a pleasant learning environment free from discrimination.

#### **CELL PHONE POLICY**

Cell phones may be used during rehearsal breaks, but must be turned off and put away during rehearsal. If your student is expecting an urgent phone communication during rehearsal time, please notify the conductor prior to the start of rehearsal. Inappropriate cell phone usage will result in disciplinary action including confiscation of the device and/or probation.

#### **DRUG & ALCOHOL POLICY**

The distribution, possession and non-prescribed use of narcotics, alcohol and other controlled substances by members is unlawful and strictly forbidden. Any violation will lead to disciplinary review and will lead to probation or dismissal.

#### **FOOD AND DRINK POLICY**

Food and drinks (except water) are not permitted in the rehearsal space or concert halls at any time. During the rehearsal breaks, members are allowed to eat and drink only in specified areas, including outside of the Gregori High School rehearsal rooms and in the Green Room at the Gallo Center for the Arts.

#### **PROBATION**

A member may be put on probation for reasons including, but not limited to, the following: excessive absences or tardiness, lack of musical preparedness, and behavior/conduct concerns. MSYO students are expected to behave respectfully during all MSYO rehearsals and events.

Receiving a Probation Statement means that the member is in violation of the Policies and Procedures set forth by the MSYO Member's Handbook. A member will have no more than two weeks to correct the situation. If the member continues to be in violation after receiving the Probation Statement, they may be dismissed from the orchestra. In any case, the member's parents/guardians will be notified at the time of probation. Probation is at the discretion of the Music Director/Conductor.

#### DISMISSAL

A member may be dismissed from MSYO for serious or continued policy violations. Consultation between the member in question, their parents/guardians and the Music Director/Conductor will be held before the dismissal notice is given. In the event of dismissal due to behavior/conduct concerns, a tuition refund will not be provided.

#### REHEARSALS

#### **LOCATION**

Regular weekly rehearsals are held on Wednesdays and begin at 5:30pm at Gregori High School. For a detailed schedule please see the MSYO 2023-24 Season Calendar. Members are expected to arrive at 5:15pm and come prepared to every rehearsal and concert.

If any MSYO student or parent has a concern regarding our facility rental of Gregori High School, please address all grievances first to an MSYO Team member, including either conductor, MSYO Manager, or MSO Director of Operations.

Please do not contact any Modesto Unified School District Employees directly with any grievances.

## WHAT TO BRING TO REHEARSALS

- Your instrument
  - Percussionists: All instruments needed are provided. However, we ask that all of our percussionists purchase their own mallets for timpani, marimba, and xylophone, as well as a pair of drumsticks. An example of what to purchase can be found here.
- Your MSYO music
- Any accessories you need (extra strings, rosin, mute, reeds, rock stop, etc.)
- A sharpened pencil with a good eraser
- A water bottle
- A positive attitude!

#### **PREPARATION**

Individual preparation prior to full ensemble rehearsal is mandatory. It cannot be stressed enough that group rehearsal time is not individual practice time. A consistent lack of preparation will be immediately addressed by the Music Director/Conductor. Furthermore, each member is expected to have all the materials necessary for rehearsal, at each rehearsal meeting. Being prepared includes proper fingernail grooming for string players.



One of the best ways students can prepare for rehearsals is to become aurally familiar with the pieces the orchestra will be performing. Listening to the music on CDs or online gives you a head start and will give you an idea of the style of the piece. We feel it is paramount that each MSYO member listen to a piece prior to rehearsing it in depth, to be familiar with the work before attending the first rehearsal.

#### MUSIC

The MSYO music library is a costly and valuable asset. The physical condition and usefulness of the orchestra part depends entirely on each member's care of the music assigned to him or her during the season. The parts will be signed out and recorded by the MSO Librarian. Parts are also accessible on the **MSYO Portal**.

All members are responsible for the condition of their music and folder. Students who forget their music may sign out a temporary folder at rehearsal. Students who lose or excessively forget to bring their music will be charged a \$20 minimum replacement fee.

MSYO members are required to bring a sharpened pencil with eraser to every rehearsal. It is an important part of the orchestral experience to learn how to mark orchestra parts (bowing, breath marks, articulations, fingerings, tempo changes, etc.). Mark only with pencil – never mark in ink or highlight.

#### CARPOOLING

MSYO understands that it can be difficult to arrange transportation to and from rehearsals and concerts. Because of this, we are happy to provide a roster of those MSYO members/families willing to share their information for carpooling purposes upon request.

#### **PARKING**

Parents who are dropping off and picking up students should do so in a valid parking space and should remain in their vehicles. For the safety of students, please be alert and drive carefully! Rehearsal ends promptly at 7:30pm. Please pick up your student in a timely manner. It is recommended that students wait inside the building in the event that a parent is running late.

#### AUDITIONS

MSYO auditions are held initially each spring prior to the start of the following concert season and are open to any musician through the age 19. Additional auditions and seating auditions are held throughout the season at the discretion of the Music Director.

## STRING SEATING AUDITIONS

String seating auditions offer an opportunity for the conductors to monitor the progress of students throughout the season and to be able to respond to the needs of the orchestra. CONCERT ORCHESTRA string seating auditions will be held on September 13th in person. SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA string seating auditions will be done virtually. Students will record a video of selected material from the conductor and submit the video by the second Friday of each set. The selected repertoire (assigned practice sections of the pieces) will be announced prior to the audition date. Auditions will be held during regular MSYO rehearsal times, or by video submission. It is under the conductors' consideration to seat students in the order they feel most beneficial for the entire group. All auditions dates and requirements will be announced no later than two weeks prior to the audition date.

Winds, Brass and Percussion sections will **NOT** have seating auditions.

If a student is absent for string seating auditions, they will not be able to make-up the audition and will be placed at the end of the list. Any make-up arrangements are offered at the conductor's discretion. **The conductor reserves the right to alter seating at any time throughout the season.** 

#### **CONCERTO COMPETITION**

The MSYO Symphony Orchestra Concerto Competition is held annually, with the winner performing with the Symphony Orchestra in the Season Finale Concert. Applications for the Concerto Competition are due to the MSYO on **Wednesday**, **October 25th**, **2023**. Video screenings and live auditions to be announced at a later date.

# CHAMBER MUSIC PROGRAM - MSYO AMBASSADORS

The MSYO Chamber music program is designed to give our most advanced students opportunities to receive expert coaching from professional musicians, and to provide additional performance opportunities throughout the season. Students enrolled in the chamber program will be required to attend additional rehearsals and performance opportunities throughout the season. Performance opportunities may include but are not limited to MSO patron & donor events, MSYO community outreach events, and prior to MSO concerts in the lobby of the Gallo Center for the Arts. Please note that all chamber events MUST be scheduled through the MSOA. If the group is asked to perform by anyone outside of the MSOA, please instruct them to contact the MSOA Office be emailing msyo@modestosymphony.org. Students from Concert Orchestra and Symphony Orchestra can participate in the Chamber Ensembles. The MSYO currently offers the following chamber groups:

## MSYO Brass/Woodwind Ensemble MSYO String Ensemble MSYO Percussion Ensemble

Space in our Chamber Music Program is limited; students are selected by the MSYO Chamber Music Coaches.

#### ATTENDANCE POLICY

Consistent attendance at rehearsals is essential to performance quality, educational value, morale of ensemble and retention of membership. MSYO members are expected to be fully committed and come prepared to every rehearsal and performance throughout the season.

#### REHEARSAL ABSENCES

In the event that a member has to miss a rehearsal, the online form must be submitted BEFORE the start of rehearsal. Excessive absences may affect seating, concert participation and/or membership in the organization. We ask that members limit absences to 1 per set, when possible. The Wednesday rehearsal before each concert is mandatory. If a student is absent the Wednesday before a concert, at the discretion of the conductor, a student may be asked to sit out for the concert. Exceptions to this policy may be made at the conductor's discretion.

#### **FOR EVERY ABSENCE:**

Submit an online absence notification form **as far in advance as possible BEFORE** the rehearsal absence. This form should also be submitted in the event that your student needs to arrive late or leave rehearsal early. **Attendance issues should be reported as far in advance as possible.** If an absence is due to an emergency situation, please submit the notification form as soon as you are able. MSYO members are responsible for practicing and learning the music rehearsed while absent. In the event of absences close to any concert, the MSYO member's participation in the upcoming concert will be at the discretion of the conductor.

#### SCHOOL CONFLICTS

We understand that MSYO members, who are often leaders in their school music programs, are urged to participate and meet all the responsibilities of rehearsing and performing in those programs. The MSYO makes every effort to avoid conflicts with District and All State Festivals, SAT's, etc. Please check your calendar and do your best to avoid scheduling exams on MSYO concert dates. In the event that a school conflict is unavoidable, please submit proper notification as soon as you are aware of the conflict.

## DRESS REHEARSAL AND CONCERT ABSENCES

Members are expected to attend **ALL** dress rehearsals and concerts throughout the MSYO season. If there is a conflict and a student is unable to attend a dress rehearsal or concert, **they must notify the MSOA Office by emailing msyo@modestosymphony.org by the first rehearsal of the concert set.** At the discretion of the conductor, a student may be asked to sit out for a set if they are unable to attend the concert.

#### **PUNCTUALITY**

The success of each MSYO member—and of all members—begins with allowing adequate time for warm-up. Members are expected to be ready for the concertmaster to tune the ensemble prior to the rehearsal start time and are expected to arrive at least 15 minutes before the downbeat of each rehearsal. Rehearsals start promptly; rehearsal time is valuable and tardiness will be considered a violation of the attendance policy and may result in probation and/or dismissal from the organization.

## WITHDRAWAL FROM MSYO

Members are expected to make a full year's commitment to MSYO. It is preferred that any member withdrawing from the program inform their Conductor in person, when possible. In addition, a written withdrawal statement must be immediately sent to the MSOA office. The MSYO may request an exit interview.

#### CONCERT INFORMATION

#### **CONCERT VENUE**

All MSYO concerts are located at The Gallo Center for the Arts in downtown Modesto. Please see the Season Calendar for concert dates.

#### **TICKETS**

Tickets are \$14 for adults and \$5 for youth and may be purchased at the Gallo Center Ticket Office over the phone at (209) 338-2100, in person, or online at ModestoSymphony. org. There is a \$2/ticket Gallo Center Box Office restoration fee for all tickets purchased. There is also a \$5/ticket handling fee (if tickets are purchased over the phone or online.

A ticket pre-order form will be handed out at the beginning of the MSYO season for those who would like to purchase all of their tickets at once. Pre-ordering MSYO tickets will allow you to save the \$5/ticket handling fee.

MEMBERS WILL NOT BE ABLE TO LEAVE THE GALLO CENTER BUILDING ONCE THEY HAVE BEEN CHECKED IN. PLEASE MAKE SURE TO BRING FOOD/SNACKS FOR LUNCH.

## POST-CONCERT RECEPTION

As long as it is safe to do so, we will host a post-concert reception after each MSYO concert. The reception will be held in the Gallo Center Lobby or other available location.

## MSYO CONCERT DRESS CODE

#### **CONCERT ORCHESTRA**

#### **Option 1**

- White dress shirt
- Black pants
- Black dress shoes (no sandals)
- Black dress socks

#### **Option 2\***

- Black floor-length skirt or slacks
- White blouse or top with sleeves
- Black shoes (no sandals)
- Black nylons/socks

#### **SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA**

#### **Option 1**

- Black pants
- Black button-down shirt or White button-down with Black suit jacket (Tuxedo jacket)
- Black dress shoes (no sandals)
- Black dress socks

#### Option 2\*

- All black floor-length dress with sleeves
  - OR -
- Black blouse with sleeves & black skirt/ slacks
- Black shoes (no sandals)
- Black nylons/socks

<sup>\*</sup> Sleeveless dresses or blouses are not allowed. Dresses or skirts to be no more than 5" above the ankle while sitting and legs may not be bare.

#### TUITION POLICY

#### **TUITION**

MSYO tuition is \$480 per season. MSYO families with more than one child participating in any given year will also receive a 20% sibling discount after the first full tuition. Please note that it is the family's responsibility to keep all active MSYO members' tuition accounts in good standing. The MSYO reserves the right to not allow participation in concerts if a member has an outstanding tuition balance and there are no prior arrangements made with the Finance Department.

If paying MSYO Tuition a lump sum is a burden to any of our MSYO families, please contact the MSO Finanace and Accounting Manager, Monica Garcia (mgarcia@modestosymphony.org) to set up an alternative payment plan. The tuition is due as a lump sum on October 4, 2023.

#### **SCHOLARSHIPS**

The Modesto Symphony Orchestra believes that everyone should have access to music education and we strive to make our programs available to all students, regardless of their financial background. Need-based scholarships are available to help MSYO members cover the cost of tuition. The scholarship form can be found on the MSO website in the MSYO Portal under 'Documents for MSYO Families'. Requests will be reviewed in the order that they are received. **The deadline to apply for a scholarship is September 27, 2023.** Students will be notified of scholarship results no later than October 11, 2023.

#### **TUITION REFUND POLICY**

If a member has paid tuition for the current semester and decides not to continue, then the member will be reimbursed according to the following schedule:

100% before the first rehearsal

75% before the second rehearsal

50% before the third rehearsal

25% before the fourth rehearsal

\*After attending the fourth rehearsal of a semester there will be no refund. Refunds will not be issued to students who are dismissed due to conduct issues

#### FUNDRAISING

There are many costs that are associated with the operation of the MSYO, including rental of the rehearsal and concert space, hiring coaches and conductors, renting music, and more. Tuition covers less than half of these expenses. Therefore the MSOA relies heavily on the income of fundraising activities to support the MSYO program. It is the philosophy of the MSOA that fundraising for the organization needs to have a commitment beyond any tour or trip opportunities. Multileveled efforts allow the community to support the MSYO as a whole, as well as support individual MSYO members in earning

money for their personal tour accounts. We strongly encourage MSYO members and families to support these efforts through spreading the word and volunteering time and energy. Fundraising opportunities include Glow Stick Sales at the MSO's annual Picnic at the Pops!, raffles, program ad sales and more.

Ideas for fundraising opportunities are always appreciated. If you have a fundraising suggestion, please email msyo@modestosymphony.org.

## VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES

Tuition covers only a fraction of our costs. To keep tuition as low as possible, each MSYO family is asked to volunteer a minimum of 6 hours or provide equivalent services.

Volunteer opportunities will be announced at the beginning of the season and as they arise during the year.

#### Here is a partial list of volunteer opportunities:

- Chaperone at MSYO events
- Concert Assistance
- Providing snacks for students
- Fundraising
- Audition Receptionist
- Music Library Assistant
- · Photography/ Videographer
- Other--please let us know if you have a special talent you'd like to contribute!

\*Please note that the volunteer buy-out payment is NOT substitution for participation in MSYO fundraising activities.



# MSYO STAFF & COMMUNICATION PROCEDURES

#### **MSYO MUSIC DIRECTOR**

The Music Director of the MSYO serves as the artistic leader of our entire youth orchestra program.

#### **CONDUCTORS & COACHES**

The conductor of each orchestra is responsible for conducting rehearsals and performances of his/her orchestra and choosing repertoire. Each conductor is also responsible for making decisions regarding issues of seating, musical preparedness, attitude, attendance, and probation of each member. Chamber ensemble coaches will do the same for their chamber ensemble.

## THE 2023-2024 SEASON MSYO CONDUCTORS & COACHES INCLUDE:

Donald C. Grishaw, Concert Orchestra

TBA, Symphony Orchestra

Ella Webb, Wind Specialist, Brass Ensemble

Joel Maki, Percussion Specialist

TBA, String Specialist/Ensemble

#### **MSYO INTERNS**

MSYO interns may provide small group or one on one coaching and assist the MSYO manager with administrative tasks during rehearsals.

#### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

Music Directors, Conductors and Coaches do not have offices or voice mail extensions at the MSOA office. If you need to talk to a Music Director, Conductor or Coach, please speak with the conductor at an appropriate rehearsal break or email the office at msyo@modestosymphony.org.

#### **MSOA STAFF**

The MSOA employs a comprehensive staff of employees and volunteers who work "behind-the-scenes" to make sure that all aspects of the MSOA and its education programs run smoothly. The MSOA staff coordinates the scheduling and managing of all rehearsals, concerts, and tours; writes the various communications to the MSYO members and their families; tracks tuition payments; prepares music and folders for each

member; raises money to support the MSYO programs; raises community awareness of MSYO through marketing and public relations work; helps build relationships among MSYO participants, their families and the MSYO and much more!

#### **ARTISTIC LEADERSHIP**

Nicholas Hersh, MSOA Music Director

Ryan Murray, Principal Pops Conductor

Daniel R. Afonso Jr., MSO Chorus Director

Don Grishaw, MSYO Concert Orchestra Conductor

TBA, MSYO Symphony Orchestra Conductor

Joel Maki, MSYO Percussion Specialist

Ella Webb, MSYO Wind Specialist

#### **MSOA ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF**

Caroline Nickel, President & CEO

Bianca Rose Ancheta, Communications & Design

Monica Garcia, Finance and Accounting Manager

TBA, MSYO Manager & Orchestra Librarian

Erin Nishimori, Director of Marketing & Communications

Matthew Oshida, Orchestra Personnel Manager

Matt Siek, Director of Operations

Ashlynn Einhell, Communication Coordinator

Burt Vasché, Chorus Manager

## CONTACT THE MSOA STAFF

The MSOA office is located at 911 13th St. in Downtown Modesto and is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Feel free to call during office hours at (209) 523-4156. A full listing of staff members can be found on the MSOA web site: <a href="https://www.modestosymphony.org">www.modestosymphony.org</a>.

## MSOA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The MSOA Board of Directors is composed of members who volunteer their time, expertise, and financial resources in support of the organization. The Board supports and carries out the MSOA mission by providing sound governance, overseeing its financial health, and ensuring the organization's longevity through strategic planning.

#### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Steve Pallios, Chairperson

Laura Bream, Vice Chairperson

Kent Johnson, Treasurer

Deni Royer, Secretary

Phillip Beck, M.D., Immediate Past Chairperson

Katherine Boyd

Carole Boyett

Meredith Brandsma

Sheila Carroll

**Amy Collier Carroll** 

Richard Dewar, MD

Robert Falzone

**Robert Hawks** 

Maree Hawkins

Mike Herrero

Greg Helbig, MD

Ron Hoffmann

Richard Kendrick, MD

Avi Nijjar, MD

Lyn Raible, MD

H. Dieter Renning

Joe Swain

**Betty Ustach** 

John Wallace

Laura Wharff

REPRESENTATIVES

Belinda Rolicheck, MSOC



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Modesto Symphony Youth Orchestra
911 Thirteenth Street
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ModestoSymphony.org

@ModestoSymphony

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