



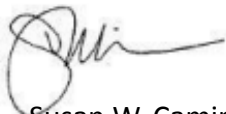
Chattanooga Youth
Symphony

POLICY MANUAL

Revised: March 18, 2026

**WELCOME TO THE CHATTANOOGA YOUTH SYMPHONY
(CYS)**

Congratulations on becoming a member of the CYS! Membership in the CYS comes with the exciting opportunity to learn and perform amazing works of music with a community of dedicated peers and professional leaders. Each individual is an important part of the CYS experience, and your involvement is vital both to your musical progress and to the musical progress of those around you. There are many wonderful and exciting ways to be a part of the CYS and I hope you take advantage of all we have to offer. We're excited that you've joined us and we can't wait to start the new season.



Susan W. Caminez
Executive Director

COMMUNICATIONS

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CSO Offices

620 Lindsay Street, Suite 210
Chattanooga, TN 37403

Staff

TBD, Music Director

CYS Manager

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Susan Caminez, CSO Executive Director

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OUR MISSION

The mission of the Chattanooga Youth Symphony is to provide youth with a music community that offers the finest orchestral training and performance opportunities, and cultivates lifelong professional skills and arts advocacy.

OUR VALUES

The CYS values a culture of warmth and belonging, where everyone is welcome, and everyone contributes their very best through:

- INTEGRITY: We act with integrity and show respect to all.
- PASSION: We are passionate about music and learning.
- COMMUNITY: We are individuals who work together to create and maintain our musical family, where each person is valued and held accountable.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, ACCESS & INCLUSION

CYS subscribes to the philosophy and practices of the CSO. Music continues to be a vehicle to bring our communities together in the ongoing effort to end systemic racism, discrimination, and injustice. We believe that our staff, musicians, and patrons deserve respect and representation inclusive of race, religion, socio-economic status, disability, sexuality, and gender identity. We pledge to center the discussion of diversity, equity, access, and inclusion throughout our operations and activities.

OUR CODE OF CONDUCT

Members of the CYS have expectations whether at rehearsals, at public performances, or in any other capacity in which they are representing the CYS. Upon acceptance into the CYS, members signed a membership agreement to abide by the following Code of Conduct:

- I contribute in making the CYS a great environment to learn in, grow in, and make music.
- I am accountable to myself to be prepared and to my orchestra who depends on me to be there.
- I am my best when I work together with others, respect others, and value each person’s unique contributions.
- I have a responsibility to take care of my property and to respect the property of my colleagues, the property of our space(s), and the property of the CSO.
- I commit to following the policy as set forth by the CYS.

REHEARSALS

Regular rehearsals take place on Monday evenings at First Baptist Church throughout the season. Please refer to the calendar located on the website.

Rehearsal Location:

First Baptist Church, Chattanooga
401 Gateway Avenue, Chattanooga, TN 37402

Rehearsal Times and Room Assignments

Chamber Players	4:30-5:30 PM	Various Assigned Rooms
Symphony	5:45-7:45 PM	Fellowship Hall

Directions to First Baptist Church

From 1-24: Take the US 27 N/Downtown exit. Take Exit 1B – Martin Luther King Jr. Drive. At the light at the end of the exit ramp, go straight through the traffic light onto Chestnut Street. Go three blocks and turn left onto 6th Street at the stop sign. Go under the HWY 27 underpass and turn RIGHT into the main FBC parking lot using the entrance off 6th Street/Gateway Avenue.

From US 27 S: Just after crossing the TN River, take the Gateway Avenue exit to the right. At the end of the ramp, turn RIGHT onto Gateway Avenue, and immediately RIGHT into the main parking lot of FBC.

Parking & Arrival

The CYS is assigned to the large main lot in front of the steeple. The assigned entry is the lobby entrance, marked LOBBY, to the left of the steeple. Please do not use any other entrance.

Departure Procedures

Members will exit through the same assigned lobby door. No member should exit the building unless there is express approval from the conductor and/or CYS Manager. We encourage members to wait inside the building for families to arrive.

Waiting Area

Parents will be allowed to walk their members to the designated entrance door and check them in at the Attendance Table, but will not be allowed to enter the rehearsal rooms. A waiting area with chairs is available in the lobby next to the Attendance Table for parents.

Building Safety & Consideration

Members and parents are not permitted in any other areas of the First Baptist Church other than those designated for use by the CYS on Monday nights.

SHEET MUSIC

Members are responsible for the sheet music they are given at the start of each concert cycle. Members are required to write in pencil their first name and last initial at the top right of every piece of music they are given. Members can also access their sheet music digitally on the members only page of the website.

Members who lose or forget their music will have an opportunity to borrow the music **one** time, after which they will be fined \$10 if they request an additional copy or need to borrow music again.

INSTRUMENT USAGE POLICY

The CYS has a limited collection of instruments for use by members only, to rehearse and perform musical selections. Members who would like to use a CYS instrument during the season should see their conductor or the Manager for an *Instrument Loan Contract*.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Absence, lateness, or early departure detracts from the learning environment, disrupts the members' learning process, and impacts the performance level of not only the member but the members of the entire ensemble. Each member is expected to fully attend all rehearsals and concerts.

The CYS Season is divided into three concert cycles (*see calendar*). Members are allowed up to two (2) absences during each concert cycle for a maximum of six (6) absences total for the season. Absences are not considered excused or unexcused. Absences caused by illness or any other reason are still counted as an absence.

Absences cannot be used for Required Attendance which includes: Venue Rehearsals, and Concerts (*see Required Attendance below*).

If a member misses more than the two (2) allowed absences in any concert cycle, the conductors will have final word on whether the member may perform the concert and/or maintain membership.

Preparedness & Arrival

Members are expected to arrive at rehearsal early and prepared. Students must be in their seats and ready to start the rehearsal at their designated times with the following rehearsal essentials: pencils, sheet music, instruments, name tag, stand card, and instrument accessories.

Attendance Check In

Members must check in at the attendance table for each rehearsal and concert. Failure to check in will result in an absence.

Tardiness

Three tardies result in an absence. Every effort should be made to inform the Manager if the member is running late.

Early Dismissal

Early dismissal of a rehearsal must be requested three (3) days (previous Friday) in advance with the Manager and the member must notify the Manager when leaving. A member who misses more than half a rehearsal is considered absent. Leaving a rehearsal early three times will result in an absence.

Absence Notification

All absences must be reported in advance using the Absence Report link on the website before 4 PM on the Monday of rehearsal. Parents are requested to report known absences at the start of each concert cycle so conductors can plan accordingly for rehearsals. Should an *emergency* arise after 4:00 PM, please notify the Manager.

Seniors

Members who are seniors may miss one (1) additional rehearsal to use at their discretion as long as the absence is academically-related and the senior presents a written request from the parent with school documentation two (2) weeks in advance to the Manager, subject to approval.

Required Attendance

- **All Venue Rehearsals:** Members who miss a venue rehearsal may be dismissed from the CYS with forfeiture of tuition. If not dismissed (*see Dismissal Policy*), the member cannot play at the concert, but must attend the concert. *Refer to the Calendar and mark these dates now.*
- **All Concerts:** Those who miss a concert will be dismissed (*see Dismissal Policy*)

from the CYS with forfeiture of tuition and will not be allowed to audition for the CYS for the following season. *Refer to the Calendar and mark these dates now.*

In all instances of absences, consideration will be made by Administration if there are extenuating circumstances such as a death in the family, extensive medically related issues, etc. Please contact the Manager who can help you through these circumstances. Documentation will be required.

EXCEEDING ABSENCES

The member and their parents will be notified at two (2) absences that they have no remaining absences for that concert cycle. Once a third absence occurs, parents will be notified to provide documentation of any extenuating circumstances within 72 hours. The member will also be required to submit a playing test via Google form based on the repertoire for that cycle.

DISMISSAL FROM CYS

The following are specific infractions that will result in immediate dismissal of a CYS student musician:

- Flagrant abuse of the Attendance Policy.
- Repeated incidences of rudeness to or harassment of fellow members, conductors, coaches, staff, and/or venue personnel.
- Flagrant and repeated use of electronic devices during rehearsals and performances.
- Theft or vandalism of property including, but not limited to, CYS members, CSO, CYS, First Baptist Church, City of Chattanooga, and all venues where the CYS rehearses and performs.
- The use of tobacco products and/or any illegal substance including, but not limited to, alcohol.
- The use of profane language or the possession of objectionable printed or recorded material.
- The possession of a weapon.

If a member becomes suspended or expelled from school, please contact the Executive Director immediately. These will be handled on a case-by-case basis by the administrative team.

SEATING AND ROTATIONS

It is important for members to have the opportunity to play different parts within their section, to have a more well-rounded musical education, and to have the experience of a variety of roles within each section. This is a powerful learning tool that will develop better individual members and musicians.

Section leaders, also known as Principals, will be determined at the beginning of the season based on audition scores. These members are expected to not only play well, but to provide musical leadership to the rest of their sections throughout the season, relaying information from the conductor and making sure the section is united.

Principal members will remain in fixed seats throughout the season, and all other players may be rotated at the conductor's discretion within their sections, from concert to concert or even from one piece to the next. In all programs, Principals will be listed in each section, followed by the other members of the section in alphabetical order.

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR MEMBERS

CYS wants to ensure that members of the orchestras have success at their own level and participate to their maximum potential. If your member has learning needs or a disability, please inform the CYS Manager to help us devise and implement strategies that will work best or accommodate your member in the orchestra setting. Confidentiality is assured.

CONCERT DRESS AND PERFORMANCES

All members are responsible for obtaining their own concert attire. Concert Attire is all black, with the following options:

- **Shirts:** Black button-down shirt, black blouse, or black sweater with elbow-length or longer sleeves with a relatively close-fitting neckline. Black tie and/or jacket/blazer acceptable but not required. No t-shirts.
- **Pants:** Black dress pants, black tuxedo pants. Black socks or black hose that are calf-high must be worn with pants.
- **Skirts:** Black below knee-length or ankle-length skirt that must cover knees when seated. Black tights or hose must be worn with skirts. No denim or leggings. Black leggings may NOT be substituted for black tights or hose.
- **Dresses:** Black dress that has elbow-length or longer sleeves with a relatively close-fitting neckline, below-knee length or ankle-length, must cover knees when seated. Black tights or hose must be worn with dresses.

- **Shoes:** Black dress shoes with black soles, black socks, tights, or hose. No athletic shoes, no open-toed shoes, no boots of any kind, no colored laces, no logos on socks.

Please do not select any clothing that has anything that will reflect light such as jewels, sparkles, or other distracting embellishments. Stay away from patterns, lace, cut-outs, sheer fabrics, or colors other than black.

These companies offer some Concert Dress products:

www.concertattire.com

www.concertblack.com (*long sleeves*)

www.formalfashionsinc.com

When to Wear Concert Dress

Members wear concert dress at concerts or chamber performances. Members wear their CYS t-shirt at venue rehearsals.

Clothes Closet

CYS has a few concert dress items on hand for those who may need assistance in obtaining items. Please arrange a time with the Manager to review these items a few weeks in advance of an upcoming concert.

PARENT VOLUNTEERS

The CYS relies heavily on parental involvement in order to meet our programming goals and provide a safe environment for our members. Parent Volunteers are needed to assist with rehearsals, events, fundraising, and backstage at concerts. Parents will be emailed when sign-ups are available and links will be available on the website.

We ask that parents who volunteer be completely focused on maintaining the safety and security of all members. For this reason, parent volunteers should not have other children or non-members with them when they volunteer. We appreciate your understanding.

CLOSINGS/REHEARSAL CANCELLATION

In the event of inclement weather or other emergencies resulting in closure, the CYS will follow the HCDE closure schedule. The following procedures will be in effect:

If a weather-related closing takes place:

- Notice will be sent to parents via email and/or text and the CYS Facebook page.
- In the event of a sudden late-breaking weather situation that results in a call for an unforeseen early dismissal, parents will be notified by email and/or text and the CYS Facebook page. Staff will stay on premises until all members have been picked up.

If another emergency takes place:

- Notice will be emailed and/or texted to parents.

ANTI-HARASSMENT & ANTI-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The CYS does not tolerate any inappropriate behavior or contact by or towards its members, conductors, staff, or any other individuals associated with the organization. Inappropriate behavior or contact includes, but is not limited to, physical, mental, verbal or sexual, or discriminatory harassment of any kind.

Complaint Procedure

If you believe you have been subjected to conduct that violates this policy or witnessed any such conduct, or otherwise have reason to believe any such conduct has occurred, you must, as soon as possible:

- Report the incident(s) to the Executive Director.
- The CSO will promptly conduct an investigation of all allegations of harassment and take appropriate corrective action where warranted. To the extent possible, the CSO will maintain the confidentiality of all information related to the complaint and investigation.
- If a complaint is found to have merit, appropriate corrective action will be taken. Such action may include immediate discipline, up to and including termination of employment or removal of the individual from all CYS programs. If warranted, including where required by law, information will be turned over to the appropriate authorities.

ANTI-RETALIATION POLICY

No one will be subjected to any form of adverse action for good faith reporting of incidents of harassment, discrimination, or otherwise inappropriate behavior that may violate this policy, or for pursuing any claim in connections with a musician or conductor, or for cooperating in any related investigation.

MANDATED REPORTING

Additionally, any person having cause to believe that a member's physical or mental health or welfare has been adversely affected by abuse or neglect by any person must immediately make a report of such conduct to appropriate law enforcement and other governmental agencies of the State of Tennessee.

EMERGENCY SAFETY PROCEDURES

Member safety is our first concern and responsibility. If we need to respond to an emergency, there are formal plans in place. Our staff has been trained and instructed on how to respond in the event of an evacuation or a lockdown situation. In the unlikely event of an emergency, our protocol is to immediately contact parents, once it is safe to do so.

ELECTRONIC DEVICE POLICY

Recreational electronic device usage is not permitted during the rehearsal time. Members may use electronic devices for tuning and other rehearsal related needs. Repeated recreational use in rehearsal may result in dismissal from the rehearsal, resulting in an absence. Emergency cell phone usage may be approved by the conductor only in the case of family illness or emergency.

THERE'S MORE TO THE CYS

Section Leaders in all orchestras are encouraged to connect with each member of their section and provide leadership and information to their section throughout the season. Section leaders act as a liaison between the conductor and the section. Each member should be on a first-name basis with their section leader.

Chamber Players are assigned to ensembles that are coached by professional musicians. This is a small group setting that allows for challenging repertoire. Ensembles may perform at a variety of venues and at concerts at the end of each semester.

Member Advisory Council (MAC) members collaboratively share feedback about the CYS member experience with the staff of CYS and CSO and help plan CYS events as well as represent the section of their orchestra.

Seniors submit a bio and Senior Portrait headshot, formal or informal which appear in the Spring Concert Program and on the CYS social media channels. Seniors will be recognized at the Spring Fling.

Concerto Competition gives members an opportunity to compete for solo opportunities with the CYS and the CSO.

CSO Benefits include sectional coachings with CSO members, free Classics and Pops Concert tickets and discounted tickets for family members, and Open Rehearsals with use of their CYS ID.

Spring/Winter Fling are fun social events after chamber concerts.

The CSO reserves the right to modify, rescind, delete, or add to the provisions of this CYS Policy Manual from time to time in its sole and absolute discretion consistent with applicable law.