



Youth Ensembles

Chamber Strings | Wind Ensemble

Parent and Member Handbook

Spring 2025

Information for Parents and Members

The information in this handbook will help you know and understand your role in making your experience and the experience of others in the Pensacola Symphony Youth Ensembles exceptional. We are dedicated to ensuring all members of the Pensacola Symphony Youth Ensembles have a rewarding and successful season of transformative music education opportunities and classical music performances.

Performing chamber music repertoire at the highest level requires a commitment by members to always bring their best to rehearsals and performances. We ask that you make your participation in the Pensacola Symphony Youth Ensembles a top priority. When you do, your experience and the experience of all ensemble members will become an exquisite point in your life as a musician, ensemble performer, and community member.

Table of Contents

Section I: Welcome

Page 4	Welcome, Vision, Mission, and Values
Page 5	Introduction Contact Information

Section 2: General Information

Page 6	Rehearsal, Sectional and Concert Schedule Tuition and Financial Assistance
Page 7	Communication Weather and Late Cancellations

Section 3: Youth Ensemble Policies

Page 8	Chair Placement Rehearsal Policies
Page 9	Rehearsal Arrival and Departure Attendance Policy
Page 10	Concert Attire
Page 11	School Music Participation Videos and Photographs

Section 4: Opportunities

Page 12	Opportunities to Serve Student Advisory Council Member Volunteering
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Section 1: Welcome

Welcome

Welcome to the Pensacola Symphony Youth Ensembles, your exceptional music education experience. This promises to be an exciting semester of musical growth and performance excellence. Our ensemble directors, the professional musicians, and the staff of the Pensacola Symphony Orchestra look forward to supporting you in your desire to learn and perform chamber music at the highest level with other young musicians.

Congratulations on being accepted into the Pensacola Symphony Youth Ensembles!

Vision

To enrich, inspire, and uplift the lives of young musicians through exceptional and transformative classical music experiences.

Mission

As an integral affiliate of the Pensacola Symphony Orchestra, the Youth Orchestra and its program ensembles will elevate the value provided to the greater Pensacola community by fostering multi-dimensional growth and development of young musicians. To meet this mission, the Pensacola Symphony Youth Orchestra will provide young musicians with opportunities to:

1. Achieve a high artistic standard in orchestral performance through educationally rich and diverse concert programming,
2. Build collaborative and lifelong connections with other students and professional musicians through the shared passion for music,
3. Develop musicianship, confidence, and self-esteem through multiple performance experiences,
4. Have a voice in the artistic and administrative processes and decisions,
5. Deepen connections with the community through volunteer chamber music performances,
6. Participate regardless of financial situation.

Members of the Pensacola Symphony Youth Orchestra and its program ensembles will demonstrate leadership and service in our relationships with fellow students, family, and the community by exemplifying these values: Respect, Professionalism, Inclusivity, Integrity, Camaraderie, and Commitment to Excellence.

Introduction

The 2024-2025 Youth Chamber Strings and Youth Wind Ensemble will provide students with advanced music education and performance opportunities and prepare students for participation in the 2025-2026 Pensacola Symphony Youth Orchestra.

This 10-week program will include rehearsals, sectional coaching with professional members of the Pensacola Symphony Orchestra, and a concert.

Contact Information

Pensacola Symphony Orchestra

Peter Rubardt
Music Director and Conductor

Bret Barrow
Executive Director

Julie Martin Green
Music Education

Pensacola Symphony Orchestra Office

205 E. Zaragoza St.
Pensacola, Florida 32502
(850) 435-2533

Section 2: General Information

Rehearsal, Sectional and Concert Schedule

Because we strive to provide an exceptional music experience for all participants, ensemble members are expected to practice and prepare the concert material for each week in advance of the rehearsal. Music rehearsal is a performance.

Rehearsal Schedule: Weekly on Sunday from February 9 – April 6, 2025 as follows:

- Chamber Strings – 2:00pm – 3:15pm
- Wind Ensemble – 3:30pm – 4:45pm

Sectional Schedule: Students will meet with PSO musicians for instrument specific sectionals 2 times during the 10-week program. Students will be provided with the dates for their sectionals after January 3, 2025. Sectionals will be held on Sundays and immediately prior to or following ensemble rehearsals:

- Wind and percussion sectionals – 2:00pm – 3:15pm
- String sectionals – 3:30pm – 4:45pm

Concert Schedule: Sunday, April 13, 2025 at 2:00pm (Each ensemble will perform in this concert)

Rehearsal and Concert location:

Dr. Grier Williams School of Music*
University of West Florida
11000 University Parkway
Building 82 - Center for Fine and Performing Arts (Parking Lot P)
Pensacola, Florida 32514

*Please note, the March 2, 2025 rehearsal/sectionals will be held at an alternate location in Pensacola. The alternate location will be announced as soon as this information is available.

Tuition and Financial Assistance

The tuition for each youth ensemble is \$275 for the 10-week program.

Financial constraints should not be a barrier to participation in a youth ensemble. A sliding fee scale is available by application to assist families with financial need.

To receive information on the sliding fee scale, please contact Julie Martin Green at education@pensacolasymphony.com or (850) 435-2533 x.103.

Refunds

A youth music education program that provides exceptional performance and educational experiences requires us to plan our budget in advance. For this reason, tuition and fees are non-refundable and non-transferable.

Communication

The PSO Music Education staff communicates with parents and members primarily through e-mail. If you do not have an e-mail account, we ask that you create a free account at one of the many free e-mail providers (Gmail, Yahoo, Hotmail, etc.). Please update the PSO office with any e-mail address changes.

Weather and Late Cancellations

In the event of severe weather conditions or late cancellations, please check your e-mail and visit the Education and Youth Orchestra page on the Pensacola Symphony Orchestra website at www.pensacolasymphony.com.

Section 3: Youth Ensemble Policies

Chair Placement

Initial chair placement decisions are based on each member's audition. Changes in placement are at the discretion of the ensemble director.

Rehearsal Policies

These guidelines lead to an effective rehearsal experience for all. Members should let the Manager know of any challenges in meeting these guidelines. Success in rehearsal leads to excellence on the stage.

Check-in

- Ensemble members are required to check in no later than 15 minutes prior to the scheduled rehearsal start time.
- Ensemble members are required to be in their seats 5 minutes prior to the scheduled rehearsal start time.
- Percussionists are expected to arrive no later than 20 minutes prior to the scheduled rehearsal start time. Percussionists are responsible for setting up and returning percussion equipment to the assigned storage area.

Stands and Chairs

- At the end of each rehearsal, ensemble members are responsible for putting away their chairs and stands.

Preparation

- Ensemble members are required to bring all sheet music for the upcoming concert to every rehearsal.
- Ensemble members must bring a pencil, their instruments, and any support equipment (extra strings, mutes, rockstops, rosin, reeds, mouthpieces, mallets, etc.) to every rehearsal.
- It is the responsibility of members to relay all information from weekly announcements to their parent and/or guardian.

Instruments

The Pensacola Symphony Youth Orchestra program does not provide instruments for members, except for percussion instruments. The PSO recommends that parents ensure instruments, whether rented or owned. Furthermore, the PSO is not responsible for any damages incurred before, during, or after rehearsals or performances.

Food and Drink

Food and/or gum may be eaten ONLY during the designated break time. Only water in a closed container is allowed in the rehearsal hall, sectional rooms or concert hall.

Conduct

To create an environment of acceptance, inclusion, and professional growth, all members are expected to treat each other, the conductor, staff, volunteers, and parents/guardians with respect and courtesy.

- Bullying is unacceptable and will not be permitted among members of the PSO Youth Ensembles.
- Other types of misconduct include, but are not limited to, disrespectful rehearsal behavior, excessive talking during rehearsal, and cell phone disturbances. Cell phones are to be turned off and stored during rehearsal. Cell phone use is allowed during the break, and phones must be turned off and stored by the end of break.
- Misconduct will be managed as follows:
 - First offense – Verbal warning
 - Second offense – Written warning, Parent/Guardian contact
 - Third offense – Meeting with member, Parent/Guardian, Conductor
 - Fourth offense – Dismissal from the ensemble

Rehearsal Arrival and Departure

Members who do not drive themselves are to be dropped off and picked up at the entrance from Lot P at the UWF School of Music. Parents/Guardians who wish to stay for the duration of rehearsals are welcome to sit in the rehearsal room. All members must stay in the rehearsal building during breaks. After rehearsal or sectionals end, members must leave the UWF School of Music or be picked up by parents/guardians within 15 minutes. Parents/guardians must notify the ensemble director by phone or text if their child will be leaving rehearsal with someone other than the parent(s)/guardian(s) listed on the registration form and provide the name of that person. PSO staff and volunteers are not permitted to transport members. Members who are on the premises at 20 minutes after the end of rehearsal on 2 occasions during a concert cycle will incur an absence.

Attendance Policy

Achieving the highest excellence in performance requires that each member commit to attending all rehearsals. Because we understand that unavoidable conflicts may happen, members are allowed two absences per concert cycle. Members who have more than two absences during a given concert cycle may be asked to withdraw from the concert performance. Excessive absences could result in removal from the ensemble.

Dress Rehearsal Attendance

Members must perform in the dress rehearsal to be eligible to perform in the concert unless given special permission from the ensemble director.

Concert Attendance

Members must contact Julie Martin Green immediately in the event he/she/they have extenuating circumstances that prevent the member from participating in the concert.

Notification of an Absence

- Illnesses and family emergencies must be reported to the PSO office as soon as possible.
- An intended absence must be reported to Julie Martin Green by the member's parent/guardian in writing no later than one week prior to the absence.
- If the absence is due to a mandatory school event, the member must also provide a note from the school sponsor to Julie Martin Green.
- Any un-reported absence will result in a conversation between the ensemble director, member, and parent/guardian with a follow-up by Julie Martin Green.

If a member is absent for any reason, it is his/her/their responsibility to contact the ensemble director or Julie Martin Green to receive announcements, and to contact another ensemble member to learn about any important changes in the music that were made at the missed rehearsal.

Tardiness

Two or more occurrences of tardiness may result in a member being moved to the back of the section. In case of tardiness or absence, the director reserves the right to have members who are present move forward, in their respective section, when chairs are empty.

Withdrawal

Ensemble members are expected to make a 10-week commitment. Members who withdraw from the ensemble must give Julie Martin Green written notification.

Concert Attire

Concert Attire

To present a professional and uniform appearance, members are required to follow the concert dress code. Deviation from the dress code will result in a member being removed from the concert.

Ladies: Black dress or black blouse and full-length black skirt or pants. Black or nude hose or socks and black shoes. Skirts must pass the knees. Tops must have sleeves.

Cellists must wear pants. No sparkles, metallic, or any non-black detailing.

Gentlemen: Black long-sleeve shirt, black pants, black shoes, and black socks.

School Music Program Participation

Members are required to participate in their school music programs (if such programs are offered). Exceptions to this requirement are made on a case-by-case basis with a written request by the student's parent or guardian. Participation in these programs or in other musical organizations cannot be considered in determining participation or seating in the ensemble. The Youth Ensembles exist to provide members with opportunities for performance excellence, education, and camaraderie outside of school or other music organizations.

Videos and Photographs

PSO staff may video record and/or photograph rehearsals, performances, and special events for archival purposes. Photos may also be used in promotional material including press releases, event announcements, or through PSO social media platforms.

For the protection of privacy, parents/guardians should refrain from taking photos during rehearsals/concerts/events of members who are not their own children.

Section 4: Opportunities

Opportunities to Serve

The Youth Orchestra program's success depends on the generosity and dedication of its volunteers. Parents and guardians are invited to volunteer their time to support the youth ensembles.

Please contact Julie Martin Green at jmartingreen@pensacolasymphony.com or (850) 435-2533 x. 103 to learn about opportunities to serve.