

Student Handbook

Updated January 2026

The mission of the Louisville Youth Orchestra is to fuel the passion and growth of young musicians through extraordinary musical experiences.

Private Lesson Policy

Private lessons are required for LYO Students in Serenade Winds/Orchestra or above. Private lessons are crucial for the development of student musicians. LYO leadership can help connect LYO students with qualified private lesson instructors who provide lessons in a range of budgets. Community support is available for students seeking private lessons that demonstrate a need for financial assistance. To learn more, email info@lyo.org

School Participation Policy

LYO participants are generally required to participate in their school band or orchestra programs. LYO frequently grants exemptions from this policy on a case-by-case basis. Reasons for an exemptions often include school scheduling conflicts, work or personal conflicts, etc. To begin this simple appeal process, please email info@lyo.org

Video/Picture Release and Privacy Policy

Participation in LYO assumes parent/guardian and student consent to appear in photography, videography, streaming, social media posts, and other forms of promotional media. Specific requests to refuse consent should be emailed to info@lyo.org

Special Accommodations

LYO is committed to providing equitable access to music education. Values related to diversity, equity, inclusivity, and access are guiding principles, and every effort will be made to create space for all participants. In rare occurrences, it may be determined that LYO staff and personnel are not trained and/or equipped to provide special accommodations to individual students, particularly when such accommodation interferes with music education in the group setting.

Attendance Policy

Consistent attendance in rehearsals and performances is essential for ensemble and individual success.

- Student with 2 or more unexcused absences in a concert cycle will be removed from the performance.
- Absences may be excused for academic, musical, medical, or family reasons. Absences must be communicated no less than two (2) weeks prior to the absence by completing the Excused Absence Request Form.
- Late arrival to rehearsal or performance (tardy) will be recorded as a half (.5) absence.
- Parents/Guardians and/or students shall make a good faith effort to communicate illness that results in absence. Good faith effort is defined as providing LYO staff as much notice as is reasonably possible.
- An unexcused absence at dress rehearsal will result in a student being removed from the performance.
- An unexcused absence at a concert may result in a student being dismissed from LYO without refund.

Rehearsal Expectations

- Students should arrive no less than fifteen (15) minutes prior to rehearsal start time.
- Students should be warmed up and prepared to play no less than five (5) minutes prior to rehearsal start time.
- Students should take care of personal needs (restroom, snacks, etc.) before or after rehearsal, except for stated group breaks. Students should refrain from leaving rehearsal for any reason except for emergency circumstances.
- Students are expected to bring their instrument, related equipment (mutes, shoulder rests, etc.), necessary music, and rehearsal aides (i.e. sharpened pencil) to all rehearsals and performances. Students whose ensemble rehearse at St. Matthew Pavilion are also required to bring a folding stand.
- Percussion students are expected to share in the responsibility of moving and maintaining all percussion equipment. In some cases, percussion students are required to meet outside of state rehearsal times to prepare percussion equipment for performance. This is a customary aspect of life as a percussion musician.

Parent/Guardian Expectations

- Guardians are expected to pick up students promptly at the stated end time of rehearsal. LYO staff are not equipped to monitor students after rehearsal.
- LYO is not responsible for self-driving students before and/or after rehearsals.
- Each student will be provided with a folder and all necessary music. Loss of music will result in a \$25 replacement fee.
- Email is the primary source of communication at LYO. Parents/Guardians are expected to read email communication and respond as necessary. Parents/guardians who do not regularly check and read their email may struggle to stay up to date on LYO happenings.
- Optional non-rehearsal activities, tours, and/or social opportunities may be developed for student enrichment. These activities may include additional fees which are a parent/guardian responsibility.
- All LYO rehearsals are closed to the public unless notified otherwise. Guests must obtain permission to observe rehearsal by emailing info@lyo.org

Concert Attire

- Students must provide their own concert attire for all performances. Students will wear all black (with black socks) or a dressier nature (i.e. no black sweatpants, leggings, t-shirts, etc.).
- Students will be provided with the opportunity to purchase a LYO branded t-shirt to wear for the late April Pops Concert.

Communication

- Conductors will provide weekly rehearsal updates. These updates typically include a review of the previous rehearsal and practice prompts for upcoming rehearsals.
- All non-musical communication should be directed to info@lyo.org. Regular updates for all LYO Ensembles are sent weekly, typically on Wednesday afternoons. Non-musical information includes topics such as scheduling, tuition, concert tickets, etc.
- LYO employees are prohibited from communicating with students on personal forms of communication and/or social media. Email is the preferred form of communication and LYO employees will make every attempt to include parents/guardians in all student communication. Students may engage with LYO's organizational social media outlets.

Acceptance

Student participation in LYO assumes acceptance of this Student Handbook. Parent/Guardian acceptance of this Handbook is assumed upon student participation in rehearsal, payment of tuition, or acceptance of any need-based tuition assistance.

Any questions or concerns should be addressed prior to participation by emailing info@lyo.org