



Oklahoma Youth Orchestras

Outstanding Students. Amazing Music.

Family Handbook

2021-2022

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General Information

Office and Contact Information

Most of our OKYO Support Team works part-time and takes on many roles to bring our programs to the community. Please call ahead before stopping by the office, as we are often out of the office helping further our mission. When calling, you will likely get our voicemail as we are often out meeting with community partners and teachers. Please be sure to leave a message so we can return your call as soon as possible. Email is always the quickest way to contact our team.

Phone: 405-232-1199 **Website:** www.okyomusic.org

Mailing Address: Oklahoma Youth Orchestras – 2501 North Blackwelder – Oklahoma City, OK 73106

Visiting Our Office: Our office is located on the 3rd floor of the Kirkpatrick Fine Arts Building on the campus of Oklahoma City University. Visit www.okyomusic.org/contact for more information on how to find our office – please call ahead before visiting.

Office Hours are Monday, 1pm-9pm and Tuesday through Thursday, 10am-5pm – please call ahead before visiting. The office operates on modified hours during the summer.

Communication Policy

The Oklahoma Youth Orchestras Artistic Director and Support Team communicates with students and parents **primarily via email. This includes all concert information and tuition billing/statements.** Please be sure to keep the Oklahoma Youth Orchestras office updated with any email address changes. If you feel you are not receiving regular communications from our office, please be sure to check your junk/spam email and add us to your safe sender list.

Our website is your best resource for the most up-to-date and helpful information. This information includes:

- Artistic Team and Support Team
- Ensembles
- Calendar of Rehearsals and Concerts
- Financial Aid and Tuition

OKYO Mission

Through quality instrumental music education programs for students and accessible cultural offerings for the community, Oklahoma Youth Orchestras provides opportunities for artistic excellence to central and western Oklahoma.

Our organization is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit supported by a combination of sources including tuition, volunteerism, concert admission, grants, sponsorships, and donations.

Core Values

1. Music benefits everyone

We provide musical opportunities for students regardless of personal, family, or financial background. While our programs are dedicated to advancing musical knowledge for students ages 8 to 18, we believe a person can be neither too young nor too old to benefit from learning something new. Additionally we believe exploring music and attending live concerts brings value to people of all ages.

2. Committed to excellence

There is room for a variety of ensembles and musical styles within this commitment, and OKYO Artistic Team are highly trained educators to navigate this. While we do hope our work and our students' concerts inspire people of all ages to get involved with music, we provide pathways to excellence for students who have already begun their musical journey, specifically students who can read music and have been playing for at least one year. This commitment to excellence means that, by participating in OKYO, our students are already above average, choosing to pursue greatness through hard work and dedication.

3. Music education is valuable

We expect a lot from our families as our highly-trained team provides pathways toward excellence. Our students and families are dedicated and hard-working in pursuit of the numerous proven benefits of music education. Likewise, our students' concerts are valuable, representing many hours of individual and collective preparation. Most of our concerts have a modest ticket fee to help cover costs. OKYO students also perform numerous free community outreach concerts every season for underserved audiences.

4. Playing It Forward

We believe in the power of music to bring people together and lift up those who are struggling. Our OKYO team leads by example and encourages students to get outside the practice and rehearsal rooms and engage in outreach and community service. This includes mentoring younger students and seeking out opportunities to meet the needs in their communities by giving their time and talents. Music can unite people across generations and backgrounds and opens up doors to new opportunities.

Eligibility Requirements

All public, parochial, private, and homeschool students are eligible to participate in Oklahoma Youth Orchestras. **Members are required to participate in their school's instrumental music program, if available.** Oklahoma Youth Orchestras is not a substitute for the daily (we hope) school music experience, and we work with local directors to be certain this requirement is fulfilled. Exceptions due to school scheduling conflicts will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Oklahoma Youth Orchestras team in communication with the school's ensemble director. Students who are concurrently enrolled in their high school and a local college/university are required to participate in an instrumental music ensemble at either institution, if available. It is strongly encouraged that concurrently enrolled students continue with their high school ensemble unless an unavoidable scheduling conflict occurs.

Acceptance of placement in Oklahoma Youth Orchestras is a season-long commitment (August through May). **All rehearsals and performances are mandatory.** The most up-to-date information is available at www.okyomusic.org/calendar. Additional performances may be added throughout the season with significant notification. Any student's decision to terminate their membership mid-season will be reviewed by the OKYO team on a case-by-case basis and may result in ineligibility to re-audition for the following year.

All tuition paid is non-refundable and payment plans must be paid in full by May 1. Refunds will NOT be granted to families who fail to comply with our Code of Conduct. A family's account with OKYO must be in good financial standing before enrolling.

Families should have a clear understanding of the time and financial commitments required by participation in Oklahoma Youth Orchestras before accepting and enrolling. If there are any questions or concerns, please contact our Program Manager of Students and Families.

Code of Conduct

All participants of Oklahoma Youth Orchestras, both students and families alike, represent the organization through their behavior and actions. It is important to respect the rights and property of others. We expect each student to use common sense in avoiding situations and behavior that would put themselves or others at risk. The following expectations are required of all students and families participating in Oklahoma Youth Orchestras. Violation of this Code of Conduct will result in disciplinary action including, but not limited to, financial responsibility for any misconduct resulting in damage, immediate removal from a rehearsal, ineligibility to perform on a concert, reseating within the section, expulsion from the organization and/or inability to re-audition for the organization in the future.

Behavioral Expectations

1. Students/Families will treat all Support Team members, conductors, volunteers, visitors, and other students/families with respect. All accusations of harassment and bullying will be investigated.
2. Students will follow all verbal, posted, and written instructions given by the OKYO team and volunteers. Failure to follow instructions will be considered insubordination.
3. Students will turn off and put away all electronic devices during rehearsals, with the exception of tuners. Oklahoma Youth Orchestras reserves the right for team members to confiscate electronic devices that are being used improperly and return them at the end of rehearsal.
4. Students will respect and treat with care all property of Oklahoma Youth Orchestras and its partners used during rehearsals and performances. If a student intentionally or willfully damages or steals any property of Oklahoma Youth Orchestras or its partners, the organization will seek restitution from the student and parent/guardian for such property.
5. Students found to be using, selling, or in the possession of tobacco, alcohol, or controlled substances will be immediately removed from rehearsal, expelled from the organization without refund, and turned over to the proper authorities.
6. Any threat or act of physical harm toward any OKYO team members, volunteers, visitors, or other students will result in immediate removal from rehearsal and expulsion from the organization without refund. If necessary, the proper authorities will be contacted.
7. Any harassment by the family of a student toward OKYO team members, volunteers, or other families will result in the dismissal of the student from the organization without refund.
8. Violation of any local, state, or federal law will result in immediate removal from rehearsal or performance, expulsion from the organization without refund and turned over to the proper authorities.

Health and Safety Policy

It is a privilege to be able to rehearse music together, especially in the fantastic facilities we enjoy at Oklahoma City University. OKYO Leadership are proceeding cautiously, hoping and planning for a season full of safely learning and performing music together. OKYO Leadership looks to the policies set forth by the CDC and Oklahoma City University to help us mitigate the risks of the COVID-19 pandemic for our students and our team. These policies may include wearing a mask while indoors and practicing social distancing. We will adjust according to the situation and we ask for your understanding as we all navigate this together. OKYO has a responsibility to protect the health of our students and staff, and in doing so, we also protect our ability to continue to safely make music together in person.

When masks are required, they will be for all students, team members, and volunteers; to be worn effectively, covering the nose and mouth with a comfortable but secure fit. OKYO has a supply of single-use, donated masks in case a mask is lost or damaged.

When should I wear a mask?

Strings and Percussion: At all times. Secure your mask before leaving your vehicle. Should you briefly need to remove your mask, for example to take a drink of water during a rehearsal break, first ensure you are a safe distance from your peers and be sure to only touch your mask by the straps. Should your mask accidentally fall and touch the floor, please immediately ask an OKYO team member for a disposable donated mask to wear instead and launder your mask as soon as you can.

Woodwinds and Brass: All times except when playing. No talking when unmasked. Make sure you avoid touching the cloth part of your mask and have a way to safely store your mask while you play, whether in a bag or container, or around your neck using a mask lanyard if that doesn't interfere with your abilities to play. Should your mask accidentally fall and touch the floor, please immediately ask an OKYO team member for a disposable donated mask to wear instead and launder your mask as soon as you can. You may choose to use a **slit mask** while you play, but also keep in mind **you will need a traditional, un-slit mask for the times you are not playing your instrument.** We are also **highly recommending the use of bell covers** for all wind instruments. Please contact the OKYO Support Team if you need any assistance with where to find a bell cover for your instrument.

When should you quarantine and how to self report?

In accordance with guidance provided by the Oklahoma City-County Health Department and the CDC, the OKYO will use the following criteria to mitigate the spread of COVID-19:

- **Positive for COVID-19**

If your student tests **POSITIVE FOR COVID-19:** Quarantine until 10 days have passed since testing positive, the student is fever free for 24 hours without medication and other symptoms are improving.

- **Close Contact**

If your student is identified as being in **CLOSE CONTACT** with someone who is positive with COVID-19: Close contact is defined as being within 3 feet (when all parties are masked) or 6 feet (when all parties are not masked) of a positive case for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more in a 24-hour period. Oklahoma City County Health Department (OCCHD) strongly recommends a 10-day quarantine period for close contacts who are not fully vaccinated.

- **Close Contact for Unvaccinated Students**

IF your student is **not fully vaccinated** and has been identified as being a close contact to a positive COVID-19 case, and **IF** your student **does not develop symptoms**, there are two quarantine options:

- Student may choose not to test and instead quarantine. As long as they do not develop symptoms, they can return to normal activities on day 11..
- Student may choose to test after a five day quarantine, and if the student does not have symptoms and receives a negative test result, they may resume normal activities on day 8.

- **Close Contact for Fully Vaccinated Students**

IF your student is **fully vaccinated** and has been identified as being a close contact to a positive COVID-19 case, your student should be tested 3-5 days following the date of exposure and should wear a mask in public indoor settings for 14 days or until they receive a negative test result. They are not

required to quarantine, as long as they follow with the testing and masking protocol.

- **Self Reporting**

If a student tests positive for COVID-19 or has been exposed to COVID-19 and has to quarantine, the absence should be reported via the OKYO Absence Report function located at the bottom of OKYO's homepage. That form will allow a student to describe the reason for the absence. This information is confidential and a student will not be penalized for self reporting.

What happens if I am not feeling well?

If a student is having any of the following symptoms, please complete an Absence Report Form and do not attend rehearsal. OKYO encourages any students with these symptoms to obtain a COVID-19 test or remain at home until symptom free. Symptoms include but are not limited to: fever, cough, difficulty breathing, sore throat, muscle aches, unusual fatigue, headache, loss of taste or smell, congestion or runny nose, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.

Failure to follow health and safety instructions will be considered a violation of the Code of Conduct and will result in disciplinary action. **Refunds will NOT be granted to families who fail to comply with our Code of Conduct.**

Background Check Policy

For the safety and security of our families, all employees of Oklahoma Youth Orchestras are subject to a background check.

Attendance Policy and Check-In

Season-long membership in Oklahoma Youth Orchestras is both a privilege and a responsibility. Regular attendance by all musicians is extremely important to the educational experience and quality of performance. When members of the team are missing, the whole ensemble receives a less than optimal experience.

Attendance Policy

- Students are required to report all absences.
- When a school-sanctioned music event is in conflict with an OKYO event, students should prioritize their school program and notify their OKYO conductor as early as possible.
- Excessive absences (as determined by OKYO Support and Artistic Team) may result in re-seating or, in extreme cases, dismissal from the program.
- If a student checks in and then leaves rehearsal without notifying an OKYO team member, or otherwise attempts to falsify their presence, OKYO reserves the right to dismiss the student without refund, and the student may not be allowed to audition in future years.

Reporting an Absence

Students are required to submit an Absence Report through our website if they are to be absent, arriving late, or leaving early. The online Absence Report form can be found in the footer of every page of our website, under Current Students. If you have questions or concerns about an absence, contact our Program Manager of Students and Families by email. In the event of an unplanned conflict, such as car trouble, please submit an Absence Report as soon as possible.

Attendance at all scheduled rehearsals and concerts is mandatory.

Families should refer to the schedule before making any travel or vacation plans and inform the OKYO office as soon as possible. Conflicts with school music activities and religious commitments will be excused. Please inform the OKYO Team as soon as a school conflict is known. In VERY rare cases will a request be considered for absence from an OKYO ensemble concert/performance or the rehearsal prior to a concert or a performance. All absences should be submitted via our website as stated in "Reporting an Absence" above and be verbally discussed with the conductor. School music activities, religious commitments and illness/family emergencies are the ONLY excused absences.

Student Check-In

Students participating in OYO, OYP, OYW, Chamber Orchestra, Sinfonia, and Festival Winds are required to check-in before each rehearsal at the concession stand. All students are to check in with plenty of time to be in their rehearsal space, in their seat and ready to begin at least 5 minutes before rehearsal begins.

Students participating in Festival Strings, OYG, and Studio Rockestra will check-in with their teacher or a volunteer at rehearsal.

Tuition

Participation in Oklahoma Youth Orchestras is a season-long commitment (August through May). We encourage you to talk as a family about this commitment as tuition refunds ARE NOT available to students who choose to leave the program without completing the year. Please evaluate your yearly schedule in order to be sure that you will be able to fulfill this time commitment. In very rare cases will a refund of tuition paid be granted to families withdrawing from the program. Pro-rated tuition may be offered to students who enroll after the season has started based on the number of concerts completed. **Failure to complete registration and payment of tuition for any ensemble will result in expulsion from the program.**

Discounts*

Multiple Students: Families with more than one student participating in Oklahoma Youth Orchestras ensembles receive a 15% discount for each additional student. The discount will be taken from the less expensive tuition(s). This discount does not apply to an individual student participating in multiple ensembles.

**additional programs made available are not subject to these discounts. Additional fees, rentals and purchases such as tuxedos and merchandise must be paid in full at the time of rental/purchase. Students receiving financial aid are not extended these additional discounts. Multiple students and multiple ensembles are taken into consideration when awarding financial aid.*

Tuition Pause Option: Each and every student in each ensemble matters and their sound will be missed if they cannot rehearse with their ensemble. However, we understand that this pandemic has led to much uncertainty and financial hardship, and it can be a difficult choice to commit to the full season when we cannot guarantee what the future holds. Therefore, we have an option for OKYO families this year: The Tuition Pause. Visit okyomusic.org/tuition and scroll down to Payment Plans and More. Click on the **Payment Plan Pledge** form, fill it out, and submit. Should you decide OKYO is not working out for your student, there are two points in the year where you can choose to stop both your participation in OKYO and your tuition payments. Email Executive Director Melody Garza Mikkelsen if you would like to pause your tuition on or before:

November 15, 2021

February 14, 2022

Please keep in mind that, should you wish to re-join OKYO after taking a pause, OKYO does not store credit card information, and you will need to provide your information again and resume tuition payments for the student to be able to resume participation in their ensemble.

Policies

Please be sure that your **Placement Acceptance and Enrollment form** is submitted NO LATER than **September 1st** or 30 days after enrollment if you are joining us in the middle of the season.

Check Policy

Oklahoma Youth Orchestras does not hold or accept post-dated checks. Checks received during business hours will be deposited no later than the end of the following business day.

Credit Card Policy

Oklahoma Youth Orchestras does not hold credit card information. We are happy to assist you with making your payments should you have any trouble but please do not send us your credit card information.

Tuition Refunds for Extenuating Circumstance

Participation in Oklahoma Youth Orchestras is a season-long commitment (August through May). A family's decision to terminate their membership must be submitted in writing to our Executive Director should they feel that there are extenuating circumstances which may warrant a refund. These circumstances often include medical issues or family relocation. Requests for tuition refunds will be reviewed by the OKYO Support Team and members of the Board of Directors. It may take up to 60 days from receipt of the request to receive a reply and/or refund. Tuition refunds are prorated based on a variety of factors.

Delinquent Accounts

Families with delinquent accounts may not enroll in future seasons until the remaining balance is paid in full. If multiple attempts by the OKYO Support Team to contact the families of a delinquent account fail, OKYO reserves the right to subject any delinquent account to collection.

Financial Aid

One of OKYO's Core Values is that music is for everyone. Our OKYO Team and Board of Directors desire that no student or family walk away from Oklahoma Youth Orchestras due to financial hardship. We fundraise year-round to be able to provide tuition assistance for families in need. If you are unsure whether or not your family is eligible for Financial Aid, please contact the Executive Director at melody@okyomusic.org.

More information can be found at www.okyomusic.org/financial-aid.

Instrument and Equipment Liability

Members of Oklahoma Youth Orchestras and their families are responsible for their instruments. Oklahoma Youth Orchestras, its team and volunteers are not liable for lost, stolen, or damaged instruments. We strongly encourage all families to have their instrument insured.

Instruments and equipment loaned to a student during their participation in our programs is the responsibility of the student. Any damage should be reported immediately to the conductor. Students and their family are responsible for any damage resulting from apparent neglect or misuse of the loaned instruments and/or equipment and will be charged a fine for its repair and any related servicing and/or labor. Students using an instrument for personal use from Oklahoma Youth Orchestras will be required to complete a form. Failure to return an instrument will result in billing for a replacement cost and a hold on enrollment for the following season. Individual instruments are loaned for use in Oklahoma Youth Orchestras ONLY. Any use outside of OKYO activities must be requested and approved in writing by a member of the OKYO Support Team.

Inclement Weather Policy

The safety of our students and families is of utmost importance to Oklahoma Youth Orchestras. We understand that our students come from all over the region and ask that families use their best judgment when considering traveling to rehearsal based on their specific weather situation. In such cases, families should contact the office regarding their absence.

Guidelines

Rehearsals will likely be cancelled if Oklahoma City University is closed due to inclement weather or if there are district/building closures that impact other ensembles. Families should check their email or OKYO social media for the most up-to-date information. It is not uncommon for some rehearsal sites to be closed while others remain open due to specific building closures. No tuition refund will be given for cancelled rehearsals. Note that decisions are typically made by 2pm.

Notification

Due to the number of students involved in Oklahoma Youth Orchestras, individual phone calls will not be made should rehearsals be cancelled. Team members will work to the best of their ability to email all families, post cancellations on the Oklahoma Youth Orchestras website and social media resources, and change the office voicemail to reflect the cancellation. Please check our various resources before calling the office.

Concert Make-Up Date

A make-up date is scheduled for each season. Families should hold this date on their calendar should a concert prior to this date be cancelled due to inclement weather. Additional concert cancellations beyond this opportunity are handled on an individual basis.

Emergency Procedures*

The safety of our students and families is of utmost importance to Oklahoma Youth Orchestras. Our team members use their best judgment to protect students when handling emergencies according to the emergency procedures in place.

Severe Weather Procedure

In the event that tornado sirens sound during rehearsal, conductors will immediately lead their students to the assigned shelter area using a designated path. All instruments will be left in the rehearsal hall and only small personal items will be taken. Simultaneously, team members and volunteers on-site will go to the rehearsal halls to either notify of the siren or be certain that rehearsal halls are vacated. Team members will also be certain the practice room area is unlocked and grab the emergency forms and attendance sheets. All students, team members, and volunteers must remain in the identified location until an all clear sign is received. **Parents may not remove their student from the shelter until an all clear is received.** Upon receipt of an all clear, the senior-most Support Team member will announce that rehearsals will be cancelled for the evening and students will be instructed to contact their parents for an early ride. Support team members will also reach out to families using electronic methods. The senior-most Support Team member on-site will remain until all students are picked-up. Should destruction occur, all team members will remain on site and follow the instruction of the University Police Department or local law enforcement.

Illness or Injury Procedure

If a student is complaining of oncoming illness or minor injury, the student will be sent to the office. In the case of minor onset illness, team members will contact the student's family according to the emergency form to pick up their student. In the case of minor injury, after assessing the situation, team members will either offer minor first aid for small injuries or contact the University Police Department for assistance and provide any information contained on the emergency form. Next, team members will contact the students' family according to the emergency form to inform them of the situation and next steps. If a student is injured in a manner that they should not be moved (head injury, broken bone) or that the student becomes severely ill or has a medical emergency, the conductor will clear the area around the student and send another student to the office with known information of what has happened. Team members will call University Police to join them at the room if necessary for an emergency and will grab the student's emergency form. Team members will follow the instructions of the University Police regarding the situation and will contact the parents once more information is known to give instructions. The conductor will resume the rehearsal after the situation is addressed if feasible.

Fire procedure

In the event that fire alarms sound during rehearsal, conductors will immediately lead their students to the assigned gathering area using the designated path. All instruments will be left in the rehearsal hall and only small personal items will be taken. Simultaneously, team members and volunteers on-site will go to the rehearsal halls to either notify of the siren or be certain that rehearsal halls are vacated. Team members will also grab the emergency forms and attendance sheets. All students, team members, and volunteers must remain in the identified location until attendance is taken. **Students will not be released to parents until permission is granted from the senior-most administrative member on-site. No one will be allowed back in the building unless given permission by the University Police Department or local law enforcement.** Upon receipt of an all clear, the senior-most Support Team member will determine whether rehearsals will continue based on the amount of rehearsal time remaining. Should destruction occur resulting in cancelation of rehearsal for the evening, students will be instructed to contact their parents for an early ride. Social media and eBlasts will be sent by the Support Team as well. The senior-most Support Team member on-site will remain until all students are picked up.

Intruder/Active Shooter Procedure

In the event that an active shooter or alerted intruder is in the building, all team members, volunteers, and students will follow organizational and University procedures. For the safety of the procedure, it is not published for public knowledge. Our team members receive annual training on this subject.

***Festival Strings, OYG, and Studio Rockestra may have alternative procedures according to their rehearsal space.**