



# ALASKA YOUTH ORCHESTRAS

**2021-2022  
Season Handbook**

Alaska Youth Orchestras (AYO) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation based in Anchorage, Alaska. The best-known program of AYO is the Anchorage Youth Symphony, a fully symphonic performing ensemble that was founded in 1965. AYO also operates other programs such as Symphony School and Alaska Virtual Symphony which function in support of the Anchorage Youth Symphony by preparing musicians to audition or by gathering public support for the youth symphony.

## VISION

Alaska Youth Orchestras envisions a community where music education and performance are valued and shared.

## MISSION

The mission of the Alaska Youth Orchestras is to build musicianship, inspire our youth to love music, offer enriching opportunities for music performance, and create a musical legacy that will sustain arts throughout the lives of our members and our communities.

## VALUES

Alaska Youth Orchestras develops its programs around four core values:

### **Musicianship**

AYO inspires young musicians as individuals and as a group to strive for and experience musical excellence.

### **Performance**

AYO inspires young musicians and audiences through superior musical performances.

### **Inspiring Youth**

AYO inspires young musicians to lifelong participation in and support of the arts in Alaska and beyond.

### **Musical Legacy**

AYO fosters a lifelong appreciation for the rewards of responsibility, commitment, self-confidence, discipline, and teamwork inherent in the arts through teaching, musical performance, and leadership.

## HISTORY OF ALASKA YOUTH ORCHESTRAS

Alaska Youth Orchestras was founded as the Anchorage Youth Symphony in 1965 as a program of the Anchorage School District. The organization was granted 501(c)3 nonprofit status in 1982 and has operated continuously since that time as an independent nonprofit corporation. Artistic leadership and further historic detail can be found on the AYO website “HISTORY” page.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

Alaska Youth Orchestras (AYO) is located Anchorage, AK. Our primary stakeholders are high school and college age musicians in pursuit of musical excellence. In support of that vision, we serve musician parents/guardians, musicians of all ages, and members of the community who share our vision.

## BOARD

The AYO Board are the fiduciaries who steer the organization towards a sustainable future by adopting sound, ethical, and legal governance, and financial management policies, as well as by making sure the nonprofit has adequate resources to advance its mission. The Board hires the Executive Director and Music Director who manage all operations. Board members are selected from community-based applicants as well as AYO parent/guardian applicants. In addition, some AYO Board members directly support various AYO programs. A current list of board members and their can be found on our website: [www.AlaskaYouthOrchestras.org](http://www.AlaskaYouthOrchestras.org)

## STAFF

**Music Director:** Bruce Wood, Ph.D. – [MD@AlaskaYouthOrchestras.org](mailto:MD@AlaskaYouthOrchestras.org)  
**Executive Director:** Denise Brown-Chythlook - [ED@AlaskaYouthOrchestras.org](mailto:ED@AlaskaYouthOrchestras.org)  
**Operations Coordinator:** Zach Akins - [OC@AlaskaYouthOrchestras.org](mailto:OC@AlaskaYouthOrchestras.org)  
**General Info Email:** [youthsymphony@gmail.com](mailto:youthsymphony@gmail.com)

## COMMUNICATION

### **Mailing Address**

Alaska Youth Orchestras  
1505 W 32nd Ave.  
Anchorage, AK 99503  
Telephone: (907) 538-6406  
[www.AlaskaYouthOrchestras.org](http://www.AlaskaYouthOrchestras.org)

### **Email**

Nearly all communication is done via email. A weekly email will be sent via MailChimp every Friday at 6 pm with vital details needed by AYO Musicians and their families. Please ensure you are receiving these emails. If your email

address changes or you're not receiving week emails for any reason, please contact the office right away.

### **Phone**

AYO staff can be reached at (907) 538-6406. This number can also be called to during rehearsal to reach and AYO Musicians in case of an emergency. Please allow 48 hours for messages to be returned during normal business hours.

## **AUDITIONS**

Musicians are chosen each season through individual auditions. All prospective musicians will audition every year. Audition applications are open every year from March-May and sometimes in the fall. Musical selections and audition instructions are made available on the AYO website in February of each year. Auditions are held in early May for the following fall. Selected musicians must declare their intent to register by July 1 of each year (requires a \$50 deposit) and may apply for available scholarships at this time.

## **SCHOLARSHIPS**

AYO regularly seeks funding from individual donors and businesses in order to provide tuition assistance for our musicians. Funding varies from year to year. Applications for scholarship funds can only be made after a musician auditions, is accepted into the upcoming season, and declares their intent to register. Applications can be accessed during the registration process.

## **REHEARSALS**

Rehearsals are held at The Nave, 3502 Spenard Rd. Anchorage, AK 99503 on Mondays: 5:30-8 pm (refer to Season Calendar for dates). Musicians are expected to be in their seats at the beginning of rehearsal. They should arrive prepared, having practiced at home, bring all their music, and have a pencil.

Concert Rehearsals are held at specified times at the Alaska Center for the Performing Arts, 621 W. 6th Ave., Anchorage, AK, 99501. Please refer to the AYO season calendar on our website.

Rehearsal attendance is required. See Attendance Policy for details.

## **PRACTICE TIME**

It is important for musicians to prepare their parts outside of rehearsal. The amount of time needed for home practice will vary from musician to musician, but this individual responsibility must be taken seriously.

## MUSIC

Musicians must keep all AYO music in the provided folder and have all music in their folders at every rehearsal. Do not rely on your stand partner's folder. Use only pencil to mark music - no ink or colored pencil. String players who are sharing music should be sure to mark both copies of their music with bowings, fingerings, etc. for at-home practice. You are required to return your folder at the end of the season or if you leave the orchestra. Failure to do so will result in a \$25 replacement fee.

## INSTRUMENTS

Musicians are responsible for the care of their own instrument and should return them to the case during rehearsal break. Instruments should be in proper repair. String musicians should have replacement stings in their cases; winds should have extra reeds; brass should have applicable mutes; percussionists should bring appropriate mallets, sticks, and small instruments. Please make sure all instrument cases and accessories are clearly marked with your name.

## AYO INSTRUMENTS

AYO has several professional-level instruments available for use by members. The Music Director, in consultation with the AYO coaches, decides by whom and how the instruments will be used. Musicians using these instruments will be required to check them out from the AYO office and will accept all liability while in their possession.

## CELL PHONES

Rehearsal time is limited and valuable. We ask that our musicians respect this time by silencing cell phones and refraining from using them during rehearsals.

## COACHING

Coaching is a unique and important component of AYO. Coaches are provided by AYO and are professional musicians. Coaching sessions are noted on the Season Calendar (subject to change) and occur during rehearsals. Coaching sessions are designed to provide additional assistance in preparing repertoire. Participation in coaching sessions is required for AYO musicians, as are regular rehearsals.

## CONCERTS

AYO presents three concerts each season in the Alaska Center for the Performing Arts as a resident company. See the AYO Season Calendar for exact dates and times.

**Fall Concert:** Held shortly after Thanksgiving

**Winter Concert:** Held just before Spring Break

**Spring Concert:** Held at the end of April or early May

## CONCERT REHEARSALS

A Concert Rehearsal is scheduled the day before each concert at the Alaska Center for the Performing Arts. Attendance at Concert Rehearsals is required. Musicians not present may be asked not to perform in the concert. Any conflicts should be made known to the AYO Music Director as soon as you are aware.

## CONCERT TICKETS

All AYO concerts are ticketed events through CenterTix.com as required by the Alaska Center for the Performing Arts. AYO musicians do not need a concert ticket for themselves. Families of musicians can purchase tickets at a reduced rate. Concert ticket sales support AYO and serve as a fundraiser for the organization. We encourage AYO musicians and their families to promote the concerts and bring along family and friends.

## CONCERT BLACK

Concert Black is required dress for all concert performances and includes two options. Both options are gender neutral.

1. Black suit or tuxedo, white shirt, black bow tie, black socks and black shoes (either open or closed toe are acceptable).
2. Long black pants, dress, or skirt (at least lower-calf length) with a solid color black shirt with long sleeves (at least  $\frac{3}{4}$  length). The shirt must cover your shoulders and should not have a low neckline. Plain black socks or stockings are to be worn with black shoes (either open or closed toe are acceptable).

ACCESSORIES: No reflective jewelry/accessories and no fragrances, please.

If you have any questions regarding CONCERT BLACK, or need any assistance obtaining any needed items, please email us at [ed@alaskayouthorchestras.org](mailto:ed@alaskayouthorchestras.org).

## CONCERTO COMPETITION

Concerto Competitions are an annual event. For the 2021-22 season, AYO will hold two concerto competitions. AYS - open only to AYS musicians performing on any symphonic instrument other than the piano. PIANO - open to any Alaska-based youth, ages 9-21. Please see the website for detailed requirements and repertoire.

Beginning in AYO's 2022-23 season there will be just one concerto competition open only to current AYS musicians on any symphony instrument including piano.

## ATTENDANCE

AYO is dedicated to professional-level performance. If you fail to comply with the Attendance Policy, you may be asked to resign from AYO. Musicians who foresee ongoing schedule conflicts should reconsider whether they can meet the attendance requirements. Musicians who must be absent from a regularly scheduled rehearsal or concert because of emergency illness or unforeseen schedule conflicts may be granted an excused absence. Musicians must check in at each rehearsal. Doing this for someone other than yourself is not permitted. If you need to miss a rehearsal, Musicians must email AYO to let us know at the earliest possible time. Emails should be sent to [OC@alaskayouthorchestras.org](mailto:OC@alaskayouthorchestras.org).

**Rehearsals:** Rehearsal attendance is critical to the success of the Anchorage Youth Symphony. Absences, when they occur, are counted during each rehearsal/concert cycle. The following are the maximum number of absences that are allowed during the period before each concert:

**Concert #1) 1**

**Concert #2) 1**

**Concert #3) 1**

Note: Arriving late or leaving before the end of a rehearsal is an absence that counts one-half (1/2) toward the member's absence count.

**Record of Attendance:** A copy of your attendance record can be requested. Please email [OC@alaskayouthorchestras.org](mailto:OC@alaskayouthorchestras.org). Please allow one week for the report.

**Concerts:** Members are expected to attend all regularly scheduled concerts and special events added after the start of the season. Two month's advance notice is required for an expected absence from a concert.

**Leave of absence for extraordinary circumstances:** Musicians in good standing who will miss rehearsals or concerts for an extended time should request a leave of absence. Musicians must send a written request for a leave of absence to the Music Director at [md@alaskayouthorchestras.org](mailto:md@alaskayouthorchestras.org). A response will be provided within 2 business days.

**Consequences:** Absences outside the attendance policy may result in a musician not being allowed to participate in a concert, being re-seated for a concert, and/or being asked to withdraw from the Anchorage Youth Symphony. The music director reserves the right to re-seat members who are absent for a concert, including those members whose absence is excused.

**Re-Audition:** Musicians who are asked to withdraw under this attendance policy may request to formally re-audition. Requests to re-audition must be made in writing and addressed to the Music Director. In addition to satisfactory musicianship, members who re-audition must demonstrate a commitment to full attendance at rehearsals and regularly scheduled concerts. Musicians who satisfactorily re-audition will not be required to pay additional tuition fees for the season but will incur the audition fee of \$25.

**Appeals:** Musicians asked to withdraw under this attendance policy may appeal to the AYO Board of Directors within 14 days. Appeals must be in writing and addressed to the AYO Board President.

## CODE OF CONDUCT

### **Musicians**

AYO musicians are representatives of the organization. The behavior of each musician reflects on the entire group. Musicians are expected to use good manners, display common courtesy, and show consideration for others. It is essential to respect the rights and property of others. AYO strictly enforces a zero-tolerance policy with regards to the use of drugs and alcohol, smoking, any other illegal activities, and any form of harassment towards students and staff.

### **Parents/Guardians**

In addition to providing a high-quality musical experience, AYO strives to teach musicians about professionalism, responsibility, and personal integrity. We are committed to providing an open and encouraging environment where every person is valued. Parents/Guardians are asked to conduct themselves in keeping with this standard by supporting their musicians in fulfilling their responsibilities of encouraging open communication, 100% attendance, prompt arrival at rehearsals and concerts, private lessons on their instrument (if possible) and at-home practice and preparation.

Should parents/guardians need to express concern or disagreement with AYO staff, we request it be done in an appropriate manner. Damaging or demeaning language will not be tolerated in any setting. Please contact the AYO Executive Director or Music Director directly. All issues will be handled with professionalism, confidentiality, and respect.

## PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL MUSIC PROGRAMS

AYO recognizes the importance of school music programs in our communities and for the health and longevity of AYO. We highly recommend our members are active participants in these programs. If a musician cannot participate in their school music program, written notice of the reason must be submitted to the music director at [MD@AlaskaYouthOrchestras.org](mailto:MD@AlaskaYouthOrchestras.org).

## PRIVATE LESSONS

Although not required for membership, private lessons are strongly encouraged. Students who study privately routinely do better on all auditions and improve faster. AYO is committed to helping qualifying musicians receive lesson scholarships through the Symphony School program should support be needed.

## LIABILITY

Musicians are solely responsible for their instruments. Lost, stolen, or damaged instruments (or instrument accessories) are not the responsibility of AYO. The following organizations, including their employees, contractors, and volunteers will not be held responsible for loss or damage to instruments or other valuables: Alaska Youth Orchestras, The Nave, Alaska Center for the Performing Arts, or any other venue where AYO performs or rehearses. AYO strongly suggests that instruments be adequately insured.

## TUITION

Anchorage Youth Symphony annual tuition is \$675. This amount represents one-third of the program cost for each musician. The remaining \$1350 is funded through the generous contributions of our funders and individual donors.

Tuition payments can be made on our website on the Anchorage Youth Symphony page via major credit card. Tuition may be paid with personal check or cash if desired. Payment arrangements are available. Please contact the AYO office to make those arrangements or mail a check to the AYO office.

## REFUNDS

AYO does not offer tuition refunds.

## EMERGENCY RESPONSE

In the event of an emergency, AYO staff will direct AYO musicians on how to respond.

### **Evacuation Response**

In the event of an emergency requiring building evacuation, musicians will be asked to leave the building via the nearest emergency exit and gather (if appropriate) the designated area (see attached map).

Parents/Guardians will be contacted and asked to pick up their musician as soon as possible. Anyone who is not picked up will remain with an AYO staff member until parents can arrive or make other arrangements for their musician's transportation. Musicians who drive will be excused if their vehicle is safely accessible.

### **Non-Evacuation Response**

In the event of an emergency that doesn't result in evacuation, musicians will shelter in place. If rehearsal cannot continue, parents will be contacted and asked to pick up their musician as soon as possible.

If, at any time, a musician feels unsafe to remain, parents will be contacted and asked to pick them up as soon as possible. If the AYO musician has their own car, parents will be contacted and will determine if they are comfortable with the AYO musician driving.

### **VOLUNTEERING**

AYO needs volunteers to run smoothly. Volunteer opportunities range in commitment from board service to supporting an event or rehearsal. For more information about volunteer opportunities, please contact AYO staff.