



**WASHINGTON
METROPOLITAN
PHILHARMONIC
ASSOCIATION**

**YOUTH ORCHESTRA STUDENT HANDBOOK
2025 | 2026 SEASON**



Mr. Martin Garfield-Levine
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A Welcome From Our Board President

Dear WMCO and WMYO Students and Families,

Welcome to the Washington Metropolitan Philharmonic Association (WMPA)! Whether you're a returning member or new to our youth orchestras, we're thrilled to have you as part of our musical family.

WMPA exists to unite and uplift our community through music, and your participation plays a vital role in that mission. As a member of the Washington Metropolitan Concert Orchestra (grades 6–8) or the Washington Metropolitan Youth Orchestra (grades 9–12), you are part of a larger ecosystem of programs that includes:

- Washington Metropolitan Philharmonic – an adult symphonic orchestra
- WMCO & WMYO – our two youth orchestras
- The Lyceum Chamber Series – summer chamber music concerts
- Community Concerts – free performances in underserved areas

Our vision is to create and serve the future audience for orchestral music, and that begins with you—not just as musicians, but as future leaders, collaborators, and engaged citizens. We aren't here just to develop professional performers (though many of our alumni have gone on to do great things in music); we're here to help you grow into confident individuals who can make an impact in any field.

This season, we're especially focused on connecting our youth programs more fully with the rest of WMPA. We encourage you and your family to attend Philharmonic concerts, volunteer at events, and help support the organization's mission. When we work together—across generations and ensembles—we strengthen the foundation that supports all our programs.

We're honored to support your musical journey and can't wait to see how you grow, both on stage and off.

With warm regards,

Helenmarie A. Corcoran
President, Board of Directors
Washington Metropolitan Philharmonic Association
helenmariecorcoran@wmpamusic.org



Who Are We?

OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Helenmarie A. Corcoran - President of the Board
Margaret Ballard - Vice President of Board
Lawrence Ries - Treasurer
Donna Reuss - Secretary/Volunteer Coordinator
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Brittany Pemberton - Orchestra Representative
Warren Zwicky

EXECUTIVE STAFF

Caroline Mousset - Executive and Artistic Planning Director
Angela Stover Anderson - Photographer
Sheryl Gorsuch - Bookkeeper
John Kean - Recording Engineer
Joshua Silva - Orchestra Librarian
Joshua Villa - Stage Manager
Kelley Williams - Orchestra Personnel Manager

ARTISTIC STAFF

Anna Binneweg - Philharmonic Orchestra Music Director
Martin Garfield-Levine - Concert Orchestra Music Director
Megan Pfister - Youth Orchestra Assistant Music Director
Alberto Rodriguez - Youth Orchestra Music Director

What We Believe

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

To unite and uplift our community through the transformative power of music.

MISSION STATEMENT

Educate and engage students through our Youth Orchestras
Perform and promote orchestral music through the Washington Metropolitan Philharmonic
Connect and communicate chamber music through our summer Lyceum Series
Expand and enlighten newcomers to classical music through our Community Concerts

Vision

To create and serve the future audience of orchestral music.

Orchestra Programs and Directors

Washington Metropolitan Concert Orchestra - For Grades 6 - 9

Directed by Mr. Martin Garfield-Levine

For grades 6-9. WMCO is focused on preparing middle level musicians for lifelong musical enjoyment and dedication. The ensemble was founded in 2008 to help develop young musician's technique and ability for the high school level WMYO, and is a full orchestra, which bridges the gap between band and strings. This offers students the opportunity to perform and grow through collaboration.

Repertoire level for WMCO is grade 3-5 (difficulty level, not classroom age). Through a variety of music selections, students heighten their understanding of rhythm, dynamics, intonation, quality of sound and overall musicianship. WMCO performs works by classical masters such as Brahms, Mozart, Tchaikovsky, and Stravinsky, but also reaches into educational works by modern day composers and music from around the world arranged for an orchestral setting.

Washington Metropolitan Youth Orchestra - For Grades 9 - 12

Directed by Mr. Alberto Rodriguez

grades 9-12. WMYO is one of the region's premiere youth orchestras, and an orchestral training program for advanced level musicians who desire to perform some of the greatest symphonic works ever written. WMYO is also open to highly exceptional Middle School students that have a long history with a private teacher.

A typical concert season may include works by Tchaikovsky, Rimsky-Korsakov, Debussy, Beethoven, Stravinsky, Dvorak, and Ravel. WMYO also tackles works by Mahler, Berlioz, Brahms, Rachmaninov, and Bartok.

WMYO offers a unique, friendly, and supportive environment in which our area's youth learns the art of great orchestral performing and musical leadership. In particular, our Orchestra offers its seniors the opportunity to perform as concerto soloists.



Rehearsals and Concert Information

Most rehearsals for both WMCO and WMYO students are Tuesday nights, located at Holmes Middle School, 6525 Montrose St, Alexandria, VA 22312 from 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM. Please note some rehearsals are not at Holmes and at an alternate location. More detail will come from your Director. Students may arrive as early as 6:15 PM to unpack and warm up. Please see the full rehearsal schedule below, noting that some dates are not on Tuesdays.

9/02/25	11/20/25 - Thursday	2/24/26 - Alt Location
9/09/25	12/02/25	3/03/26 - Alt Location
9/16/25	12/09/25 - Alt Location	3/10/26
9/30/25	12/16/25 - Alt Location	3/17/26
10/07/25	1/08/25 - Thursday	3/24/26
10/14/25	1/13/26	4/07/26
10/21/25	1/20/26	4/14/26
10/28/25 - Alt Location	1/27/26 - Alt Location	4/21/26
11/05/25 - Wednesday	2/03/26 - Alt Location	4/28/26
11/12/25 - Wednesday	2/10/26 - Alt Location	5/05/26
		5/12/26 - CO Only

No Rehearsal Dates: 9/23/25, 11/25/25, 12/23/25, 12/30/25, 2/17/26, 3/31/26

Rehearsal dates are scheduled with Fairfax County Public Schools Community Use Department. They may be cancelled due to weather events or other unforeseen reasons. Our directors will do their best to keep all parents updated of cancellations or reschedules as quickly as possible.

Attendance Policy

Attending orchestra rehearsals is vital to the success of the ensembles. However, we recognize that family, school, and other conflicts may arise throughout the season. Please take time to study the above calendar and mark which dates may be in conflict. Please let Mr. Rodriguez or Mr. Garfield know of any planned or unplanned absence throughout the season when any sickness or unexpected conflict arises. A maximum of **one** unexcused absence is allowed per concert cycle, any more, and the student may not be allowed to perform in that concert.

Concert Dates

12/06/25 - 7:00 PM - Bishop Ireton HS

3/22/26 - 3:00 PM - Edison HS

5/10/26 - 3:00 PM - Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall (WMYO Side-By-Side)

5/17/26 - 3:00 PM - Location TBD (WMCO Only)

Concert arrival times are typically two hours before the concert starts. Exact details of arrival times and pre-concert rehearsal schedules will be sent home by your director no later than one week before the concert date.

General Concert Info

Aligning with the WMPA's mission and statement of purpose, all Youth Orchestra concerts are **free and open to the public**. We are one of the only youth orchestra programs that host free concerts to the community. They will all be recorded with audio and video, as well as professionally photographed. The recorded media will be available to all parents through a Google Drive link shortly after each concert. WMPA reserves the right to publish musicians' names, video recordings, and photographs of any concert or activity. If you have any issues with this, please feel free to reach out to your Director.

Concert Dress Codes

Wearing concert black attire ensures a polished and professional performance. It is essential that no individual's appearance distracts the audience or fellow musicians from the music being delivered. All musicians collaborate as a team to showcase their hard work and commitment to the community, and dressing in a professional and uniform manner supports this objective.

Students are required to wear the following

- Black button down dress shirt
- Black dress slacks
- Black socks and shoes

Or:

- Long black dress (hem must fall below the knee when seated) with black socks or hosiery
- Long sleeved all-black shirt (elbow length at minimum) paired with long black skirt (hem must fall below the knee when seated) with black socks/hosiery
- Shoulders must be covered

Unacceptable:

- Short skirts
- Slit skirts
- Neck lines or back designs with significant skin exposure
- Sleeveless, short sleeved, tank tops, tube tops
- Jeans or leggings
- Sweatshirts or sweatpants
- Bare feet, athletic shoes, or flip-flops
- Non-black articles of clothing

If you have any questions or are unsure about the dress code, please consult your director for guidance. There may be occasions when alternative dress codes are permitted, and such communication will be provided by your director on a case-by-case basis.

Musician Behavior Expectations

General Behavior

- Treat WMPA staff, sectional coaches and fellow students with respectful, appropriate, and safe behavior.
- Keep our rehearsal and performance areas clean and well kept.
- Treat all instruments with safety and respect.

Rehearsal Etiquette

- **No Devices.** Cell phones and other electronic devices are to be off and away during rehearsals and performances.
- No food or drink is allowed in our rehearsal spaces other than a refillable water bottle unless for medical purposes. You may eat snacks in the hallway during scheduled breaks.
- **Stay on task during rehearsals.** Please do not use this time as an opportunity to get other work done. Being active and engaged even when you are not playing is an important part of being in an ensemble.
- **Home practice is essential.** Rehearsals are for refining and bringing music together, not for individual note learning. Your director will help with difficult passages, but outside work is necessary for our collective success.
- **Come to rehearsal prepared.** Every student must arrive on time and bring all necessary materials: instrument, accessories, sheet music, and most importantly: a pencil.
- **Bring a positive and professional mindset.** This is a team effort and every musician contributes to the energy of the room. Every student must be open to improvement and understand that no piece of music is too easy if the right effort is applied. There is always room for improvement.

Bullying and Harassment Policy

The WMPA strives to provide a safe, secure, and respectful environment for all students during their rehearsals and concert experiences. Bullying has a harmful social, physical, psychological, and academic impact on every member of the ensemble, whether they are directly involved or not. The WMPA has a specific plan in place banning and dealing with bullying as outlined below:

The WMPA prohibits all bullying, whether it is physical, verbal, indirect, cyber-bullying, or bullying by proxy. Bullying behavior is prohibited in all WMPA sanctioned events and under WMCO/YO supervision. Suspension or expulsion/termination from the organization are possible consequences for individuals found to have taken part in these behaviors.

Disciplinary Process

The conductor of each orchestra may set additional requirements for rehearsal and concert behavior. Failure to abide by any of these expectations or policies will be addressed through the following steps:

1. Staff members speak with the student and parents concerning the problem.
2. If the problem persists, the conductor may remove the student from the rehearsal/concert.
3. Failing a satisfactory resolution, the student may be expelled from the WMCO/YO.

Payment Informaiton

Tuition

Participation in all WMPA programs requires annual tuition. The tuition fees are as follows:

- **WMYO**: \$850
- **WMCO**: \$750

Tuition covers various costs, including music rentals and purchases, community use fees for 30 rehearsals and 3 concerts, printing materials, additional expenses related to the effective operation of the youth orchestra program.

Payments can be made via cash or check (payable to WMPA) and delivered to your director or mailed to: **PO Box 16442, Alexandria, VA 22302**. Alternatively, debit or credit card payments can be processed through our website. Please be aware that a 4% processing fee is included in the payment links below:

- WMYO Payments: www.wmpamusic.org/store/c3/WMYO-Tuition
- WMCO Payments: www.wmpamusic.org/store/p9/WMCO-Tuition

Families with multiple students enrolled in the WMYO and/or WMCO will receive a \$100 discount on the tuition for each additional student.

Financial Aid

The WMPA is proud to offer various forms of scholarship and financial aid to students from all socioeconomic areas in Northern Virginia. Each group has two full scholarships and four half scholarships available to students, as well as a number or payment plan options for the full cost of tuition. The financial aid applications and paperwork will be sent home in an email from the directors close to the start of the season.

In Closing

We are so excited to start this season, and welcome in new and returning students to our Youth Orchestras. We will do our best to update you of any changes to our concert schedule, student expectations, or dress codes through regular emails throughout the season. Please feel free to reach out with any additional questions or concerns throughout the year. Thank you for being a part of the WMPA family!