

Hochstein
Youth Symphony
Orchestra

Membership Handbook
2025-2026



HOCHSTEIN YOUTH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Casey Springstead, Music Director

Ruth Gates, Orchestra Manager

2025-2026 HANDBOOK

Mission Statement

The Hochstein Youth Symphony Orchestra offers orchestral training to the advanced string, wind, and percussion student through rehearsal and performance of standard orchestral repertoire.

Membership Guidelines

Enrollment

Enrollment is by audition only and is open to students in junior and senior high school. Auditions are held in late spring.

Each HYSO student **MUST BE** a member of their appropriate school music ensemble (i.e. string students must participate in their school orchestra, wind and percussion students must participate in their school band and /or orchestra). The only exceptions are for students whose school does not have a music program (or a program for their instrument), or they are home schooled.

Each student should be studying their instrument on a private basis. The Hochstein School offers a discounted youth orchestra tuition rate for orchestra members taking private lessons through the music school. Please call the main office (454-4596) for information.

Attendance Policy

Because each member is important and vital to the success and growth of the group, it is imperative that students attend every rehearsal. If there is an event that cannot be rescheduled and requires a student to miss a rehearsal, the student and parent must complete the Hochstein Ensemble Absence Form no later than two weeks prior to that date. The form can be found at <https://hochstein.org/Ensembles/Orchestras/Absence-Form/>. Please be aware of all rehearsals and schedule your events and activities around them. If you have an unavoidable conflict, try to find a compromise between our rehearsal and the other activity.

It is mandatory that each member make every effort to make each and every rehearsal throughout the season. An excused absence from rehearsal may be an all-county or area all-state rehearsal, illness, SAT's, band trip, etc. If a student has more than **three absences**, the conductor will then contact the student and discuss future obligations.

There are a few Sunday and Saturday afternoon rehearsals scheduled this season to help students avoid conflicts with honors festivals and standardized testing. It is our hope that these rehearsals will alleviate some of the demands put on Saturday mornings and improve overall rehearsal attendance over the course of the year.

***Seniors**, we would appreciate any consideration you can give to planning auditions for colleges from November through March. If possible, please try to consolidate some of the auditions/interviews so that you have multiple auditions on a weekend in which you'll miss HYSO rehearsal.

Commitment

Your artistic commitment to the group means that you are prepared for each week's rehearsal. You need to practice your parts and work on difficult passages with your private teacher during the week. You will receive an e-mail by 4:00 pm on Monday each week outlining specific pieces/passages to practice for the next rehearsal as well as rehearsal order. Please note: The Hochstein Youth Symphony Orchestra and Rochester Philharmonic Youth Orchestra have agreed that student musicians should be members of one orchestra or the other, not both.

Solo Festival, Area All-State, All County

When being excused for Area All-State and All-County Ensembles, the student should fill out an excuse form as soon as possible and put it in the HYSO check-in box. *Note: When signing up for any solo festival, ask your teacher to sign you up for **FRIDAY EVENING OR LATE SATURDAY AFTERNOON** audition.*

Seating Auditions

The function of assigned seating is to create the most balanced ensemble possible, as well as to offer leadership opportunities to various players.

Seating auditions occur in the fall. For returning orchestra members the seating assignment is also based on performance/participation from the previous year. *The director reserves the right to rotate seating assignments in all sections.*

HYSO Concerto Competition

Any member of HYSO is eligible to compete to perform a solo with the orchestra during the school year on his/her orchestra instrument or on a secondary instrument (including voice). Two to four soloists are chosen each year and placed on the Winter or Spring concert. A maximum of two wins will be permitted during one's membership in the orchestra and there must be one year between wins.

Auditions will be held in the recital hall on **Wednesday, November 5, 2025 from 3:00 to 9:00 pm**. Students will be assigned a 10-minute audition slot and auditionees will be contacted that evening with the results.

- ◆ A piano accompanist **IS REQUIRED**. We find it beneficial to the performer and listener to present the piece in its entirety, allowing for the best possible presentation. An accompanist **WILL NOT BE PROVIDED**.
- ◆ Good literature does not necessarily need to be 'flashy' so in choosing your solo with your teacher, select a movement/piece you like playing and that shows off your strengths.
- ◆ Your private teacher should make sure that the orchestral parts are readily available and are reasonable to purchase or rent.

Rehearsal Preparation

If you are 15 minutes early to rehearsal you are on time.

If you are on time, you are late.

Rehearsal begins at **9:00 am**. Orchestra members are to be seated, warmed up and ready to rehearse at 9:00 am which means you must arrive no later than **15 minutes ahead – 8:45 am**. Percussionists will need to arrive earlier to set up equipment.

WHAT TO BRING TO REHEARSAL:

- **Sharpened pencils**
- **All of your music in a black binder or folder (this includes all string players)**
- **Spare reeds, valve oil, full set of strings. (The music school does not have an in-house source of supplies)**

**All electronic devices
(cell phone, ipod, etc.)
are to be put in purses and/or instruments cases.**

Inclement Weather

The youth orchestra rehearsal is canceled due to snow or other inclement weather **ONLY** if Hochstein is closed. Check our social media outlets or the Hochstein website – www.hochstein.org.

Rehearsal Check-in table and HYSO mailbox

Check off your name on the attendance sheet and then look for any handouts on the check-in table right outside the entrance of the Performance Hall before every rehearsal. Anything that needs to be turned in can be put in the HYSO box located on the check-in table.

You will receive a weekly email with specific instructions for the next rehearsal. Specific pieces will be listed so you know exactly what to practice at home. There may be times when a section of the orchestra may be excused early or a section may begin rehearsal at a later time. All this information is provided so you can plan accordingly.

Scholarships

Scholarships are awarded to HYSO members annually according to each scholarship's criteria. It is through the generous donation of individuals that these scholarships are available and awarded to different HYSO students each year. Students are selected by the conductor along with a committee of Hochstein faculty members. Each scholarship is awarded for the period of one year only.

Don Messina String Instrument Endowed Scholarship

Don Messina studied piano and double bass, which he played in the East High School Orchestra and the Eastman School's Conducting Orchestra in the 1950s. He has been a life-long concert-goer and is currently pursuing conducting opportunities. This scholarship is in memory of Don's immigrant parents, Harry and Louise Messina, who loved music and who sacrificed much to encourage his musical aspirations. The Don Messina String Instrument Scholarship covers the HYSO tuition for one year and is awarded annually to a student currently enrolled in elementary, middle or high school, and plays a stringed instrument. The recipient must display strong potential and outstanding musicianship.

The George A. Pettersen Memorial Scholarship

George A. Pettersen served as a Lieutenant in the U.S. Navy during World War II, successfully ran his own business, and was passionate about many things in life including music. Mr. Pettersen truly appreciated those around him who devoted their lives to their passions, and it is in his memory that Nancy Strelau annually honors a string, wind, or percussion student who emulates her father's commitment and work ethic.

Morning Musicale Scholarship

Morning Musicale was founded in Rochester around 1930. It is an organization of approximately sixty women musicians who meet monthly for chamber music and friendship. The group provides support for the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, the Imogene Barstow Fund at the Eastman School of Music and it is proud to sponsor this full scholarship for a student in HYSO. The Morning Musicale Scholarship is awarded to a returning junior or senior who strives for excellence and exhibits dedication and commitment to the orchestra.

Gretchen Snedeker Memorial Endowed Scholarship For Principal Horn

Gretchen Snedeker, a 24-year-old graduate student at the Eastman School of Music, was tragically killed in a car accident in April 2008. She was principal horn of the Hochstein Youth Symphony Orchestra from 1998 to 2001, and featured on our first tour to Austria in 2001. She discovered her passion for music during her time with *HYSO*. It is in the memory of Gretchen's spirit and passion that a full tuition scholarship is awarded annually to the HYSO principal horn.

Anne Wilson Yard Memorial Endowed Scholarship For Principal Oboe

Anne Wilson Yard, a lifelong supporter of the arts, passed away in July 2017. Passionate about children being engaged musically at an early age, she was influential in starting a Suzuki Violin program at an independent school in New Jersey where her children were enrolled. She passed on her love of music to her daughters and grandchildren, including three generations of oboe players. Later in life, she and her husband moved to Pittsford, New York to be closer to family. Two of her grandchildren have attended Hochstein for more than a decade and thoroughly enjoyed their time in HYSO. In Anne's memory, her family has endowed the Principal Oboe chair for the Orchestra.

Frank and Mary Louise George Memorial Scholarship For Principal Flute

This scholarship was established by flutist and Hochstein faculty member Rita George Simmons to honor the time and dedication her parents, Frank and Mary Louise George, gave in support of her musical achievements. She feels very blessed to have had parents that drove her to lessons, came to all of her concerts, and purchased her instruments, music, and accessories without question or complaint. To keep their memory going and shine a light on what wonderful parents they were, this scholarship is given in support of the HYSO principal flute.

Concert Attire

All articles of clothing must be solid black. Either of the below options must be paired with appropriate footwear, including black socks if necessary and black dress shoes (please avoid open-toed shoes).

Students may select from the following:

- I. Black dress with sleeves and professional neckline, or skirt/dress pants and blouse with sleeves and professional neckline. Hem must be below the knee or ankle-length; shoulders covered.
- II. Solid black two-piece suit, including jacket and pants, with solid black long-sleeved, collared dress shirt and black tie.

For rehearsals and performances: no fragrances, colognes, perfumes, strong scented lotions, etc.

For option II, we have a special rental/purchase arrangement with Tuxedo Corner/C. Anthony Men's Shop – 2040 East Ridge Road, Rochester, NY 14622. www.tuxedocorner.com Call ahead – 585-342-2800, identify yourself as an HYSO member and arrange a time in which to get fitted in August or September. Your rental period runs from October 1, 2025 - June 1, 2026. They will try to help past customers with some type of credit or exchange with past purchases of a tuxedo and formal accessories. Appointments are best for all students. This pricing is good for all musicians and families of HYSO.

Pricing

Rental (complete) - \$139.99 + 10.95 damage waiver+ tax.

Gently Used-(complete) if available - \$269.99+ tax

New- (complete) - \$349.99+tax

Billing Information

Tuition for 2025-2026 HYSO season is \$595, billed in quarterly installments. Students enrolled in private lessons at Hochstein are charged a reduced tuition rate of \$523.60. Payment reminders are sent 2 weeks before the start of each quarter, with first payment due September 3, 2025. If you are awarded an HYSO scholarship, your account will be adjusted for the remaining quarters to reflect your reduction in tuition. For questions regarding billing, contact the Hochstein business office at: 585-454-4596 Ext. 217

Travel

Under the direction of Nancy Strelau, the Hochstein Youth Symphony Orchestra made its first performance tour in 2001, traveling and performing in Vienna, Graz, Innsbruck and Salzburg, Austria. The orchestra made its Carnegie Hall debut in New York City in April 2002 and was a featured performer at the New York State Music Educators Convention in 2003 and 2008. HYSO toured northern France in 2004, performing in Normandy and Paris. In April 2006 the orchestra traveled to Germany and the Czech Republic, performing in Berlin, Dresden, Leipzig and Novy Bor. In April 2009, the group presented concerts in Rome, Florence, Cremona, Italy and in Weggis, Switzerland. In 2011, the group toured southern Ireland performing benefit concerts in Dublin, Galway, Kilkenny and Bray. In April 2014, under the direction of Casey Springstead, HYSO toured Normandy and Paris, France with performances commemorating the 70th Anniversary of the D-Day Invasion and the Liberation of France. HYSO returned to Austria in 2016, 15 years after their first tour. Spring 2018, HYSO toured and performed in Portugal and Spain. Spring 2022 took HYSO to Germany and the Czech Republic. Italy 2024 brought performances in Rome, Florence, and Cremona! In 2026, HYSO will return to France for performances in Paris, Avignon and Nice. Participation in tours is not required for membership in HYSO.

HYSO 2025-2026 Rehearsal/Concert Schedule

IMPORTANT POINTS:

- There are occasional Sunday and Saturday afternoon rehearsals to avoid Area All-State, All-County and SAT exams.
- All rehearsals/concerts are in the Hochstein Performance Hall.

Day/Date	Time	Event
Saturday & Sunday, 9/6 & 9/7	9:00 am-6:00 pm Sat. / 12:00-7:00 pm Sun.	Seating Auditions
Friday 9/12	3:45-8:45 pm	Mini-Camp
Saturday 9/13	9:00-11:30 am	Rehearsal
Saturday 9/20	9:00-11:30 am	Rehearsal
Saturday 9/27	9:00-11:30 am	Rehearsal
Saturday 10/4	9:00-11:30 am	Rehearsal
Saturday 10/11	9:00-11:30 am	Rehearsal
Saturday 10/18	2:00-4:30 pm	Rehearsal (Note special time)
Saturday 10/25	9:00-11:30 am	Rehearsal
Saturday 11/1	1:30-4:00 pm	Rehearsal (Note special time)
Wednesday 11/5	3:00-9:00 pm	Concerto Competition
Sunday 11/9	2:00-4:30 pm	Rehearsal (Note special time)
Saturday 11/15	9:00-11:30 am	Rehearsal
Sunday 11/16	2:00 PM	Fall Concert
Sunday 11/23	1:30-4:00 pm	Rehearsal (Note special time)
Saturday 11/29	OFF	THANKSGIVING BREAK
Saturday 12/6	2:00-4:30 pm	Rehearsal (Note special time)
Saturday 12/13	9:00-11:30 am	Rehearsal
Saturday 12/20	9:00-11:30 am	Rehearsal
Saturdays 12/27 & 1/3	OFF	HOLIDAY BREAK
Saturday 1/10	9:00-11:30 am	Rehearsal
Saturday 1/17	9:00-11:30 am	Rehearsal
Saturday 1/24	9:00-11:30 am	Rehearsal
Saturday 1/31	9:00-11:30 am	Rehearsal
Saturday 2/7	9:00-11:30 am	Rehearsal
Sunday 2/8	2:00 PM	HYSO/HPO Concert
Saturday 2/14	9:00-11:30 am	Rehearsal
Saturday 2/21	OFF	WINTER BREAK
Sunday 3/1	2:00-4:30 pm	Rehearsal (Note special time)
Saturday 3/7	2:00-4:30 pm	Rehearsal (Note special time)
Sunday 3/15	2:00-4:30 pm	Rehearsal (Note special time)
Wednesday 3/18	TBA	Live from Hochstein Performance
Saturday 3/21	9:00-11:30 am	Rehearsal
Tues. & Thursday, 3/24 & 3/26	6:30-8:30 pm	Tour Rehearsals
Saturday to Sunday, 3/28 to 4/5	France Tour Departs and Returns	France Tour
Saturday 4/11	9:00-11:30 am	Rehearsal
Saturday 4/18	9:00-11:30 am	Rehearsal
Saturday 4/25	9:00-11:30 am	Rehearsal
Saturday 5/2	2:00-4:30 pm	Rehearsal (Note special time)
Saturday 5/9	9:00-11:30 am	Rehearsal
Sunday 5/10	2:00 PM	Spring Concert, Mother's Day

*The Hochstein School
Orchestral Program*

Hochstein Concertino Strings
Marcos Kreutzer, Music Director

Hochstein Sinfonia Strings
John Fetter, Music Director
Terry Smith, Assistant Director

Hochstein Philharmonia Orchestra
John Fetter, Music Director
Matt Osika, Assistant Director

Hochstein Youth Symphony Orchestra
Casey Springstead, Music Director

Contact Information



50 North Plymouth Avenue
Rochester, NY 14614

Hochstein Front Office: 454-4596

Hochstein Business Office: 454-4596 ext. 217

Casey Springstead, Director: 255-0007 (c) casey.springstead@hochstein.org

Ruth Gates, Orchestra Manager: 739-2556 (c) ruth.gates@hochstein.org

Visit our website – www.hochstein.org