



CLAREMONT YOUTH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

providing affordable orchestral opportunities for youth

STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK

*For students and parents in the Claremont Youth Symphony Orchestra
and Prelude Symphonic Ensemble*



CYSO

Robert Sage, Music Director
David Van Brunt, Executive Director

PSE

Matthew Keating, Director

Revised September 2023

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WELCOME!

Congratulations and welcome to the Claremont Youth Symphony Orchestra and Prelude Symphonic Ensemble! We look forward to having fun, working hard, and making beautiful music together.

The purpose of this handbook is to give CYSO and PSE members and parents information about our policies, expectations, and procedures. While we are not professional ensembles, there are times when we do need to be professionally minded. We welcome any suggestions on how to improve this handbook.

Find CYSO on the web www.claremontyouthsymphony.org

www.facebook.com/ClaremontYouthSymphonyOrchestra

YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCzCAGkm4doN4dArcNR5TpRg>

Find PSE on the web

<http://www.claremontyouthsymphony.org>

How to Contact Us

CYSO Executive Director David Van Brunt:

909-938-6126 (voice & text)

claremontyouthso@gmail.com

PSE Director Matthew Keating:

909-624-3012

mkeating@claremontmusic.org

ABOUT CYSO

General Information

CYSO is composed of students ranging in age from 6th through 12th grade. Current members represent 46 different schools across 25 communities. CYSO performs two free concerts annually in Bridges Hall of Music on the campus of Pomona College in Claremont, California.

CYSO also holds an annual Concerto Competition. Winners perform with the adult Claremont Symphony Orchestra. See page 13 for more details.

Our Mission

CYSO is a non-profit organization designed to foster in young musicians a lifelong love of music through an affordable, educational, professionally directed orchestra program. CYSO is intended to support and enhance existing school music programs and students' private study.

Our History

The Claremont Symphony Orchestra Association founded CYSO in 1983 to provide an orchestral music experience for young people in Claremont and the surrounding cities. At the time, state-wide budget cuts were forcing schools to cut or reduce services, and programs in Music and Art were among the first to be negatively affected. The CSO Board conceived CYSO as both a supplement to school music programs and as a playing opportunity for students whose schools no longer offered orchestra classes.

Since its inception, CYSO has seen hundreds of students benefitting from membership. Many families have had several children participating over quite a number of years. We have been especially pleased that some CYSO students have developed their proficiency such that they have eventually become members of the CSO

ABOUT PSE

Prelude Symphonic Ensemble (PSE) is a preparatory orchestral ensemble working in partnership with CYSO. Established in 2014, PSE is for orchestral instrumental students (strings, woodwinds, brass, percussion, keyboard, harp) who would like to gain experience playing in an orchestral ensemble, improve their sight-reading skills, and prepare for future placement with CYSO.

Since its founding, PSE has seen a number of its members “graduate” to CYSO.

OUR EXPECTATIONS

Arrive on time and be picked up on time. CYSO rehearsals begin promptly at 7:00 p.m. and end at 8:30 p.m. You should arrive by 6:45 p.m. to give yourself time to sign in, prep your instrument, and warm up your fingers/lips. Your parents should pick you up promptly when rehearsal ends. PSE rehearsals start at 7:15 p.m. and end at 8:15 p.m.

Attend as many rehearsals as possible. When you miss a rehearsal, it affects not only your instrument section but the entire orchestra. If you have solo parts, your parts may be reassigned to another musician in your section if you display excessive absenteeism; this would be out of fairness to those

who attend regularly, and out of necessity, as the orchestra must get accustomed to hearing the solo parts.

Orchestra rehearsals are about playing as an ensemble, and we can't do that if you're not there. In addition, during rehearsals, decisions are made that require musicians to mark their parts; when you miss rehearsal, you miss this important information.

We understand that sometimes there are circumstances that prevent you from attending rehearsal - school events, illness, etc. Please notify the CYSO Executive Director or PSE Music Director as soon as you know you will be missing a rehearsal.

Practice at home. You will be issued a music folder with all the relevant music inside. (*See Music Folders section on page 10.*) We expect you to practice on your own at home. If you take private lessons, go through the music with your teacher to get help with fingerings, shifting, or finding the ideal spots to take a breath. Learning the music is your responsibility during your home practice time. When you come to rehearsal, it's about playing together as a group and bringing out the musicality. Rehearsals are more effective (and more fun!) if you have already learned the notes at home. **If YouTube videos are available for the pieces we are playing, you will be emailed the links;** please watch and listen to help you learn the pieces.

Come to rehearsal prepared. *Bring a music stand; stands are not provided.* Bring a pencil with a working eraser, mute, rosin, extra strings, end-pin stop, extra reeds, or any other equipment you need. Bring your own set of music, even if you have a stand partner, so you can make marks in your copy for practicing at home.

We strongly encourage you to attend the Claremont Symphony Orchestra concerts. Watching our parent orchestra will increase your familiarity with classical repertoire and enable you to closely observe musicians who have extensive orchestral experience. The CSO season schedule may be found at www.claremontso.org.

COMMUNICATION

Absences must be communicated in advance. With the exception of illness, you must give at least 24 hours' notice to the CYSO Executive Director or PSE Director if you expect to be absent from rehearsal. **Absences numbering more than three per semester may result in your being required to sit out the concert**, although every case will be considered on an individual basis.

Check your email regularly. This is how CYSO and PSE communicate with you. We do also text, but email is the primary mode of communication. If you do not have your email and have provided a parent's email, make sure your parent checks his/her email regularly and communicates the information to you.

Sign up for CYSO Discord messages. Sometimes last-minute information needs to be communicated. (For example, one time, our regular rehearsal location became unavailable on the day of rehearsal.) Discord is the fastest way for us to get the message out. Please contact the CYSO Executive Director for the latest Discord server link.

REHEARSAL ETIQUETTE

Sign in when you arrive. Attendance is taken at every rehearsal. For CYSO, a sign-in sheet will be available when you walk in. If you do not sign in, you will be marked absent. For PSE, attendance is taken by the Music Director.

Do not converse during rehearsal. Talking is disruptive to the musicians sitting near you, and you will miss important information that the conductor is trying to communicate to you.

Do not play with your instrument while the orchestra is not playing. Any excess noise is distracting and inconsiderate to those around you. Making noise with your instrument while the conductor is talking is just as disruptive as holding side conversations.

DO ask questions if anything is unclear. Don't be afraid to ask the conductor a question if s/he is being unclear in any way, or if you need him/her to repeat something. CYSO and PSE are learning orchestras; we expect you to have questions. Ask them, please! We are here to teach you.

If you come across terms or symbols in your music that are unfamiliar, please raise your hand and ask for clarification. Most musical terms will be in Italian, German, or French; it is important that you understand the markings in your music so you know how to properly play it.

CYSO students, if you are in an instrument section that has an Adult Coach, that Coach is there to answer any questions you may have or to help you in any way you need. *(See page 13 for more information on Adult Coaches.)*

Give your full attention to the rehearsal. Give 100% of your attention and effort to the rehearsal. Be there not just physically but mentally as well. This means you should not be doing anything but rehearsing - no homework, reading, joking around, etc.

All electronic devices should be turned off or set to silent and put away. Absolutely no texting, web surfing, etc. is allowed during rehearsals. **Students caught using electronic devices during rehearsal may have their devices taken away for the duration of the rehearsal.**

Watch the conductor as frequently as possible. It does take some time to get accustomed to looking at your music, playing, and watching the conductor. However, it is critical that you look up at the conductor at regular intervals while you are playing the music. The conductor's baton will indicate the beat of the measure, and the conductor will make clear motions to lead you in tempo and dynamic changes, which you will miss if you are not watching.

Mark your music. If the conductor gives instructions about the music, use your pencil to mark it in the music. Markings may be made ONLY in pencil, not pen. Don't assume that you will remember what the conductor told you; you won't. Feel free to mark your music in any way that is helpful to you, for example, circling rests that you may find yourself missing regularly or putting in fingerings or breath marks.

Know your responsibilities as a stand partner. If you are sharing a stand, the musician who sits on the inside is responsible for turning pages while the person sitting on the outside continues playing uninterrupted. For 1st Violins and

2nd Violins, “outside” is the person on the right. For Violas and Cellos, “outside” is the person on the left.

Put away your own chair at the end of rehearsal. Adults will supervise to make sure chairs are replaced correctly, but it is your responsibility to clean up your own area.

MUSIC FOLDERS

You will be issued a music folder for the duration of the academic year. The CYSO folders are very expensive, and you are expected to take good care of yours. **There will be a \$25.00 fee for any lost or damaged CYSO folders.** We expect folders to be returned in the same condition as when they were issued. (PSE does not have a lost folder fee.)

CONCERT ETIQUETTE

Please observe the dress code.

Gentlemen: Black or white dress shirt, black dress pants, black tie, black socks, black dress shoes. A black jacket is optional. If not wearing a jacket, shirt must be long-sleeved. Tuxedos are also acceptable. **PSE**: White dress shirt, black dress pants, black socks, black shoes.

Ladies: Black dress, or black or white blouse with black skirt or black pants. Tuxedos are also acceptable. Dresses/skirts must be mid-calf length or longer. The stage at Little Bridges is at the audience’s eye level; short skirts are inappropriate. Dresses/blouses must have sleeves; no sleeveless tops are allowed. Black dress shoes. **PSE**: White blouse (must have sleeves), black skirt or dress pants, black shoes.

Please keep all jewelry to a tasteful minimum - no jingling bracelets or earrings that may distract during performance.

Please remember that we are guests of Pomona College. Bridges Hall of Music (“Little Bridges”) is a world-renowned concert hall. Absolutely no food or beverages are allowed in the performance hall. During the concert, we will be using Pomona College’s chairs and stands. Please treat all equipment with respect.

Turn in all music at the end of the concert. Turn in your music folders (with all music inside) into the box provided at the end of each concert. This music belongs to CYSO and PSE and must be re-catalogued into our music library.

CONCERTO COMPETITION

Each spring CYSO holds a Concerto Competition for any member of the orchestra who wishes to participate. The winner(s) perform(s) with the adult Claremont Symphony Orchestra the following season during the CSO’s annual Concert for Young People.

Please use the following guidelines when preparing for the Concerto Competition:

- You may audition on any instrument of your choosing. It does NOT have to be the instrument you play in CYSO. For example, we know that there are talented musicians in our orchestra who are proficient on piano.
- Your audition piece should be a single movement of a concerto or a stand-alone piece with orchestral accompaniment. The piece should be no longer than 10 minutes. Do not worry if you select a movement that goes attacca into another movement. If you win, we will make

the necessary edits to ensure a proper ending to the movement.

- Your audition piece should have a piano transcription of the accompaniment part. When you audition, you will play with a piano accompanist, whom we will provide.

More details will be available when the competition date nears.

CONTINUING MEMBERSHIP

Once you are accepted into CYSO, you do not need to re-audition in subsequent years, provided you continue each year. You are always welcome to re-audition for seat placement change if you wish. Please note:

- If you switch instruments, you are required to re-audition on your new instrument.
- If you leave CYSO or PSE for one year or more, you will be required to re-audition to be re-admitted.

SEATING ASSIGNMENT

Your CYSO seat placement each year will be determined by the Music Director, Executive Director, and adult coaches based on a number of factors:

- your performance during the current season
- your behavior during rehearsals
- your overall dedication to CYSO.

You may re-audition if you so choose.

Because new students join and older students graduate from high school and leave us, seating assignments may change from year to year or, in some instances, from semester to semester.

PSE seat placement is determined by the PSE Director and Assistant Instructor and is subject to change at the Director's discretion.

ADULT COACHES

Adult Coaches are musicians who support CYSO by playing in various instrument sections during rehearsals and sometimes also during concerts. All Adult Coaches have orchestral experience. During rehearsals, Adult Coaches are available to:

- Explain musical terminology you may not know.
- Explain how to play certain notes or articulation.
- Give you pointers on how to play certain passages.
- Help in any way that you may need help.

Take advantage of the adult coaches! They are there as a resource for you, to help you become a better orchestral musician.

TUITION

CYSO and PSE are sponsored by the Claremont Symphony Orchestra Association and thus can maintain low tuition fees for students.

CYSO

Tuition is \$225 per year, and \$175 per year for each additional sibling. Students who join in the spring semester will have pro-rated tuition fees. **Tuition is due no later than the third rehearsal of the semester in which the student joins.**

PSE

Tuition is \$200 per year and \$175 per year for each additional sibling. If a PSE student has a sibling in CYSO, the CYSO student pays the full CYSO tuition, and the PSE student pays the sibling rate.

No Refund Policy

CYSO and PSE have a no-refund policy concerning tuition. Tuition is due in full, regardless of the student's nonattendance at rehearsals or concerts.

Financial Assistance

Need-based scholarships for both CYSO and PSE are available for families seeking financial assistance. Please speak with the CYSO Executive Director or PSE Director if you would like to apply for a scholarship for your child.

MAP OF CONCERT LOCATION

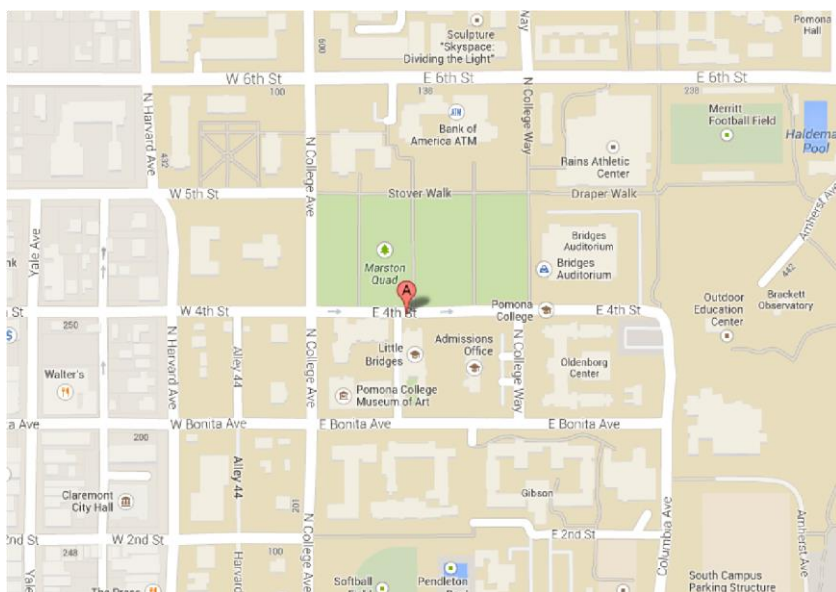
Concerts and CYSO dress rehearsals are held at

Bridges Hall of Music (“Little Bridges”)

Pomona College

150 E. 4th Street

Claremont, CA 91711



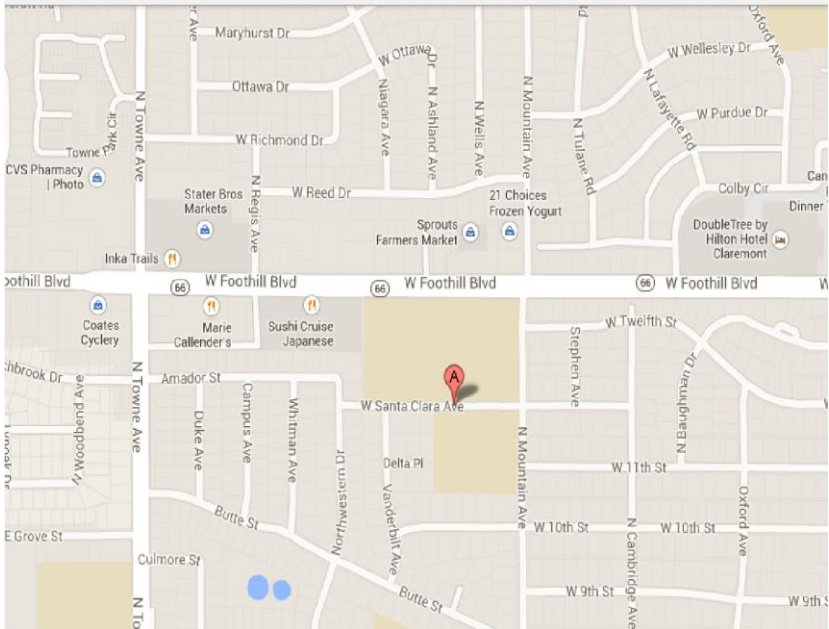
MAP OF CYSO REHEARSAL LOCATION

CYSO rehearsals are held at

Mountain View Elementary School

851 Santa Clara Avenue Claremont,
CA 91711.

Rehearsals take place 7:00-8:30 pm in the multi-purpose room.



MAP OF PSE REHEARSAL LOCATION

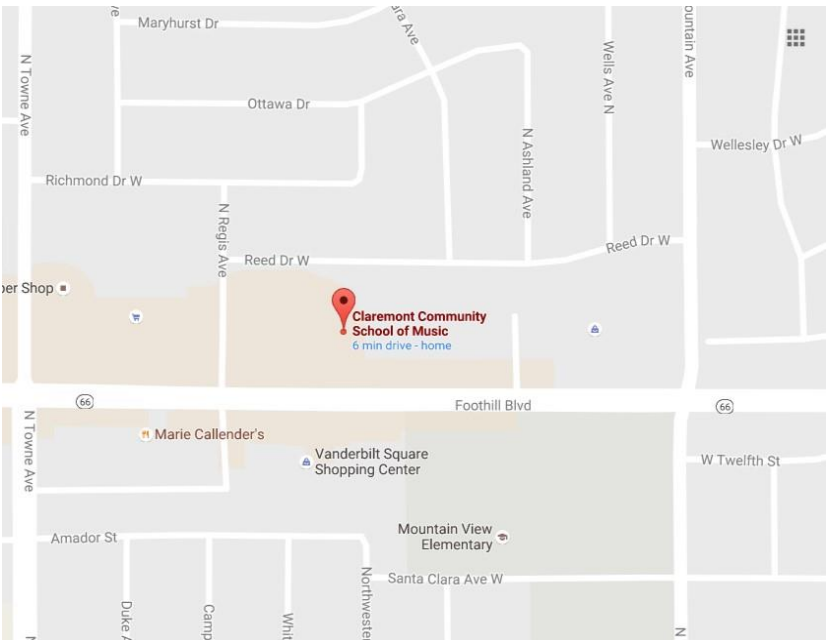
PSE rehearsals are held at

Claremont Community School of Music

951 West Foothill Boulevard

Claremont, CA 91711

Rehearsals take place 7:15-8:15 p.m. in William Huff Recital Hall.



CLAREMONT SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA ASSOCIATION

CSO Board of Directors

Dr. Cecilia Cloughly, President

Laura Jaoui, Vice President

Xuan Shi, Secretary

Doug MacLaughlin, Treasurer

Sue Hodson, Member-at-Large

Pat Kuenning, Member-at-Large

John Sandhagen, Member-at-Large

June Xu, Member-at-Large

Gloria Cangahuala, Concertmaster

CSO Conductors

Robert Sage, Music Director

Ruth Charloff, Associate Conductor

CYSO Personnel

Robert Sage, Music Director

David Van Brunt, Executive Director

PSE Personnel

Matthew Keating, Music Director