

Attendance Expectations

Grand Rapids Youth Symphony & Classical Orchestra

Before you secure your place in the Grand Rapids Youth Symphony or Classical Orchestra, please read the following information. Ask a parent or guardian to read it also. Then continue with the registration process.

Commitment

When you accept a position in the Grand Rapids Youth Symphony or Classical Orchestra, you are agreeing to participate **for the entire year**. You are agreeing to attend all rehearsals (with the allowable number of absences), stay at rehearsals the **entire time**, and perform **at all concerts**:

- To join either orchestra and then quit in the middle of the season because you've been selected for some other activity is unfair to students who were not selected for the orchestra.
- To join either orchestra and then decide to attend only half of each rehearsal so you can do something else is not allowed.
- To join either orchestra and then not play at a concert is unfair to everyone. You don't get to choose whether you play in a concert. You are agreeing to play at all concerts.

Rehearsals and absences

Rehearsals are on Monday nights (see the published schedule for details). The Classical Orchestra rehearses from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. The Youth Symphony rehearses from 7 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. We allow the following absences:

- **Two** absences prior to the first concert
- **Three** absences between the first and second concerts
- **Two** absences between the second and third concerts

In other words, we allow you to miss seven out of the 28 scheduled rehearsals throughout the year; that's 25 percent! This is a very generous allowance—what other job or school activity would allow this? We do this to make room for required school functions, study, and illness.

We do not have an excused or unexcused absence policy. **An absence is an absence.** Arriving late or leaving early counts as a partial absence. **Two partial absences will equal one absence.**

The only times we stretch past these limits are when there are conflicts with required activities (something you are graded for) that are part of your enrollment in your school music program, which we require you to be in as a member of GRYS&CO. Any additional activity (sports, musicals, dramas, forensics, etc.) that is voluntary on your part will require you to tell that supervisor, coach, or director that you have **only a certain number of allowable absences from your prior commitment**, which is the Grand Rapids Youth Symphony or Classical Orchestra. If you are asked to be in the school musical, or if you want to audition for a school play, remember, your **prior commitment** is with the Youth Symphony or Classical Orchestra. If you get a job, you must tell your supervisor that you have a **prior commitment** on Monday nights.

This means that you need to be organized with your schedule. Add our rehearsal times and concert dates to your calendar. When your school music director announces the concert and rehearsal times at the beginning of the school year, mark them in your calendar. Look ahead and determine whether you will need to miss a Monday night rehearsal to study for exams and mark that in. If your parents want to take the family on vacation, make sure the dates don't conflict with a concert. When sports tryouts and drama/musical auditions are announced, look at your calendar, note your allowable absences, and talk to the coach or director **before** you take on additional commitments. Thank you!