



# NORWALK YOUTH SYMPHONY

## AUDITION GUIDELINES

Auditions are held once a year, at the end of August and/or the beginning of September. The schedule for the **2017-2018** season is as follows:

Saturday, Aug. 26	Violin
Monday, Aug. 28	Viola/Bass/Harp
Tuesday, Aug. 29	Cello
Wednesday, Aug. 30	Violin
Thursday, Aug. 31	Woodwinds
Tuesday, Sept. 5	Brass/Percussion

### PRIMARY OUTCOME

The primary outcome of the auditions is assignment to one of the five Norwalk Youth Symphony ensembles. The audition is also important as an aid to the conductors in determining seating assignments. Seating in an orchestra is not determined by ranking. Rather, it is done in the best interests of the individual musicians and the orchestra as a whole.

### AUDITIONERS

Each student will generally be heard by two of the conductors, although some may be heard by just one (returnees for Principal Orchestra, for example, and the very youngest students). The auditioner(s) will be provided with the student's name and grade, photograph, a copy of the music being played and information about previous participation in the Norwalk Youth Symphony. After playing is completed, the auditioner(s) may have some brief questions for the student. In addition, at the end of the audition, the student will have the opportunity to state any factors that may have affected his or her audition.

### THE AUDITION

All musicians are asked to please bring:

- an extra copy of your music for the auditioners,
- a current photograph for the auditioner(s). If you do not bring a photograph, we can take a Polaroid for you, at a cost of \$2.

Students will be greeted and escorted to the warm-up room and audition by a Norwalk Youth Symphony musician or parent volunteer. Students audition individually. Parents are **NOT** permitted in the audition area. They are to wait for their child in the lobby.

The ten-minute audition will have three components:

#### SCALE:

***Membership into the Principal Orchestra FOR STRINGS*** requires the knowledge of all major and minor scales in all forms and must demonstrate the ability to play up to at least three octaves. Students will be asked first to play a scale of their own choosing (excluding G or D major for violins and C or G major for violas and cellos). The auditioner(s) may then choose a second scale to be played. Be prepared to play the scale with different articulations and at different speeds.

**Membership into the Principal Orchestra FOR BRASS AND WOODWINDS** requires the knowledge of all major and minor scales in all forms and must demonstrate the ability to play two octave scales and a chromatic scale through the candidate's range. Students will be asked first to play a scale of their own choosing. The auditioner(s) may then choose a second scale to be played. Be prepared to play the scale with different articulations and at different speeds. Familiarity with tenor clef for trombone and bassoon is helpful, but not required. Familiarity with transpositions for trumpet is also helpful, but not required.

**Membership into the Concert Orchestra FOR STRINGS** requires the knowledge of all three-octave scales through 4 sharps and 4 flats. Students will be asked to play a scale of their own choosing. The auditioner(s) may then choose a second scale to be played. Be prepared to play the scale with different articulations and at different speeds.

**Membership into the Concert Orchestra FOR BRASS AND WOODWINDS** requires the knowledge of all two-octave scales through 4 sharps and 4 flats. Students will be asked to play a scale of their own choosing. The auditioner(s) may then choose a second scale to be played. Be prepared to play the scale with different articulations and at different speeds.

**Membership into the Philharmonia FOR STRINGS** requires the knowledge of three-octave scales through 3 sharps and 2 flats. Bass players requires the knowledge of two-octave scales through 3 sharps and 2 flats. Students will be asked to play a scale of their own choosing.

**Membership into the Philharmonia FOR BRASS AND WOODWINDS** requires the knowledge of one-octave scales through 3 sharps and 2 flats. Students will be asked to play a scale of their own choosing.

**Membership into the Prelude Orchestra** requires the knowledge of keys through 3 sharps and 2 flats. Students will be asked to play a two-octave scale of their own choosing.

**Membership into the Jr. Strings** will be asked to play a scale of their own choosing, preferably two octave.

2. **SOLO:** Each student will be asked to perform solo music of his or her own choosing.

**STRING CANDIDATES FOR BOTH PRINCIPAL AND CONCERT ORCHESTRA** are expected to prepare two pieces of contrasting tempo and style (i.e., for example a slow Classical movement and a fast Romantic movement) that display the following: articulation, lyrical, slow playing; rhythmic accuracy; agility and fast playing; phrasing and musicality; and dynamics.

**PRINCIPAL ORCHESTRA BRASS AND WOODWIND CANDIDATES** are expected to prepare two pieces of contrasting tempo and style (i.e., for example a slow Classical movement and a fast Romantic movement) that display the following: articulation, lyrical, slow playing; rhythmic accuracy; agility and fast playing; phrasing and musicality; and dynamics. IN ADDITION TO THE PREPARED PIECES the candidate may choose to prepare orchestral excerpts but are not required doing so.

**CONCERT ORCHESTRA BRASS AND WOODWIND CANDIDATES** should prepare either (A) two pieces of contrasting tempo and style (for example a slow Classical movement and a fast Romantic movement) that display the following: articulation, lyrical, slow playing; rhythmic accuracy; agility and fast playing; phrasing and musicality; and dynamics OR (B) one solo piece and a minimum of three orchestral excerpts demonstrating contrasting styles, tempos and musical periods.

**PHILHARMONIA ORCHESTRA STRING CANDIDATES** will be asked to play one selection at a difficulty level at least equivalent to Suzuki Book 4. Student should be comfortably shifting into third position; shifting into upper positions is desirable but not required.

**PHILHARMONIA ORCHESTRA BRASS AND WOODWIND CANDIDATES** should perform one solo piece that demonstrates their technical and musical abilities.

**PRELUDE ORCHESTRA CANDIDATES** will be asked to play one selection at a difficulty level at least equivalent to Suzuki Book 3. Beginning to shift into third position is desirable but not necessary.

**Jr. String Candidates** will be asked to play a piece that exhibits their current playing level.

IF YOU ARE NOT CERTAIN WHICH ORCHESTRA YOU QUALIFY FOR, DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT. PREPARE THE BEST AUDITION YOU CAN USING THE ABOVE AS GENERAL GUIDELINES AND THE CONDUCTORS WILL KNOW WHERE TO PLACE YOU.

**3. SIGHT READING:** All candidates will be asked to sight-read passages that contain skill expectations appropriate to each of the five orchestra levels.

After a first run-through of the solo passages and/or sight-reading music, the auditioner(s) may request a second attempt, possibly including a request to concentrate on a particular technical element.

**SPECIAL NOTE TO PERCUSSIONISTS:** Percussionists should prepare a solo or etude on snare drum and mallets (bells and xylophone will be available at the audition). Timpani tuning and a short etude is recommended for placement into Concert and Principal Orchestras. Sight reading will be provided for snare drum and mallets. We realize that not everyone will have access to all of these instruments during the summer months, so just prepare what you can...AND HAVE FUN!!

Suggestions for repertoire is as follows:

Snare drum: etudes by Al Lepak, Vic Firth, Anthony Cirone, Garwood Whaley, Mitchell Peters, etc.

Mallets: solos by Garwood Whaley, Mitchell Peters, George Hamilton Green, Morris Goldenberg, or orchestral excerpts

Timpani: etudes by Al Lepak, Vic Firth, Saul Goodman, Elliot Carter, John Beck, or orchestral excerpts

#### **NOTIFICATION**

Orchestra placements (but not seating within sections) will be posted on the NYS web site during the week preceding the first rehearsal. Orchestra placement as well as seating assignments will be posted in the lobby at the first rehearsal. Audition decisions are based on the conductors' considerable professional judgment and are final.