



The Akron Youth Symphony Eric Benjamin, Music Director

As one of Ohio's oldest youth orchestras, the Akron Youth Symphony has provided talented young musicians the opportunity to rehearse and perform standard orchestral literature for more than 60 years. Founded in 1955 by the Greater Akron Musical Association, the Akron Youth Symphony performed its first concert in January of 1956. AYS provides a diverse and exciting full symphonic ensemble experience that continues to make a lasting impact on the musicians and community.

AYS is geared toward high school students, but is open to all qualified middle and high school students. AYS members (generally ranging from ages 13 to 18) represent numerous schools, cities, and counties in northeastern Ohio. AYS musicians include homeschooled students, as well as those who attend public, private, and parochial schools. All members participate in their respective school ensembles, and take private music instruction.

Musicians rehearse weekly under professional direction and receive regular coaching from Akron Symphony Orchestra musicians. AYS members also may have other opportunities available to them, including the annual concerto competition, chamber music groups, and master classes. Every year a number of scholarships for private lessons, summer camps, and college study are available through the generosity of AYS donors.

AYS gives back to the community by performing at special events and mentoring our sister organization, Akron Youth Philharmonic, in Side-By-Side concerts. The most valuable part of the experience is the process of high-caliber concerts in a supportive and energized environment. The AYS season runs from August through May, with Sunday afternoon rehearsals. AYS performs at least four full concerts each season, in addition to participating in other special events.

Akron Youth Symphony Member Benefits:

- Sectional rehearsals and master classes led by Akron Symphony Orchestra musicians
- College credit available from The University of Akron
- Chamber music coaching with members of the Akron Symphony
- Complimentary tickets to Akron Symphony performances

Eligibility:

The AYS is open, by audition, to all middle and high school students who play one of the following instruments:

- Strings: Violin, Viola, Cello, Bass
- Woodwinds: Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon
- Brass: French Horn, Trumpet, Trombone, Tuba
- Others: Harp, Timpani, Percussion

Tuition Fees:

\$225 (non-refundable)

A typical season schedule includes:

Rehearsals generally on Sunday afternoons at 1:15 – 4:15 p.m. (Late August – Early May)
Fall, Winter, Side-by-Side, and Spring Concerts on selected Sunday afternoons at 3:00 pm
Chamber Music / Chamber Orchestra Performances
Additional performance opportunities

Audition Information

Auditions are open to all middle school and high school instrumental music students who study privately, actively participate in their school music program, and are able to commit to the rehearsal and concert schedule. There may be limitations or exemptions to this policy. Auditions are heard by the Akron Youth Symphony Music Director. Audition information and specific instrumental requirements are available on the Akron Youth Symphony website at <https://akronsymphony.org/musicians/>. Scroll down until you see the Akron Youth Symphony.

Please note: These auditions are for the Akron Youth Symphony only. Students not accepted are eligible to audition in the Fall for the Akron Youth Philharmonic. More information can be found on the Akron Symphony website.

Orchestral excerpts can be downloaded at <https://akronsymphony.org/musicians/>

Auditions are private and not open to the public.

Dates, Locations & Times:

Wednesday	May 16, 2018 4:00 – 8:00 p.m.. Guzzetta Hall, The University of Akron campus
Thursday	May 17, 2018 4:00 – 8:00 p.m. Guzzetta Hall, The University of Akron campus
Friday	May 18, 2018 4:00 – 8:00 p.m. Guzzetta Hall, The University of Akron campus
Saturday	May 19, 2017 1:00 – 5:00 p.m. Guzzetta Hall, The University of Akron campus

Audition Fee: \$25 (non-refundable)

Deadline: Application materials are due by April 30, 2018

Recommendations: Written recommendations from your current private teacher and current school music director are not required but are encouraged with your application.

Please submit application form, \$25 non-refundable application fee, and (optional) recommendations

QUESTIONS? Contact the Akron Symphony office at 330-535-8131



Akron Youth Symphony (AYS) Application

PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Name _____ Male Female

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home phone _____ Age _____ DOB _____

Student e-mail _____

(You must provide a legible e-mail address.)

Instrument _____ Years of study _____

PARENT INFORMATION

Parent/guardian names _____

Parent/guardian emails _____

SCHOOL INFORMATION

Grade (Fall 2018) _____ School _____

School instrumental ensemble(s) in which you are participating or plan to participate:

School music instructor _____

School music instructor e-mail address _____

PRIVATE INSTRUCTION INFORMATION

Current private music instructor _____

Address _____ City _____ St _____ Zip _____

E-mail (if available) _____

Phone number _____

Once the application and fee are received, directions for scheduling an audition time and date will be sent to the submitted e-mail addresses of both the parent and student.

Please mail application form, \$25 non-refundable application fee, and (optional) recommendations to:

Akron Youth Symphony, 92 North Main Street, Akron, OH 44308 (fax: 330-535-7302)

APPLICATION DEADLINE: April 30, 2018

Method of payment: Check (payable to Akron Symphony)
 VISA Mastercard Discover

Account # _____ Exp. Date _____



Eric Benjamin graduated from the New England Conservatory of Music with degrees in music education and orchestral conducting. He began his professional conducting career as resident conductor of the Akron Symphony Orchestra and now serves as music director of the Tuscarawas Philharmonic and the Alliance Symphony. He is the Associate Conductor of the Akron Symphony Orchestra.

He has appeared as guest conductor with orchestras in Canton, Columbus, Cleveland, Wooster and Erie, Pa. Active as a composer and arranger, his works have been performed by orchestras nationally. Recently, the Canton Symphony opened its season with the premiere of his *An Occasional Overture*.

Eric is a committed educator and has taught music at the elementary, secondary and college level. He is currently an adjunct faculty member at University of Mount Union where he conducts the orchestra, teaches conducting and a course on music and culture. He also directs the University Chorus and teaches at the Kent State Tuscarawas campus.

"I love to engineer interactions between young people and music," Eric said, "events that hook up scholarship, creativity, performance and achievement with that electric current that makes a student want to do music in the first place."



Akron Youth Symphony's School Participation Policy

The Akron Youth Symphony has joined other youth orchestras across the country in requiring all Akron Youth Symphony musicians (enrolled in schools with music programs) to participate in their school music programs. This is an important statement of support for school music programs which serve a broad range of students with varying levels of ability. We expect our Youth Symphony musicians to participate in and be leaders of those school programs.

If a student is unable to participate in his or her school music program due to an academic scheduling conflict that cannot be resolved, the student, the school music teacher, and GAMA can try to develop a plan for involving the student with the school program in another manner.

Our goal in having this policy is twofold. We are committed to supporting all in-school music programs, and your participation is an important part of the success of those programs. In addition, we intend to support your development as a musician by requiring that you participate in ensemble playing as often as possible. One rehearsal a week is insufficient for the development of excellent ensemble skills.

For those students who may have come to view their school music programs in a less than positive light, we urge you to go to the school, to the teacher, and to the administration to advocate for the improvement of the school's music programs. The Akron Symphony and Akron Youth Symphony staff members are happy to provide resources for your advocacy efforts and help you in other ways.

Why students need to participate in school programs:

- AYS should serve as a supplement to, not replacement for, music in the schools.
- School fine arts programs are being cut or reduced all across the country. When top students leave the programs, performance levels suffer, adding fuel to the fire that music programs should be cut.
- Without school music instruction, most of the professional musicians in this area (and around the country) would not be where they are today.
- We rely on directors to encourage students to audition and to recommend students to help fill vacancies in our sections.
- If we want the schools to support us, we need to support the schools.

Absences will be accepted for required school ensemble events.

AYS members are REQUIRED to participate in the instrumental or vocal music programs at their respective schools when applicable. School ensemble participation forms will be sent to you with confirmation of your commitment to AYS, and must be returned before the beginning of the season. AYS tuition fees are nonrefundable once Commitment Forms are received. We thank you for adhering to our School Participation Policy.