

Gwinnett County Public Schools

Honor Orchestra

Program



2025-2026

Handbook

Gwinnett County Public Schools

Vision

Gwinnett County Public Schools will be a system of world-class schools where students acquire the knowledge and skills to be successful as they continue their education at the post secondary level and/or enter the work force.

Mission

The mission of Gwinnett County Public schools is to pursue excellence in academic knowledge, skills, and behavior for each student resulting in measured improvement against local, national, and world-class standards.

Honor Orchestra Program

Mission

It is the purpose of the Gwinnett County Public Schools Honor Orchestra Program to provide opportunities for students to maximize their developing knowledge and skills in orchestra music, beyond the scope of their local school classes, in full orchestra, string orchestra, and chamber ensemble settings. Students will study and perform music selections with care and accuracy and with sensitivity to the aesthetic properties of the music. Membership in these organizations is intended to enhance students' self-discipline and creative ability as well as develop the knowledge of opportunities for life-long participation in musical activities.

Under the auspices of GCPS Fine Arts office and Gwinnett County Fine Arts Director, the Honor Orchestra program consists of two performance organizations, which rehearse weekly throughout the school year and present concerts at the end of each semester. Membership in one of these organizations is an honor reserved for serious students who wish to increase their understanding of the works of the classical music masters. Students are expected to practice on their own with the assistance of their private teachers, and should be prepared in advance for each weekly rehearsal.

The Kendall Youth Orchestra performs as a string orchestra. This orchestra is open to students from sixth through eighth grade. Members of the orchestra faculty, area professionals, and private teachers assist the conductors in preparations for concerts. Students selected to be members of this group will focus on musicianship and technique, and will learn the etiquette and rules of conduct required of professional orchestra members.

The Gwinnett County Youth Symphony (GCYS) is a string orchestra during the fall semester and a full orchestra during the spring semester (including winds, brass, and percussion). It is open to students in the sixth through twelfth grade. They perform standard professional repertoire and selected full orchestra arrangements. The orchestra consists of a large string section with a full complement of appropriate woodwinds, brass, and percussion. The conductors are assisted in preparation for concerts by selected members of the orchestra faculty, band faculty, area professionals, and private teachers. Students selected to be members of this group would focus on musicianship, expression, and the aesthetic qualities of the music studied. Members will exhibit the etiquette and rules of conduct of professional musicians.

Membership

Eligibility

Any Gwinnett County Public Schools student currently enrolled in a GCPS local school orchestra or band program for an entire year is eligible to audition for membership in the GCPS Honor Orchestra Program. Kendall or GCYS students who fail to meet their commitment for the whole season are not eligible to audition for either Gwinnett County Honor Orchestra the following year.

Audition

Each orchestra member must audition every year. Auditions for the Honor Orchestra Program will be held each year in late August. Audition forms will be distributed to the GCPS orchestra faculty at the August planning meeting prior to the opening of the school. A schedule will be determined from these forms and provided to teachers in a timely manner. The audition is a blind audition adjudicated by two-member panels consisting of the conductors, the GCPS orchestra faculty and, if needed, private studio teachers. Upon the discretion of the conductors, the panels may audition by orchestra or by upper and lower strings for both orchestras. Seating within sections will result from audition scores and at the discretion of the conductors.

Membership Notification

Teachers will be notified of the students selected for membership as soon as possible. Notification to all students will be completed within four days of the audition. All adjudication forms will be kept on file for three months after the audition date.

Communication

Although we will e-mail you from time to time, we need members to join our google classroom to share music, submit seating videos, and communicate with members throughout the year. Please join your google classroom using the following code- **khn7li5**

Make-up Auditions

There are no scheduled make-up auditions for either the Gwinnett County Youth Symphony or the Gwinnett County Kendall Honor Orchestra. Because the orchestra seating is determined immediately after the auditions conclude, make-up auditions are not possible.

Alternates

A designated number of alternates will be named by rank from the students not selected for membership in the orchestras. If openings occur in the orchestra, positions will be filled from the list of alternates.

Rehearsal Notification

Students are notified of the first rehearsal by email. Prior to the first rehearsal, there will be a parent meeting to discuss the GCYS policies and procedures. Handbooks containing information about the Honor Orchestra Program and rehearsal/performance schedules will be available for parents. Parents will receive a calendar of events for the year at the parent meeting.

Rehearsals

2025-2026 GCYS Rehearsal Schedule

<u>Rehearsal Day</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Place</u>
Monday	6:30-8:30 PM	Duluth High School

2025-2026 GCYS Performance Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Place</u>
Winter Concert	Tues., Nov. 18, 2025	7:00 P.M. Gas South Theater
Spring Concert	Tues., Mar. 31, 2026	7:00 P.M. Gas South Theater

Attendance

A weekly rehearsal is scheduled for each orchestra. Rehearsals begin no later than the last week in September. Rehearsals may also be scheduled on the day of performance. Rehearsals will not be scheduled on countywide holidays. However, rehearsals may be scheduled on teacher work days, which are local, or student holidays. Rehearsals may be canceled at any time due to inclement weather. (Check local radio and television stations for school closings.) Please consult the calendar at the back of this handbook for a complete listing of rehearsal and performance dates for the current school year calendar.

Absences

A limit of two absences per concert will be permitted. An understandable absence would be for illness, religious holiday, hazardous weather conditions, death in family, school music events, or any legitimate reason determined in advance of the absence by the conductor. There are no excused absences from performances.

Tardiness and Transportation

Punctuality is essential to the smooth functioning of a group. Therefore, **students must be at rehearsal fifteen (15) minutes early and in their seats five minutes before rehearsal time.** Students should be in the warm up room twenty minutes before a performance. **After three tardies, the student will be charged with one absence.** Please be respectful of the conductors' time. **Students who are picked up from rehearsal more than 15 minutes after the rehearsal is over will be charged a tardy.** If this is a consistent problem, the student will be released from the organization.

Probation Status – Termination of Membership

If the student has reached the limit of absences per concert, he or she will be notified of their probationary status at the next rehearsal. If the limit is exceeded, that student will be removed from the roster for that performance. Students whose membership is terminated due to absences will not be allowed to audition for the Youth Symphony for the next school calendar year.

Parents' Responsibilities

Parents are expected to transport their students to and from rehearsals and concerts. Students are expected to arrive early and be picked up promptly at the end of the rehearsal.

Gwinnett Youth Orchestra Parents is the parent booster organization that provides additional financial support and assistance (as outlined below) to the GCPS Honor Orchestra Program. Parents of all selected orchestra members are automatically members of GYOP. GYOP will operate under a set of by-laws with an executive board including president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer, to be elected each year. Each selected orchestra member is encouraged to pay a membership fee of \$100.

GYOP Responsibilities

- Provide concert refreshments and plan receptions
- Purchase awards
- Provide out-of-county transportation when necessary
- Maintain a bank account for management of funds
- Assist with coaches' and adjudicators' stipends
- Assist in music purchases
- Provide parent volunteers to take attendance at each rehearsal and concert
- Assist in set-up and breakdown of rehearsals and performances

Student Responsibilities

Students are expected to conduct themselves, in rehearsal and performance, in a respectful and responsible manner, observing rules of etiquette and rehearsal competence pertaining to orchestral membership. If a behavior problem occurs, the student will be instructed to confer with the conductors either during or upon completion of rehearsal. Students will be given a warning conference for misbehavior. The conductors will maintain documentation of this conference, and the student's parents will be notified by phone. Upon the second offense, by decision of the conductors, a student will be expelled from membership in the orchestra. A student who is expelled for misbehavior will be non-eligible for membership in the GCPS Honor Orchestra Program during the next school calendar year. The decision of the conductors to expel a student for misbehavior is final and not subject to appeal.

GCYS Uniforms

Uniforms for the Youth Symphony will consist of:

Males:

Black dress pants and jacket
Black dress shirt
Black socks (that go above the ankle)
Black Dress Shoes

Females:

Long black dress OR
Black vest, black dress pants and white shirt
Black stockings
Black Dress Shoes

GCYS Conductors

Gwinnett County Youth Symphony

Mr. David Metrio
North Gwinnett High School
david.metrio@gcpsk12.org

Mr. Carl Rieke
Osborne Middle School
carl.rieke@gcpsk12.org

Wind and Percussion Specialist

Mrs. Maria (Mimi) Phillips
Norcross High School
maria.phillips@gcpsk12.org

Conductors' Responsibilities

- Fulfill responsibilities under the discretion of the Fine Arts Director
- 2-year commitment, with annual evaluation reviewed by a Steering Committee made up of Orchestra faculty and the Fine Arts Director
- Select repertoire for concerts, rehearsals, and auditions
- Conduct weekly rehearsals
- Conduct a minimum of two performances
- Conduct selected additional performances (arranged in consultation with the Fine Arts Director)
- Communicate regularly with the Fine Arts Director, orchestra manager, Gwinnett Youth Orchestra Parents, orchestra faculty and band faculty
- Assist with auditions for winds and percussion
- Communicate regularly with the Fine Arts Director, conductors and coaches, parents of orchestra members, and Gwinnett Youth Orchestra Parents
- Communicate regularly with GCPS Fine Arts Director to arrange concert venues, report services, submit music budgets, and consult on the activities of the orchestra
- Secure substitute conductors and coaches from among GCPS personnel when necessary set up auditions, confirm performance sites, and assist in the purchase of music
- Coordinate set-up and breakdown for each rehearsal and performance
- Work collaboratively with Winds and Percussion Specialist as winds and percussion are auditioned for full orchestra concerts

Gwinnett County Youth Symphony Staff

Mr. David Metrio, Conductor

David Metrio is a Colombian-American educator, conductor, and double-bassist based in the Atlanta area. Mr. Metrio is currently the Director of Orchestras at North Gwinnett High School in Suwanee, GA, as well as the conductor for the Gwinnett County Youth Symphony Orchestra. Before his appointment to the Gwinnett County Youth Symphony Orchestra, Metrio served as a conductor for the Georgia Youth Symphony Orchestra for seven seasons. Mr. Metrio has also served as a double bass clinician for the New England Conservatory Preparatory School in Boston, MA. Mr. Metrio was named the Teacher of the Year at North Gwinnett High School for the 2022/2023 school year, and a Top 25 Finalist for County-Wide Teacher of the Year.

Orchestras under Mr. Metrio's direction consistently receive superior ratings at performance evaluations and frequently perform in concert and invitational settings. Most recently, the North Gwinnett High School Chamber Orchestra has been invited to perform at Carnegie Hall in March of 2026. Under his direction, the North Gwinnett High School Chamber Orchestra was also invited to perform at the Midwest International Band and Orchestra Clinic, the American String Teacher's National Orchestra Festival, the Georgia Music Educator Association's In-Service conference, the Capital Orchestra Festival at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC, and the Kennesaw State University Orchestra Invitational. The North Gwinnett High School Orchestra has also been named a national winner in the Mark of Excellence/National Orchestra Honors project by the Foundation for Music Education. Mr. Metrio is in demand as a guest clinician and conductor, and has been invited to conduct, present, or adjudicate at various orchestra festivals around the United States.

Mr. Metrio is an active member of the Georgia Music Educators Association (GMEA), where he serves on the state board of directors as Chairman for District 13, as well as a member of the state standing committee for the orchestra division. Mr. Metrio is also the organizer for the GMEA Allstate 11/12 Full Orchestra. He is a member of the National Association for Music Education (NAfME), and the American String Teachers Association (ASTA), where he serves as the membership liaison for the Georgia chapter. Before serving as Director of Orchestras at North Gwinnett High School, Mr. Metrio served as the Director of Orchestras at Lanier High School in Sugar Hill, GA. In 2020, Mr. Metrio was named the Professional Association of Georgia Educators STAR teacher for Lanier High School as well as a finalist for Lanier High School Teacher of the Year.

Mr. Carl Rieke, Conductor

Mr. Carl Rieke graduated from St. Olaf College (Northfield, Minnesota) in 1997, receiving his Bachelor of Arts in Music Education. He received his Masters Degree in Instrumental Conducting from Georgia State University in 2003.

Mr. Rieke has served as the music director at the Red Wing Theater Company in Red Wing, Minnesota. He has also performed with a variety of orchestras, including the Mankato Symphony Orchestra, the Owatonna Chamber Orchestra, the New Ulm Civic Orchestra, the Southern Crescent Symphony Orchestra, and the North Georgia Symphony. For nine years he served as a co-director of the Southern Crescent Symphony Orchestra. Mr. Rieke is also the director of the Metropolitan Youth Symphony Philharmonia and Sinfonietta Orchestras.

From 1999 until 2006, Mr. Rieke was Director of Orchestras at Shiloh High School in Gwinnett County. From 2006-2015, Mr. Rieke taught at Ola Middle School in Henry County where he was named Teacher of the Year for the 2011-2012 school year. That same year, his program received the GMEA Exemplary Program Award. In 2013, Mr. Rieke was named a "Class Act" teacher by Atlanta's WXIA-TV—11 Alive News. Under Mr. Rieke's direction, the Gwinnett County Youth Symphony, Metropolitan Youth Symphony Philharmonia, the Osborne Middle School Orchestra, and the Southern Crescent Symphony were featured at the Georgia Music Educators Association (GMEA) state conference. He is currently the director of orchestras at Frank N. Osborne Middle School in Gwinnett County where he was named the 2017-2018 Teacher of the Year. The Osborne Middle School Orchestra program received the GMEA Exemplary Program Award for the 2015-2016 school year.

Mr. Rieke is a sought-after clinician, adjudicator, and conductor at orchestra events around the metro area, and State. He has also conducted the Minnesota summer pops camp, the east Tennessee all regional orchestra, one of the 2009 Alabama All-State Orchestras, and one of the 2020 Minnesota All-State Orchestras.

Mr. Rieke has been a Georgia All-State Orchestra organizing chair for eleven years, served as the GMEA Orchestra division chair (2007-2009), the GMEA Vice President for Performance Evaluations (2012-2014) and most recently as the GMEA President (2018-2020). Mr. Rieke has also served as secretary and treasurer for the Georgia Chapter of ASTA and was named the Georgia ASTA "Orchestra Director of the Year" in 2010. Mr. Rieke has presented sessions at the GMEA in-service Conference and the ASTA National Conference.

Mr. Rieke resides in Tucker, Georgia, with his wife Stacy.

Gwinnett County Youth Symphony

Rehearsal and Concert Dates

2025-2026

Please note that rehearsals will begin promptly at 6:30 PM and end at 8:30 PM at Duluth High School. Students need to arrive between 6:00 and 6:15 PM.

September 8	6:30 PM	Rehearsal
September 15	6:30 PM	Rehearsal
September 22	6:30 PM	Rehearsal
September 29	6:30 PM	Rehearsal
October 6	6:30 PM	Rehearsal
October 20	6:30 PM	Rehearsal
October 27	6:30 PM	Rehearsal
November 3	6:30 PM	Rehearsal
November 10	6:30 PM	Rehearsal
November 17	6:30 PM	Rehearsal
November 18	7:00 PM	CONCERT at Gas South Theater
January 26	6:30 PM	Rehearsal
February 2	6:30 PM	Rehearsal
February 9	6:30 PM	Rehearsal
February 23	6:30 PM	Rehearsal
March 2	6:30 PM	Rehearsal
March 9	6:30 PM	Rehearsal
March 16	6:30 PM	Rehearsal
March 23	6:30 PM	Rehearsal
March 30	6:30 PM	Final Rehearsal
March 31	7:00 PM	CONCERT at Gas South Theater