

Harmony

2022-23 Family Handbook

in partnership with Riverview West Side School of Excellence



Creating stronger learners, building confidence, and opening new doors through music

Harmony phone 651.602.6809 | naomi@gtcys.org

www.gtcys.org/programs/harmony



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WELCOME!

Dear Harmony Families,

Welcome to the Greater Twin Cities Youth Symphonies (GTCYS, pronounced git-seez)! We are delighted that you have chosen to play the violin or cello in the seventh year of GTCYS' partnership with Riverview Elementary. Harmony provides students with access to high-quality instrumental instruction and performance opportunities that complement their school learning and boosts their personal development.

With seven teaching artists this year, it promises to be a wonderful year of music learning, performance, friendships, new opportunities, and fun!

As a Harmony musician, you are part of a much larger family of young musicians – more than 800 students including many Harmony alumni – play in GTCYS' orchestras this year! You will have the opportunity to meet and perform with some of them later this season.

Being a Harmony musician will be rewarding and enjoyable. It is also an honor and a responsibility. By enrolling in this program, students and parents are electing to "play your part." Please read this handbook to understand the program expectations which are designed to help students achieve their individual and collective best.

We look forward to an exciting journey with you this year! Should you have any questions along the way, please contact any of us using the contact information below.

Sincerely,



Megen Balda
Executive Director

ABOUT HARMONY

Harmony is a program of the Greater Twin Cities Youth Symphonies (GTCYS) in partnership with Riverview West Side School of Excellence. Second, third, fourth, and fifth grade students can learn how to play the violin or cello in a before school group program with their peers. Participants will also attend concert outings and perform for their families and the broader community.



Rehearsals take place during the school year on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 8:00– 9:15am at Riverview. Additional summer activities are also available.

Vision

The goal of this program is to provide Riverview students with access to high-quality instrumental music instruction and performance opportunities to complement their academic experience and aid in their personal development. We are committed to excellence and access using a holistic musical approach to engage students, their families, and the broader community. As students progress musically, they will have the opportunity to join GTCYS' other orchestras. As Harmony grows, so will our vision for what we can achieve together!

Harmony Values

Joy is music appreciation and experiencing the joy of playing music. It's also having fun while learning!

Positivity is having a good attitude toward yourself and others, which makes our learning environment safe and effective.

Inclusion is everyone taking responsibility for making sure that everyone is participating, feeling welcome, and being supported.

Courage is about showing up and trying even when you aren't sure you can do something right or perfect. It takes courage to play an instrument in front of other people, especially when you're a beginner.

Kindness is how we treat each other inside and outside of class. Kindness goes beyond basic respect; it also means that you show care for others and make them feel welcome.

Effort is putting in the work to learn something, even on your own at home. It's about trying even if you "fail". It takes effort to learn any new skill, just like reading a book.

Tenacity is keeping going even when it's hard, to experience the reward of learning something new and make yourself proud

Who's Who



Mary Sorlie

Harmony Artistic Director and Lead Teaching Artist

mary@gtcys.org

¡Estoy aprendiendo español!



Naomi Schroeter

Harmony Manager and Lead Teaching Artist

naomi@gtcys.org or 651-602-6809

¡Yo hablo español!



Olivia Quintanilla

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Laurie McFaul

Violin Teaching Artist

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Emily Doyle

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Jesús Andrés Guzmán

Violin Teaching Artist

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COMMUNICATION

Communication between school staff, Harmony program staff, students, and their families is essential. If you are running late to arrive or have another transportation issue, please call Harmony Manager, Naomi Schroeter at (651) 602- 6809.

We use the following forms of communication:

- **Website** for Harmony families <https://gtcys.org/programs/harmony> check here for updates and information on upcoming events and how to request concert tickets, etc.
- **Email:** It is very important to read and respond to messages. Please make it a habit to check emails regularly for Harmony updates. **Email is the best way to contact Harmony staff and is our primary means of communication.** If you are not receiving regular communications from GTCYS, please contact Naomi at naomi@gtcys.org to ensure that we have the correct contact information on file.
- **Phone:** We also use phone to contact students and families directly. Classroom teachers will contact parents 2-3 times/semester to provide student progress updates and to touch base for any questions/concerns. Staff contact information can be found on page 3 of this handbook.
- **Flyers:** We will occasionally send home printed flyers with important information. Check your child's backpack!

Questions

For questions about program details including rehearsals, performances, transportation, concert attire, and materials fee, contact Harmony Manager Naomi Schroeter at naomi@gtcys.org or 651-602-6809. For questions about classes, music, and the violin or cello contact Harmony Artistic Director Mary Sorlie at mary@gtcys.org.

For questions about your child's progress or your instrument, please contact your student's Teaching Artist (contact info listed on page 3). Information about students' progress will also be shared at parent-teacher conferences in December and March.

INSTRUMENTS

Instrument Loan

Harmony provides instruments to Harmony musicians on a loan basis. Each student/family is responsible for taking care of the instrument and returning it to Riverview at the end of the school year. Families assume full financial responsibility for replacing the instrument and accessories if they are lost, stolen, altered, or damaged beyond repair. Musicians are expected to take care of their instruments and respect other musicians' instruments and property. Families agree to these conditions in the instrument loan agreement that they sign in the Harmony registration form.



Instrument Care

I love my instrument! How should I take care of it?

- Never let anyone else touch it
- Treat your instrument like it is your baby.
- When you are finished playing, put the instrument and bow in the case properly.
 - Remember to take the sponge off the violin first and close the case. Cellos need to push the end pins in.
 - Always loosen the hair of the bow before you put it away. Don't touch the hair of the bow. It is real horsehair and the oils from your fingers can hurt the hair.
- Don't touch the tuning pegs at the top of the instrument! You could accidentally break one of your strings. Your teachers will tune your instrument!
- Avoid extreme temperature and humidity. Don't let it get wet. Don't leave it anywhere too warm, like a hot car in the summer or by a heater in the winter. Don't leave it anywhere too cold, either!

Instrument Repairs

If your instrument needs supplies or repair, bring the instrument and any parts to your next rehearsal and notify one of the teaching artists. Do not try to repair the instrument yourself (even if the bridge falls off) as this may result in more damage and financial repercussions. Accidents happen and we will work with families to fix the instrument.

PARTICIPATION FEE

A \$20 annual materials fee is requested for each musician, though the actual cost for GTCYS is more than \$2,000 per student. The fee contributes to costs for instruments, supplies, and sheet music. This fee is collected at the beginning of the year and is non-refundable. If this fee is a barrier for your family, please contact Naomi Schroeter.

MUSICIAN EXPECTATIONS

By understanding and following GTCYS' guidelines, you help create a positive, productive experience for you and your fellow students. Please read the following carefully and let your teacher know of any questions.



- Be respectful of your fellow students, teachers, and staff.
- Be kind to one another.
- Take care of your instrument.
- Be prepared for rehearsals.
- Do not touch or write on anything not belonging to you.
- Keep food and beverages out of rehearsal and performance spaces.
- Put away cell phones and other electronic devices during all program activities.

Harmony Community and Behavior Mantra:

"We are responsible for our actions, words and instruments"

CONSEQUENCE LADDER

Harmony and Riverview prioritize the safety of our students. The Harmony administrative and artistic staff collaborated to develop program expectations according to the Harmony value system.

Probation and Dismissal

A musician may be put on probation or dismissed from the program according to the Harmony consequence ladder (see below).

Behavior Contracts

Students struggling to follow behavioral expectations will be required to have a conference with GTCYS staff. Families will be contacted, and before returning to the Harmony Program, students must complete a behavior contract. This is an opportunity for students to reflect on behavior and find ways to grow. After two conferences, students will be removed from the program indefinitely.

Harmony 2022 – 2023 Student Behavior Guidelines and Consequence Ladder

To ensure program success and maximize learning, Harmony will implement a consequence ladder to support behavior infractions. These expectations are in place so we can work with families to support students. Please see the consequence ladder below for major and minor infractions.

Harmony 2022 – 2023 Student Behavior Guidelines and Consequence Ladder

To ensure students' success and maximize learning, Harmony will use a "consequence ladder" to navigate behavior infractions. These expectations are in place so we can work with families to support students. Please see the consequence ladder for major and minor infractions below.

Minor Infraction Consequence Ladder

- Teachers will **give 3 reminders** per class for students to follow rehearsal expectations
 - After three reminders – student will take a 5-minute break in designated break area in the room.
- If behavior continues after 5-minute break, the teacher will ask the student to take a break in another teacher's classroom. Families will be contacted to set up a conference with Harmony staff and students will be required to sign a behavior contract.
 - Students will not be allowed to rejoin Harmony classes until a conference is held and the behavior contract is signed and returned to Naomi Schroeter, Harmony Manager.
- If the above process is repeated, students will receive a one-week suspension from Harmony. After the suspension, we will gladly welcome the student back ready to have a successful year!
- **If the student repeats this process a third time, a family-teacher conference will be arranged to determine the future of this student's participation in Harmony.**

Minor infractions include, but aren't limited to:

- Not following directions after 3 reminders
- Talking back to teachers
- Touching other students without permission
- Speaking out of turn, joking, or laughing during targeted instruction time
- Eating or drinking outside beverages during instruction
- Failure to follow transition expectations and procedures during designated bathroom breaks, rehearsal set up and rehearsal dismissal
- Using designated bathroom breaks as playtime
- Running with an instrument
- Not respecting sheet music (folding, crumpling)

Major Infraction Consequence Ladder:

- The teacher will immediately remove the student from class.
 - Families will be contacted to set up a conference with Harmony staff members and students will be required to sign behavioral contract.
 - Students will not be allowed to rejoin Harmony classes until a conference is held and the behavior contract is signed and returned to Naomi Schroeter, Harmony Manager.
- If the above process is repeated, the student will receive a one-week suspension from Harmony. After the suspension, we will gladly welcome the student back ready to move forward successfully!
- If the student repeats this process a third time, a family-teacher conference will be arranged to determine the future of this student's participation in Harmony.

Major infractions include, but aren't limited to:

- Physical or emotional altercations
- Hitting another student
- Intentionally provoking another student
- Bullying another child or intentionally hurting their feelings
- Leaving the room without permission
- Intentionally damaging instruments or resources

Practicing IS Homework

Once students start taking their instruments home around winter break, they are expected to begin a regular practice routine. We want you to think of practicing the violin as your homework, the same as math or reading. Without daily practice it is easy to fall behind and feel frustrated during the group rehearsals. Commit to 10 minutes a day of homework (practice!). Here are some practice tips (more will be shared during the year):

- Find a quiet place without distractions
- Practice slowly and then increase speed
- Practice with the YouTube videos, as well as with the music you have been given in class

Daily practice time is essential for student success!

Parents: Help Your Musician Practice!

Regardless of musical background, a parent or guardian's encouragement will impact a child's progress. You'll be amazed at your student's progress if you follow these tips!

- Facilitate regular practice: provide a daily time and quiet place where your child can practice without distractions or interruptions.
- Encourage small performances: In addition to Harmony Program performances, encourage your child to play for you, your family, and friends at home or family gatherings
- Get Involved! Enthusiastically attend all Harmony Program events to show your support. You are welcome to attend a rehearsal to see what your child is learning and encourage those concepts at home.
- Talk to the Teaching Artists: Ask Teaching Artists about your child's progress via email or phone calls.
- Teach Commitment: Teach your child to be present and punctual by helping them to be on time to Harmony program activities.

COVID-19 PROTOCOLS

Throughout the pandemic, Harmony has aligned its program activities with SPPS policies to support students' ongoing participation. This year, we look forward to returning to the full scope of regular activities, though COVID is still with us. Families should follow the policies and procedures outlined below. We will adapt if needed during the season.

Health Screening: Before sending your child to school each morning, please answer the following questions (same questions as listed on the [SPPS COVID-19 2022-2023 policy](#)).

1. Did my child recently test positive for COVID-19?
2. Does my child have any of the COVID-19 symptoms listed above, even if they have completed their primary vaccination series, received a booster shot, or previously had COVID-19?

If you answered **YES** to any of the above:

- **Do not send your child to school**, report your child's absence, and contact your child's healthcare provider
- **Report your child's symptoms or exposure using the online [SPPS COVID-19 Reporting System](#)**

Attendance: Anyone who is ill should stay home from Harmony. **Students will not be penalized for health-related absences.** If absent, we encourage students to devote extra time to practice before the next rehearsal. Refer to our full attendance policy for additional details.

Hygiene Protocols

- Upon arrival and before entering the activity space, everyone must sanitize hands (sanitizer provided by GTCYS)
- Everyone must continue practicing proper respiratory etiquette (cover nose and mouth with your elbow when coughing or sneezing).

Masks: Masks are welcome, but are no longer required during times of low to medium community levels of COVID-19 in Ramsey County. Masks are required when community levels of COVID-19 in Ramsey County are high (notifications will be sent to families if community spread shifts to a high range). Refer to [SPPS policy](#) for the expanded mask policy.

Remember that wearing a mask or choosing not to is a personal decision, and no one should be questioned or penalized for their choices. Please uphold this level of respect and support for all your GTCYS peers.

Exposure: If a family suspects that their student has been exposed to someone confirmed to have COVID-19, they should monitor for symptoms and test 5 days after the student has been exposed. If symptoms develop, stay home, isolate from others and get tested right away.

Positive Cases: Students and staff who test positive for COVID-19 should stay at home until all three of these things are true:

1. They feel better. Their cough, shortness of breath, or other symptoms are improved; and
2. It has been 5 days since they first felt sick or tested positive; and
3. They have had no fever for at least 24 hours, without using medicine that lowers fever

Contact tracing: We will no longer send communications about positive cases to classes.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Student commitment: Participation in GTCYS' Harmony program is a privilege and a responsibility. Regular attendance is at the heart of students' own musical development and success, and that of the orchestras. Each GTCYS student is responsible for honoring their commitment to their Harmony community by consistently participating in all GTCYS activities, including rehearsals, retreats, and concerts. Students and families [should subscribe to Harmony's calendar](#) to understand the schedule and plan accordingly.

Absence limits: A limited number of absences are allotted as described here:

- Semester 1 (September through the last activity in December): 4 absence limit
- Semester 2 (January through the May concert): 4 absence limit

What happens when Harmony students need to be absent?

1. Complete the [Harmony Absence Form](#) soon as you are aware that you will miss a GTCYS activity for any reason. Anticipating accurate attendance is crucial for conductors to effectively plan their rehearsals.
2. If students accrue multiple absences, they may be asked to record and submit short passages from their class' music to demonstrate their progress and musical understanding to teachers despite absences. GTCYS staff and conductors will work with each family on a case-by-case basis to address attendance.

Promptness: To ensure adequate time for set-up, warm-up, and tuning, all students must be present 7:50 every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Teacher will begin class promptly at 8:00am.

Weather cancellations: Harmony follows the SPPS district calendar and cancels rehearsals when SPPS cancels school. The district typically makes decisions regarding cancellations by at latest 5:00am the morning of but sometimes in extreme weather will sometimes decide the evening before. In the event of a cancellation, Naomi will email all families and will post the notification on the Harmony calendar and website. It is parents' responsibility to check their email and GTCYS' website for an announcement.

REHEARSALS

What should I bring to each rehearsal?

At the beginning of the year, we will provide the following materials:

- Violin and cello
- Sheet music / notebook
- Accessories (bow, strings, rosin)
- A sharpened pencil with a good eraser

Students will not bring their instruments home at first. This will happen part way through the year once they have learned how to care for it. Once this takes place, students will be responsible for bringing their instrument to school each rehearsal (aside from some cello students).

Where do rehearsals take place?

Rehearsals take place from 8:00am-9:15am in different rooms on the third floor and in the gym. Students will be escorted to their violin rooms after arriving to Riverview.

Finishing class and transitioning into homeroom

Students are done at 9:15am and will be escorted to their homeroom classroom with one of the Harmony teachers.

CONCERTS

Harmony students will play in various concerts throughout the year, some taking place at Riverview and others out in the greater Twin Cities community (see schedule below for dates). Attendance to these concerts is mandatory and students must inform teachers beforehand if they are unable to attend.

Concert Attire

- Performances at Riverview: Students will wear school uniforms or Harmony t-shirts (provided).
- **Orchestrating Opportunities Benefit Concert (Feb. 19), Harmony/Camerata concert (Feb. 25), and Spring Festival (May 6) performances:** Students wear white on top and black on bottom.
 - **Top:** Bright white long-sleeved (at least $\frac{3}{4}$ length) button-down shirt or bright white long-sleeved blouse.
 - **Bottom:**
 - Long black dress slacks OR floor- or ankle-length black skirt (not form-fitting)
 - Black socks or tights (at least mid-calf height, no bare legs or feet)
 - Black dress shoes (no open toes, sandals, or sneakers)

Tickets

GTCYS will provide families with free tickets to concerts at which their students are performing. Details forthcoming. The actual ticket cost per ticket is \$10 - \$24, but we will provide complimentary tickets to Harmony families for every concert.

Family Involvement

Families are important partners in their musician's participation and development through GTCYS' programs. Musicians' success is the result of dedicated families who help their children understand the importance of practicing, being on time and contributing to the ensemble.

Volunteering

We welcome the help of family members! Assisting at special events, encouraging community members to attend concerts, and providing expertise are great ways to share your time and knowledge. Contact Naomi Schroeter for more information and opportunities.

HARMONY SCHEDULE

All activities take place at Riverview West Side School of Excellence unless otherwise noted.

Fall

	THURS	October 13	6:00 – 7:00pm	
		Parent Orientation Night – Riverview		
TUES	October 18		8:00 – 9:15	Rehearsal
WEDS	October 19		8:00 – 9:15	Rehearsal
	<u>THURS</u>	<u>October 20</u>	<u>No rehearsal (MEA)</u>	
TUES	October 25		8:00 – 9:15	Rehearsal
WEDS	October 26		8:00 – 9:15	Rehearsal
THUR	October 27		8:00 – 9:15	Rehearsal
TUES	November 1		8:00 – 9:15	Rehearsal
WEDS	November 2		8:00 – 9:15	Rehearsal
THUR	November 3		8:00 – 9:15	Rehearsal
	<u>TUES</u>	<u>November 8</u>	<u>No rehearsal (virtual learning/election day)</u>	
WEDS	November 9		8:00 – 9:15	Rehearsal
THUR	November 10		8:00-9:15	Rehearsal
TUES	November 15		8:00 – 9:15	Rehearsal
WEDS	November 16		8:00 – 9:15	Rehearsal
THUR	November 17		8:00 – 9:15	Rehearsal
TUES	November 22		8:00 – 9:15	Rehearsal
WEDS	November 23		8:00 – 9:15	Rehearsal
	<u>THUR</u>	<u>November 24</u>	<u>No rehearsal (Thanksgiving)</u>	
TUES	November 29		8:00 – 9:15	Rehearsal
WEDS	November 30		8:00 – 9:15	Rehearsal
THUR	December 1		8:00 – 9:15	Rehearsal
TUES	December 6		8:00 – 9:15	Rehearsal
WEDS	December 7		8:00 – 9:15	Rehearsal

THUR	December 8		8:00 – 9:15	Rehearsal
TUES	December 13		8:00 – 9:15	Rehearsal
WEDS	December 14		8:00 – 9:15	Rehearsal
THUR	December 15		8:00 – 9:15	Rehearsal

Winter

TUES	January 3		8:00 – 9:15	Rehearsal
WEDS	January 4		8:00 – 9:15	Rehearsal
THUR	January 5		8:00 – 9:15	Rehearsal
TUES	January 10		8:00 – 9:15	Rehearsal
WEDS	January 11		8:00 – 9:15	Rehearsal
THUR	January 12		8:00 – 9:15	Rehearsal
TUES	January 17		8:00 – 9:15	Rehearsal
WEDS	January 18		8:00 – 9:15	Rehearsal
THUR	January 19		8:00 – 9:15	Rehearsal
TUES	January 24		8:00 – 9:15	Rehearsal
WEDS	January 25		8:00 – 9:15	Rehearsal
THUR	January 26		8:00 – 9:15	Rehearsal
TUES	January 31		8:00 – 9:15	Rehearsal
WEDS	February 1		8:00 – 9:15	Rehearsal
THUR	February 2		8:00 – 9:15	Rehearsal
TUES	February 7		8:00 – 9:15	Rehearsal
WEDS	February 8		8:00 – 9:15	Rehearsal
THUR	February 9		8:00 – 9:15	Rehearsal
TUES	February 14		8:00 – 9:15	Rehearsal
WEDS	February 15		8:00 – 9:15	Rehearsal
THUR	February 16		8:00 – 9:15	Rehearsal

SUN Feb 19 Orchestrating Opportunities
Benefit Concert at Orchestra Hall Times TBD

TUES February 21 8:00 – 9:15 Rehearsal

WEDS February 22 8:00 – 9:15 Rehearsal

THUR February 23 8:00 – 9:15 Rehearsal

SAT February 25 Harmony and Camerata Concert
at Humboldt High School at 10:30am

TUES February 28 8:00 – 9:15 Rehearsal

WEDS March 1 8:00 – 9:15 Rehearsal

THUR March 2 8:00 – 9:15 Rehearsal

TUES March 7 8:00 – 9:15 Rehearsal

WEDS March 8 8:00 – 9:15 Rehearsal

THUR March 9 8:00 – 9:15 Rehearsal

TUES March 14 8:00 – 9:15 Rehearsal

TUES March 14 5:00-7:30 Fieldtrip to
Philharmonia East

WEDS March 15 8:00 – 9:15 Rehearsal

THURS March 16 8:00 – 9:15 Rehearsal

TUES March 21 8:00 – 9:15 Rehearsal

WEDS March 22 8:00 – 9:15 Rehearsal

THUR March 23 8:00 – 9:15 Rehearsal

TUES March 28 8:00 – 9:15 Rehearsal

WEDS March 29 8:00 – 9:15 Rehearsal

THUR March 30 8:00 – 9:15 Rehearsal

April 3-7 No rehearsal (spring break)

THUR April 20 8:00 – 9:15 Rehearsal

TUES April 25 8:00 – 9:15 Rehearsal

WEDS April 26 8:00 – 9:15 Rehearsal

THUR April 27 8:00 – 9:15 Rehearsal

TUES May 2 8:00 – 9:15 Rehearsal

WEDS May 3 8:00 – 9:15 Rehearsal

THUR May 4 8:00 – 9:15 Rehearsal

SAT May 6 Spring Festival Concert at Orchestra
Hall (Times + details TBD)

TUES May 9 8:00 – 9:15 Rehearsal

WEDS May 10 8:00 – 9:15 Rehearsal

THUR May 11 8:00 – 9:15 Rehearsal

TUES May 16 8:00 – 9:15 Rehearsal

WEDS May 17 8:00 – 9:15 Rehearsal

THURS May 18 8:00 – 9:15 Rehearsal

Spring

TUES April 11 8:00 – 9:15 Rehearsal

WEDS April 12 8:00 – 9:15 Rehearsal

THUR April 13 8:00 – 9:15 Rehearsal

TUES April 18 8:00 – 9:15 Rehearsal

WEDS April 19 8:00 – 9:15 Rehearsal

CONTINUING AFTER HARMONY

After graduating from Harmony at the end of 5th grade, students will have many opportunities to continue playing violin or cello GTCYS' school-year orchestras, in middle school orchestra programs, and private lessons.

Middle School Orchestra Programs

There are a wide range of string programs in SPPS middle schools – some schools with programs below:

- Schools with large strings programs: Capitol Hill, Murray Middle School, Ramsey, Washington Tech
- Schools with small to medium strings programs: Farnsworth Upper, Magnet Highland Park Middle, Parkway Middle, Creative Arts, and Washington Technology School, Middle and Highland Park Middle
- Schools without string programs: Global Arts Plus, Monroe, Battlecreek and Humboldt.

GTCYS School-Year Orchestras

We hope every Harmony graduate will audition for GTCYS' Philharmonia East string orchestra led by Harmony Director Mary Sorlie. Orchestra includes weekly rehearsals (typically Tuesday nights), social activities, and performances with students from all over the city.

Harmony alumni in Philharmonia receive a loaner instrument and are required to take private lessons paid for by GTCYS (see below). You will also be eligible for tuition scholarships (minimum \$20 for the year pending a scholarship application), reduced-priced concert tickets.

Harmony alums will audition each year and advance through GTCYS' orchestra levels. Eventually we hope you will be part of Symphony (the most advanced orchestra) with international touring opportunities. Playing an instrument also opens doors for college scholarships and beyond.

Private Lessons

Harmony graduates in Philharmonia qualify for GTCYS' Sponsored Lesson Program. Students receive regular private lessons from a professional violin teacher. One-on-one instruction helps students improve technique, learn new repertoire, and build skills to advance in Orchestras. There is a \$20 participation fee, and parents must commit to taking students to lessons and ensure practice at home.

ABOUT GTCYS

The Greater Twin Cities Youth Symphonies (GTCYS) transforms young musicians of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds by breaking down barriers to music instruction and providing exceptional year-round orchestral experiences. Led by Artistic Director Mark Russell Smith, outstanding conductors, and coaches from the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra (SPCO) and Minnesota Orchestra, GTCYS serves more than 1,100 students ages 7-18 through 10 school-year orchestras and summer programs. In 2016, GTCYS launched a new extracurricular program, Harmony, which provides beginning violin and cello instruction to students at Riverview Elementary School in St. Paul's West Side neighborhood.

GTCYS believes in bringing music to diverse audiences, and our students share their talents through 30 free performances at Twin Cities schools, homeless shelters, and senior care centers, plus formal ticketed concerts at professional venues like Orchestra Hall. In total, GTCYS reaches more than 17,000 children and adults through our educational activities and performances each year.

Founded in 1972, GTCYS' 16,000 alumni include leaders in every field who developed lifelong values of teamwork, discipline, and community engagement during their GTCYS experience. With the help of generous donors, GTCYS will award more than \$180,000 in need-based scholarships for tuition and private lessons this season. Learn more at www.gtcys.org.

GTCYS' Youth Orchestras

Harmony trains first-time musicians to appreciate orchestral music and develop skills on their instruments with the hope of joining one of GTCYS' 10 school-year orchestras in the future. These orchestras, which rehearse weekly and perform multiple times during the year, serve string, woodwind, brass, and percussion students who audition each year and are placed by ability in orchestras that range from beginning to pre-professional:

- Philharmonia East/West: entry-level strings-only orchestras for students with 2-4 years' experience
- Sinfonia East/West: full orchestra for string, woodwind, brass, and percussion students with 2-5 years' experience
- Concertino East/West an intermediate orchestra for students with 2-7 years' experience
- Camerata: an intermediate orchestra for students with 3-7 years' experience
- Concert: an advanced orchestra for students with 4-8 years' experience
- Philharmonic: a highly advanced orchestra for students with 5-10 years' experience
- Symphony: a pre-professional orchestra for students with 5-12 years' experience

GTCYS also offers summer camps for beginning to advanced musicians. Many Harmony students will have the opportunity to audition for camp in the spring.

POLICY FOR CHILD PROTECTION

The Greater Twin Cities Youth Symphonies (“GTCYS”) seeks to ensure that young musicians who participate in any GTCYS programs may do so without fear of abuse. GTCYS seeks to create an environment of awareness and prevention, where those involved in administering GTCYS programs act in a manner that minimizes any opportunities for abuse to occur, and where allegations that may arise are addressed promptly.

Therefore, we, the Board of Directors of GTCYS, reaffirm this Policy for Child Protection this 23rd day of August 2022.

Policy for Child Protection

1. Employees, contractors and volunteers of GTCYS who regularly work with children must meet the following qualifications:
 - Successfully clear a criminal background check review upon appointment and approximately every 2 years thereafter; and
 - Review, agree to abide by, and sign this policy; and

The Executive Director will review all positions and identify those that must meet some or all of the above qualifications. Those positions that are subject to these prerequisites include, but are not limited to, conductors, regular coaches, specialists, tour chaperones, and interns. GTCYS employees, contractors, and volunteers may also be required to participate in training sessions.

2. Short-term personnel, contractors or volunteers for whom it is not practicable to complete a criminal background check must review and agree to abide by this policy. Any such individuals should be supervised by a GTCYS representative who has met the full qualifications set forth in Section 1 above.

3. For the protection of GTCYS, its students, and its staff, volunteers and contractors, individuals who work with GTCYS students will attempt to avoid potentially compromising situations in which abuse could occur and/or an allegation of abuse could arise. GTCYS promotes a “Rule of Three” culture where staff, volunteers and contractors are encouraged to avoid situations where one child is alone with one staff, volunteer or contractor.

When performing work on behalf of GTCYS, staff, contractors and volunteers should avoid situations where they are alone with a single child (unless the GTCYS staff, contractor or volunteer is the child’s parent). If situations arise when this is not possible (e.g., a parent is late to pick up a student after rehearsal and there are no other GTCYS representatives or students present), then the staff, contractor or volunteer should take precautions to remain in an open public area with the child. GTCYS staff, contractors and volunteers should avoid situations where they are alone with a single child behind closed doors or in an isolated and private location.

4. Minors involved in coaching other students will be supervised to confirm they are acting in a manner consistent with this policy including leading any instruction in a rehearsal space or area equipped with a window or open door.

5. With the exception of activities involving their own children or other relatives, or apart from conducting official GTCYS business, employees, contractors and volunteers of GTCYS should not instigate or maintain a personal relationship with any GTCYS student in any form including on any social media platforms. All contact with GTCYS students outside of rehearsals, performances, tours or other GTCYS' events should be initiated through the student's parent/guardian so that the parent/guardian is aware of the circumstances surrounding the communications.

6. GTCYS staff, volunteers and contractors should examine rehearsal, retreat, concert and other venues for GTCYS programs and activities to address potential areas of concern. This might include areas with doors that lock; doors that do not have windows that would permit individuals outside to view activities inside the room; dark, out-of-the-way places, such as remote staircases; and areas created to promote privacy such as restrooms, bathing facilities, changing rooms and locker rooms. Windows to rooms should remain uncovered. When appropriate, doors should remain propped open. GTCYS staff, volunteers and contractors are encouraged to engage in "drop-ins" to ensure compliance with the policy.

7. Any GTCYS student, parent, employee, contractor or volunteer who knows or suspects that a student has been subjected to physical or sexual abuse in connection with a GTCYS program or activity should report the incident to the student's conductor, or the Executive Director. GTCYS staff, contractors and volunteers may be required by law to report any known or suspected abuse or neglect of a GTCYS student to law enforcement and/or child protection services, and these GTCYS representatives are strongly encouraged to contact the executive director and law enforcement and/or child protection services if they become aware of known or suspected abuse or neglect.

8. In the event that GTCYS receives an allegation of abuse of a child or GTCYS becomes aware of any incident in which there is a concern for the safety or well-being of a child under the supervision of GTCYS, GTCYS will conduct an investigation into the matter and, if required, involve law enforcement and/or child protection services. GTCYS reserves the right to take interim protective measures to ensure the safety of GTCYS' students while an investigation is pending. GTCYS will strive to conduct its investigation in a manner that respects the privacy and confidentiality of the individuals involved in the investigation.

9. In addition to prohibiting abuse of minors, this policy prohibits any retaliation against employees, contractors, volunteers, students and parents/guardians for making a good faith report under this policy and for participating in an investigation into allegations of abuse.

10. This policy will be disseminated to all parents and students in the students' handbooks. It will also be presented to GTCYS employees, contractors and volunteers (including members of GTCYS' Board of Directors) annually.