



greater twin cities youth symphonies



Harmony Program

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

Family Handbook Riverview Elementary School 2017-18

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WELCOME!

Dear Harmony Program Families,

Welcome to the Greater Twin Cities Youth Symphonies (GTCYS)! We are delighted that you have chosen to play the violin in the second year of GTCYS' partnership with Riverview Elementary. The Harmony Program is designed to provide students with access to high quality instrumental instruction and performance opportunities that complement their academic experience and boost their personal development. With 7 teaching artists this year, it promises to be a wonderful year of music learning, performance, friendships, new opportunities, and fun!

As a member of the Harmony Program, you are part of a much larger family of young musicians – over 600 students are also GTCYS members this year! You will have the opportunity to meet and play with some of them later this year.

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,

Gracie Miller

Community Engagement Coordinator
gracie@gtcys.org or 651-602-6806

Yo hablo español!

Barbara Flooding

Teaching Artist
barbara@gtcys.org

Mary Sorlie

Teaching Artist
mary@gtcys.org



ABOUT THE HARMONY PROGRAM

Harmony is a program of the Greater Twin Cities Youth Symphonies (GTCYS) in partnership with Riverview Elementary School. Third and fourth grade students have the opportunity to learn how to play the violin in an afterschool group setting with their peers. Participants will also attend concert outings, and perform for their families and the broader community.



Rehearsals will take place during the year on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 3:30 – 4:45pm at Riverview except on days that Riverview is closed.

Vision

The goal of this program is to provide Riverview students with access to high quality instrumental music instruction and performance opportunities which will complement their academic experience and aid in their personal development. We are committed to excellence and access using a holistic approach to engage students, their families, and the community. As this program grows, so will our vision for what we can achieve together!

Harmony Values

Joy • Tenacity • Positivity • Inclusion • Kindness • Courage • Effort

COMMUNICATION

Communication between school staff, Harmony program staff, students, and their families is essential.

If you are running late to pick up your child, or have another transportation issue, please call the school office directly at (651) 293-8665, to let the office staff know when you are coming.

We use the following forms of communication:

- **Harmony Website for families of Harmony only:** <https://www.gtcys.org/harmony>: this is where you'll find updates and information on upcoming events, where to fill out forms like how many tickets you need for an event, etc.
- **Email/Phone/Text:** We use email and phone to contact students and families directly. Email is the best way to contact staff and Teaching Artists outside of rehearsal, but the Gracie can also be contacted via phone. All staff contact information can be found on the inside front cover of this handbook.
- **Sheet Music:** Each student has a workbook or sheet music that he/she will bring home and to each rehearsal session. Teachers may include notes for parents in the workbook.
- **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 Community Engagement Coordinator Gracie Miller at gracie@gtcys.org or 651-602-6806.

For questions about your child's progress or your instrument, please contact our teaching artists. Either email Barbara Flooding or Mary Sorlie barbara@gtcys.org or mary@gtcys.org, or come to the end of a rehearsal to speak in person.

INSTRUMENTS

Instrument Loan

Riverview provides violins to Harmony program 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 also 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 (see below).

Instrument Care

I love my new violin! 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 violin and the bow in the case properly.
 - Remember to take the sponge off first, and close the case.
 - 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 violin! You could accidentally break one of your strings. Your teachers will tune the violin.
- 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 is in need of supplies or repair, bring the instrument and any parts to your next rehearsal and notify one of the teaching artists. All repairs are done by Saint Paul Public Schools. **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.

MATERIALS FEE

A \$20 materials fee is required for each musician for the year. The fee contributes to costs for musician

instruments and equipment, sheet music, and transportation. This fee is collected at the beginning of the year and is non-refundable. If you this is not possible or you have questions, please contact Gracie Miller.

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.



Probation and Dismissal

A musician may be put on probation or dismissed from the program at the discretion of the teaching artists for reasons including, but not limited to: excessive absences, lack of musical preparedness, and behavior/conduct.

We believe in taking a break when you need one. If a student is doing something that is distracting or hurtful to others, they will be given a warning and reminded what to do. If it happens again, they will need to take a break. If it happens a 3rd time, a staff will talk to the child about what is going on, and decide if further intervention is needed such as a behavior contract meeting.

Behavior Contracts

A musician who is struggling to behave respectfully to their teachers, fellow students, themselves, or the room may be asked to complete a behavior contract. Depending on the situation, parents will be invited to join. This is an opportunity for the student to consider what they could do instead of the behavior that isn't working, away from the situation that caused the behavior.

Practicing IS Homework

Daily practice time is essential for student success. 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

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 after rehearsals.
- **Teach Commitment:** Teach your child to be present and punctual by helping him or her to be on time to Harmony program activities.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Consistent attendance at the after school rehearsals and performances is essential to students' success. Because enrollment is limited, it is necessary for students and families to commit to the entire year of instruction. Please carefully review the schedule of activities to plan ahead. All participants are expected to attend rehearsals and mandatory performances. **Remember, consistent rehearsal attendance benefits not only you, but also the whole group.** We understand that life happens and we will work with families if challenges arise.

Students are allowed 4 absences per semester. If your child is gone more than 4 times in a semester we'll be in touch to see if the program still makes sense for your family.

Report an Absence

If you are going to miss a rehearsal, notify your teacher in advance, or in the event of a last minute absence, leave a voicemail for Gracie Miller at 651-602-6806.

REHEARSALS

What should I bring to each rehearsal?

At the beginning of the year, we will provide the following materials which students should bring to each session:

- Your violin
- Your sheet music
- Accessories (bow, strings, rosin)
- A sharpened pencil with a good eraser

Where do rehearsals take place?

- Rehearsals take place in room 3301 (3rd grade) and 3309 (4th grade)

- Students will eat a snack in the cafeteria at 3:00pm and be escorted to the 3:30pm rehearsal.

Check out process

Students are able to leave at 4:45pm. The safety of our musicians is our highest concern. Parents and guardians who pick up their child must sign them out in the school office. Students who walk must sign themselves out with the time of their departure. Youth who bus home do not sign out.

CONCERTS

Concert dates are outlined on the schedule on pages 9-10. Additional details will be shared about performances throughout the year.

Transportation

GTCYS will provide transportation for students and families to and from designated performances and concert outings that take place outside of the West Side.

Concert Attire

- **Performances at Riverview:** Students will wear school uniforms or Harmony t-shirts.
- **Spring Festival performance at Orchestra Hall in May:** Students will wear formal concert attire (long black pants or skirts, white shirts, black socks and dress shoes, and black bow ties for the boys. **GTCYS can provide concert attire if needed.** Please contact Gracie Miller in the spring to coordinate.

Tickets

GTCYS will provide families with free tickets to concerts at which their students are performing. Details forthcoming.

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. All rehearsals are open for families to attend. Families are encouraged to visit rehearsals to take part in their musician's musical journey.

Rehearsal Guest Etiquette

To ensure musicians have a positive and productive learning space, guests must respect the learning that takes place. A distraction-free environment is essential to help musicians progress. If you are observing, please listen quietly. If you need to use your phone or have a conversation, step outside the room and return when you are done.

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 Gracie Miller for more information and opportunities.



SCHEDULE OF HARMONY PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

All activities take place at Riverview Elementary on the EDL schedule unless otherwise noted.

Fall Semester Rehearsals

TUES	October 10	3:30 - 4:45
WEDS	October 11	3:30 - 4:45
THUR	October 12	3:30 - 4:45
TUES	October 17	3:30 - 4:45
WEDS	October 18	3:30 - 4:45
<u>THUR</u>	<u>October 19</u>	<u>No Rehearsal</u>
TUES	October 24	3:30 - 4:45
WEDS	October 25	3:30 - 4:45
THUR	October 26	3:30 - 4:45
TUES	October 31	3:30 - 4:45
WEDS	November 1	3:30 - 4:45
THUR	November 2	3:30 - 4:45
TUES	November 7	3:30 - 4:45
WEDS	November 8	3:30 - 4:45
THUR	November 9	3:30 - 4:45
TUES	November 14	3:30 - 4:45
WEDS	November 15	3:30 - 4:45
THUR	November 16	3:30 - 4:45
TUES	November 21	3:30 - 4:45
<u>WEDS</u>	<u>November 22</u>	<u>No Rehearsal</u>

<u>THUR</u>	<u>November 23</u>	<u>No Rehearsal</u>
TUES	November 28	3:30 - 4:45
WEDS	November 29	3:30 - 4:45
THUR	November 30	3:30 - 4:45
TUES	December 5	3:30 - 4:45
WEDS	December 6	3:30 - 4:45
THUR	December 7	3:30 - 4:45
TUES	December 12	3:30 - 4:45
WEDS	December 13	3:30 - 4:45
THUR	December 14	3:30 - 4:45
TUES	December 19	3:30 - 4:45
WEDS	December 20	3:30 - 4:45
THUR	December 21	3:30 - 4:45

Fall Performances (required) Evening of Tuesday, December 12 at Riverview Cafeteria

Details coming soon!

During-School Performance December 20 at 1:30pm (part of 3-5th grade concert in the cafeteria)

Spring Semester Rehearsals

TUES	January 2	3:30 - 4:45
WEDS	January 3	3:30 - 4:45
THUR	January 4	3:30 - 4:45
TUES	January 9	3:30 - 4:45
WEDS	January 10	3:30 - 4:45
THUR	January 11	3:30 - 4:45
TUES	January 16	3:30 - 4:45
WEDS	January 17	3:30 - 4:45
THUR	January 18	3:30 - 4:45
TUES	January 23	3:30 - 4:45
WEDS	January 24	3:30 - 4:45
THUR	January 25	3:30 - 4:45
TUES	January 30	3:30 - 4:45
WEDS	January 31	3:30 - 4:45
THUR	February 1	3:30 - 4:45
TUES	February 6	3:30 - 4:45
WEDS	February 7	3:30 - 4:45
THUR	February 8	3:30 - 4:45
TUES	February 13	3:30 - 4:45
WEDS	February 14	3:30 - 4:45
THUR	February 15	3:30 - 4:45
TUES	February 20	3:30 - 4:45
WEDS	February 21	3:30 - 4:45
THUR	February 22	3:30 - 4:45
TUES	February 27	3:30 - 4:45
WEDS	February 28	3:30 - 4:45
THUR	March 1	3:30 - 4:45
TUES	March 6	3:30 - 4:45
WEDS	March 7	3:30 - 4:45
THUR	March 8	3:30 - 4:45
TUES	March 13	3:30 - 4:45
WEDS	March 14	3:30 - 4:45

THUR	March 15	3:30 - 4:45
TUES	March 20	3:30 - 4:45
WEDS	March 21	3:30 - 4:45
THUR	March 22	3:30 - 4:45
TUES	March 27	3:30 - 4:45
WEDS	March 28	3:30 - 4:45
THUR	March 29	3:30 - 4:45
<u>TUES</u>	<u>April 3-5</u>	<u>No Rehearsal</u>
TUES	April 10	3:30 - 4:45
WEDS	April 11	3:30 - 4:45
THUR	April 12	3:30 - 4:45
TUES	April 17	3:30 - 4:45
WEDS	April 18	3:30 - 4:45
THUR	April 19	3:30 - 4:45
TUES	April 24	3:30 - 4:45
WEDS	April 25	3:30 - 4:45
THUR	April 26	3:30 - 4:45
TUES	May 1	3:30 - 4:45
WEDS	May 2	3:30 - 4:45
THUR	May 3	3:30 - 4:45
TUES	May 8	3:30 - 4:45
WEDS	May 9	3:30 - 4:45
THUR	May 10	3:30 - 4:45

Spring Performances (required)

Friday, February 16 at 7pm at Humboldt High with the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra

Saturday, March 3 at Humboldt High at 10-11am

Sunday, May 6 at 1:00pm at Orchestra Hall with GTCYS other orchestras
Tickets and transportation provided for families

Tentative concert for 3rd Graders: May 11 at Humboldt High with Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra

Optional Concert Outings

Students and family members are strongly encouraged to attend the following orchestra concerts as audience members. These are wonderful ways to be inspired by other young musicians and enjoy time with your family!

Saturday, November 18 at 10am at Humboldt High

Start the Music! is a musical experience geared for children ages 3–6 and their families. Music lovers of all ages are welcome to join us for crafts, games and activities, followed by the SPCO's energetic accompaniment to a classic children's story in a 30-minute concert.

Sunday, November 19 at 4:30pm at Orchestra Hall, Minneapolis

GTCYS Fall Festival Concert

Free tickets and transportation provided from Riverview

Sign-up details coming soon

Saturday, April 14 9am-1pm Arts Open House at The Ordway, St. Paul

Free GTCYS Family concert

Visit www.gtcys.org/calendar for a wide array of other GTCYS concerts which you are invited to attend.

ABOUT GTCYS

Mission

In the conviction that music nourishes the body, mind, and spirit of the individual and enriches the community, the Greater Twin Cities Youth Symphonies provides a rigorous and inspiring orchestral experience for young musicians.

History and Activities

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 nearly 1,000 students ages 8-18 through eight academic-year orchestras and two summer programs. In 2016, GTCYS launched a new afterschool program, Harmony, which provides violin instruction to elementary students at Riverview Elementary School on the West Side of St. Paul. In total, GTCYS serves more than 15,000 children and adults annually through core educational programs, free community activities, concerts, and special events.

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. Dedicated to increasing access to music education with the help of generous donors, GTCYS will award \$60,000 in need-based scholarships this year.

GTCYS presents 25 annual concerts to 12,000 audience members with performances at Orchestra Hall, The Ordway, and Ted Mann Concert Hall, and free community concerts at homeless shelters, schools, and care centers across the Twin Cities. Renowned for its rich international touring history, GTCYS toured Argentina in June 2016 and performed by invitation at the Granada International Festival of Music and Dance (Spain) in 2014. Symphony's 2018 Tour will introduce students to Germany, Poland, and Hungary. Through a unique partnership since 2011, GTCYS and the SPCO work together to strengthen our community, build future audiences, provide educational opportunities for students, and promote the value of classical music. For more information, visit www.gtcys.org.

GTCYS' Youth Orchestras

The Harmony Program trains beginning musicians so that they are able to appreciate orchestral music, learn valuable skills, and possibly join one of GTCYS' academic-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: full orchestra for string, woodwind, brass, and percussion students with 2-5 years' experience
- Concertino: 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 programs, including a string orchestra camp for students age 8-12 in St. Paul. Harmony students will have the opportunity to audition for this camp in the spring.



POLICY FOR CHILD PROTECTION

The Greater Twin Cities Youth Symphonies (GTCYS) acknowledges that the abuse of children can happen anywhere and that the effects of such abuse have a profound short-term and long-term impact on the victim. GTCYS seeks to ensure that young musicians who participate in any GTCYS programs may do so without fear of abuse, particularly given that a person who would prey upon children may see GTCYS as a place where he/she may have access to children or youth. In addition, any abuse or allegation of abuse may seriously compromise the ability of GTCYS to achieve our mission. GTCYS' Board of Directors of GTCYS adopt the following Policy for Child Protection, effective immediately and dated this 22nd day of February 2005.

1. All employees and contractors of GTCYS who regularly work with children, including, but not limited to, conductors, rehearsal assistants, and regular coaches, must first meet the following qualifications: Complete an application form; Authorize a criminal background check; Review, agree to abide by, and sign this policy; and Be interviewed by the Artistic Director and/or Executive Director.
2. For GTCYS coaches used on a limited basis for whom it is not practicable to run a criminal background check before they work with children, those coaches must still complete an application form; review, agree to abide by, and sign this policy; and be interviewed by the Artistic Director and/or Executive Director. Any such coaches shall be supervised by a GTCYS representative who has met the full qualifications set forth in Section 1 above.
3. At no time will individual students be left in an individual's care behind closed doors or in an isolated and private location.
4. If minors are involved in coaching younger students, they will be supervised and will always meet with children in a rehearsal space or area equipped with a window or open door.
5. No employees or contractors of GTCYS, including, but not limited to, conductors, rehearsal assistants and coaches, shall instigate or maintain a private personal relationship with any student.
6. Individuals who work with GTCYS students will be reminded of the importance of avoiding potentially compromising situations in which an allegation of abuse could be made.
7. Any GTCYS student, parent, employee, contractor or board member who believes that a student (either themselves or another student) has been subjected to abuse of any sort while under the supervision of GTCYS should report the incident to their conductor, the Artistic Director or the Executive Director.
8. In the event that GTCYS receives an allegation of abuse of a child or youth 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 investigate and, if appropriate, involve the police. This investigation will be conducted by the Artistic Director. If the Artistic Director is accused of abuse, the President of the Board of Directors will conduct the investigation. GTCYS shall try to ensure the confidentiality of the source of any reports under this policy
9. Any employees, contractors, Board members, students and/or parents shall be free from any retaliation for making a good faith report under this policy.
10. This policy will be disseminated to all parents as part of the students' orientation packets, presented to GTCYS employees and contractors each year, and will be given to the Board of Directors at its annual meeting.