

**Gwinnett County Public
Schools**

**Honor
Orchestra
Program**



2014-2015

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 may perform as a string orchestra or may include full orchestra arrangements with the appropriate complement of woodwinds, brass, and percussion. This orchestra is open to students through the ninth grade. The conductors are assisted in preparations for concerts by members of the orchestra faculty, band faculty, area professionals, and private

teachers. 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.

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 in as timely a manner as possible. Teachers will notify all students who auditioned for their membership status. Notification will be completed within 7 days of the audition. Copies of adjudication forms will be returned to teachers by courier and may be returned to students. Originals adjudication forms will be kept on file.

Make-up Auditions

There is no scheduled make-up audition. Only students with legitimate and verified excuses will be granted a make-up audition appointment. The audition request should be made to the student's local school orchestra teacher on the Monday after the audition is held. The teacher will forward the request to the appropriate conductors. Verifying letters from the parent and orchestra teacher should be presented at the audition appointment. The audition content will be the same as the original audition. All make-up auditions must occur before the first rehearsal of the orchestra. Students new to Gwinnett County Public Schools may audition during the first two weeks of the semester. New students will not displace previously appointed principals.

Alternates

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

Rehearsals

Notification

Students are notified of the first rehearsal by their school orchestra directors. Handbooks containing information about the Honor Orchestra Program and rehearsal/performance schedules for both orchestras will be distributed to each student at the first rehearsal.

2014- 2015 Rehearsal Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Place</u>
Monday Evenings	7:00-9:00 PM	Peachtree Ridge High School

2014- 2015 Performance Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Place</u>	
Winter Concert	November 18, 2014	7:30 P.M.	PRHS Theater
Spring Concert	March 31, 2015	7:30 P.M.	PRHS 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.

Excused and Unexcused Absences

A limit of two excused absences will be permitted. Excused absences from rehearsals will be granted only with one-week **advance** notice except in case of an emergency. Contact the conductors in case of an emergency. An absence is excused 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 or manager. There are no excused absences from performances. Only one unexcused absence is permitted.

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 unexcused 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, he or she will be notified of their probationary status at the next rehearsal. If the limit is exceeded, the student's membership in the orchestra may be terminated. Students may appeal to the conductors' committee, who in consultation with

the Fine Arts Director will consider the appeal. 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 \$40 membership fee to GYOP in order that GYOP may provide the following services.

FOTO 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 parent 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 tuxedo pants and jacket
White wing-tip tuxedo shirt
Bow tie
Black socks
Black dress shoes

Females:

Long Black dress or Dress Pants
Black stockings
Black dress shoes

GCYS Conductors

Gwinnett County Youth Symphony

Dr. Bernadette Scruggs
Peachtree Ridge HS 770-495-5413
bernadette_scruggs@gwinnett.k12.ga.us

Dr. Peter Lemonds
Duluth HS 770-232-3393
peter_lemonds@gwinnett.k12.ga.us

Wind and Percussion Specialist

Mr. Heath Jones
McConnell Middle School
heath_jones@gwinnett.k12.ga.us

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, Friends of the Orchestra officers, 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 Friends of the Orchestra officers
- 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. Heath Jones, Wind and Percussion Coordinator

Heath Jones is a native of Augusta, Georgia and holds the Bachelor of Music Degree in Music Education from the University of Georgia and the Master of Music Degree in Music Education from the University of South Carolina. Mr. Jones has served as both a brass clinician and guest conductor for the University of South Carolina Summer Music Camp. He has served as an adjudicator and clinician in Virginia, Tennessee, Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina.

Mr. Jones began his teaching career as the Director of Orchestras and Assistant Director of Bands at Sumter High School in 1996. He has since taught in Tennessee, Georgia and South Carolina for the last fifteen years. Mr. Jones is currently the Director of Bands at McConnell Middle School in Lawrenceville, GA. Bands under his direction have consistently earned superior ratings in marching, jazz and concert activities. Bands under Mr. Jones' direction have been featured performers at the UGA/Athens Twilight Jazz Festival, SCMEA State Convention and the University of Georgia High School Music Festival. The Sumter High School Music program was recognized by the Grammy Foundation as a Grammy Signature School in 2004 for excellence in its choral, orchestral and band programs. In 2006 he was recognized as a National Board Certified Teacher by the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards. Mr. Jones' professional affiliations include: National Band Association, MENC, GMEA, Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia, Tau Beta Sigma and Kappa Kappa Lambda. He lives in Flowery Branch, GA with his wife, Jeanine, and two children, Abigail and William.

Dr. Peter Lemonds, Conductor

Dr. Peter Lemonds is Co-Director of Orchestras at Duluth High School and the lead teacher for high school orchestras for the Gwinnett County Public Schools. He also serves as the conductor of the Georgia Youth Symphony Orchestra Philharmonia as part of the Cobb Symphony Orchestra's youth orchestra program. Dr. Lemonds has served as Fine Arts Department Chair at Duluth High School, and District 13 Orchestra Chair for the Georgia Music Educator's Association (GMEA). As a cellist, conductor, and educator, he has performed numerous concerts in North America, Europe and Korea. He was an Assistant Professor of Music at the University of Southern Mississippi and has taught at Emory University, Agnes Scott College, and Bates College, as well as serving on the faculty of the Sewanee Summer Music Center and the Georgia Governor's Honors Program. He holds a Bachelor of Arts from the University of the South, Sewanee, and a Master of Music degree from Louisiana State University. He received a Ford Foundation Fellowship for study at the Conservatory of Music at the University of Missouri, where he completed his Doctor of Musical Arts degree. He has studied conducting with Robert Culver, William LaRue Jones, and Glen Block. On four occasions, his orchestras have been selected to perform at the GMEA Convention in Savannah, Georgia and twice for the National Orchestra Festival, placing first in 2005 at Reno and third in 2007 in Detroit. In 2007 the Duluth High School Chamber Orchestra was selected to perform at the Midwest Band & Orchestra Clinic in Chicago, Illinois. Under the direction of Shawn Morton and Peter Lemonds, the Duluth Chamber orchestra was selected to perform again in 2014.

Dr. Bernadette Scruggs, Conductor

Bernadette Scruggs received her Bachelor of Music in Education and her Master of Music in Education from Columbus College. She received her Specialist's Degree and her Ph.D. from Georgia State University. Prior to teaching in the Gwinnett County School System, she previously taught for both the Floyd County and the Clayton County School Systems. While teaching in Clayton County, Dr. Scruggs was a director of the Clayton County Honor Orchestra. Under her direction, this middle school group performed for the Georgia Music Educators' Association (GMEA) in Savannah, Georgia and for the Southern Division Music Educator's National Conference in Nashville, Tennessee. Bernadette has also been a director for the Clayton County Youth Symphony, which was invited to perform for the Georgia Music Association Conference. At Pointe South Middle School, where Dr. Scruggs taught for eleven years, the orchestra performed at several festivals receiving First Place Awards. They were also invited to perform for the Georgia Music Educators' Annual Conference in 1994. During her tenure in Clayton County, she was voted the 1995 Pointe South Teacher of the Year. Previously, Dr. Scruggs was the orchestra director at Hull Middle School whose eighth grade orchestra performed at the 2000 Georgia Music Educators' Annual Conference. She was the 1999 Hull Middle School Teacher of the Year. Currently, Dr. Scruggs teaches at Peachtree Ridge High School. Under her direction, the program has grown to over 280 students. She has served as treasurer for the American String Teachers Association and Vice- President of Performance Evaluations for the GMEA. After serving two years as the President of the Georgia Music Educators Association, she is now the Past-President's representative for the executive committee. Dr. Scruggs adjudicates orchestras all over Georgia and has also judged in Las Vegas, Nevada. This will be Dr. Scruggs's sixteenth year to serve as a Director with the Gwinnett County Honor Orchestras.

Gwinnett County Youth Symphony Rehearsal and Concerts Dates

2014-2015

(Please note that rehearsals will begin promptly at 7:00 PM and end at 9 PM at Peachtree Ridge High School. Students need to arrive between 6:30 and 6:45 PM.)

September 8	7:00 PM- 8:30 PM 8:30 PM- 9 PM	Rehearsal Parent meeting/student party
September 15	7:00 PM	Rehearsal
September 22	7:00 PM	Rehearsal
September 29	7:00 PM	Rehearsal and concerto competition
October 6	7:00 PM	Rehearsal
October 20	7:00 PM	Rehearsal
October 27	7:00 PM	Rehearsal
November 3	7:00 PM	Rehearsal
November 10	7:00 PM	Rehearsal
November 17	7:00 PM	DRESS REHEARSAL
November 18th	7:30 PM	Winter Concert- Call time is 6:15
January 12	7:00 PM	Rehearsal
January 26	7:00 PM	Rehearsal
February 2	7:00 PM	Rehearsal
February 9	7:00 PM	Rehearsal
February 23	7:00 PM	Rehearsal
March 2	7:00 PM	Rehearsal- GCYS seating auditions
March 9	7:00 PM	Rehearsal
March 16	7:00 PM	Rehearsal
March 23	7:00 PM	Rehearsal
March 30	7:00 PM 8:45 PM-9:15 PM	DRESS REHEARSAL Trophy presentation and pizza party
March 31	7:30 PM	CONCERT at Peachtree Ridge HS , report 6:15 pm

**Gwinnett County
Honor Orchestra Program**

CONTRACT

I have read and understand the attendance policy and member expectations as listed in the handbook of the Gwinnett County Honor Orchestra Program and I agree to fulfill my obligations as an orchestra member.

(Student printed name and signature)

Student e-mail: _____

(School and Instrument)

I (we) have read and understand the attendance policy and member expectations as listed in the handbook of the Gwinnett County Honor Orchestra Program and I (we) agree to fulfill my obligations as the parent of an orchestra member.

(Parent(s) signature)

(Date)

(Parent Phone) (Parent Email)