

*East Valley*  
**YOUTH SYMPHONY**  

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**HANDBOOK**

2026-2027

# EVYS Calendar 2026-2027

AUGUST 2026						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
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30	31					

JANUARY 2027						
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SEPTEMBER 2026						
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FEBRUARY 2027						
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OCTOBER 2026						
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MARCH 2027						
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NOVEMBER 2026						
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APRIL 2027						
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DECEMBER 2026						
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MAY 2027						
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23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

## ROUND 2 AUDITIONS 2026-2027

Aug 3, 5, 8

## PARENT MEETING

Aug 24

## REHEARSALS

Aug 31

Sep 14, 21, 28

Oct 12, 19, 26 (concert attire check)

Nov 9, 16, 30

Dec - no rehearsals this month -

Jan 4, 11, 25

Feb 1, 8, 22

Mar 1, 8, 22, 29

Apr 5, 12, 19, 26

May 3

## NO REHEARSALS

Sep 7 - Labor Day

Oct 5 - Fall Break

Nov 23 - Thanksgiving Break

Jan 18 - Civil Rights Day

Feb 15 - Presidents Day

Mar 15 - Spring Break

## SPECIALS

Oct 17 - Fall Retreat

Dec 7 - Concerto Audition

Feb 20 - Play-A-Thon

## CONCERTS

Nov 2

Mar 4

May 7

## ROUND 1 AUDITIONS 2027-2028

May 24, 25

## REHEARSAL TIMES

Preparatory Winds,  
Concert & Chamber Orchestras  
4:45 pm - 6:15 pm

Symphony Orchestra

6:30 pm - 8:30 pm

All EVYS members should be tuned, warmed-up, and ready to play at the start of rehearsal.



**The East Valley Youth Symphony (EVYS)** is now in its 20th season! During our previous season, EVYS consisted of approximately one hundred musicians from the East Valley with three conductors, one wind specialist and a string specialist.

EVYS was founded in 2006 with the mission to encourage and inspire young musicians in the East Valley by providing an uplifting and challenging orchestral experience under the guidance of skilled conductors and supportive parents.

We welcome our musicians for the upcoming 2026-2027 season!

All parents and musicians are requested to read this handbook and sign the required forms. In order to participate in EVYS, the following items are ***due at the first rehearsal*** (*please note- due to insurance and liability, if the forms are not submitted prior to first rehearsal then the student will not be able to rehearse until forms are submitted*):

- **Tuition** - full payment or first installment payment
- **Member Contract** - signed by musician and parent
- **Media Release Form** - signed by parent
- **Waive, Release, and Assumption of Risk Form** - signed by musician and parent
- **School Participation Letter** - signed by school conductor
- **Parent Volunteer Form or SignUpGenius** - one parent per family to assist for at least 1 practice or event per semester for a total of 2 over the season. Volunteer opportunities will include time and/or goods (i.e.,- food, etc) for events.

## ... a note from our President

### Dear Fellow Parents and EVYS Members:

We're incredibly proud of the vibrant, supportive culture we've built together—one that helps our young musicians grow into some of the finest in the Valley. As we begin our 20th season, I'm confident that EVYS will continue to offer your children a musical journey that is both challenging and deeply rewarding. Under the guidance of our talented conductors, they'll explore complex works and discover the brilliance behind the music of the masters.

As we look to the future, our commitment remains strong: to provide an exceptional experience for every student. Whether your child is just beginning their musical skills or is already an accomplished player, EVYS is here to nurture their passion and lay the foundation for a lifelong love of music—wherever life may lead.

Thank you for being part of the EVYS family and for your ongoing support.

*Linda Wheeler*

President, EVYS Board of Directors

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## 2026-2027 Board of Directors

**Linda Wheeler** - President  
president@evysaz.org

**Hana Giauque** - Auditions Director  
auditions@evysaz.org

**Ivan Insua** - Vice President  
vice-president@evysaz.org

**Jennifer Bugarini** - Concert Coordinator  
concert-director@evysaz.org

**Bety Rahm** - Treasurer  
treasurer@evysaz.org

**Carrie Purcell** - Fundraising Director  
fundraising-director@evysaz.org

**Danielle Collinwood** - Secretary  
secretary@evysaz.org

**Ashley Boyle** - Social Media/Marketing  
media-director@evysaz.org

OPEN - Admin  
admin@evysaz.com

OPEN - Publishing Director  
publishing@evysaz.org

*Open Positions - Social Media Team, Fundraising Team, Publishing Director, Admin, Treasurer Assistant*

# ... a note from our Artistic Director

## Congratulations and Welcome to the 2026–2027 Season of the East Valley Youth Symphony!

We are delighted to welcome you as a member of the East Valley Youth Symphony Program for the 2026–2027 season! Each year brings new energy and inspiration as we come together to grow as ensembles, learn new music, and share our talents with each other, our families, and the wider community.

It is a privilege to return as Artistic Director and Symphony Conductor. I am joined by a remarkable team of educators and musicians:

- Victor Mendoza, Winds and Brass Specialist, assisting with the Symphony and coaching the Preparatory Wind Ensemble
- Priscilla Benitez, Director of the Chamber Orchestra
- Rebecca Joslin, Director of the Concert Orchestra
- Hana Giauque, String Specialist and Audition Chair

Each of these dedicated professionals brings extensive experience as both music educators and performers. Together with our talented board and artistic leadership, we are united in our commitment to inspiring and guiding the next generation of young musicians.

We are also proud to continue our residency at the Benjamin Franklin High School (BFHS) Performing Arts Center. We deeply appreciate the respect and care our musicians and families show for this exceptional space. Our partnership with BFHS and the charter school administration remains strong, and we look forward to many more years of collaboration.

Thank you for supporting music, music education, and the personal growth of young artists. Whether you're a student musician, a supportive parent or family member, or a valued community member, we are grateful to have you with us. We look forward to a season filled with beautiful music, lasting friendships, and a shared passion for making the world a better place through the power of music.

Let's make this year an unforgettable musical journey—together!

*Cindy H Petty*

Artistic Director and Symphony Conductor  
East Valley Youth Symphony

## - Our Conductors and Specialists -



Cindy H  
Petty



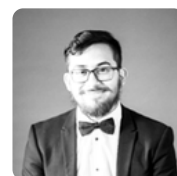
Priscilla  
Benitez



Rebecca  
Joslin



Hana  
Giauque



Victor E  
Mendoza

# EVYS Policies

## I. Rehearsals - starting Monday, August 31, 2026

Monday evenings at Benjamin Franklin High School (BFHS)

- 4:45 – 6:15pm Preparatory Winds, Concert Orchestra, & Chamber Orchestra
- 6:30 – 8:30pm Symphony Orchestra

## II. Tuition

The tuition fee for the season, August 2026 to May 2027, is \$325 for each of the Preparatory Winds, Concert Orchestra and Chamber Orchestra groups, and \$375 for Symphony Orchestra.

*All tuition fees are non-refundable.*

Payment may be made using one of the following methods:

- Pay cash or check to East Valley Youth Symphony
- Pay online using Venmo (@EVYS-Symphony)
- Pay through PayPal at **[www.evysaz.org](http://www.evysaz.org)** using Visa/Mastercard
- Payment installments are available
- Scholarship opportunities are available and are need based
- *For more information about payment installments and scholarship opportunities, please contact **Linda** at **[president@evysaz.org](mailto:president@evysaz.org)** or **Bety** at **[treasurer@evysaz.org](mailto:treasurer@evysaz.org)***

## III. Eligibility

All student musicians who are able to perform the minimum audition requirements as stated on **[www.evysaz.org](http://www.evysaz.org)** are eligible to audition to become a member of EVYS.

EVYS members are required to participate in a school band or orchestra program, if offered by their school. EVYS members should obtain the signature of the school band or orchestra conductor on the School Participation Letter (*p. 19 of handbook*) to verify student participation at school and to give consent for participation in EVYS.

Exceptions are made on a case-by-case basis.

If a school does not offer band or orchestra class, a school official may sign the release form indicating no program is available. If a student is attending homeschool or online school, a parent or private teacher may sign to give consent for participation in EVYS.

## IV. Auditions

All eligible applicants will be auditioned by a fair and qualified adjudicator. Orchestra placement will be determined by each member's EVYS audition performance.

At the discretion of the conductor and the EVYS Board, additional placement auditions may be scheduled throughout the season. In rare circumstances, and by invitation only, adjustments may be made following the first concert.

Seating will be at the discretion of the conductor of each ensemble for musical and educational reasons. There will be periodic skills and proficiency playing tests for each concert throughout the season, and seating may be adjusted following these. Materials for the skills tests will be announced in advance at rehearsal. Members absent for chair auditions, skills tests, or rehearsals may forfeit their current ranking in their section.

Exceptions for missed chair auditions or skills tests due to school concerts may be arranged prior to audition or test date. Late chair auditions will only be given under circumstances deemed excusable by the Board of Directors or conductors. The conductors reserve the right to schedule additional chair auditions or skills tests without notice, so musicians should be prepared.

Audition fees are non-refundable. Please choose an audition time that you are confident will work for your schedule. If you cancel your selected audition time within 48 hours of the appointment, *a \$20 cancellation fee may apply*, depending on the reason for cancellation.

## **V. Attendance**

In order to maintain a high standard of performance, it is the policy of the EVYS Board that each member of EVYS attend as many rehearsals and concerts as possible.

Participation in EVYS is voluntary. Parent *and* student signature of the EVYS Waive, Release, and Assumption of Risk Form is mandatory prior to participation. Absences due to a health situation, a school concert, family emergency or illness will be excused. We do request that participants let their conductor know and complete an absence notice online in a timely manner. Unreported absences will be labeled unexcused. *Remember – absences will affect chair seating.* Absences are to be reported through the absence request form on the website at [www.evysaz.org](http://www.evysaz.org).

Punctuality is of great importance. Musicians are requested to be in their seats with their music out and their instruments tuned at the rehearsal start time. If a member has reoccurring absences or tardies without absence notices, a skills test or change in chair position may result.

## VI. Specials - Fall Retreat and Play-A-Thon

- EVYS offers two Saturday events that provide additional rehearsal for the groups to prepare for upcoming concerts. The Saturday events are ***mandatory*** rehearsals. In addition to the traditional rehearsals, the Fall Retreat and Play-A-Thon include sectional instruction with Community Musicians that will provide instruction for specific instruments (i.e. violin, viola, cello, bass, winds, etc.). The two Saturday events also include activities to form improved teamwork and EVYS will provide food through the day. *Please remember that missing the Saturday events may affect seating.*
- The Play-A-Thon Event is the main fundraising event for the organization. We expect each student to fundraise even if they are not able to attend the Play-A-Thon. The expectation is that each student will raise at least \$200. There are prizes for students based on their fundraising.

## VII. Rehearsal and Concert Rules

- EVYS members commit to respect the property of rehearsal and concert facilities (i.e., no leaning on music stands, tilting back on chairs, or pushing chair racks into the wall).
- No food is allowed in the building or rehearsal room, only water. No sharing of food or water items is allowed.
- Instruments need to be protected. EVYS members commit to not play or touch anyone else's instrument.
- EVYS musicians are expected to be courteous and respectful to conductors, EVYS parent volunteers, and Benjamin Franklin High School facility and employees.
- No cell phone usage is allowed during rehearsals or concerts. Text messaging is specifically for emergencies only.
- EVYS musicians are expected to be punctual and seated early for rehearsals, performances, and after breaks.
- Musicians should always plan to bring their personal copy of music in the EVYS music folder and their own pencil.
- Music should only be marked with light pencil markings; no use of ink or colored pencils to mark EVYS music! Music must be returned at the specified time. Lost music will incur a replacement fee.

### VIII. Concert Conduct

Part of the EVYS experience is to learn proper concert etiquette as both a musician and an audience member. During performances, we respect and support fellow musicians by turning off electronic devices and remaining quietly seated until the end of the concert after all EVYS orchestras have performed. In the event that anyone must enter or exit the performance hall during a concert, proper etiquette is to wait until the music stops to quietly enter or exit.

### IX. Concert Attire

In order to provide an atmosphere of professionalism and excellence the following attire will be required for concerts:

**All girls:** Black, closed-toe dress shoes with heels no higher than 2 inches and black nylons or tights (no bare legs or feet allowed). Girls may choose from the following:

- Long, black, ankle-length skirt (no denim or high slits); long-sleeved black blouse (no showing cleavage; must cover elbows; no T-shirts)
- Dressy, long, straight-legged black slacks (no denim); long-sleeved black blouse (no showing cleavage; must cover elbows; no T-shirts)

*NOTE - leggings are not appropriate attire*

- Long black dresses (no denim or slits) - 3/4 sleeve or long sleeve preferred

**All boys:** Black dress slacks (no denim); long-sleeved black button-up dress shirt (tucked in); black long tie, black shoes, black socks and black belt.

- *Preparatory Winds, Concert & Chamber Orchestras:* No Jacket
- *Symphony Orchestra:* Black Tuxedo Jacket (no tails)

**Concert dress will need to be approved on October 26, 2026,** when there will be a "concert dress" check and group photos taken during rehearsal. Any inappropriate and unapproved concert attire will not be allowed on the stage during a concert.

## **X. Parental Support and Volunteer Opportunities**

Music is the universal language, and it is our desire to facilitate the learning of that important language in our society. We believe that can be best accomplished by providing a nurturing environment of supportive parents, families, teachers, and community.

EVYS is run by parent volunteers. In order to accomplish the goals of EVYS, we count on all parents to participate and volunteer. It is necessary for the success of the program. Each family is asked to commit service time by signing the EVYS Parent Volunteer Form/SignUpGenius for at least one practice or event per semester - a total of two volunteer opportunities.

A \$25 fee per semester per family will be assessed if parents are unable to or do not volunteer.

If parents or family members have additional talents (such as fundraising, photography, musical skills) or ways to give back to EVYS (such as food donations to specials), please reach out to a Board member!

## **XI. Additional Information**

EVYS member photos or videos may be taken occasionally and published in EVYS related publications such as brochures, newspaper articles, social media, or on our website at [www.evysaz.org](http://www.evysaz.org).

Please see the Media Release Form in this handbook.

EVYS does not provide insurance for musical instruments. Members are responsible for providing their own insurance against damage or theft as they may deem necessary.



*Music  
is the soundtrack  
of your life.*

- Dick Clark



# 2027 Young Artist Competition

The **East Valley Youth Symphony Young Artist Competition** offers a dynamic platform for young musicians under 20 years old affiliated with the East Valley Youth Symphony Organization. Open to both current members and alumni in good standing, the competition highlights talent across diverse categories such as Strings, Brass/Woodwinds, Mallets, Piano, and Voice. Emphasizing both excellence and community, the competition not only showcases musical prowess but also fosters a supportive environment where emerging artists can shine. With preference given to current members, it serves as a vibrant celebration of dedication and skill within the vibrant musical community of East Valley.

## Categories

Strings, Brass / Woodwinds, Mallets, Piano and Voice

## Awards

One winner will be selected to perform one movement of a concerto with the East Valley Youth Symphony at the Spring concert.

## Concert Date

March 4, 2027

Benjamin Franklin Performing Arts Center

7:00pm (Call time 5:30pm for sound check)

## Eligibility

The competition is open to all students 20 years of age or younger who are current members of the East Valley Youth Symphony Organization or Alumni of the East Valley Youth Symphony Organization in good standing. Preference will be given to current members.

Competitors must be studying currently with a private teacher and be available for rehearsals on February 1, 8, 22, and March 1, 2027 from 6:30 – 8:30pm at Benjamin Franklin High School. Conductor will attend one private lesson with the soloist prior to the rehearsals.

# 2027 Young Artist Competition

## Repertoire

The performance piece must be scored for orchestra accompaniment, be the same as the audition piece and will consist of one movement from a standard concerto (or comparable short work) and be less than 12 minutes in length. Cuts in the parts will be made at conductor discretion. Duets or small ensembles may also apply providing the work is scored for orchestra accompaniment. Repertoire must be memorized for the performance.

## Audition

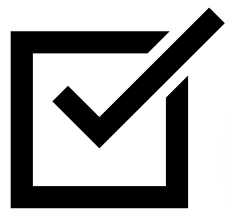
Live auditions will take place on Monday, December 7, 2026 between 4:20 – 6:15pm. A time will be assigned upon application. Winner will be notified and announced by Monday, December 14, 2026.

## Application

Please email EVYS Audition Chair at [auditions@evysaz.org](mailto:auditions@evysaz.org) for an audition time.

Include the following information in the email:

- Applicant's Name, address, email and phone
- Parent's Name and email
- Private Teacher's name, Email and phone number
- Complete name of
  - repertoire including composer
  - publisher
  - timing of the piece



# Checklist

**Items to be completed by Aug 31, 2026 - Students will not be allowed at rehearsal unless all forms are turned in.**

- Parent meeting (Aug 24, 2026)
- Pay tuition or make arrangements
- Turn in Member Contract (p. 13)
- Turn in Media Release Form (p. 15)
- Turn in Parent Volunteer Form (p. 16)
- Turn in Waive, Release, and Assumption of Risk Form (p. 17)
- Turn in School Participation Form (p. 19)
- Check for appropriate concert attire (p. 7)
- Mark all rehearsals, concerts, and specials in your calendar

**SCAN HERE**  
to fill out your  
forms online



**East Valley Youth Symphony**  
**MEMBER CONTRACT 2026 – 2027**

Every member matters in the realization of the East Valley Youth Symphony mission—to encourage and inspire young musicians by providing an uplifting and challenging orchestral experience. Upon reading the handbook and EVYS policies herein, members will please sign this contract signifying your commitment to conduct yourself according to those policies.

Thank you for being a part of EVYS excellence!

1. I have read and understand the EVYS Orchestra Handbook 2026-2027 and will honor the policies as stated herein.
2. I will further promote EVYS excellence by learning my instrument and the assigned EVYS music to the best of my ability.
3. I understand that I must sign and return this Member Contract and the School Participation Letter and pay tuition (or make arrangements to pay tuition) by the first rehearsal.
4. I understand that I will not be allowed to play in EVYS rehearsals or concerts unless my signed Member Contract and tuition have been submitted.
5. I commit to abide by this contract in order to participate in EVYS.

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EVYS Member Name

Signature

Date

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EVYS Member Email

Mobile Phone Number

EVYS Member School Grade \_\_\_\_\_

EVYS Member Shirt Size

\_\_\_ YM \_\_\_ YL \_\_\_ YXL

\_\_\_ AS \_\_\_ AM \_\_\_ AL \_\_\_ AXL \_\_\_ A2XL

Address

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*Please return signed to EVYS conductor or Board member at first rehearsal.*

**East Valley Youth Symphony**  
**MEMBER CONTRACT 2026 – 2027**

**Tuition**

My musician is in:

- Preparatory Winds (\$325 tuition)
- Concert Orchestra (\$325 tuition)
- Chamber Orchestra (\$325 tuition)
- Symphony Orchestra (\$375 tuition)

I will be:

- paying the full amount today/by the first rehearsal.
- splitting up the cost into three payments- September 1, November 1, and January 1 (additional form required, please contact the treasurer at [treasurer@evysaz.org](mailto:treasurer@evysaz.org))
- arranging a payment plan with the treasurer ([treasurer@evysaz.org](mailto:treasurer@evysaz.org))

As a parent, I will support and facilitate my child's good standing in EVYS. I pledge to support our EVYS musicians by assisting with at least 2 events this season (1 per semester) through the EVYS Volunteer Signup Genius or pay the volunteer fee.

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EVYS Parent Name

Signature

Date

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EVYS Parent Email

Mobile Phone Number

*Please return signed to EVYS conductor or Board member at first rehearsal.*

**East Valley Youth Symphony**  
**MEDIA RELEASE FORM 2026 – 2027**

During rehearsals and concerts, opportunities will arise to photograph or video record musicians engaged in music learning and performance. These photos will usually be with other musicians and no names will be published.

I understand that by signing this form or by not turning this form in, the use of photos or videos of my musician for print publications, newspaper, online publications, presentations, websites, and social media to promote EVYS can happen. Please contact a board member for other options.

I understand that no royalty, fee or other compensation shall become payable to me by reason of such use.

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EVYS Member Name

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EVYS Parent Printed Name

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EVYS Parent Signature

Date

*Please return signed to EVYS conductor or Board member at first rehearsal.*

**East Valley Youth Symphony  
PARENT VOLUNTEER FORM 2026 – 2027**

I understand that EVYS is run by parent volunteers and that all parents are asked to participate and volunteer for a total of two volunteer opportunities during the season.

- I am able to volunteer at least once per semester and will -
- be signing up when the SignUpGenius is released (food donations to Specials will be listed here).
  - volunteer to-
    - assist with rehearsal volunteer
    - assist with fundraising.
    - assist with social media.
    - take pictures during the concert.
- I am unable to volunteer. I will pay the \$25 fee per semester per family. *(please choose an option below)*
- I choose to pay \$50 today.
  - I choose to pay \$25 today. Please bill me for the additional \$25 in January 2027.

---

EVYS Member Name

---

EVYS Parent Printed Name

---

EVYS Parent Signature

Date

If you would like to pay by Venmo, scan this  
QR code with your phone, or type in  
**@EVYS-Symphony**



**venmo**

*Please return signed to EVYS conductor or Board member at first rehearsal.*

**East Valley Youth Symphony**  
**WAIVE, RELEASE, AND ASSUMPTION OF RISK FORM 2026 – 2027**

On behalf of myself, my household members, and my student, I hereby give permission for my student to attend camps, clinics, practices fundraisers, concerts, auditions, and competitions in and out of the East Valley Youth Symphony (EVYS). My student and I are familiar with, and knowingly and voluntarily accept, any and all risks associated with attending camps, clinics, practices, fundraisers, concerts, auditions, and competitions at a school campus, concert venue or fundraising venue. I acknowledge that my student's participation in this program is wholly voluntary and is not part of any regular school curriculum.

I specifically assume all risks and hazards associated with my student's participation. I understand that my student will be associating with staff, volunteers, Board members and other students and may contract or be exposed to viruses and diseases. My student's participation could therefore be hazardous to my student and others, both known and unknown to myself, with whom my student may have contact. I understand and voluntarily assume the risk that my student may acquire a virus or disease, and that it may subsequently be transmitted from my student to me, my family, members of my household, and/or other members of the community, known or unknown to me.

While instruction and reasonable supervision will be provided, staff cannot ensure my student's safety. Accidents and injuries happen, and it is impossible to eliminate the risk that my student will suffer an injury or illness.

I certify that my student currently has no current issues that make it unsafe for my student to participate. I will notify EVYS staff and not send my student to participate if my student develops a fever or illness; I acknowledge that my student and I are responsible for ensuring that he or she takes any necessary medications, and for avoiding any allergies. In the event of a medical emergency, 911 will be called and I will be responsible for any and all costs of medical treatment.

*Please return signed to EVYS conductor or Board member at first rehearsal.*

To the fullest extent permitted by law, I hereby agree to waive, release, and discharge any and all claims, causes of action, damages and rights of any kind against EVYS, its insurers, EVYS's governing board members, and all their respective employees, agents, representatives, and volunteers (the "Released Parties") arising from or relating in any way to any damage, injury, trauma, illness, loss, unwanted contact, harassment, disability, dismemberment, or death that may occur to my student, me, or my household members—whatever the cause—due to my student's participation. This includes, without limitation, any claim arising from negligence of the Released Parties.

I further agree not to sue the Released Parties, and to defend and indemnify the Released Parties for all claims, damages, losses, or expenses including attorneys' fees, if a suit is filed concerning an injury, illness, or death to me, my student, or my household members resulting from participation.

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EVYS Member Name

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EVYS Parent Printed Name

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EVYS Parent Signature

Date

*Please return signed to EVYS conductor or Board member at first rehearsal.*

**East Valley Youth Symphony  
SCHOOL PARTICIPATION LETTER 2026 – 2027**

Dear Orchestra or Band Teacher/Conductor,

Members of the East Valley Youth Symphony are required to participate in a school band or orchestra program if the student is attending school in person and if the program for their respective instrument is offered by the school. Please sign this form to verify enrollment and being in good standing, OR to give consent for participation in EVYS even though the student may not be enrolled in a school music program presently.

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Student Name

---

School

---

Orchestra or Band Teacher/Conductor Name, Phone Number & Email

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Orchestra or Band Teacher/Conductor Signature & Date

**Thank you music teachers for encouraging and inspiring the young musicians of  
East Valley Youth Symphony!**

(HOMESCHOOL & ONLINE STUDENTS – Parent or private teacher may sign in place of school conductor.)

\*If you have a private music teacher, please indicate name, phone number & email contact:

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Private Teacher Name

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Private Teacher Email

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Private Teacher Phone

*Please return signed to EVYS conductor or Board member at first rehearsal.*

Music  
is the strongest  
form of magic.



# SCAN HERE



to fill out your  
forms online

Sign Up Genius  
available at the  
Parent Meeting  
August 24, 2026

Fall 2026  
volunteer sign-up

Sign Up Genius  
available at the  
Parent Meeting  
August 24, 2026

Spring 2027  
volunteer sign-up

2026-2027



@EVYSAZ

