



Dear MYS Families,

As Minnesota cautiously begins to open up and create policies around life with COVID-19, we want to let you know how we are planning for the 2020-2021 season as an organization. There are many elements that are still unknown, and we are not completely sure what the fall season will look like. However, we are working on creating great opportunities for music-making in the fall! With that in mind, we want to share what you can expect from us, our guiding principles, and decisions we have already made regarding next season.

- 1) MYS will focus on delivering the excellent orchestra experience that families expect, either through in-person rehearsals, virtual rehearsals, or a combination thereof. Virtual programming will include classes that enhance the full orchestra experience and provide learning opportunities for the well-rounded student musician. Rehearsals will still take place on Saturday mornings during the scheduled time frame.
- 2) MYS will make decisions that prioritize the safety of our students, families, and staff.
- 3) MYS will follow the best practices and guidelines of the MN Department of Health. Since MYS rehearsals take place in a Saint Paul public school, we will be basing many decisions on their policies for fall related to social distancing, sanitation procedures, and limits on the number of people in the building.
- 4) MYS will seek out best practices from many sources, including the League of American Orchestras, Minnesota Music Educators Association, and others dealing specifically with instrumental and ensemble rehearsal procedures. We will abide by the best guidance we have for sanitizing surfaces (including instruments and folders), creating appropriate space between student ensemble members, and ensuring that ensemble members maintain social distance while going to and from rehearsals.
- 5) MYS will provide opportunities for students to connect virtually with their peers and conductors.
- 6) MYS will provide virtual attendance opportunities for students.
- 7) MYS is prepared to make changes to its regular schedule in order to accommodate virtual rehearsals and live-streamed or virtual performances.
- 8) Overnight retreats for full orchestras have been cancelled. Orchestras will have the opportunity to make memories and rehearse together in other ways that take into consideration social distancing guidelines.
- 9) The MN Department of Education will be making a decision about the 2020-2021 school year in the final week of July. Our rehearsal space at Highland Middle School is governed by the Facilities department of Saint Paul Public Schools, so we will need to wait until we know their updated policies for rental groups like ours. We will have an update by August 7th about what we have learned and how this may affect the MYS season.

Please contact the MYS office with further questions, and you will be hearing more from us throughout the summer. We hope you will join us!

With great expectations,

The Minnesota Youth Symphonies