

**SYMPHONY OF THE MOUNTAINS SUMMIT ORCHESTRA and
SYMPHONY OF THE MOUNTAINS PRIMO ORCHESTRA
Policies and Guidelines Handbook**

The Symphony of the Mountains Summit Orchestra (SMSO) and Primo Orchestra (SMPO) are educational initiatives organized and funded by Symphony of the Mountains. These honors ensembles were created for the most talented and dedicated instrumental players in grades 12 and under from the Northeast Tennessee and Southwest Virginia region. Students accepted into SMSO and SMPO will enjoy the following benefits:

- Perform challenging orchestral repertoire alongside peers who share their enthusiasm and dedication to music, under the direction of a professional orchestral conductor.
- Gain experience playing in a large ensemble and receive mentorship from more experienced musicians.
- Receive a complimentary ticket for a parent or guardian to attend a regular season Symphony of the Mountains concert.

The mission of the Symphony of the Mountains Summit and Primo Orchestra is to enrich the lives of participants by providing a professional environment for the study, preparation, and performance of music. Our focus is complementing participation in school music programs; to encourage and advocate for music and music education in the Northeast Tennessee/Southwest Virginia region; and to serve the community at large by providing high quality performances.

Weekly rehearsals are held on Thursday evenings for 10 weeks during the Fall and Spring semesters with concerts at the conclusion of each 10 weeks.

Location:

Renaissance Center, Room 310
1200 East Center Street
Kingsport, TN 37660

Times:

5:30pm – 6:30pm **Primo Only**
6:30pm – 6:40pm - **Break** -
6:40pm – 7:00pm **Both Primo & Summit**
7:00pm – 7:45pm **Summit Only**

Background Information

The two ensembles (SMSO and SMPO) are designed to serve a wide variety of ages and students at all stages of musical development. The season consists of two semesters that coincide with the academic calendar. Each semester has approximately 10 rehearsals and then ends with a concert in both the fall and spring.

Two Ensembles

A. Symphony of the Mountains Summit Orchestra (SMSO): The SMSO is an advanced strings only group that performs repertoire ranging from standard classics to more contemporary selections. Membership in the Symphony of the Mountains Summit Orchestra is obtained by audition only. For Summit Orchestra auditions, students are asked to play a short (max 5 minutes) piece that demonstrates their ability as well as a scale of their choosing (2 or 3 octaves). Student musicians in high school or very advanced middle school students are invited to apply. Every member must re-audition each fall and is placed in the appropriate ensemble.

B. Symphony of the Mountains Primo Orchestra (SMPO): The SMPO is a string group that focuses on introduction to ensemble playing and techniques. The Primo Orchestra prepares concert repertoire independently and serves as a preparatory setting for students who want to become members of the Summit Orchestra. It is recommended that students have a minimum of one year of study. The student is asked to play a selection and a scale of his/her own choice. A student who auditions and is admitted into the Primo Orchestra may audition for the Summit Orchestra after one year when they feel ready. It is recommended that the student speak with their conductor to assess if the student is ready to move up to the Summit Orchestra.

Season Auditions

Auditions for the SMSO and SMPO are held in August for the upcoming season. Students will either be placed in the SMSO or SMPO. The date of audition is published on the Symphony of the Mountains website in the summer, and students will need to call (423) 392-8423 or email info@symphonyofthemountains.org to schedule their audition time.

Mid-season Auditions and Registrations

A. SMSO: Mid-season auditions are discouraged because there are only 10 rehearsals for each concert, it is important that all students are prepared and can play the selected music well. In rare circumstances, outstanding musicians may have the opportunity to join the Summit Orchestra mid-year, and it is up to the discretion of the conductor to make that decision.

B. SMPO: This ensemble accepts additional students at mid-year.

Note: Since the commitment to the Symphony of the Mountains Primo Orchestra is for the entire season, only rarely will students placed in the SMPO be allowed to audition to move to the Summit Orchestra mid-season. A Symphony of the Mountains Primo Orchestra member may audition for the SMSO mid-year only if openings exist and if the Symphony of the Mountains Primo Orchestra conductor has recommended the student for the more advanced group.

Concert Attire

Concert attire should be all black or white shirt/top with black bottoms. For ladies, be aware that you are up on a stage and below the knee skirts or black tights are a must.

Men: Long-sleeved black or white dress shirt, black necktie, black pants, black shoes, and black socks.

Women: Long or ¾ sleeved white blouse, black dress, or black skirt below the knee with black tights, or black slacks, and black shoes.

Membership Dues

Support and funding for the Symphony of the Mountains Summit and Primo Orchestras comes from the Symphony of the Mountains, the Tennessee Arts Commission, the Women's Symphony Committee, the National Endowment for the Arts, and from membership dues.

Non-refundable dues for the Summit Orchestra and the Primo Orchestra participants are \$100 per student for the year, with a maximum of \$300 per family, per year. Dues are payable in the first two weeks of rehearsal.

Please make checks payable to **Symphony of the Mountains** and **include the musician's name & "for SMSO or SMPO dues" on the memo line**. Payments made at audition will be held until placement notification. A limited number of full or partial scholarships are available that reduce or eliminate dues in cases of financial need. Please see the SMSO and SMPO Manager.

Attendance Policy

The members of this ensemble are outstanding young people with many commitments. Balancing these commitments is no easy task. Musicians are urged to attend all rehearsals. Each student's absence negatively affects the ensemble, even if the student is well prepared individually. Please schedule Thursday afternoon conflicts during weeks when SMSO and SMPO are not in session. If an absence is unavoidable, the student needs to let the conductor and manager know as much ahead of time as possible.

A. Rehearsals are scheduled from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. in Room 310 for Primo and 6:40 to 7:45pm in Room 310 for Summit with a 10-minute break to transition between bringing in the Summit musicians. Musicians are responsible for checking in with the Manager, who will be taking attendance.

B. If a student misses more than two rehearsals in a semester, that musician is not as prepared as other peers and could possibly be asked not to perform in the concert. Musicians who miss more than two rehearsals may be asked to show their proficiency by playing excerpts from the music being rehearsed. Only those musicians demonstrating that they have continued to practice and improve during the absence will be allowed to play the concert.

C. No one may miss either of the last full rehearsals before a concert unless granted special permission by the SMSO/SMPO Conductor.

Complimentary Tickets to Symphony of the Mountains Concerts

Any current member of the SMSO or SMPO is entitled to a complimentary ticket for a parent or guardian to any Regular Season Symphony of the Mountains subscription concert. All students can get a complimentary ticket to any Regular Season SOTM concert as part of our Free Student Ticket Program. To obtain admission, go to the ticket table on the night of the concert, sign the attendance list, and you will be given a ticket for the concert.

Musicians' Family Support Opportunities

The Symphony of the Mountains Summit and Primo Orchestra are happy to have any parent or guardian volunteer. Musicians' families are asked to help with various things during the year. This helps to keep our organization's dues at an affordable level. Listed below are ways families can help:

Concert Reception Refreshments: A reception organized by the Women's Symphony Committee is held after the fall and spring concerts to allow the musicians and audience to mingle and visit after the concert. Musician's families are encouraged to:

- Provide cookies or some other treats for these receptions
- Help with setup and cleanup before and after the reception

Inclement Weather Policy

Unless the weather is hazardous, rehearsals are generally not cancelled. In case of snow on a rehearsal day, go to our website www.symphonyofthemountains.org after **12 pm** on rehearsal day. The decision to cancel will be posted there whether there is a rehearsal. You can also email the SMYO/SMPO manager at info@symphonyofthemountains.org to confirm any cancellation. Generally, the manager will send out group emails to communicate or cancel a rehearsal. **Please make sure that we have an email that you check regularly listed on your information sheet.**