

Reading Symphony Junior String Orchestra  
Parent Information

Welcome to the RSJSO, and congratulations on all your hard work. In addition to the hours of practice your child put in, I'm sure you also helped earn this honor with hours of encouragement, practice reminders, and driving. Alas, more driving and encouragement is part of the orchestra experience, but the results and rewards are well worth it. Here is some basic information on how orchestra works and the major events to get you started and get some things on the calendar.

1. **REHEARSALS:** Rehearsals are held Saturday mornings, from 9:30-11:30. Students should plan to arrive 10-15 minutes before the rehearsal time to get their instruments out and get seated so tuning can begin at 9:30. Regular attendance is expected. Students may miss up to 3 rehearsals during the year for family events or other conflicts. If regular absenteeism is a concern, you students may not get to participate in the concerts. Exceptions can be made for school events, county, district musical events, etc. **WHEN YOU ARE GOING TO MISS A REHEARSAL, PLEASE CALL IN YOUR ABSENCE.** My phone number is 717-445-5986 or e-mail at [pangstadt@frontiernet.net](mailto:pangstadt@frontiernet.net).
2. There is a snack break in the middle of rehearsal. For many students this is a favorite event! Students take turns bringing snack and/or drink based on section (ie. Violin I-first week, cello- second week, etc.) You will receive a schedule at the first rehearsal of your assigned weeks. It is usually only a few weeks a year. Please mark them on the calendar so that we have enough snack for the kids. There will be a parent coordinating the snacks, transporting paper goods, setting and cleaning up. She would appreciate help at the rehearsals if you are staying or willing to help.
3. When students arrive at rehearsals they need to sign in on the attendance sheets. Please remind your students to do this or it will look like they are absent.
4. Seating within sections is rotating, though your student will always have the same stand partner. At the first rehearsal they will sit in what is their concert seat, with their stand partner for the year. At the following rehearsals, there will be a list of students at the sign-in table. Each student checks their Number on the list, and then finds the seat in their section which has the matching number card on the chair. The numbers are by stand-so two seats share a number. They will move back one number each week, when they reach the end, they go back to the front. For consistency, the first two stands in each section do not rotate. If you student is confused by this ( and they all are at first) please help them out. If you are confused, wait until we explain it again at the meeting
5. Please pick up your student promptly at 11:30.
  
6. **CONCERT CLOTHES-**Students are expected to dress in black formal clothes for the performances: black suits and white shirts with black bow ties, black shoes and socks for the boys, and full length black skirts and tops or full length dresses for the girls, black shoes. Spaghetti straps and strapless dresses are not allowed.

If your daughter's dress has this type of top, please use a shrug or jacket for modesty. If there is enough interest, we may be able to order dresses as a group. This will be optional, though maybe a less expensive and more convenient option for some. More information will be available on ordering dresses at the meeting.

Because these are growing years for the kids, we do organize and encourage an exchange of used suits, and girl's outfits. If you have any to trade, please bring them to the first meeting to for others to see. We will also circulate a list at the parent meeting of clothing people have available and clothing needs to help match up all those outgrown clothes and save us all some money and make space in the closets.

New students to the orchestra will receive a RSJSO t-shirt. Returning students can order new shirts at cost as needed. More information on this will become available at the first rehearsal. The t-shirts are worn at Hershey Park after the festival performance.

7. CONCERTS- the students participate in a minimum of three concerts, which a possibility of another for the church who is hosting rehearsals.

Christmas Concert - is scheduled for December 12, and will be held at Reading High. Tickets for the concert will be sold at the rehearsals a few weeks prior to the concert and will also be available at the door. Parent volunteers to help selling tickets, hand out bells and candy canes, and other tasks will be needed.

RSO Concert – is scheduled for January 23. The students will play one piece as a prelude to the RSO concert in January. Students will then receive free tickets to stay and enjoy the concert. We will need a number of parent chaperones to help with this event. All chaperones will also receive their concert tickets for free and will be seated with students.

Spring Concert – is scheduled for April 25 at 3:00, and will be held at Schuylkill Valley High School. Tickets will again be sold at the rehearsals prior to the concert, as well as be available at the door. This concert has been recorded in the past, with a CD available to purchase by pre-order in advance or at the concert. Parent volunteers will be needed to help with this concert.

Music In The Parks- The final event of the year is our adjudicated performance in the Hersey Park area. There are two parts, an adjudicated performance, followed by a day of fun at Hershey Park where awards are given in later in the day. Students will be bused from Berks county to the competition, and can choose to stay only for the performance and be picked up by parents, or to continue by bus to Hershey Park. Tickets are available to all family members at significantly reduced costs. There is a fee for students to participate in this event. During the second half of the year, there will also be an optional fundraiser to help defray these costs