



STUDENT HANDBOOK

2026 - 2027

Dr. Leo Sakomoto
Conductor

The Bakersfield Youth Symphony

Dr. Leo Sakomoto
Conductor

Antonio Reyes, *Orchestra Manager*

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www.bysorocks.org

Welcome

Welcome to the Bakersfield Youth Symphony Orchestra! Membership in this group will enrich your musical skills by allowing you to perform great symphonic literature with some of Kern County's finest young musicians. Your acceptance into the BYSO speaks highly of your musical accomplishments. The Board of Directors is excited to have you become a part of this important component of Bakersfield's cultural life.

Purpose of this Handbook

This handbook was designed to acquaint you with the philosophy, policies, rules and expectations of the BYSO. Most of the provisions in this handbook were determined by the official action of the BYSO Board of Directors; all are the product of careful thought and consideration. The BYSO Board reserves the right to change any regulation contained in this booklet as is made necessary by situations that may occur during the season.

BYSO Objectives

The objectives of the Bakersfield Youth Symphony Orchestra shall be:

1. To provide gifted young musicians an opportunity to further their education in orchestra performance.
2. To introduce members to advanced orchestral literature.
3. To present performances for the enjoyment of the community.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

ATTENDANCE AT EVERY REHEARSAL AND PERFORMANCE IS MANDATORY. The success of the BYSO is dependent upon every member being present at all rehearsals and performances. Please be aware of the following regulations:

Bring your BYSO folder, all your music, and a pencil to each rehearsal.

You are expected to arrive by 5:15 PM and ready to play at **5:25 PM** on Sunday (Mondays for 3-day weekends) evenings **and are required to stay through the entire rehearsal which ends at 8:00 PM unless you are dismissed by the conductor or manager.** This includes sectional rehearsals as well as full rehearsals. If specific members are not needed for part of the rehearsal, they will be notified in advance (whenever possible). During the week leading up to the June concert, rehearsals will be from 5:30-8:30 PM.

If for any reason you cannot attend a rehearsal you must call or text **BYSO Manager, Anthonio Reyes immediately at (661) 440-3606.**

If you know that you are going to miss a **concert**, you must submit a letter or email Anthonio Reyes at bysomanager@gmail.com for approval to the Board of Directors prior to the first rehearsal for that concert.

You are expected to resolve any work-related conflicts with your employer that may arise during the year.

ATTENDANCE AT ALL REHEARSALS IS MANDATORY. THREE TARDIES TO REHEARSALS WILL EQUAL ONE ABSENCE. STUDENTS THAT MISS MAY NOT BE ELIGIBLE TO PERFORM AT THE CONCERT.

DRESS CODE FOR CONCERTS

Please come to the dress rehearsal already dressed in your concert attire.

Women:

- Mid-calf or full-length black dress with no slit above the knee. **No sleeveless, plunging neckline, or backless dresses.** Black dress pants (no skin-tight pants, no jeans) with a black blouse are acceptable.
- You must wear black hosiery or long black socks with **all outfits**. Black dress shoes; no open toed shoes, no athletic shoes.
- No sequins, lettering, contrasting trims, or distracting jewelry or hair ornaments.

Men:

- Black jacket and black dress pants (**no jeans**) or a black tuxedo.
- **BLACK** button-down dress shirt.
- **LONG BLACK TIE**
- Long black socks and black dress shoes (**no athletic shoes**).

IF YOU ARRIVE FOR A CONCERT DRESSED INAPPROPRIATELY, YOU WILL BE SENT HOME TO CHANGE OR YOU WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO PLAY.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

To remain in good standing, members of the BYSO must maintain a professional attitude. Anything less than exemplary behavior is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. This includes, in part, tardiness, poor attendance, inattention, excessive talking, eating, use of cellphones, doing homework during rehearsals, or general disruptive behavior. Students who have disciplinary problems will be referred to the Board of Directors for parental contact and possible dismissal from the BYSO.

MEMBERSHIP AUDITIONS

All students must audition in September for membership for the current season. Special auditions may need to be held during the season to fill vacancies should they arise.

In the violin section, the eight highest scoring violins will be seated as such:

1 st rank	Violin 1, Seat 1 (concertmaster)
2 nd rank	Violin 2, Seat 1
3 rd rank	Violin 1, Seat 2
4 th rank	Violin 2, Seat 2
5 th rank	Violin 1, Seat 3
6 th rank	Violin 2, Seat 3
7 th rank	Violin 1, Seat 4
8 th rank	Violin 2, Seat 4

These eight chairs will be seated in this arrangement for the first and third concerts. They will switch parts for the second concert. This arrangement allows for the strongest players to be balanced between the two violin sections. It also allows the first four Violin 2 chairs an opportunity to play the Violin 1 part and gives the principal chair in the Violin 2 section an opportunity to learn and develop his/her skills as concertmaster.

ELIGIBILITY

Membership in the BYSO is open to students in the 7th grade through 19 years of age at the time of auditions unless exceptions have been approved by the conductor.

Members shall be enrolled and in good standing in their school orchestra (or other appropriate ensemble as agreed upon by their school director) where available.

High school students in the Bakersfield Symphony Orchestra are required to participate in the BYSO.

FEES

A non-refundable audition fee of \$25 is due at the time of application to the BYSO. Upon acceptance into the BYSO, a tuition of \$250 is due and payable by check or cash by the first rehearsal. The fee helps pay for the facilities, conductor, manager, music, folders, coaches, and other BYSO performance needs. Failure to comply will result in dismissal. A tuition discount is offered for families of 2 or more BYSO members at a rate of \$25 off per member.

FINANCIAL AID FOR TUITION AND PRIVATE LESSONS

A limited amount of tuition financial aid is available for people who qualify. To apply for consideration of financial aid, please fill out our financial aid form. The form is found on our website and must be accompanied by your 2025 income tax return information. Financial Aid forms MUST be turned in by the second rehearsal, September 27.

All BYSO students are encouraged to take private lessons. If you are unable to afford lessons, the BYSO is offering Financial Aid for Private Lessons to help offset the cost. To apply, fill out the Financial Aid form and check the box for Private Music Lesson Aid. This form MUST also be turned in by the second rehearsal.

COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS

In order to be eligible for college scholarship consideration, BYSO members must meet the following requirements:

- At least two years of membership that includes one or more years from junior and senior years of high school and/or two years of junior college.
- A clean attendance record for rehearsals and concerts. (See Attendance Policy.)

Award amounts are determined by the BYSO Board of Directors.

A college scholarship is only granted once per member. A member who is granted a scholarship following high school graduation then continues to perform with BYSO while studying at CSUB or Bakersfield College cannot reapply. A student may choose to wait to apply until after he/she is a student at CSUB or Bakersfield College, but the application must be submitted the last concert of the season of their second year of college.

Members wishing to apply for a scholarship must submit the application form to the Board of Directors by the last concert of the season.

BYSO CONCERTO COMPETITION GUIDELINES

Please read carefully before applying!

The purpose of the competition is to determine who will have the honor of performing a concerto with the BYSO during the 2027-2028 concert season.

1. From one to three BYSO winners will be chosen for the concert season in the categories of piano, string, wind, and percussion.
 2. Youth Symphony members may only perform one time in each consecutive four-year period with the BYSO. Students may perform again after four consecutively enrolled years in BYSO. Students must remain in good standing for the duration of their tenure with the organization in order to be eligible to be selected as a winner.
 3. A candidate must choose one movement of a concerto or appropriate repertoire that is available from the publisher for rental or purchase and is appropriate for BYSO to perform. *It is highly recommended that you check with the BYSO conductor before you start your preparation to see if your repertoire choice is appropriate for the ensemble.*
 4. There will be a staff page-turner; no family members or teachers will be in the room with the performers.
 5. Memorization is encouraged but not required.
 6. Each student may audition only one time per year.
 7. An experienced panel of jurors will select the soloist(s) best qualified to perform with the Youth Symphony during the coming season.
 8. The BYSO conductor will make the final repertoire selection and determine in which concert the winner(s) will perform.
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NON-BYSO Members:

1. Up to one non-BYSO student who plays a non-BYSO instrument may also be chosen for the 2026-2027 concert season.
2. Non-BYSO students who play instruments not auditioned for in BYSO (such as piano, guitar, etc.) may also audition for a concerto spot. A non-refundable audition fee of \$25 is required to audition. Winners are required to be at all rehearsals for their concert and are required to pay a non-refundable tuition fee of \$85. Non-BYSO students who have previously performed as a winner with the Youth Symphony may not compete.
3. Concerto competition guidelines #3-8 above apply to non-BYSO Students as well.

*If you have any questions about the BYSO concerto competition, please contact
bysomanager@gmail.com*

MUSIC FOLDERS

Bakersfield Youth Symphony Orchestra members will be issued a music folder and music prior to/at the first rehearsal of the season. Members are required to keep their folders and music in good condition. Always bring your music folder to rehearsal, even if you do not plan on using it at that rehearsal! All folders must be turned in the day of the concert. Music for the next concert will be issued at that time. You will be charged \$30 for a missing folder.

PARENT VOLUNTEERS

Parents are strongly encouraged to volunteer for the many tasks necessary to make the BYSO successful. To volunteer, please speak to any one of our Board Members of the Executive Committee or Directors-at-Large. All parents will need to sign up to bring water or snacks at a rehearsal. Check our website for the schedule. If you do not sign up, you will be assigned a date.

IN CLOSING

The Board of Directors appreciates your taking time to read this handbook. We hope that it will be of help to you this year. If you have any questions about this handbook or anything else pertaining to the BYSO, please contact the orchestra manager, Anthonio Reyes at (661) 440-3606 or email her at bysomanager@gmail.com.

Check the BYSO website for updates and other information throughout the year at www.bysorocks.org.

Bakersfield Youth Symphony Orchestra 2026-2027 Season

Expect to be at rehearsals 15 minutes before they begin, in your seat, warmed up, and ready to play. Bring all your music with you to each rehearsal and a pencil with an eraser. Attendance at every rehearsal and performance is **mandatory**. Three tardies to rehearsals will equal one absence. Students that miss rehearsals may not be eligible to perform at the concert. Contact the Orchestra Manager, Anthonio Reyes at (661) 440-3606 if you have any questions. **You are expected to be on time and ready to play and are required to stay through the entire rehearsal unless you are dismissed by the Conductor or Manager. This includes sectional rehearsals as well as full rehearsals.** If you know that you are going to miss a **concert**, you must submit a letter to the Board of Directors for **approval prior to the first rehearsal for that concert**. You are expected to resolve any work-related conflicts with your employer that may arise during the year.

- All rehearsals will be in the CSUB Music Building

On concert days you should come to the rehearsal in concert dress. Bring all your music with you.

Tickets are available at the door 30 minutes before the concert: \$10 for adults and \$5 for seniors and students.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Purpose</u>	<u>Location</u>
September 12 (Saturday)	Auditions	CSUB Music Building
September 15 (Tuesday)	Pick-up music 4:00-5:30 PM	CSUB
September 20 (Sunday)	Rehearsal – 5:30-8:00 PM	CSUB Band Room
	Parent Meeting – 5:30 PM	CSUB Choir Room
	BYSO Tuition Payment Due - \$250	
September 27 (Sunday)	Rehearsal 5:30-8:00 PM	CSUB Band Room
October 4 (Sunday)	Rehearsal 5:30-8:00 PM	CSUB Band Room
October 11 (Sunday)	Rehearsal 5:30-8:00 PM	CSUB Band Room
October 18 (Sunday)	Rehearsal 5:30-8:00 PM	CSUB Band Room
October 25 (Sunday)	Rehearsal 5:30-8:00 PM	CSUB Band Room
November 1 (Sunday)	Rehearsal 5:30-8:00 PM	CSUB Band Room
November 8 (Sunday)	Rehearsal 5:30-8:00 PM	CSUB Dore Theater
November 15 (Sunday)	Dress rehearsal 1:30 PM	CONCERT 4:00 PM
		Dore Theater
January 10 (Sunday)	Rehearsal 5:30-8:00 PM	CSUB Band Room
	Concerto applications available	
+January 18 (Monday)	Rehearsal 5:30-8:00 PM	CSUB Band Room
January 24 (Sunday)	Rehearsal 5:30-8:00 PM	CSUB Band Room
January 31 (Sunday)	Rehearsal 5:30-8:00 PM	CSUB Band Room
+February 8 (Monday)	Rehearsal 6:15-8:30 PM	CSUB Band Room
+February 15 (Monday)	NO REHEARSAL – PRESIDENT'S DAY	
February 21 (Sunday)	Rehearsal 5:30-8:00 PM	CSUB Band Room
February 28 (Sunday)	Rehearsal 5:30-8:00 PM	CSUB Band Room
March 7 (Sunday)	Rehearsal 5:30-8:00 PM	Bakersfield College Indoor Theater
March 14 (Sunday)	Dress rehearsal 1:30 PM	Concert 4:00 PM
		BC Theater
March 14 (Sunday)	Concerto applications due	
May 2 (Sunday)	Concerto Auditions – Afternoon/Evening	CSUB Choir Room
June 1 (Tuesday)	Rehearsal 5:30-8:30 PM	CSUB Band Room
June 2 (Wednesday)	Rehearsal 5:30-8:30 PM	CSUB Band Room
June 3 (Thursday)	Rehearsal 5:30-8:30 PM	CSUB Band Room
June 4 (Friday)	Rehearsal 5:30-8:30 PM	CSUB Band Room
June 5 (Saturday)	Rehearsal 10:00 AM-1:00 PM	CSUB Dore Theater
June 5 (Saturday)	Pizza Party after rehearsal at CSUB	
June 6 (Sunday)	Dress rehearsal 1:30	Concert 4:00
		CSUB Dore Theater

+ Monday rehearsal because of holiday weekend

Bakersfield Youth Symphony Orchestra

Member Contract

To audition and be accepted as a member of the 2026-2027 Bakersfield Youth Symphony Orchestra is an honor and a privilege. With that privilege comes the responsibility of being an integral part of the orchestra and your section. Following the guidelines set forth in the handbook, including attendance policies and dress code, insures the best musical experience for all members involved.

Student:

I understand that to maintain my membership I must practice the music and attend all rehearsals and concerts for the entire season. I have read the Bakersfield Youth Symphony Student Handbook and I understand the commitment necessary to maintain my membership in the orchestra. I understand that my membership may be reviewed by the Board, and I may be dismissed from the orchestra (without refund of fees) if I do not follow the guidelines set by the BYSO Board.

I am currently enrolled and in good standing in my school instrumental group. I understand to maintain my position in the BYSO, I must continue to participate in my school orchestra group (or other appropriate ensemble as agreed upon with my school director) throughout the 2026-2027 school year.

Please sign below and bring this contract with you to the next BYSO rehearsal.

Student Name (Please Print)

Student Signature

Date

School I am currently attending

Name of School Instrumental Director

School Director Signature

**Parent:

I understand that parental support is an integral part of my student's success and will make every effort to attend the concerts. I understand that if I am unable to attend, ***I will ensure that my student is picked up promptly at the end of all rehearsals and concerts.***

**Parent Signature (if student is a minor)

Date