

THE FOX VALLEY  
YOUTH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRAS  
*(Affiliated with The Fox Valley Academy of Music Performance)*

Handbook  
(Student/Parent Agreement)  
2009-2010  
Season

## Welcome to The Fox Valley Youth Symphony Orchestras

Welcome to the Fox Valley Youth Symphony Orchestras! Your acceptance into these ensembles is an indication that you desire to be challenged; that you thrive on being encouraged to excel at your art; and that you derive great personal pleasure from studying and mastering musical literature.

As Music Director, I am looking forward to getting to know you, both musically and personally. I am also looking forward to doing some special performances throughout the Fox Valley area.

I am very proud of the accomplishments of our ensembles. Our program has grown immensely since its inception. We have studied and performed works by Beethoven, Handel, Purcell, Stamitz, Mozart, Rossini, Grieg, Strauss, Vivaldi, Copeland and others. I anticipate that all of our ensembles will rise to the highest levels of performance and gain wide recognition for their excellence. I am excited to have you sharing this journey with me and look forward to getting to know you, both musically and personally.

Our staff of highly trained and highly respected professionals is always eager to help you in any way that they can, so never hesitate to come to us with your concerns or suggestions I know that you will find them to be compassionate and caring individuals.

There are many expectations detailed in this handbook with which you should become very familiar, including attendance, personal preparation and school music program participation. With scores of students expected to participate in our ensembles each year, it is important that things operate smoothly. Please take a few moments and familiarize yourself with the expectations outlined in this handbook.

I look forward to working with you this year!

Best regards –

Jason R. Palmer  
Music Director

## MISSION STATEMENT

*The mission of the Fox Valley Youth Symphony Orchestras is to provide a challenging opportunity for talented musicians to study and perform great music together, while fostering creativity, friendships, and lifelong enrichment through the common language of music.*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
A. Fox Valley Youth Symphony Orchestras	5
1. Music Director/ Conductor	5
2. Fox Valley Youth Symphony Orchestra	6
3. Fox Valley Academy Orchestra	6
4. Fox Valley Youth Strings	6
5. Sinfonia Baroque	7
6. Fox Valley Flutes	7
7. Summer Symphony/Chamber Music Institute	7
B. Expectations	9
1. Attendance	9
2. Absences	9
3. Tardiness	9
4. Section Coaches	9
5. School Participation	9
6. Dress Rehearsals	9
7. Dress Rehearsal Dates and Times	10
8. Concerts	10
9. Concert Attire	10
10. Music and Folders	10
11. Personal Rehearsal	11
12. A Few Reminders	11
C. Other Important Information	12
1. Seating	12
2. Promoting Performances	12
3. Summer Symphony	12
4. Tours	12
5. Membership	12
6. Auditions	12
7. College Credit	13
8. Private Lessons	13
9. Recruitment	13
10. Tuition	13
12. Volunteer Opportunities/Requirements	13
13. Communication	14
14. Fundraising	14
15. Concert Tickets	14
16. Questions	14
17. Contact Information	14
18. Board of Directors/Executive Staff	14
D. Student/Parent/Handbook Agreement Form	15

# THE FOX VALLEY YOUTH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRAS

## Music Director/Conductor

The Fox Valley Youth Symphony Orchestras were created as a result of the life long vision of the conductor, Jason Palmer. Jason began his journey of music at age 9 while studying both the piano and the trumpet. By age 14, he had taught himself to play the organ, was teaching piano professionally, and guest performing at functions throughout Northern Illinois. While in High School, he consistently won first place in Illinois' highly regarded Mendelssohn Competition. Mr. Palmer went on to study piano and voice at Northern Illinois University. While attending college, he served as the Choral Director of the Tour Choir of the University Methodist Church/Wesley Foundation and founded the Student Baroque Ensemble which he directed and also played the harpsichord. In 1977, Mr. Palmer was awarded first place for his composition "Two Psalms" through the Religious Composition Contest held in DeKalb, Illinois.

Mr. Palmer has a long and distinguished career as a professional musician in the Fox Valley area. He has served as an organist and choirmaster for over 30 years, serving congregations in the Fox Valley. He has also served many years as the Music Director for the Fox Valley Festival Chorus. Five years ago, Mr. Palmer and his wife founded The Fox Valley Academy of Music Performance. In those few short years, the organization has grown from one orchestra program to seven, and most recently includes the highly regarded Fox Valley Philharmonic, the areas semi-professional adult symphony orchestra.

Mr. Palmer holds degrees in music from Northern Illinois University. He is the composer of more than 20 choral works and several children's musicals. He is currently Director of Music for The Fox Valley Academy of Music Performance where he conducts The Fox Valley Philharmonic as well as The Fox Valley Youth Symphony Orchestra and The Academy Orchestra. Mr. Palmer also serves as the Music Director, Senior Organist and Choirmaster at Our Savior Lutheran Church in Aurora.

We, at the Fox Valley Academy of Music Performance, wish to welcome you to our organization. We are confident that your experiences with us will be rewarding ones for years to come.

Warmest Regards,

The Board of Directors of The Fox Valley Academy of Music Performance

# The Fox Valley Youth Symphony Orchestras

## Fox Valley Youth Symphony Orchestra

This is The Academy's top performance orchestra and is designed for the serious musician who desires to sharpen their skills as they perform an exceptionally challenging repertoire. College and professional level works are studied and performed.

### Rehearsal Schedule:

**Sundays 1:00-3:00 PM**  
(Summer- 1:00-3:00)

### Rehearsal Location:

Eden of North Aurora  
311 S. Lincolnway (RT. 31)  
North Aurora, IL. 60542

Fall Season Concert:

Sunday, December 13, 2009 at 3:00 pm

Spring Season Concert:

Sunday, April 25, 2010 at 3:00 pm

## Fox Valley Academy Orchestra

An intermediate performance orchestra designed to challenge young musicians. This ensemble focuses primarily on mastering the skills and techniques necessary for advancement to the Fox Valley Youth Symphony Orchestra.

### Rehearsal Schedule:

**Sundays 4:00-5:30 PM.**  
(Summer- 1:00-3:00)

### Rehearsal Location:

Eden of North Aurora  
311 S. Lincolnway (RT 31)  
North Aurora, IL. 60542

Fall Season Concert:

Sunday, December 13, 2009 at 3:00 pm

Spring Season Concert:

Sunday, April 25, 2010 at 3:00 pm

## Fox Valley Youth Strings

This ensemble is designed for young string musicians who have studied and played for at least two years. This is the first orchestra experience for students enrolled in grades four through eight. Students should be playing at or above the Suzuki Book mid 2 level. Violin and viola students should be able to shift comfortably and play/read in the 3<sup>rd</sup> position. Cello and bass students should be able to shift comfortably and play/read in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> positions. All students should be able to play scales up to three sharps and three flats in two octaves.

### Rehearsal schedule:

**Sundays 1:30-2:45 pm**  
(Summer- 1:00-2:30)

### Rehearsal Location:

Eden of North Aurora  
Concert Schedule: Same as above

**Note: All musicians are expected to be in their chairs and ready to rehearse promptly at the scheduled rehearsal time.**

# The Fox Valley Youth Symphony Specialty Ensembles

## Sinfonia Baroque

This elite chamber group consisting of the areas finest string musicians selected by invitation only, will experience music as only the professional musician can. A near perfect performance is what this group of talented high school students will strive for in every performance of challenging repertoire. Guest artists will be invited several times a year to work with the musicians to challenge and perfect their skills. Performance opportunities throughout the year will showcase these ensembles talents and help them to establish meaningful connections within the community that will benefit them into their future.

### Rehearsal Schedule

**Tuesdays 7:00-8:30pm**

### Rehearsal Location

The Music Director's home

\*note: membership in the Fox Valley Youth Symphony Orchestra is also required

## Fox Valley Flutes

An energetic flock of flautists make up this ensemble designed to take the art of flute playing to the highest level. FVF will perform music written specifically for flute choirs and will be featured during The Fox Valley Youth Symphony concerts as well as on their own at special occasions.

### Rehearsal schedule:

**Sundays 3:00-4:00**

(Summer- 3:15-4:15)

### Rehearsal Location:

Eden of North Aurora

Fall Season Concert:

Sunday, December 13, 2009 at 3:00 pm

Spring Season Concert:

Sunday, April 25, 2010 at 3:00 pm

## Chamber Music Institute

Selected members rehearse in small ensembles to develop listening and leadership skills in addition to improving their musical abilities. Ensembles arrange their own rehearsal schedule. Highly trained coaches assist each ensemble in selecting appropriate music and in fine tuning the overall sound of the group. Chamber ensembles that are sufficiently prepared to perform their work will be include on the regular Academy concert programs.

### Rehearsal schedule:

**Sundays 3:00-4:00**

### Rehearsal Location:

Eden of North Aurora

Fall Season Concert:

Sunday, December 13, 2009 at 3:00 pm

Spring Season Concert:

Sunday, April 25, 2010 at 3:00 pm

## Summer Symphony

Never a dull moment. Summer comes alive with music during May-July as this purely fun group of musicians gathers together once a week to play popular music from today's movies and song tracks. A combined group of talented High School and Middle School musicians share mentoring and role modeling as well as friendship and fun.

Rehearsal schedule:

(See individual group times above)

Rehearsal Location:

Eden of North Aurora

Summer Season : Sundays

Concerts:

Dress rehearsal:

Rain Date:

## Expectations

### **Attendance**

Attendance is taken at every rehearsal and students are responsible for signing in before the beginning of the rehearsal.

Arriving late to a rehearsal is disruptive; therefore we require that students **arrive at least fifteen minutes early** to prepare for the rehearsal. **All students should be warmed up, tuned and seated prior to the start of the rehearsal.** If, for some reason a student arrives late, they will be expected to tune up outside of the rehearsal area. Each student is required to have his/her own electronic tuner.

### **Absences**

Orchestra members are allowed only **2 absences per semester whether excused or unexcused.** A conference will be scheduled with any student who exceeds the allowed number of absences to discuss continued participation in the ensemble. The Music Director reserves the right to dismiss any student for a lack of commitment (including but not limited to absences, lack of part preparation and behavioral problems).

### **Tardiness**

Rehearsal time is limited so starting promptly is very important. Arriving late or leaving early will be noted and every 3 occurrences will be counted as a single absence. In the case of an emergency the day of the rehearsal / concert, please call 630-879-8018 (office) or 630/269-6534 (cell phone) before rehearsal/concert begins.

### **Section Coaches**

Section coaches will be sitting in on rehearsals periodically to observe and offer their expert advice on improvement. We are privileged to have these professional musicians share their expertise with us.

### **School Participation**

Starting in the fall of 2009, all new musicians are **expected** to participate in their school music ensembles. Participating in both a school music program and the Fox Valley Youth Symphony Orchestras program provides many benefits to young musicians including experience playing a wider variety of music, development of technique and musicianship and the opportunity to work with and gain knowledge from different music directors. If, for whatever reason, you cannot participate in your school music programs, we will require a note from your school music director, or guidance counselor.

Every attempt is made to avoid scheduling conflicts with area school events. Please compare our program/concert calendar with your school events calendar and discuss any pending conflicts with the Music Director as early as possible.

### **Dress Rehearsals**

**Dress rehearsals are mandatory.** Casual dress is appropriate as this is a working session. Dress rehearsals are scheduled for the Saturday before each concert. Parents are encouraged to stay and listen to the dress rehearsals.

## Concert/ Dress Rehearsal Dates and Times (subject to change)

Fall 2009 Concert Date	Fall Dress Rehearsal Date	Fall Dress Rehearsal Time	Spring 2010 Concert Date	Spring Dress Rehearsal Date	Spring Dress Rehearsal Time
12/13	12/12	1:00	4/25	4/24	1:00 pm

### Concerts

All of the orchestras and ensembles will perform in concert several times each season. A dessert reception will follow each concert where families and guests may greet the musicians. Students are encouraged to invite their private teachers and other prospective students to see them perform.

### Concert Attire (school year)

#### Fox Valley Youth Symphony Orchestra

Ladies: Full length black skirt or black dress slacks with black top with discreet neckline and long sleeves or full length black dress with discreet neckline and long sleeves. If sleeves are short, a matching black jacket or black sweater with long sleeves is required to be worn. Black conservative dress shoes with black tights or black pantyhose (no patterns). Jeans and cords are not acceptable. No perfume or cologne, please.

Gentlemen: Tuxedo (not tails), white shirt with a black bow tie, all black dress shoes and black socks. No cologne or aftershave, please.

#### Fox Valley Academy Orchestra

Ladies: Full length black skirt or black dress slacks with white top with discreet neckline and long sleeves. Black conservative dress shoes with black tights or black pantyhose (no patterns). Jeans and cords are not acceptable. No perfume or cologne, please.

Gentlemen: Black dress slacks, white shirt with a black bow tie, all black dress shoes and black socks. Jeans and cords are not acceptable. No cologne or aftershave, please.

#### Fox Valley Youth Strings

Ladies: Full length black skirt or black dress slacks with white top with discreet neckline and long sleeves. Black conservative dress shoes with black tights or black pantyhose (no patterns). Jeans and cords are not acceptable. No perfume or cologne, please.

Gentlemen: Black dress slacks, white shirt with a black bow tie, all black dress shoes and black socks. Jeans and cords are not acceptable. No cologne or aftershave, please.

### Music and Folders (fvyso and fvao only)

Each ensemble member is assigned a black music folder at the beginning of the season. A fine of \$30 will be charged for music folders not returned by the end of the season. Every musician is responsible for his/her own folder and the music issued. Music is expensive. Some of the music is rented and replacement part charges can range from \$5 to \$30. Please handle music carefully and return it on time. Students will be charged the replacement cost for any lost music.

## **Personal Rehearsal**

**\*\*\*Students are expected to prepare their parts outside of rehearsal.** Rehearsal is **NOT** the time to learn the part; it is the time to learn how the individual part fits with the ensemble. Students are expected to devote the amount of practice time necessary to learn their part. Our organization works hard to maintain its high standard of excellence and we expect our musicians to demand no less of themselves. If we feel that a musician is not devoting enough time to their practice, we reserve the right to move that musician to a more appropriate orchestra.

Students are expected to bring their music to every rehearsal. In the event that some music is shared with another student, the absent student must make arrangements to have his/her music there for the benefit of the other student.

**Only pencil marks are allowed on the music.** Each student should have at least two sharp pencils in his/her case or folder at all times.

### **A FEW REMINDERS**

#### **For woodwinds**

- Have a supply of extra reeds available at every rehearsal and concert.

#### **For brass**

- All students must have a straight mute available at each rehearsal.

#### **For strings**

- Have a mute at each rehearsal.
- Have a shoulder rest (as needed), rosin, dust cloth, and an extra set of strings available at rehearsal.
- \* Cellists need to have their own rock stops.

#### **For percussionists**

- Have own snare sticks, timpani pitch pipe, and mallet bag.
- Complete any necessary setup before rehearsal begins.

## Other Important Information

### **Seating**

Seating within a section is at the discretion of the Music Director. Seating may change during the course of the season. Musicians may challenge each other for placement at the close of a semester and, if successful, the new placement would take effect the following semester.

### **Promoting Performances/Auditions**

Students are expected to promote concerts and auditions by distributing posters which will be made available for displaying in your community. Students are asked to place posters in their orchestra/band room at school if approved by their teacher. Families are required to sell a block of tickets for each concert (5 tickets per concert). The cost of the blocks of tickets is included in the tuition for the school year. Summer Symphony participants will need to purchase 5 tickets for resale (\$40.00). Two complimentary tickets are provided for each family for each concert.

### **Membership**

Membership in the Fox Valley Youth Symphony Orchestras program is open to any qualified musician who auditions and is accepted. Acceptance is based upon many factors, including age, experience, technical proficiency, and the personnel needs of each orchestra. The Fox Valley Youth Symphony Orchestras program is dedicated to educating a diverse group of musicians.

Membership in the program is a commitment **for the entire season**, from the first rehearsal in September through the final concert in April. Members are expected to be actively involved and committed for the entire season.

### **Auditions**

Auditions for incoming musicians and re-auditions (where necessary) for existing musicians are held in the spring for the summer and upcoming school year season. Previous participation is no guarantee of placement in the program in the fall. Those accepted into the program will pay a non-refundable deposit of \$100 toward their fall tuition in order to secure their spot. Additional auditions will be held throughout the year as necessary.

Auditions are private and acceptance to the program is based upon:

- Technique and musicianship
- Tone quality; and
- Sight-reading ability

### **College Credit**

Members of the Fox Valley Youth Symphony Orchestra, who are age 16 or older at the beginning of the semester, may qualify to receive college credit from Waubensee Community College (WCC) for their participation. To receive college credit, the student must pay a minimal course fee and register before the start of each semester with WCC. Grades will be mailed by WCC after each concert. Significant absences will affect grades. Please request enrollment information from the Music Director before the start of the WCC semester.

## Private Lessons

FVYSO strongly encourages all students to take private lessons on their particular instrument. Students who study privately do better on auditions and grow faster as musicians. FVYSO maintains a list of private instructors. A copy of the list may be obtained by request from the Music Director or by calling 630-879-8018. Those musicians who cannot afford private lessons should speak with the Music Director about special arrangements.

## Recruitment

Students and parents are expected to recruit new musicians to our programs throughout the year. Often it is the recommendation of a member or a parent that brings interested students to our programs.

## Tuition

Tuition includes instruction, all music and materials and time with section coaches. Payment can be made in full for the entire year or paid in two (2) installments (see below). If you need an extended payment schedule, please call 630-879-8018 and terms will be arranged. Each student who makes a referral to the program that results in a new member will be credited \$25.00 towards their tuition. Financial aid will be offered as needed and only if funds are available (see financial aid below). Extended tours outside the area will be funded separately by the musician's family and through fundraisers. For current tuition charges, please call the Fox Valley Youth Symphony Orchestras office, at (630) 879-8018, or email us at [MusicDirector@fvacademy.org](mailto:MusicDirector@fvacademy.org).

**Payment Methods:** All funds received must be in the form of a check or money order made payable to: "FVAMP" (The Fox Valley Academy of Music Performance). NO CASH will be accepted. Please be sure to include student's full name (first and last) on each check or money order. Bank fees resulting from a returned check are the responsibility of the paying party.

Payment is due **before** the first rehearsal at the start of the fall season, or by installments.

**Installment payments (optional):** Installment payments are to be made as follows-

1<sup>st</sup> installment- August 23 rd  
Final installment- November 1st

## Tuition Assistance/Scholarships

Tuition Assistance may be available for **part** of a musician's tuition. All Tuition Assistance recipients are expected to pay a portion of their tuition. Request a Tuition Assistance form on your Application or print one from the document link on our website. The amount of assistance available each season is dependent upon contributions, fund raising and grants received. **All recipients of assistance must volunteer one (1) hour for every \$10 dollars of tuition assistance received.**

## Volunteer Opportunities

There are many volunteer opportunities with the Fox Valley Youth Symphony Orchestras. If you have a particular talent, expertise or area of interest, we would greatly appreciate your help. Some of the needs for help are: check in table each week, concert helpers, marketing, public relations, Board Member, Volunteer Coordinator, phone tree, certificate makers, concert programs, ushers, secretarial, book keeping, advertising help, etc. Please call our office at 630/879-8018 to sign up. Musicians in need of volunteer hours, or wishing to fulfill college entrance requirements for community service may fulfill all of their requirements with Academy opportunities. For more information, call the office. 630/879-8018.

## Communication

Important information will be put into each musician's check in folder. Musicians are responsible to check their folder before their rehearsal time and take information home to their parents.

## Fund Raising

All of our families are required to participate in all of our fundraising activities each year. We strive to make our fundraisers as easy and affordable as possible to all of our families.

## Concert Tickets

Each family will be supplied with a block of 5 tickets for each of our two concerts that can be resold. **The cost of your tickets is included on your tuition invoice each year** (so, when you sell them, you get your money back). Two additional complimentary tickets will be allotted to each family per concert.

## Questions?

Visit our website at [www.fvyso.org](http://www.fvyso.org), call us at 630/879-8018, or you may E-mail us at [MusicDirector@fvacademy.org](mailto:MusicDirector@fvacademy.org). This handbook is intended to provide quick reference for common questions. New information throughout the season will be distributed to parents and students as necessary. Please make sure to keep your contact information up to date with our office. We mostly communicate via e-mail, but occasionally we will perform a phone blast when important information must be received immediately. Please make sure that the appropriate person in your family receives the symphony's information.

## Contact Information:

**Mailing address:** The Fox Valley Academy of Music Performance  
1242 Woodland Ave. Batavia, IL 60510

**Telephone:** (630) 879-8018 **E-mail:** Mr. Palmer at [MusicDirector@fvacademy.org](mailto:MusicDirector@fvacademy.org) or Mrs. Palmer at [Riverwoodcms@comcast.net](mailto:Riverwoodcms@comcast.net) **Website:** [www.fvyso.org](http://www.fvyso.org)

**Jamie Palmer**, Executive Director

**Jason R. Palmer**, Music Director

# The Fox Valley Youth Symphony Orchestras

Student/Parent/ Agreement

2009 – 2010 Season

I, \_\_\_\_\_ have read the handbook and agree to accept the policies described herein as a condition of being a student of the Fox Valley Youth Symphony Orchestras. I realize that if I fail to follow any of these policies, I may be dismissed from the Fox Valley Youth Symphony Orchestras program.

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\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Date of Birth

\_\_\_\_\_  
Partial Tuition Assistance and special payment plans may be available for families in financial need and are based upon the availability of funds and proof of earnings (w-2 and income tax return). All families receiving tuition assistance will volunteer 1 hour for every \$10.00 of tuition assistance that they receive.

\_\_\_\_\_ Check here if you need tuition assistance or a payment plan.