

Statement of Common Cause: Orchestras Support In-School Music Education

Music education improves the learning environment and engages teachers and caregivers in children's learning. Students who participate in ensemble music-making create joy, human connection, and expressions of individual and shared cultural identities. **America's orchestras are committed to advocating for equitable access to comprehensive and sequential music education in our nation's schools.**

Research has proven that arts education provides academic and social benefits and is essential to a complete education for all students, preparing them for success in school, work, and life. There is also clear proof that musical training during childhood can lead to markedly accelerated brain development. The status of music education in our nation's schools has short- and long-term consequences for both student achievement and the future of orchestras.

Educational activities in orchestras have grown exponentially over the past two decades. Starting from the tradition of stand-alone school-day and family concerts, orchestras now offer small ensemble performances, residencies and long-term partnerships, after-school and summer camps, intensive instrumental instruction and ensemble experiences, early childhood and teen programs, and a host of other activities occurring during the school day as well as during out-of-school time. In addition to more than 1,200 professional and community orchestras, there are now nearly 500 youth orchestras in communities across the United States. Orchestra programs strive for deeply embedded partnerships with local school systems and community-based music (and other) organizations that are informed by current and emerging community needs, and responsive to local, state, and national arts and academic standards.

While these programs and initiatives of orchestras provide an opportunity for young people to develop and deepen a lifelong relationship with music and to learn more about themselves and the world around them through the orchestral tradition, they do not and cannot, nor should they, replace a standards-based K-12 music education.

America's Orchestras are Committed to:

Advocating for In-School Music Education

Orchestras believe:

- A child's education is not complete unless it includes the arts. The arts are an academic subject essential to a well-rounded education, and music is vital to maximizing a child's potential. Ensemble music-making in schools is an important part of a complete education.
- Schools are in a unique position to deliver comprehensive, high-quality, systemic music education to all students. Orchestras will serve as a resource in this effort, supporting the work of school-based music educators.
- Beginning at a very young age, robust education related to music of many genres and cultures is a key ingredient to youth development, and to creating opportunities for equity and access for all students through the arts.
- After-school hours are a vulnerable time for many young people, and orchestras support initiatives with intensive music learning for students regardless of economic status.
- The needs of students should be at the center of education advocacy efforts. Orchestras' education programs are most effective when developed to address the needs of student learners in partnership with school leaders (teachers, administrators, caregivers), local arts organizations, and other stakeholders.

Being Informed Advocates

Orchestras commit to:

- Understanding the status of in-school music education in their communities and in local districts, and advocating for accurate data and accountability about how much and what kind of music instruction students receive.
- Discovering, implementing, and sharing best practices in advocacy for comprehensive, high-quality in-school music education through sustainable partnerships with all advocates in the community.
- Consulting with educators, administrators, and community leaders to understand how orchestra resources and strengths can best address the unique needs of students, schools, and communities.

Taking Action

Orchestras seek to improve the status of in-school music education by:

- Ensuring music education advocacy is a role for everyone in the orchestra family—staff, musicians, trustees, volunteers, and audiences.
- Advocating for policies that support the presence of qualified in-school music educators and that demonstrably improve access to high-quality music education for all students, particularly in low-income and underfunded schools.
- Proactively forming sustainable advocacy relationships with school partners, policy leaders, and community stakeholders to secure the success of every child's music education.
- Participating in forums where local, state, and national education policies are determined by listening to community needs and communicating the benefits of systemic K-12 music education.

To date, the following orchestras have endorsed the statement of common cause:

Akron Symphony Orchestra	Dallas Symphony Orchestra
Alabama Symphony Orchestra	Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra
Albany Symphony (NY)	DC Strings Orchestra
The Alhambra Orchestra	DC Youth Orchestra Program
Altoona Symphony Orchestra	Delaware Symphony Orchestra
Amarillo Symphony	Denver Young Artists Orchestra
American Composers Orchestra	Duluth Superior Symphony Orchestra
American Youth Philharmonic Orchestras	Eastern Connecticut Symphony
Anchorage Symphony Orchestra	El Camino Youth Symphony
Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra	El Paso Symphony Youth Orchestras
Annapolis Symphony Orchestra	El Sistema USA
Asheville Symphony	Elgin Symphony Orchestra
Aspen Music Festival and School	Elgin Youth Symphony Orchestra
Association of California Symphony Orchestras (ACSO)	Erie Philharmonic
Atlanta Symphony Orchestra	Etowah Youth Orchestras
Atlanta Symphony Youth Orchestra	Eugene Junior Orchestra
Auburn Civic Symphony (CA)	Eugene Little Symphony
Austin Symphony Orchestra	Eugene Symphony
Baltimore Chamber Orchestra	Eugene Youth Symphony
Baltimore Symphony Orchestra	Evansville Philharmonic Orchestra
Bay Youth Orchestras of Virginia	Fairfax Symphony Orchestra
Bellevue Youth Symphony Orchestra	Fargo-Moorhead Symphony Orchestra
Big Bend Community Orchestra (FL)	Fort Wayne Philharmonic
Billings Symphony Orchestra & Chorale	Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra
Boise Philharmonic	Four Seasons Orchestra
Bonneville Youth Orchestra	Fox Valley Symphony (WI)
Boston University Tanglewood Institute	The Fox Valley Youth Symphony Orchestras (IL)
Boulder Philharmonic Orchestra	Fresno Philharmonic
BRAVO Youth Orchestras	Gemini Youth Orchestras
Britt Orchestra	Georgia Symphony Orchestra
Canton Symphony Orchestra	Georgia Youth Symphony Orchestra
Carolina Youth Symphony	Glacier Symphony
Carson City Symphony (Nevada)	Glens Falls Symphony
Central Florida Symphony Orchestra	Grand Rapids Symphony
Central Minnesota Youth Orchestra	Greater Boulder Youth Orchestra
Central Ohio Symphony	Greater Bridgeport Symphony
Central Wisconsin Symphony Orchestra	Greater Dallas Youth Orchestra
The Chappaqua Orchestra	Greater Miami Youth Symphony
Charlotte Symphony (NC)	Greater Newark Youth Orchestras
Charlottesville Symphony Society	Greater Princeton Youth Orchestra
Chattanooga Symphony & Opera Association	Greater Twin Cities Youth Symphonies
Cheyenne Symphony Orchestra	Greenville Symphony Orchestra
Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association	Greenwich Symphony Orchestra
Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestras	Harrisburg Symphony Orchestra
Cincinnati Chamber Orchestra	Hartford Symphony Orchestra
Cincinnati Philharmonic Orchestra	Hawaii Youth Symphony
Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra	Hilton Head Symphony Orchestra
Cincinnati Symphony Youth Orchestra	Holland Symphony Orchestra
Civic Orchestra of Tucson	Houston Youth Symphony
The Cleveland Orchestra	The Hudson Symphony
Cleveland Orchestra Youth Orchestra	Huntsville Symphony Orchestra
The Cleveland Pops Orchestra	Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra
Columbus Indiana Philharmonic	Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra
Columbus Symphony Orchestra (GA)	InterSchool Orchestras of New York
Conway Symphony Orchestra	Johnson City Symphony Orchestra (TN)
Corvallis Youth Symphony	Johnstown Symphony Orchestra

Kalamazoo Junior Symphony Orchestra
 Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra
 Kamuela Philharmonic Orchestra
 Kansas City Symphony
 The KEYS Orchestra (CT)
 Knoxville Symphony Orchestra
 Lake Geneva Symphony Orchestra (WI)
 Lake Placid Sinfonietta
 Lansing Symphony Orchestra
 Las Colinas Symphony Orchestra
 Lexington Philharmonic
 Liberty Symphony Orchestra
 Lincoln's Symphony Orchestra
 The Little Orchestra Society/Orpheon, Inc.
 Lone Star Wind Orchestra
 Longwood Symphony Orchestra
 Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra
 Los Angeles Philharmonic
 Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra
 Louisville Orchestra
 Louisville Youth Orchestra
 Lynchburg Symphony Orchestra
 Madison Symphony Orchestra
 Maryland Symphony Orchestra
 Maui Pops Orchestra
 Metropolitan Youth Orchestra of New York
 Michigan Philharmonic
 Mid-Atlantic Symphony Orchestra
 Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra
 Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra
 Minnesota Orchestra
 Minnesota Youth Symphonies
 Mississippi Symphony Orchestra
 Missoula Symphony Orchestra
 Mobile Symphony Orchestra
 Monterey Symphony
 Murfreesboro Youth Orchestra
 Music City Youth Orchestra
 Music in the Mountains Festival Orchestra (CA)
 Musical Arts Youth Orchestra
 Naples Philharmonic Youth Orchestra
 Nashville Symphony
 Natchez-Adams School District Orchestras
 National Arts Centre Orchestra
 National Philharmonic
 National Symphony
 New Bedford Symphony Orchestra
 New England Conservatory Youth Orchestras
 New Haven Symphony Orchestra
 New Jersey Festival Orchestra
 New Jersey State Youth Orchestra
 New Jersey Symphony Orchestra
 New Jersey Youth Symphony
 New World Symphony
 New York Philharmonic
 The New York Pops
 New York Youth Symphony, Inc.
 Newton Mid-Kansas Symphony Orchestra
 North Carolina Symphony
 Northeast Massachusetts Youth Orchestras
 Northern Ohio Youth Orchestra
 Northern Valley Youth Orchestras (ND)
 Northwest Indiana Symphony Orchestra
 Norwalk Symphony Orchestra
 Nova Vista Symphony
 NW Chamber Orchestra
 Oakland Symphony Youth Orchestra
 Ojai Music Festival
 Oklahoma City Philharmonic
 Oklahoma Youth Orchestras
 Old York Road Symphony
 Olympia Symphony Orchestra
 Omaha Area Youth Orchestras
 Omaha Symphony
 Oquirrh Mountain Symphony
 Orchestra of Southern Utah
 Oregon Symphony
 Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra
 Orpheus Chamber Orchestra
 Owasso Youth Orchestra
 Owensboro Symphony Orchestra
 Paducah Symphony Orchestra
 Pasadena Symphony Association
 Peninsula Youth Orchestra
 Pensacola Symphony Orchestra
 The Philadelphia Orchestra
 Philadelphia Youth Orchestra
 Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra
 Pittsburgh Youth Symphony Orchestra
 Plano Symphony Orchestra
 Portland Symphony Orchestra (ME)
 Portland Youth Philharmonic
 Quad City Symphony Orchestra
 Quad City Youth String Ensemble
 Quad City Youth Symphony Orchestra
 Quincy Area Youth Orchestra
 Quincy Symphony Orchestra
 Reading Symphony Orchestra (PA)
 Reno Chamber Orchestra
 Richmond County Orchestra (NY)
 Richmond Symphony Orchestra (IN)
 Richmond Symphony (VA)
 Ridgefield Symphony Orchestra
 Riverside Philharmonic (CA)
 Rhode Island Philharmonic Orchestra & Music School
 Rochester Philharmonic Youth Orchestra
 Rochester Symphony Orchestra & Chorale
 Rockford Symphony Orchestra
 Rogue Valley Symphony
 Roswell Symphony Orchestra
 Saginaw Bay Symphony Orchestra
 Salisbury Symphony Orchestra
 San Angelo Symphony
 San Antonio Symphony
 San Diego Symphony
 San Diego Youth Symphony & Conservatory

San Francisco Chamber Orchestra
San Francisco Symphony
San Jose Youth Symphony
San Luis Obispo Symphony
San Luis Obispo Youth Symphony
San Marcos Artists Retention & Training (SMART) Orchestra
Santa Barbara Symphony
Santa Cruz County Youth Orchestra
Santa Cruz Symphony
Santa Fe Youth Symphony Association
Seattle Symphony Orchestra
Seattle Youth Symphony Orchestras
Sioux City Symphony Orchestra
Skagit Symphony
South Carolina Philharmonic
South Dakota Symphony Orchestra
South Florida Symphony Orchestra
South Florida Youth Symphony
South Texas Youth Symphony
Southwest Florida Symphony Orchestra
Spartanburg Philharmonic Orchestra
Springfield Symphony Orchestra (OH)
St. Cloud Symphony Orchestra
St. Louis Symphony Orchestra
Stockton Symphony
Susquehanna Symphony Orchestra
Symphony NH
Symphony of Southeast Texas
Symphony Silicon Valley
Symphoria (NY)
Toledo Symphony
Toronto Symphony Orchestra
Tucson Symphony Orchestra
Utah Symphony & Opera
Valley Symphony Orchestra
The Venice Symphony (FL)
Vermont Symphony Orchestra
Vermont Youth Orchestra Association
Virginia Symphony Orchestra
Walla Walla Symphony
Warren Civic Orchestra (PA)
Warren Philharmonic Orchestra (OH)
Washington Metropolitan Philharmonic Association
Wenatchee Valley Symphony
West Shore Symphony Orchestra
West Virginia Symphony Orchestra
Western Connecticut Youth Orchestra
Western Piedmont Symphony
Westmoreland Youth Symphony Orchestra
Wheeling Symphony
Wichita Symphony Orchestra
Williamsburg Symphony Orchestra
Wilmington (NC) Symphony Orchestra
Winston-Salem Symphony
Wisconsin Youth Symphony Orchestras
Yakima Symphony Orchestra
Youngstown Symphony Orchestra
Youth Orchestra of Bucks County

Youth Orchestra of Palm Beach County
Youth Orchestras of Charlottesville-Albemarle
Youth Orchestras of Fresno
Youth Orchestras of San Antonio
Youth Symphony of Kansas City *and the*
Youth Symphony of Southern Oregon

<https://americanorchestras.org/common-cause-signatories/>