

# AD ASTRA

*Kansas City*

**2026-2027 Season Auditions**

**Our city. Our sound. Our heart.**



# **VIOLIN**

## **Audition Information**

# To be considered for...

## Apollo Orchestra

Apollo Orchestra is Ad Astra's most advanced ensemble. Apollo is designed for advanced students in grades 9-12.

- ✔ Grade 9 - College in 2026-2027 school year.
- ✔ Prepare and submit audition videos of Excerpts 1, 2 & 3.

## Gemini Orchestra

Gemini Orchestra is Ad Astra's advanced middle level ensemble. Gemini is designed for students in grades 8-10.

- ✔ Grade 8 - 10 in 2026-2027 school year.
- ✔ Prepare and submit audition videos of Excerpts 1 & 2.

## Aurora Orchestra

Aurora Orchestra is comprised of students in their first 2-3 years of playing experience. Aurora is designed for students in grades 6 - 7.

- ✔ Grade 6 - 7 in 2026-2027 school year.
- ✔ Prepare and submit audition video of Excerpt 4.
- ✔ Prepare and submit audition video performing a solo or orchestra class passage of your choice. Duration should be 1-3 minutes in length.

### **Recording your audition videos:**

1. Using a cell phone, computer, video camera, etc., video record yourself performing each excerpt/requirement separately. Please make sure your entire instrument, as well as both hands and the bow, are visible in your video. Do not play behind a stand.
2. Students are allowed to record their excerpts as many times as they like. Students should submit the video recordings that they are most proud of.  
All excerpts/requirements must be recorded and submitted as separate tracks.
3. All videos must be uploaded to YouTube and saved as “unlisted.” No other formats are accepted. To save your videos to YouTube as unlisted, please refer to this online tutorial: [CLICK HERE.](#)

### **How are my auditions evaluated?**

The Ad Astra staff comprises dedicated and experienced music educators. All requirements/excerpts have been highly vetted and selected to ensure fairness and musical quality, and to ensure that all is accessible to all students at their current age/playing level.

All performances are evaluated using the attached performance rubric.

Ad Astra auditions are evaluated by staff and other area music educators as well as professional musicians.

Audition videos are not evaluated through the lens of perfection. While we expect all students to submit high-quality auditions, perfection is not required. Performances are evaluated through the rubric, but more importantly, in terms of preparedness, current playing level/ability, and musical promise.

Audition results, outcomes, placements, scoring, and/or adjudicator comments are not discussed with students, parents, school orchestra directors, and/or private teachers. Acceptance and placements are final.

### **School Orchestra Director/Private Teacher Recommendations**

One of Ad Astra’s major tenets is building strong ties and bridges of communication with our area school orchestra directors and private studio teachers. Ad Astra staff firmly believe that all work in tandem to ensure student success.

Part of the audition process includes recommendations from school music educators and private teachers. Teachers listed on your initial registration will receive a confidential recommendation form to submit on your behalf. The information gathered helps us determine placement, thereby ensuring a positive experience for each student in our program.

**When do I find out the results?**

Students submitting audition videos during SPRING PHASE 1 (videos due May 11) will receive audition results and placement via email by May 20.

Students submitting audition videos during SPRING PHASE 2 (videos due May 31) will receive audition results and placement via email on a rolling basis once videos are received and evaluated. Videos must be received within two weeks of registration.

Video audition results received during the SUMMER and SEASON PHASES will be emailed on a rolling basis once videos have been evaluated. Videos must be received within two weeks of registration.

# Violin Audition Excerpt 1

Required of all violinists grades 8-college  
(2026-2027 school year)

## Brandenburg Concerto No. 3, 1<sup>st</sup> Movement J.S. Bach/arr. Isaac

75  $\text{♩} = 76-80$

84

93

100

106

*mf* *f* *mf* *f* *ff* *rit.*

# Violin Audition Excerpt 2

Required of all violinists grades 8-college  
(2026-2027 school year)

Students may elect to play upper or lower octaves where printed.

## Montagues and Capulets from *Romeo and Juliet* Sergei Prokofiev/arr. Siennicki

17 Allegro pesante  $\text{♩} = 100$  *ppp* *senza sord.* 2

*f* *pesante* 25 *marcato* 33

optional 8va

45

# Violin Audition Excerpt 3

This excerpt is required for violinists in grades 9 - College (2026-2027 school year) seeking consideration for Ad Astra Apollo Orchestra

## Symphony No. 3, Movement I (Allego Con Brio) Johannes Brahms

1  $\text{♩} = 54$  2 3 4 5 6

*f* *passionato*

7 8 9 10 11

*cresc* *f*

12 13 14 15 **A** 16

*p*

17 18 19 20 21

*f* *sf*

Detailed description: This is a musical score for a violin audition excerpt. It consists of four staves of music, numbered 1 through 21. The first staff (measures 1-6) begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat (B-flat), and a 6/4 time signature. A tempo marking of quarter note = 54 is indicated. The music starts with a whole rest in measure 1, followed by a series of notes and rests. A dynamic marking of *f* and the instruction *passionato* are present. The second staff (measures 7-11) continues the melodic line with slurs and accents. A *cresc* (crescendo) marking is shown with a hairpin symbol, leading to a *f* dynamic. The third staff (measures 12-16) features a section marked with a box containing the letter 'A'. The dynamics here are *p* (piano). The fourth staff (measures 17-21) includes triplets and ends with a *sf* (sforzando) dynamic. The key signature remains one flat throughout.

# Violin Audition Excerpt 4

## 73. BUCKEYE SALUTE

Moderato



## Solo of Choice

Prepare and submit audition video performing a solo or orchestra class music of your choice. Duration should be 1 - 3 minutes.



## Tone

20-18

Consistent/focused  
Developed vibrato

17-14

Focus/resonance  
affected by range.  
Vibrato somewhat  
present

13-10

Focus/resonance and  
vibrato inconsistent.

9-5

Minimal focus,  
resonance and vibrato

4-1

Lack of focus,  
resonance and vibrato

## Expression

20-18

Artistic and  
appropriate phrasing,  
dynamics, style and  
tempo

17-14

Frequent use of  
expressive elements

13-10

Inconsistent use of  
expressive elements

9-5

Minimal expressive  
elements

4-1

Lack of expressive  
elements

## Intonation

20-18

Well-centered and  
adjustments made quickly

17-14

Minor problems in certain  
ranges or passages

13-10

Minor problems with  
minimal adjustments

9-5

Minor problems with no  
adjustments made

4-1

Lack of intonation and  
center

## Technique

20-18

Consistent and correct  
articulation/technique

17-14

Minor defects with  
articulation/technique

13-10

Inconsistent  
articulation/technique

9-5

Minimal  
articulation/technique

4-1

Lack of  
articulation/technique

## Rhythmic Accuracy

20-18

Rhythms performed  
correctly

17-14

Nearly all rhythms  
performed correctly

13-10

Inconsistent rhythmic  
accuracy

9-5

Minimal rhythmic  
accuracy

4-1

Lack of rhythmic  
accuracy

## Overall Preparedness

20 points possible

Adjudicator assigned

## All About Ad Astra:

In just two years, Ad Astra Youth Orchestra Kansas City has grown from 90 students in two orchestras to over 200 in four ensembles, including a 30-member cello ensemble.

In this short time, Ad Astra has already gained a reputation for musical excellence and educational integrity. The program has also established itself as Kansas City's Youth Orchestra and Musical Ambassadors, performing for highly visible community performances such as the KC Chamber of Commerce World Cup Dinner, the Kansas Music Educators Association, and others. Ad Astra has collaborated with KC area professional musicians, Grammy award-winning artists, and the Kansas City Jazz Orchestra. In June 2026, Ad Astra Youth Orchestra will make its debut performance in New York's famed Carnegie Hall.

Ad Astra's major tenets include providing area student musicians the opportunity to expand their playing opportunities beyond their school program. Our aim is to help students and teachers enhance their programs by offering students these additional opportunities. All music is selected by Ad Astra staff through a highly vetted process to ensure age/level appropriateness, educational value, and overall enjoyment.

### **Ad Astra Orchestras**

Ad Astra is made up of three orchestras, all based on grade/age and playing level/ability. Each student submits audition materials, and all are heavily vetted to ensure effective and fair placement.

**Apollo Orchestra** is Ad Astra's most advanced orchestra.

Apollo is designed for students in grades 9-college.

*In 2026/2027 Apollo will introduce a full/symphonic orchestra experience for our members. First semester will be string orchestra only and second semester will be full/symphonic orchestra. String students must be members in both semesters.*

Apollo is conducted by Russ Pieken.

**Gemini Orchestra** is our ensemble designed primarily for students in grades 7-9 with at least two years of playing experience.

Gemini is conducted by Sheri Cain and Lauren Martens.

**Aurora Orchestra** is designed for students in grades 5-9 with at least one year of playing experience.

Aurora is conducted by Madeline Smith.

**Cellonauts** is Ad Astra's cello ensemble. Accepted cellists in Apollo and Gemini Orchestras are eligible to audition for this select group. Accepted members will receive Cellonaut audition information before the start of the season.

Cellonauts is conducted by Matthew Imber.

### **Ad Astra Requirements**

Motivated string students from across the Kansas City area are encouraged to audition. Ad Astra accepts auditions from students in grades 6 through college.

Ad Astra aims to enhance a student's music education by providing motivated students the opportunity to perform in an ensemble outside of their school day. Ad Astra is not intended as a replacement for the school music program.

Students must be enrolled and in good standing in their respective school orchestra/strings or band program, should one be offered. String students must be enrolled in orchestra, and woodwind/brass/percussion students must be enrolled in band.

Of course, this requirement is waived if a student is homeschooled or attends a school that does not offer a strings/orchestra or band program. This requirement is also waived for college-level students.

Accepted members must adhere to the Ad Astra attendance policy. Members are also required to be prepared for each and every rehearsal.

### **Tuition**

Ad Astra strives to keep tuition as low as possible and as attainable as possible for all members and families. However, we also strive to offer a superior product and experience for our student members.

Tuition rates for the 2026-2027 season are as follows:

**-String students**

(full-year tuition)

\$750.00

**-Woodwind/Brass/Percussion students**

(half-year tuition)

\$300.00

Tuition rates equate to approximately just \$25 per weekly rehearsal. Accepted students and families are offered fair payment plans and options. Families may also apply for financial assistance to help offset tuition costs. Accepted students will also receive instructions for the financial assistance application.

