

Syracuse Friends of Chamber Music

2026 YOUTH COMPETITION RULES

This season's SFCM Youth Competition will be held at Park Central Presbyterian Church in downtown Syracuse on February 28, 2026. Details and the online application form are available at SyrFCM.org/youth-competition. Applications are due February 1.

Eligibility

Participating students must be in grades 7–12 and enrolled in a New York school district within 90 miles of Syracuse or homeschooled in one of those districts (this includes Ithaca, Utica, Watertown, and Rochester).

Ensembles must be comprised of 3 to 8 musicians playing on standard orchestral instruments. Ensembles competing in past years have included string trios and quartets, ensembles with piano, woodwind and brass quintets, woodwinds with strings, and ensembles of all the same instrument (e.g., cello or saxophone quartets).

Each ensemble must have a coach.

Repertoire

We prefer classical repertoire that has been composed for the designated instruments — arrangements and transcriptions are discouraged. The music performed must include contrasting sections/movements of a single composition or consist of contrasting pieces, with a total duration of 5 to 15 minutes.

Please contact us if you have questions about the suitability of your repertoire: sfcm00@gmail.com or 315-682-7720.

Competition

Each group will be assigned a time to participate. Each competing ensemble must present two musical scores to our judges and then perform its selection(s) for them. Every group will be given a written evaluation from each judge.

The judges will, at their discretion, select a single **Best Ensemble**. All competing ensembles are eligible for this award. If any of the students in that winning ensemble live in a school district more than 30 miles from Syracuse, then the judges may also select a **Best Syracuse-Area Ensemble** (Canastota, Fulton, Auburn, and Cortland are all within the 30-mile "Syracuse-area" radius.)

Each of the musicians in the **Best Ensemble** (and the **Best Syracuse-Area Ensemble**, if different) will be awarded \$100. Every coach will receive \$100 as well.

The judges' decisions are final.

Syracuse Friends of Chamber Music, at its discretion, may invite one of the ensembles to perform its selection(s) at the beginning of one of SFCM's spring subscription concerts.

Email **questions** to sfcm00@gmail.com or call 315-682-7720.