



2026 YOUTH COMPOSITION COMPETITION

We're glad you're considering our annual ECHO Youth Composition Competition for students in grades 7-12. The winning composition will be premiered by the full orchestra at ECHO's spring concert on Friday, May 15, 2026 at St. John Vianney Catholic Church. The winning composition also will receive a cash prize.

Guidelines/Rules

- Composers must be enrolled in grades 7th - 12th grade in the 2025- 2026 school year.
- Composers should live or attend a school within Houston and surrounding areas.
- The work should be scored for anything from string orchestra (violins 1 & 2, violas, cellos, basses) to full orchestra. Maximum instrumentation: 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 2 trumpets in B-flat, 2 trombones, tuba, 2 percussion, timpani, and strings (limited divisi). Regular instrument doublings (e.g. piccolo) should be somewhat limited. No longer than 5 minutes in length
- If selected, composers should commit to attend one rehearsal and the premiere of the work. By submitting a work, the composer allows ECHO to perform the piece.
- The work may have been previously performed elsewhere. Both previously-performed and unperformed works will be accepted.
- ECHO may request minor edits to ensure ready playability of the winning work; these edits may be done in collaboration with ECHO composer-in-residence Mark Buller.
- Works should be written at a level readily playable by a volunteer orchestra. For examples please see works on current and previous ECHO seasons.
- Works will be judged on the following criteria: originality, idiomatic writing, craft, ready playability by ECHO, adherence to competition guidelines. The winning work does not need to fit any specific stylistic niche, though it should fit well on a traditional orchestra concert program.
- ECHO reserves the right to select no winners in case no submitted works fit the desired criteria.

To submit a work

- Submit your work via email to info@echorchestra.org, include your name in the email.
Please attach:
 - 1) PDF of your FULL SCORE. DO NOT INCLUDE your name or any other identifying information in the file name.
 - 2) Submit one audio file.
 - Pay the competition fee of **\$10**
- **Deadline to submit materials Sunday, March 1, 2026 at midnight.** No late submissions will be accepted!
- **If selected as the winner, the deadline to deliver PDFs of (edited) score and parts for the performance by Tuesday, March 31, 2025**

Questions?

If you have any questions about the competition, please email info@ECHOOrchestra.org

To read more about ECHO Orchestra please visit our website at www.ECHOOrchestra.org