

September 15, 2011

Dear Prospective DSA Orchestra Parents and Guardians,

My name is Thomas Goodrich and I'm the new Director of Orchestras at the Denver School of the Arts. I'm excited that you are considering the DSA Orchestra Program for your child for the upcoming school year. I encourage you to take a look at our orchestra website, as well as the school's website, and explore the information we have to offer. You may also find the 'calendar' option helpful in planning how many performances happen in a typical school year. I'm sending you this audition information packet to give you an overview of our orchestra program and our audition process. Full details are on the school's website.

I'd like to invite you to visit our school and see what the buzz is about! Details on how to schedule a visit are included in this packet.

Don't hesitate to contact me if you have questions. My contact information is listed below. I look forward to hearing from you!

In the interest of your child,

*Thomas Goodrich*

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## Auditions for the 2012-2013 School Year Announced

### Openings

We are looking to audition promising young string orchestra students who play the following instruments:

High School viola, cello

Middle School violin, viola, cello, string bass

### Visit DSA and the DSA Orchestra

We invite you to visit the school to get a sense of our amazing performing arts learning community. There are two options:

#### 1. Visitation Days for prospective students currently in grades 5–8

October 4, 13 & November 1, 8, 17

The Visitation Morning Program at Denver School of the Arts offers prospective students and parents the opportunity to spend a morning visiting both academic classes as well as "majors" classes at DSA. The Visitation Mornings are an excellent opportunity for students to ask questions about classes, major requirements and extracurricular activities, etc. NOTE: Visitation Mornings are not part of the audition process.

##### program overview

7:20—7:35 a.m. Arrive at DSA. Students/parents may walk the halls and watch "DSA Life" as our students arrive at school.

7:35—8:00 a.m. Visit with DSA Administration in the Concert Hall

8:00—9:30 a.m. Students/parents split into groups according to their art major of interest for a parent-volunteer-led tour including visits to art and academic classrooms.

##### details

[http://dsa.dpsk12.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/Shadowing\\_Program.pdf](http://dsa.dpsk12.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/Shadowing_Program.pdf)

##### schedule a visitation

Space is limited for each date to the first 100 families who sign up online at [dsa.dpsk12.org/admissions](http://dsa.dpsk12.org/admissions). Please sign up only once, to not displace another family's opportunity. No confirmation will be made: once you sign up, you're in, and we will see you on the day of your visitation.

#### 2. Shadowing Program for prospective students currently in grades 8–11

September 1—December 1, 2011

The Shadow Program at Denver School of the Arts offers prospective students the opportunity to spend a morning going to class with a current DSA student to get a feel of what our school is really all about. Shadowing is an excellent opportunity for students to ask questions about classes, major requirements and extracurricular activities. NOTE: the Shadow Program is not part of the audition process.

##### program overview

9:00 a.m.—2:35 p.m. Report to the Main office at 9:00 a.m., prearrange a pick-up location in/around DSA for 2:35 p.m. Both a staff member and a DSA Student Ambassador from your desired major will greet you in the morning. You can ask them questions and they will provide you with written information about DSA. They'll give you a tour of the school and then you'll sit in on a few of your student ambassador's classes. (See the school's website for details.)

##### shadowing program details

[http://dsa.dpsk12.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/Shadowing\\_Program.pdf](http://dsa.dpsk12.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/Shadowing_Program.pdf)

##### schedule a shadowing visit

Call 720-424-1717 and leave a message including: *Your child's name, current grade, school, and major of interest; Your name and phone number; At least 2 Wednesdays you are interested in shadowing.* Mr. Loera, DSA Dean of Students, will return your call to schedule a date.

## The Audition Process

Here is a brief synopsis of our audition process:

### step 1 – online application

November 1—21

The online application window is open November 1—21 and will close at noon that day. You may apply online at any point during the open window. Only completed applications will be considered for audition; be sure to completely fill out the online application. Once you complete your application, print out the *verification report*. You must bring this report with you to the pre-audition meeting (see below). If you do not have access to a computer, please come to the DSA counseling center, during school hours November 1—21, and someone will help you with the online application. Note: Students may apply and audition for one major only.

### step 2 – mandatory pre-audition meeting

November 30, 6pm, DSA Concert Hall

A parent, or an adult parent designee for the applicant, *must* be in attendance at this meeting in order to move ahead with the audition process. The student applicant does not have to attend the meeting but is highly encouraged to do so. We will explain, in great detail, the audition process and requirements. At the end of this meeting, your child will be assigned an audition date and time in January 2012.

### step 3 – the district school of choice form

due January 31, 2012

Beginning in mid December, the district's *Office of Choice and Enrollment Services* will have a form available which needs to be filled out by all auditioning students – both in-district and out of district. Their website is <http://soco.dpsk12.org/>. This form must be filled out with your top five DPS schools you wish to attend during the 2012-2013 school year. The form must be signed and turned into the front office of any DPS school – elementary through high school. The form must be turned in before January 31<sup>st</sup>. *If you desire to attend DSA, be sure to indicate DSA as your 1st choice.*

### step 4 – the audition

January 7 or 14, 2012, 9am—2pm, DSA Orchestra Room

*Your audition date and time will be assigned to you at the pre-audition meeting in November.* Please be advised, you do not pick your audition date or time. For now, keep the above-listed dates and time blocks open on your calendar. NOTE: All current 9th–11th grade students are asked to bring an unofficial copy of their high school transcripts with grades posted through December 2011 in a sealed envelope to auditions. Please give the envelope to the audition committee – they will in turn hand it to DSA administration. Administration will look at the transcripts to ensure that your student is on track to graduate.

## The Notification Process

### step 1 – notification date

February 17, 2012

All families will be notified through a written letter of acceptance, denial or waitlist into DSA. We understand that many families need to know the results as soon as possible in order to reserve a space at another school. Unfortunately, Denver School of the Arts must follow the *Denver Public Schools' Office of Choice and Enrollment Services* timeline, which precludes us from notifying families before February 17, 2012. See the DSA website for further details.

### step 2 – new student meeting

March 10, 2012

All new students and their parents are invited to attend the *Welcome to DSA Meeting*. Please keep this date open in case you are admitted. You will hear from the DSA principal, William Kohut, in the Concert Hall. You will pick up your registration packet and all necessary documents. There will be a cover sheet explaining how to fill out the paperwork and when to turn it in. The counselors will be in the Schomp Theatre to answer your questions immediately following the morning session. There will be additional information about this meeting included in your student's acceptance letter.

## About The DSA Orchestra Program

The Denver School of the Arts Orchestra (DSAO) is a program for string musicians seeking to develop their talent, understanding, and passion for music in an intensive daily program. As the Rocky Mountain Region's only public 6-12 school for the arts, and a member of the Denver Public Schools, DSA welcomes promising young students who seek a challenging and inspiring environment in which to pursue their musical passion. Acceptance into the program is by completion of a successful audition, portfolio and interview (see the DSA Orchestra website for details). We welcome students of varying technical levels and ability who demonstrate talent, potential and dedication to string playing and to the art of making music.

The DSA Orchestra Program is made up of three primary performing groups: the DSA String Orchestra (high school), the Sinfonia (middle school), and the Vanguard Ensemble (8<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade honors chamber orchestra). Ancillary groups consist of high school and middle school Symphonic Orchestra and Jazz Orchestra, in conjunction with the DSA Band Program, as well as chamber music ensembles and opportunities to perform in a music theater setting. The course of study at DSA is a pre-conservatory, project based model and includes daily rehearsals in large and small ensembles, music theory and musicology classes in cooperation with the other DSA music departments and various assignments designed to expose students to an array of music careers and performance opportunities. Collaboration with other majors at the school, such as dance and theatre, is encouraged and fostered.

Regional, national, and international travel is incorporated into the orchestra curricula, as a means of providing opportunities to perform at competitions and festivals, exposing students to master classes, clinics and adjudications with world class music professionals, promoting global awareness and evolving cultural ambassadorship.

## DSA Orchestra's Goals and Philosophy

DSAO's main goal is to provide opportunity for students to develop the confidence and skills needed to perform with accuracy and expression, in order that they may experience the joy of performing with fellow musicians for the enjoyment of an audience as well as for their own enrichment.

Our philosophy is to provide an environment where students feel simultaneously nurtured and challenged by each other and by their instructors to excel to the best of their ability. Students' progress and preparation are measured according to standards established by the state of Colorado, the American String Teachers Association, the Music Educators National Conference and instructor-developed rubrics. Although not required, DSA orchestra students are strongly encouraged to take private lessons with a professional musician in the Denver area.

Parents are integral members of the orchestra family. The DSA Orchestra Family Association is the parent volunteer organization that provides myriad support to the orchestra program, students and the director.

The DSA Orchestra values its connections to the larger community. We have been fortunate to host visiting artists to supplement instruction and understanding through coaching, master classes and concerts. Relationships with area universities are cultivated. DSA Orchestra gives back to the community through concerts performed for elementary schools and other audiences, and seeks other ways for its members to participate in music-oriented service projects.

The DSA Orchestra recognizes that music adds beauty and texture to our lives; the study of music is not frivolous, but rather essential and practical. It is our hope that students will develop the skills and appreciation necessary to continue their musical education in college and/or pursue music as a profession or lifetime activity, but many of our students have gone on to other professions.

## DSA Orchestra Website

Detailed information can be found at [dsaorchestra.org](http://dsaorchestra.org)

Thank you for your interest in our program! We look forward to hearing from you.