



wctyo.org

String Orchestra Wind Ensemble Symphony Orchestra

Handbook 2020-21

Office and Contact Information

Office Location:
77 Danbury Road, Ridgefield, CT

Mailing Address:
Western Connecticut Youth Orchestra
P. O. Box 964
Ridgefield, CT 06877

Telephone: (203) 894-8786
Email: wcyo@wctyo.org / Website: www.wctyo.org

Tuition & Fees

Application Fee:

There is a non-refundable fee of \$40 due upon submission of an application for an audition.

Yearly Tuition:

Symphony Orchestra – \$750, *but prorated during COVID-19 pandemic based on ability to offer programming.*

String Orchestra and Wind Ensemble –\$650 *but prorated during COVID-19 pandemic based on ability to offer programming.*

Tuition is due upon acceptance into a WCYO ensemble and no later than August 1 for June auditions and within 15 days of acceptance at other times during the year. Tuition is non-refundable after September 30. *During the COVID-19 pandemic, tuition is due prior to the start of each season as announced via email communication.*

Note: Additional fees may be required in the case of events such as the fall retreat, trips or special performances.

Financial Assistance:

An application for need-based financial assistance is available on the website under the Auditions tab. Financial Assistance Applications are due by July 15 for June acceptances or within 15 days of acceptance at other times during the year. *During the COVID 19 pandemic, simply please submit prior to the start of the first season in which your student participates.*

Mission Statement

The mission of the Western Connecticut Youth Orchestra is to educate and inspire young musicians through the study and performance of classical and contemporary musical works, participation in enrichment activities, and engagement with the community.

Our program provides an opportunity to develop artistry and technique, as well as profound understanding and appreciation of instrumental music. Our members are challenged not only to perform at the highest level, but also to build character, creativity, and self-esteem, with music as their guide.

WCYO Value Statement

Western Connecticut Youth Orchestra holds the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion central to achieving our mission to educate and inspire young musicians through the study

and performance of classical and contemporary musical works, participation in enrichment activities, and engagement with the community.

We stand against racism and all forms of discrimination, we embrace individual uniqueness, foster a culture of inclusion, and engage all our youth musicians to help them thrive and find joy through music.

We affirm our commitment to setting an example that demonstrates kindness, understanding, and a willingness to listen and learn. We are guided by the beliefs that music can change the world, that our youth are our future, and that we can use music as a way to discover and strengthen that which connects us all.

Eligibility, Auditions & Seating

Membership in the WCYO organization is by audition. Students in grades 8 through 12 may audition for the Symphony Orchestra. Students in grades 5 and through 12 may audition for the String Orchestra and Wind Ensembles. The Music Director and Conductors will decide in which ensemble to place auditioning students based upon musical ability. Students will be assigned to their sections and seats by the Music Director and Conductors. Seating decisions are based on assessment of musical ability, leadership skills and arrangement best suited to achieve optimal musical results for the ensemble.

IT IS THE POLICY OF THE WESTERN CONNECTICUT YOUTH ORCHESTRA THAT MEMBERS PARTICIPATE IN THEIR SCHOOL MUSIC PROGRAM AND PURSUE PRIVATE STUDY OF THEIR INSTRUMENT.

Commitment

Membership in the WCYO organization is an honor and a privilege. Musicians chosen by audition to play in a WCYO ensemble are expected to make participation a priority. Instrumentation and balance within the ensembles are established at the time of auditions and must be maintained through regular attendance by all musicians.

Attendance

DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, ATTENDANCE IS EXPECTED BUT NOT MANDATORY AND ALL ABSENCES ARE EXCUSED.

If the WCYO ensembles are to achieve the highest possible level of performance, preparation of the music and attendance at all rehearsals and concerts during the season is crucial for all musicians. Absences seriously hinder the musical development during a season. Tardiness is also extremely disruptive to the rehearsal process. Therefore,

please plan to attend rehearsal each week, on time. Should you need to miss a rehearsal, the following policy applies *under normal conditions*:

Musicians will be excused for mandatory school concerts and allowed up to two (2) absences, regardless of reason, per concert cycle, without penalty. Additional absences will result in exclusion of the musician from performing at the concert of that concert cycle. Any musicians with (3) absences during a concert cycle will be required to re-audition for his/her position in the WCYO. Three (3) tardy arrivals constitute an absence.

Absences should be brought to the attention of the Executive Director via email at wcyo@wctyo.org as soon as the musician is aware of the need for the absence. The Executive Director will notify the conductor.

Conduct

Musicians must at all times conduct themselves respectfully toward their leaders, their fellow musicians, their instruments and the rehearsal and concert venues. Musicians who fail to conduct themselves appropriately may be dismissed from the WCYO. (See Code of Conduct Form.)

Rehearsals

During the COVID-19 Pandemic, students are not allowed food at in-person rehearsals, must bring their own water, music stands, pencils, and sheet music. No sharing of equipment or sheet music will be allowed.

Musicians should arrive at the rehearsal venue 15 minutes prior to the start of rehearsal in order to unpack and be ready to begin promptly at the designated rehearsal start time. Musicians should ensure that their instruments are in good working order and that they have adequate accessories (strings, reeds, swabs, etc.) prior to each rehearsal. Musicians should bring their music and a sharpened pencil to each rehearsal. On occasion, musicians may be asked to bring a music stand to rehearsal. At the end of each rehearsal, musicians are expected to help straighten the rehearsal space.

At the discretion of the Music Director or Conductors, there may be a brief break taken during the course of a rehearsal. However, at no time is food allowed on the stage or in the rehearsal rooms. Musicians are welcome to bring water bottles onto the stage or into the rehearsal rooms, but no other beverages are permitted.

Students are responsible for their instruments and music as well as any other personal items brought to rehearsals. The WCYO does not maintain a lost-and-found.

A detailed rehearsal schedule, including the location of each week's rehearsal, is posted on the WCYO website at wctyo.org under the Members tab. Generally rehearsals take place on Thursday evenings, with exceptions made for religious and school holidays and rehearsal venue conflicts. Musicians will be notified via email blast of any changes or updates in the rehearsal schedule.

Music

Music for each ensemble is posted on the WCYO website under the Members tab. Each ensemble has its own music page. Music remains posted throughout each concert period. **Musicians are responsible for downloading and printing their own music.** If musicians lose their music or need additional copies, they are expected to print replacement music. All musicians should bring their music to rehearsal each week. The Password for music pages is: **wcyo** (all lower case)

Concert Attire

Girls: Concert Black

Black dress OR black skirt or dressy pants with a black dressy top. **Dresses or skirts MUST fall below the knee when sitting. If a musician cannot find a dress or skirt that falls below the knee, please wear black pants!** Black shoes.

NO slits in skirts or pants, spaghetti strap or strapless tops, exposed midriffs, shiny hair ornaments, excessive makeup or perfume.

Boys: Concert Black

Black long-sleeved dress shirt and black dress pants. Black socks and black dress shoes. Black belt (if belt required.) NO black sneakers.

Chamber Music Program

Information under the headings of Commitment, Conduct, Attendance, and Rehearsals apply to the WCYO Chamber Music Program as well. Chamber ensembles are formed at the discretion of the Music Director and Conductor(s) and rehearse at the direction of these leaders.

Trips/Retreats/Special Performances

Trips, retreats and special performances are arranged at the discretion of the Music Director and/or Conductor(s), the Executive Director, the WCYO Board of Directors, and with the support of WCYO parents. These special events may require active participation in fundraising by the involved musicians and their parents. Trips, retreats and special performances may also require parent chaperones.

Parent Volunteers

The WCYO organization depends upon the support of its active and committed parent community. Throughout the year, there are opportunities for parents to assist the WCYO organization and the individual ensembles. These opportunities include, but are not limited to:

- Assistance at concerts;
- Fundraising;

- Publicity;
- Assistance with special events, field trips or special performances.

Financial Support

The Western Connecticut Youth Orchestra, Inc. is a registered 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation, and therefore donations to the organization are tax deductible to the extent permitted by law