

2016-2017 Student Handbook



Vermont Youth Orchestra Association
Elley-Long Music Center at St. Michael's College
223 Ethan Allen Ave, Colchester, VT 05446
802-655-5030 www.vyo.org

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Welcome to the Vermont Youth Orchestra Association!

The mission of the Vermont Youth Orchestra Association is to develop young people as artists, citizens, and leaders through the shared pursuit of musical excellence.

In each of our ensembles, our students grow as musicians through professionally-led training in rehearsals and performances and coaching from many of the finest music educators in the region. The musical and non-musical activities of each ensemble offer students the opportunity to develop team building and leadership skills.

Our students benefit greatly from being a part of the VYOA. Performances by our ensembles are highly valued in our community and have been enjoyed throughout the world. As one of the largest independent youth orchestras in the country, we serve not only our students but also contribute to the cultural and educational vitality of our community and serve as a catalyst for initiatives and partnerships that increase the reach and depth of arts education in our region.

The purpose of this handbook is to outline our programs, policies, expectations and offerings. The success of our programs demands a high level of commitment from each student and their parents. Please make use of this handbook to understand how you can reap every benefit of participating in the VYOA and how you can contribute to the fulfillment of our mission.

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VYOA Programs

Scope of program offerings

The VYOA offers instrumental ensemble programs for musicians who play the following instruments: Bassoon, Cello, Clarinet, Double Bass, Flute, French Horn, Harp (must be a pedal harp), Oboe, Percussion, Trombone, Trumpet, Tuba, Viola, and Violin.

Our choral programs serve singers in grades 6 through 12.

Occasionally, one of our ensembles will perform a piece that requires instruments not listed above (including the piano.) The opportunity to play those parts is typically given to a current member of the ensemble who also plays the required instrument. In other cases, the opportunity may be offered to a non-VYOA student based on the recommendation of their private teacher or school ensemble director.

Below is a brief description of each group. For more detailed information and a complete look at each ensemble's rehearsal schedule please visit our website at www.vyo.org.

Instrumental ensembles

Vermont Youth Orchestra

Edward Cumming, Interim Conductor ~ Art DeQuasie, Manager

Rehearsal: Sunday: 12:30 – 3:30 PM at the Elley-Long Music Center (Aug-May)

Established in 1963, the Vermont Youth Orchestra (VYO) draws its members from Vermont, New York, and New Hampshire. As our most advanced orchestra, the VYO performs masterworks of the orchestral canon, interesting lesser-known works, and music written by outstanding contemporary composers. The VYO presents three major concerts each year at Burlington's Flynn Center for the Performing Arts in addition to community concerts and school tour concerts. Its members master a significant amount of music each season in fast-paced and focused rehearsals.

The Vermont Youth Orchestra begins its season with *Reveille!*, a day camp for both VYO and VYP that takes place at the Elley-Long Music Center in early August. The students use this camp as a kick-off to the season, both musically and socially. While the rehearsal schedule is intense, all staff work together to create fun non-musical activities that everyone participates in. VYO students are expected to attend *Reveille!*, as it serves a vital role in preparing for the fall concert at the Flynn. Students unable to attend *Reveille!* typically join the orchestras in October. Exceptions to this policy may be granted if a student misses *Reveille!* due to a conflict with a multi-week music camp or festival such as Tanglewood, Kinhaven, Meadowmount, or Interlochen.

Musicians are invited to join VYO based on their placement auditions, where they must display a high level of proficiency on their instrument, mature tone production, and strong musicianship skills. VYO members are primarily in grades 10 through 12, joined by a small complement of accomplished 8th and 9th grade musicians. Please see the "Auditions, placements, role assignments, and awards" section of the handbook for more information.

VYO International Tours: The VYO has a proud tradition of touring internationally on a regular basis, with a goal of touring every third year (our next tour is expected to take place in summer 2018). Previous tours have taken our musicians to China, France, Germany, Czech Republic, and, most recently, Iceland. Tour plans are announced a year in advance to give families time to plan for students' participation. In order to maximize our orchestra

students' opportunity to have the touring experience, recent VYO alumni and seniors in VYP graduating in a tour year are given the opportunity to join the VYO for the tour.

Vermont Youth Philharmonia

Yutaka Kono, Conductor ~ Art DeQuasie, Manager

Rehearsal: Sunday: 3:45 – 6:15 PM at the Elley-Long Music Center (Aug-April)

Vermont Youth Philharmonia, our intermediate orchestra, presents three major performances during the concert season including OrchestraChorusPalooza at the Flynn Center. VYP is also featured in annual school tour performances. VYP performs a variety of professional and educational repertoire, including mainstream orchestral pieces, contemporary music, and lighter fare such as film music. For many members, VYP offers them their first experiences playing in a full symphony orchestra and provides the ensemble training that prepares them to advance to the VYO.

Vermont Youth Philharmonia students begin their season with *Reveille!*, a day camp for VYO and VYP that takes place at the Elley-Long Music Center in early August. The students use this camp as a kick-off to the season, both musically and socially. Rehearsals are intense and focused but all staff work together to come up with fun non-musical activities that everyone participates in. VYP students are expected to attend *Reveille!*, as it serves a vital role in preparing each orchestra for its fall concert. Students unable to attend *Reveille!* typically join the orchestras in October. Exceptions to this policy may be granted if a student misses *Reveille!* due to a conflict with a multi-week music camp or festival such as Tanglewood, Kinhaven, Meadowmount, or Interlochen.

VYP membership is offered based on student auditions. On average, a student will spend two to four years in VYP prior to earning advancement to VYO. Most VYP members are in grades 7 to 10, with an overall spread of membership from grades 5 through 12. Please see the "Auditions, placements, role assignments, and awards" section of the handbook for more information.

Vermont Youth Strings

Asiat (Ace) Ali, Conductor ~ Mia Fritze, Manager

Rehearsal: Sunday: 3:15 PM – 5:30 PM at the Elley-Long Music Center (Aug-April)

Vermont Youth Strings provides ensemble experience for string players, with an emphasis on developing ensemble skills that can't be learned in private instruction alone, preparing members for the full orchestra experience offered in VYP. VYS presents two concerts annually including OrchestraChorusPalooza at the Flynn Center and performs in school tours. VYS performs arrangements of classic and traditional repertoire and original compositions written for younger ensembles.

VYS begins its season with a 2-day mini-camp at the Elley-Long Music Center in August. The mini-camp runs 9am to 3pm both days and serves as a kick-off to the VYS season. The mini-camp includes rehearsal time as well as recreational activities that help everyone get to know each other. All VYS students are expected to attend this camp. Missing both days is counted as one absence; missing one day is counted as a half absence.

Audition is required for placement into VYS. On average, a student will spend two to four years in VYS prior to earning advancement to VYP. Please see the "Auditions, placements, role assignments, and awards" section of the handbook for more information.

Presto

Kathleen Kono, Conductor ~ Mia Fritze, Manager

Rehearsal: Sunday afternoons at the Elley-Long Music Center (Six-week sessions in the fall and spring)

Presto provides beginning string students with an introductory ensemble experience. Through their involvement in Presto, students improve their listening skills and learn how to play independent parts, work in a section, and

follow a conductor. Students are placed in Presto I or Presto II based on their current skills and level of experience and typically participate in two to four Presto sessions to prepare for membership in VYS.

No audition is required for admission to Presto, though it is useful to check with a student's private or school string teacher to determine if the student is ready to join. Please see the "Auditions, placements, role assignments, and awards" section of the handbook for more information.

Choral ensembles

Vermont Youth Chorus

Caleb Pillsbury, Conductor ~ Mary Jane Austin, Accompanist ~ Art DeQuasie, Manager
Rehearsal: Tuesday: 6:30 - 8:30 PM at the Elley-Long Music Center (Aug-April/May)

The Vermont Youth Chorus brings together some of Vermont's finest young singers (in 8th through 12th grades) to perform masterpieces of the choral repertoire, including works with orchestra. The Chorus is a SATB (soprano, alto, tenor, and bass voices) ensemble and performs in two major choral concerts each year at the Elley-Long Music Center, as a part of OrchestraChorusPalooza in December at the Flynn Center for the Performing Arts, and occasionally in concerts with the VYO at the Flynn. The Chorus also performs in school tours and community concerts. The Chorus begins its season with a 2-day mini-camp (shared with Vermont Youth Chorale) at the Elley-Long Music Center in August. VYOA Choral Mini-Camp also welcomes any student interested in joining our choral program for the coming year. The camp takes place from 9am to 3pm both days, focusing on a variety of vocal techniques and choral activities in a workshop style. All Chorus students are expected to attend this camp. Missing both days is counted as one absence; missing one day is counted as a half absence.

Audition is required for placement into the Chorus, with most members having previous choral experience in school, at church, and/or with Vermont Youth Chorale.

Vermont Youth Chorale

Heather Schoppmann, Conductor ~ Mary Jane Austin, Accompanist ~ Art DeQuasie, Manager
Rehearsal: Tuesday: 4:30 - 6:00 PM at the Elley-Long Music Center (Aug-April)

The Vermont Youth Chorale is an ensemble of treble voices (students 4th through 7th grade) providing first-rate vocal training in the context of a high quality performance-oriented ensemble. Students sing in two major choral concerts each year, OrchestraChorusPalooza at the Flynn Center, on school tours and in community concerts. Chorale begins its season with a 2-day mini-camp (shared with the Chorus) at the Elley-Long Music Center in August. VYOA Choral Mini-Camp also welcomes any student interested in joining our choral program for the coming year. The camp takes place from 9am to 3pm both days, focusing on a variety of vocal techniques and choral activities in a workshop style. All Chorale students are expected to attend this camp. Missing both days is counted as one absence; missing one day is counted as a half absence.

Students interested in joining the Chorale are invited to meet with the conductor for a brief audition/assessment prior to joining the ensemble.

Additional programs

Endangered Instruments Program

Established over ten years ago, the VYOA's Endangered Instruments Program (EIP) offers subsidized private lessons as an incentive for students to play instruments that are typically difficult to recruit for our orchestras, currently targeting Bassoon, Horn, Trombone, and Double Bass.

The VYOA offers EIP students 24 subsidized half-hour lessons during the school year for a maximum of three years. Participating students are expected to contribute \$10 per lesson in the first two years of participation and \$15 per lesson in the third year and final year.

The additional requirements for EIP students to maintain their eligibility for lessons are:

- that the student practice regularly and arrive at lessons prepared
- that the student stay current in their lesson payments
- that the student participate in their school music program
- that the student audition for placement in a VYOA ensemble when their teacher deems him/her ready to do so
- that when the student is placed into a VYOA ensemble, they join that ensemble

Although the VYOA has a few instruments available for loan to EIP students, new EIP students are responsible for obtaining an instrument, either from their school, via loan, or as a rental.

Places in the EIP program are in high demand. If the teacher and the music director determine that a student is insufficiently dedicated to giving the time and effort needed to master their instrument, after a warning, their participation will be revoked and their spot will be offered to another student.

For more information or to apply for Endangered Instruments Program lessons, please contact our office at 802-655-5030, or send an email with all of your pertinent contact information to rosina@vyo.org.

School tours

Each of the VYOA's orchestras and choruses participate in school tour days each spring. A school tour day typically includes visits to two elementary/middle schools – one in the morning and one in the afternoon. This experience provides additional performance opportunities for the ensembles, enables players to share their music with their peers, and inspires an interest in music in others. School tours involve a one-day absence from school, usually just prior to each ensemble's spring concert. [Exception: VYO School Tours usually take place in the fall.] While it's regrettable that some students are unable to participate in their ensemble's school tour day, this does not affect those students' eligibility to perform in concerts nor is it deducted from their allowed absences.

Summer programs

Music Day Camp

(4th week of June)

String students in grades 4-10 and band students in grades 6-10 who have at least 1 year of experience either in a school instrumental program or private instruction are welcome to join us for Music Day Camp. **No audition is required.** VYOA Music Day Camp is the perfect summer activity for young musicians! This popular week-long program is designed to help young musicians grow by augmenting individual music knowledge and skills, offering exciting ensemble performance experiences, and providing a supportive and relaxed environment to explore a great variety of musical activities with some of the best music educators in Vermont. Students are placed in one of two levels of band and string orchestra, and participate in chamber music, master classes and small ensembles. A variety of electives are offered that are both music and non-musical, such as Jazz Band, Chorus, art and outdoor recreation.

Discovery Strings Camp

Kathleen Kono, Director

Discovery Strings is the Vermont Youth Orchestra Association's new camp for young string players entering grades 1 - 5 who have at least one year of experience on their interest. Discovery Strings offers young string players a chamber orchestra experience in a camp setting and is perfect for those students who have never attended music camp before. This half-day camp includes ensemble rehearsals, group classes, and fun camp activities. The week culminates with a lunchtime concert for families and friends at the beautiful Elley-Long Music Center.



VYOA Member Expectations and Policies

This section explains the expectations of VYOA student musicians and policies that ensure a safe learning environment and make it possible for our ensembles to perform at an exception level.

Commitment to Musical Excellence

As a member of the VYOA, your personal progress and success as a musician and the collective progress and success of your ensemble depend upon your **FULL** participation. By joining a VYOA ensemble, you make a commitment not only to yourself but also to each of your fellow musicians to do the following:

Participate in as many rehearsals as possible (in accordance with the attendance policy for your ensemble). The challenging music and intensity of work in our ensemble rehearsals means that each minute of rehearsal time is valuable and important. A missed rehearsal is the equivalent of missing a school class for the entire week! We follow the professional rehearsal standard with members expected to remain in place during rehearsals until dismissal at the break and at rehearsal end.

Sectional rehearsals are of particular importance; please make every effort to attend them and bring as much focus and attention to them as you do to full rehearsals.

Practice your ensemble music on a regular basis between rehearsals and achieve mastery of it well before the concert. The primary purpose of rehearsals is for the musicians to grow together as an ensemble and to develop a clear, consistent, and cohesive approach to the music. **Do not plan on learning your parts only during rehearsals!**

If there are issues observed with any student's preparation level, they may be asked on a week's notice to perform certain parts of their ensemble music for their conductor.

Study with a private teacher, if at all possible. Private study is essential for ensuring the continuing development of your musical skills and for meeting the technical challenges of your ensemble music. If you need help finding a teacher please visit the Music Resource Directory on our website (<http://www.vyo.org/music-teacher-directory/>) or speak with your conductor.

Participate in other music activities, especially the school programs that are available to you. One rehearsal per week with us is not enough time to develop your ear, ensemble skills, and musicianship to the fullest. School programs offer not only opportunities for students to develop in these areas but also to develop their leadership skills. We also find that VYOA students who take part in their school ensembles advance more quickly.

Be a good colleague and role model by:

- **Being on time for rehearsals:** be in your seat, ready to play/sing at least 5 and preferably 10 minutes before the scheduled start with all of your music and relevant equipment (e.g. mutes, pencil, reeds, etc.) within easy reach. ***Students are expected to arrive no later than 10 minutes prior to the start of rehearsal.***
- **Engaging fully in rehearsals:** pay attention, follow instructions, mark reminders and changes in your parts, and avoid distracting talk/activity. ***Cell phones and other devices are to be turned off during rehearsals*** – don't put your conductor or ensemble manager in the position of having to confiscate yours!
- **Being supportive of each other** – praise good work, offer assistance and encouragement when needed, hold each other to high standards

Read all emails from your Conductor and Operations Staff. Respond to the emails in a timely manner if asked! These emails contain essential information related to your ensemble. Your response may be needed in order for the VYOA to proceed with organizing your season events.

Attendance and Lateness Policy

The VYOA's attendance and lateness policy recognizes that critical school or family events may conflict with rehearsals and that illnesses occur. Compliance with the VYOA school music participation policy may also cause students to miss rehearsals. Each student is allowed a set number of absences prior to entering ***probationary status***:

- **VT Youth Strings** members – allowed no more than **two absences** per semester.
- **Vermont Youth Chorus & Chorale** members – allowed no more than **two absences** per semester.
- **VT Youth Orchestra & VT Youth Philharmonia** members – allowed no more than **two absences in each set of rehearsals** leading up to a major concert.

Lateness: Rehearsals start on time. Late arrivals are disruptive to the group. Students who are repeatedly late will need to meet with their conductor. Students are expected to **arrive at least ten minutes prior** to beginning of rehearsal so they can be fully prepared and make it possible for rehearsal to start as scheduled. We ask that parents be mindful of this in planning transportation to rehearsals.

Probationary status: Upon reaching probationary status due to excess absences or a combination of absences and latenesses, the student is given an appointment with the ensemble conductor/director (when possible) to demonstrate that they are keeping pace with the rest of the ensemble (this is a practical, not punitive measure designed to maintain our high levels of artistic quality). Remedial work and additional assessments may be required based on this meeting. In the interests of ensuring the overall quality of the ensemble's performance,

wind/brass/percussion parts may be reassigned and section leadership/principal roles may be withdrawn as a consequence of excessive absences. If the student's preparation remains inadequate, **participation in the affected concert may be curtailed** (partially or completely). Probationary status is lifted upon the performance of the current concert program.

Please make use of your allowed absences sparingly and strategically. We recommend that students use their allowed absences for things over which they have no control. These include illness, family emergencies, college visits, mandatory school events, or school music events. We ask that students and their families work together to avoid absences due to things that are under their control. These include family vacations, school work, work shifts, or other competing activities. Making competing commitments means making tough choices, a process that is itself an important learning experience!

Take responsibility for catching up after a missed rehearsal. Be aware that missing one weekly ensemble rehearsal is equivalent to missing an entire week of a school class. Therefore, after missing a rehearsal, **students are expected to contact a colleague or their section leader (VYP/VYO/Chorus) or their conductor (VYS/Chorale)** and learn what was covered in the missed rehearsal (e.g. changes to bowings/fingerings, tempos set, diction explained, passages targeted for individual practice, etc.)

Members must notify their ensemble manager of any upcoming absence from rehearsal. Email is the best way to give notification. All absences, *including* SAT testing, Music Festivals, or illness, require that the ensemble manager be notified in advance of the absence.

School Music Program Participation Policy

As a key element in the VYOA's partnership with school music programs, **all VYOA students in elementary and middle school are required to participate in their school music program if one is offered.** At all grade levels, when scheduling conflicts arise between VYOA and school music events (especially performances), participation in those school music events is given precedence, resulting in an excused absence.

Ensemble Folder and Sheet Music Responsibilities

Your ensemble folder and sheet music are the property of VYOA. Losing or damaging your folder will incur a \$30 replacement fee. Each lost original (non-photocopied) piece of music may incur a fee of \$15 or more, depending on replacement cost or publisher penalties for lost rental materials. Whenever possible, we aim to provide high-quality photocopies to avert these types of problems. All photocopies should be returned following the concert unless students are told otherwise by their ensemble manager. Students are encouraged to write their name in pencil at the top right corner of their music if it has not already been written there prior to music distribution. During rehearsals, students need a pencil with medium to soft black lead (No.2 or softer) and eraser available at all times. *VYOA sheet music should never be written upon with pens, markers, or colored pencils!*

Student Behavior Expectations

Reasonable standards of behavior and dress are expected while rehearsing, performing, or participating in any event or activity associated with the Vermont Youth Orchestra Association. No set of rules can cover every possible situation. The list below, along with common courtesy and respect, offers a guide to appropriate behavior.

General behavior

1. Demonstrate **appropriate, respectful, and safe behavior** with VYOA staff, sectional coaches, and fellow students
2. **Put trash in the appropriate containers.** Please help keep our building clean and well maintained!
3. The use of *tobacco, alcohol or any illegal substances* is **strictly forbidden** in and around the Elley-Long Music Center at all times. Violations of this policy are grounds for suspension or expulsion.
4. Students need to demonstrate **safe behavior at all times while at the Elley-Long Music Center.** Running, rough housing, and using equipment for improper purposes will not be tolerated.
5. **During breaks from rehearsal,** students should remain inside ELMC or in the area immediately surrounding the building and stay out of the street. Ensemble manager approval is required for students to go beyond this defined area.
6. Everyone must take care to **avoid damaging instruments** or any property in the building. Members are responsible for their own instruments. **Do not leave instruments or bows unattended** where they might be damaged accidentally. Do not leave your instrument on your chair during breaks. ***Instruments should be safely put into cases during breaks or when not needed.*** All instruments should be insured; most homeowner or renter's insurance policies can include a rider to cover instrument insurance.

Rehearsal etiquette

1. ***Cell phones and other electronic devices are to be turned off during rehearsals!***
2. **Restroom usage:** Please use the restrooms **before the rehearsal or at the break.** Students may not leave the rehearsal for any reason (other than for absolute emergencies) while it is in progress. Any issues with bathroom supplies or hygiene should be reported immediately to VYOA staff.
3. **Please do not bring food or drink into rehearsal spaces.** Water is the only exception. A **refillable water bottle** provides an excellent means of staying hydrated, avoiding spills, and reducing trash. Please eat your snacks in the hallway or lobby before or after rehearsal or during breaks, and remember to dispose of your trash properly.
4. **Listen carefully** to instructions from your conductor or manager. Do not talk while your conductor or manager is speaking. When being addressed prior at the end of the rehearsal, stay in your seat and don't start packing up until the announcements have concluded. If you have difficulty hearing the conductor, please let him/her know immediately.
5. **Talk among musicians should be kept to a minimum,** and should deal directly with issues related to the music at hand. Musician attentiveness is essential for productive and smooth-running rehearsals.
6. **Books, homework, and other off-task materials are not to be brought into the rehearsal area** – being attentive and engaged even when you are not playing is an important part of being in an ensemble. You

will learn important things about the music and how to improve your skills by observing your colleagues rehearsing.

Bullying and Harassment Policy

The VYOA strives to provide a safe, secure and respectful environment for all students at Elley-Long Music Center and at VYOA-sponsored activities. Bullying has a harmful social, physical, psychological and academic impact on bullies, victims and bystanders. Therefore, the VYOA has defined an explicit policy banning bullying at Elley-Long Music Center and at VYOA-sponsored activities.

Definition

Bullying is deliberate or intentional behavior using words or actions, intended to cause fear, humiliation, intimidation, harm or social exclusion. Bullying may be repeated behavior and involves an imbalance of power. The behavior may be motivated by an actual or perceived distinguishing characteristic, such as, but not limited to: age; national origin; race; ethnicity; religion; gender; gender identity; sexual orientation; physical attributes; physical or mental ability or disability; and social, economic or family status.

Bullying behavior can be:

1. **Physical** (e.g. assault, hitting or punching, kicking, theft, threatening behavior)
2. **Verbal** (e.g. threatening or intimidating language, teasing or name-calling, racist remarks)
3. **Indirect** (e.g. spreading cruel rumors, intimidation through gestures, social exclusion and sending insulting messages or pictures by mobile phone or using the internet – also known as cyber-bullying)

Prohibition

The VYOA prohibits all bullying, whether it is physical; verbal; indirect; cyber-bullying; bullying by proxy; or between students and students, students and adults, or adults and adults. Bullying behavior is prohibited in all VYOA sanctioned events and under VYOA supervision. Suspension or expulsion/termination from the organization are possible consequences for individuals found to have taken part in these behaviors.

Disciplinary Process

In addition to the expectations and policies shown above, the conductor of each orchestra/chorus may set additional requirements for rehearsal and concert behavior.

Failure to abide by any of these expectations or policies will be addressed through the following steps:

1. VYOA staff members speak with the student and/or parents concerning the problem.
2. If the problem persists, the Conductor and/or Director of Operations may remove the student from the activity or have him/her sit out of one or more activity.
3. Failing a satisfactory resolution, the student may be expelled from the VYOA.
(Note: Tuition is non-refundable.)

Concert Attire Regulations

The goal of our concert attire regulations is to help our students present a professional appearance and ensure a uniform look throughout the ensemble. **No one member's outward appearance should distract the audience from everyone's performance.**

Recognizing that concert wear may be outgrown year to year or during the course of the season, families should be aware that season-long rentals (with in-year exchange privileges) are available at a reasonable cost from a number of vendors. Tuxedo Wholesaler http://tuxedowholesaler.com/ConcertAttire_Info.html#redi-ship is a good place to start exploring this option. Please contact your ensemble manager if you need further assistance with concert wear.

Vermont Youth Orchestra Vermont Youth Chorus Vermont Youth Chorale

Students in the above ensembles are required to wear:

- Black suit or tuxedo
- White button down dress shirt
- Black bow tie, black socks, black dress shoes (no other colors, please!)
- **Unacceptable:** jeans or athletic shoes



-OR-

Choice of:

- Long black dress (hem must fall **below the knee**) with black socks or black hosiery and black dress shoes
- Long sleeved all-black shirt (**elbow length at minimum**) paired with solid black dress slacks; accompanied by black socks or black hosiery and black dress shoes
- Long sleeved all-black shirt (elbow length at minimum) paired with long black skirt (hem must fall **below the knee**); accompanied by black socks or black hosiery and black dress shoes
- **Unacceptable:**



- Short skirts
 - Slit skirts
 - Neck lines or back designs with significant skin exposure
 - Sleeveless, short-sleeved, tank or tube tops
 - Jeans
 - Bare feet
 - Non-black articles of clothing
- **Shoulders and knees must be covered when seated!**

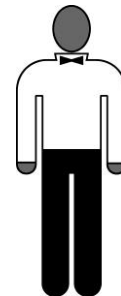
Please Note: ALL BLACK ITEMS should be solid black without pattern or ornament

A student who fails to wear the appropriate attire for a concert may be withheld from performing in that concert.

**Vermont Youth Philharmonia
Vermont Youth Strings**

Students in the above ensembles are required to wear:

- Clean, solid white button down dress shirt (long or short sleeved)
- Black dress pants
- Black bow tie, black socks and black dress shoes (no other colors, please!)
- **Unacceptable:** jeans or athletic shoes



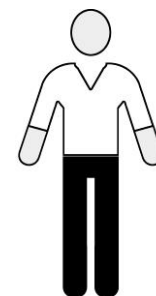
-OR -

- Clean, solid white shirt (short or long sleeved)
- Solid black dress slacks or long black skirt (hem must fall **below the knee**)
- Black socks or black hosiery and black dress shoes (no other colors, please!)
- **Unacceptable:**



- Short skirts
 - Slit skirts
 - Neck lines or back designs with significant skin exposure
 - Sleeveless, short-sleeved, tank or tube tops
 - Jeans
 - Bare feet
 - Non-black articles of clothing
- **Shoulders and knees must be covered when seated!**

Please Note: ALL BLACK ITEMS should be solid black without pattern or ornament



A student who fails to wear the appropriate attire for a concert may be withheld from performing in that concert.

Other important information for VYOA families

Tuition

Annual tuition is required for participation in all VYOA programs. Tuition may be paid in cash, check, MasterCard or Visa. Payment plans are available, please see your tuition contract for details.

Please note the following important tuition policies:

- VYO and VYP students who drop out of their orchestra less than one week prior to the start of *Reveille!* or an October start will be reimbursed only 50% of their total tuition cost.
- For all orchestras, tuition is non-refundable after the first day of *Reveille* or mini-camp.
- A tuition discount is available for students who participate concurrently in more than one VYOA ensemble. This discount applies to the lesser of the two tuitions.

- Student tuition for the current season must be paid in full in order for the student to receive an audition appointment for the coming season

VYOA Financial Aid Program

It is our policy that no child be discouraged from participating in VYOA programs due to financial need. Application forms for need-based financial assistance are included in the standard registration packet for each of our programs. Each application is reviewed in confidence by an independent committee. For more information, please contact our Executive Director, Rosina Cannizzaro at rosina@vyo.org

Concert admission

Admission is charged for all concerts held at the Elley-Long Music Center unless otherwise noted. Admission costs are always posted at the ticket table in the lobby.

Tickets to VYO concerts and OrchestraChorusPalooza at the Flynn Center are sold through the **Flynn Box Office only**. Contact them at **802-86-Flynn** or www.flyntix.org.

Complimentary VYO concert tickets

All VYOA students are encouraged to attend the VYO's Fall, Winter, and Spring concerts at the Flynn Center for the Performing Arts. We offer each student (except VYO members) one complimentary ticket to enable them to attend each of these concerts. These tickets are distributed at rehearsals prior to each VYO concert. *Tickets are limited!* If you do not intend to use your ticket, please do not take one.

Please Note: Student comp tickets are NOT held at the Flynn Center Box Office. Remember to bring your ticket to the concert. You will not be able to obtain another on the day of the concert. All tickets are general admission. ***Complimentary tickets are not available for OrchestraChorusPalooza due to the number of performers involved. Seat locations for this concert are printed on your tickets.***

Concert recordings

DVDs – DVDs of all concerts presented by the VYOA at the Flynn Center for the Performing Arts and for the Winter and Spring Choral Concerts presented at ELMC are produced by and made available for purchase by our media partners, RETN. These can be ordered through the RETN website www.retn.org. Instructions are given at the time that DVDs become available for each concert.

Audio Recordings – Recordings of all concerts presented by the VYOA at the Flynn Center for the Performing Arts and the Elley-Long Music Center are made available for purchase and download at www.InstantEncore.com. Families are notified of when the recording is available and are given links for purchase and download.

Note: DVDs and audio recordings of performances at non-VYOA produced events such as Flynn School Day Matinees are not produced and therefore not available for purchase

Parental support

Supporting your child's VYOA participation: For students to benefit from everything the VYOA offers, we need parents to assist with their children's participation in the following ways:

- Read all emails and materials from VYOA. Respond in a timely manner when requested
- Stay informed via the means described in "Communicating with the VYOA" section below

- Ensure prompt arrival at rehearsals and concerts and pick-up at the end.
 - *Students are expected to arrive at least 10 minutes prior to the published start time for rehearsals.*
 - *Students must be picked up no later than 15 minutes following the end of a rehearsal or performance, especially if it is the last event of the day at ELMC.*
 - *Students whose siblings are in an ensemble whose rehearsals finish later than their own can remain in the building until family pick-up time, although we request that students age 10 and younger not be left unsupervised.*
- Support full attendance of your child at all rehearsals and events by avoiding conflicts between family plans and VYOA activities whenever possible
- Support your child's private lessons, practice routine, and participation in school music activities
- Plan for your family to attend each of your child's VYOA concerts
- Provide a snack for your child for rehearsals
- Introduce people to the VYOA, including parents of prospective students, and help grow our audience base by bringing friends to your child's concerts
- Speak to VYOA staff members regarding any concerns surrounding your child's participation. The sooner we are aware of your concerns, the better chance we have of resolving them successfully.

Volunteering: At various points in each season, the VYOA needs assistance from parent volunteers. Typically, this includes helping at concerts or special events, serving as a chaperone for school tours or community concerts, or helping with a large office mailing. Additional information and volunteer sign-ups are available at the annual parent orientation meetings in August/September. Parents are always welcome to contact the VYOA staff to volunteer or to add their name to a list of volunteers available for a particular task.

Recommended equipment/supplies for students

Students are required to have all applicable items with an asterisk (*) available for rehearsals and performances

General

- Medium to soft lead pencil with eraser*
- Folding music stand for tour performances

Electronics tools/smart device apps for everyone

- metronome (either dedicated device or app on phone; “Tempo” by Frozen Ape is an excellent choice)
- tuner (either dedicated device or app on phone; “Tunable” is an excellent choice)
- digital recorder (most smart phones offer this feature)

String players

- extra set of strings*
- mute* (keep in instrument case; always bring to rehearsal area if your music calls for muting)
- rosin*
- rock stop or strap for cellists* (**required** at all times)
- end pin cover or rest for bassists*
- spare bow (for emergencies)
- cleaning cloth

Percussionists (one pair of each)

- Snare drum sticks*
- Timpani mallets*
- Yarn mallets*
- Bell/xylophone mallets*

Wind players

- instrument cleaning tools/supplies*
- instrument stand (a small investment that can help avoid major repair costs!)
- extra reeds*
- cork grease
- appropriate screwdrivers for minor repairs and adjustments
- extra pads

Brass players

- instrument cleaning tools/supplies
- valve oil*
- slide grease*
- slide lubricant and water bottle (trombones)*
- mutes (as required by repertoire)*
- instrument stand (a small investment that can help avoid major repair costs!)
- spare mouthpiece

Brass players are reminded that inserting mouthpieces while making a twisting motion will keep them from becoming stuck in the lead pipe

Communicating with the VYOA

The VYOA staff communicates with students & parents primarily via email. Students and parents receive emails from their Orchestra/Chorus conductor and ensemble managers on a regular basis regarding rehearsal schedules, performances and other important events. Please be sure to read all emails. The VYOA avoids overloading families with emails but activities in the normal course of the season do require frequent communication. Please keep your ensemble manager updated with any email address changes. If you suspect you are not receiving all VYOA emails, check your junk/spam folder periodically as this is where mass emails are sometimes routed.

Please read the **VYOA E-Newsletter**. Published on a monthly basis, it contains useful information regarding upcoming events and opportunities. If you have opted out of receiving it in the past, please contact info@vyo.org to resume delivery.

Ensemble managers do not hold regular office hours. Please feel free to call the VYOA office to leave them a voicemail message. Often times the fastest method of communication with staff is via email – see the first page for a list of these email addresses or consult the VYOA website at www.vyo.org

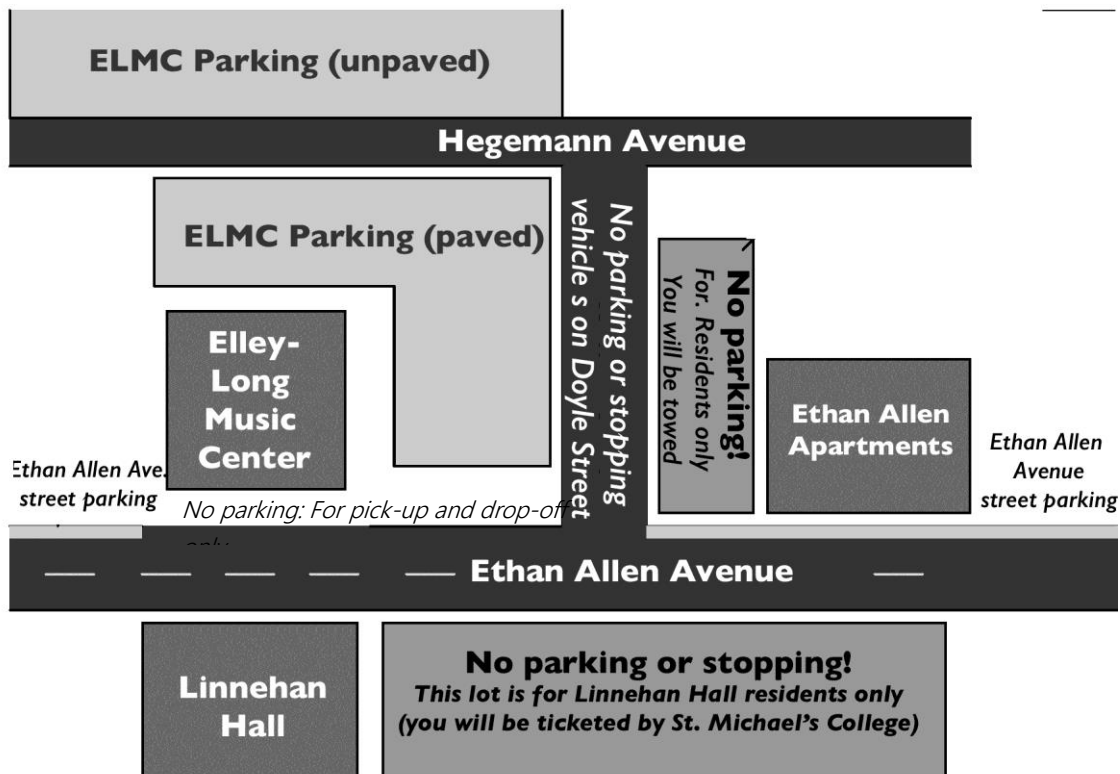
Please “like” the Vermont Youth Orchestra Association on Facebook! While we do not rely on Facebook as a channel for communicating essential information, it is useful way to keep current on VYOA events, especially those that are not included in the ensemble schedules.

Please visit our website frequently! It contains a great deal of useful information and will help keep you up to date. www.vyo.org

Weather conditions

The VYOA does not normally cancel concerts or rehearsals in the event of inclement weather. Please use your best judgment when deciding to travel to a VYOA event in bad weather. Please notify the operations staff if you decide not to attend an event because of weather conditions. If the VYOA does cancel an event, as much notice as possible will be given out via email, Facebook, and outgoing voicemail messages.

Parking at the Elley-Long Music Center at Saint Michael’s College



Park only in the following areas:

- the paved lot directly behind and adjacent to the Music Center
- the grassy field behind the Music Center
- the street along Ethan Allen Ave

Please **DO NOT park** in any of the following areas:

- the lot adjacent to the apartment building next to the Music Center - you may be towed!
- the lot adjacent to the dorm building (Linnehan Hall) across the street from the Music Center – you may be ticketed by St. Michael’s College.

- the pull-off area directly in front of the Music Center – this area is needed as drop-off and pick-up area for equipment and for people with mobility restrictions

We encourage students and parents to **drive cautiously around the Music Center**. Fort Ethan Allen is a busy residential, business, and college student housing area. Please avoid obstructing traffic especially during the busy drop-off/pick-up times. There is limited parking space on Ethan Allen Ave but plenty of space behind the Music Center in our paved and grassy lots. Please park and arrange to meet your child inside the Music Center. Let's be good neighbors to the residents of Fort Ethan Allen!

Music festival sponsorships

The VYOA sponsors participation in the **New England Music Festival** for VYOA students whose schools do not participate in the festival and for VYOA students who are homeschooled. VYOA students receive information via email in late September/early October on the sponsorship process. Families of participating students are responsible for all expenses and registration fees associated with the festival and are invoiced by the VYOA. Fees vary from year to year and we make every effort to notify families of total costs prior to the festival. For more information on the festival and the audition process, visit www.nemfa.org. Please note that the VYOA **cannot** sponsor participation in the **Vermont All-State Music Festival**. Students wishing to audition for All State must sign up through their high school music program (or as a homeschool). Visit www.vmea.org for more information.

Special ticket offers

Professional music organizations, such as the Vermont Symphony Orchestra, Burlington Chamber Orchestra, and Lake Champlain Chamber Music Festival sometimes extend reduced price ticket offers to VYOA students. We encourage all students to take advantage of these offers, as witnessing high-quality live performances are an important element in the development of young musicians. We share details of these offers with VYOA families as they become available.

Lost and found

A lost and found bin is located in the library at the Music Center. Please pick up misplaced items as soon as possible. Unclaimed items are donated to Goodwill on a regular basis during the season. It is wise to label your music-related property (tuners, rock stops, instrument stands) to ensure they can be recovered easily if left at ELMC.



Auditions, placements, role assignments, and awards

Annual Placement Auditions

Auditions are required for placement in the following ensembles: Vermont Youth Orchestra, Vermont Youth Philharmonia, Vermont Youth Strings, and Vermont Youth Chorus.

When: All orchestra and choral auditions are held annually in May/June. *Current students* must re-audition each year and automatically receive an audition appointment in late March. *New students* can email auditions@vyo.org to request an audition appointment. When appropriate, auditions can be scheduled outside the normal time frame, though timing or the existing ensemble makeup may delay a student joining an ensemble until later in the season. Mid-year auditions are offered in December only for students who did not audition for placement prior to the start of the season (ensemble assignments do not change over the course of the season, except in cases where there is an organizational need for a student to be reassigned).

Where: All auditions are held at the Elley-Long Music Center at Saint Michael's College.

Cost: There is no cost for any VYOA audition.

Time: All instrumental auditions are approximately 10 minutes in duration. Choral auditions are approximately 15 minutes in duration.

Placement results: Once auditions are completed, all placements are sent out via email.

Eligibility: Auditions are open to instrumentalists currently in grades 3-11 and vocalists in grades 8-11 (6th and 7th grade vocalists are not required to audition for Chorale). Instrumentalists should have at least one year of experience on an orchestral instrument. Woodwind and brass players younger than 6th grade should have at least 2 years of experience on their instrument. Younger students may be permitted to audition if given a recommendation by their private instructor.

To maintain eligibility for VYOA ensemble membership, students in elementary and middle school must concurrently participate in their school music program if one is offered. At all grade levels, when scheduling conflicts arise between VYOA and school music events (especially performances), participation in those school music events is given precedence, resulting in an excused absence.

Requirements: Details of VYOA audition requirements can be found at www.vyo.org/auditions

VYOA Senior Soloist Auditions

All VYOA high school juniors (including VYChorus members) are welcome to audition in May (preceding their senior year) to perform as an orchestral soloist during the following season. Interested students must participate in a special 15-minute audition, playing/singing the selection they wish to perform as a soloist. The soloist auditions are typically held on the 3rd Tuesday of May. No alternate audition day can be offered.

Piano accompaniment is required for this audition and students should also be prepared to play scales, arpeggios, and sight reading exercises, as *this audition also serves as their annual ensemble placement audition*. Additional information regarding soloist auditions is distributed to eligible students each spring. Unlike many youth orchestras, where a single winner is chosen as the exclusive student soloist for the season, the VYOA has a proud tradition of creating orchestral soloist opportunities for every student who demonstrates the level of excellence that being a soloist requires. Audition results are typically sent to all participants within the week following these auditions.

Note: Students should be aware that most orchestral music written in the past 90 years is under copyright and often available only via rental from the publisher. In these cases, the VYOA covers the first \$200 of the rental or purchase cost and splits the next \$100 with the student. Any portion of the rental fee or purchase cost over \$300 is the responsibility of the student. All students planning to participate in these auditions should check in with Mr. Cumming **no later than the first week of January** to determine if your selected piece is suitable for programming and if it presents significant music rental or purchase costs so that you can make an alternate repertoire choice if necessary. Because of reproduction and broadcast rights costs, videos of performances of works still under copyright cannot be included in the RETN broadcasts and DVDs.

Ensemble placements

The VYOA conducting staff use an evaluation system developed during thousands of auditions over the past two decades and consult closely over the course of auditions to identify and contextualize each student’s current level of development, taking into account not only what is observed in the audition, but also the quality of their VYOA ensemble participation in the previous season and the trajectory of growth demonstrated in the year between auditions. Our goal is to determine the ensemble placement and role for each student that is developmentally appropriate – where the student will experience suitable levels of challenge and opportunities for growth, camaraderie, and artistic accomplishment.

For our choral ensembles, placement is straightforward: students in grades 6&7 are accepted into Vermont Youth Chorale; students in grades 8-12 who have the requisite vocal development and musicianship skills are accepted into Vermont Youth Chorus.

For our orchestral ensembles, the placement process is more complex.

The following areas are key in determining instrumental ensemble placement:

- Technical level of audition repertoire (especially as it relates to position proficiency in strings)
- Technical facility
- Maturity of tone/projection
- Intonation
- Rhythmic accuracy
- Security in extreme registers
- Quality of audition preparation

Sight reading: The sight-reading portion of the audition serves primarily as a **diagnostic exercise** to identify elements of music notation a student may have difficulty processing, which is a helpful guide for rehearsal and curriculum planning. **Students should not consider sight-reading difficulties as failures** nor give these exercises undue weight in their perception of the quality of their performance. As noted above, it is the skills development and preparation they have achieved over the preceding year that determine their ensemble placement. Sight reading skills are, however, taken into account when determining section leadership positions, as a well-developed level of musicianship is needed to succeed in a leadership role.

After all factors have been weighed in a student’s instrumental audition, we determine the “natural” ensemble placement and role (e.g. 1st or 2nd violin section, section leadership) for which the student has demonstrated their qualification. Not until all auditions for an instrument are complete do we determine the actual placements we can offer students.

For some instruments, placements can be heavily influenced by the number of available positions—flute and clarinet, for example, often have more qualified candidates than available orchestral chairs for those instruments. In these cases, students who are qualified for membership in a particular orchestra may be put on a **waiting list** pending the decisions of students who were placed ahead of them.

In other cases (most often with strings), to achieve proper ensemble balance we may choose to “bump” a student’s placement upward. In making these decisions, we may contact a student’s private instructor to confirm that the student will be able to cope with a “stretch” placement and be able to do the work needed to avoid being overwhelmed by more difficult music and ensemble challenges. In both of these situations (waitlist and stretch placements), factors such as tenure in the organization and the observed quality of a student’s focus, collegiality, and commitment in the ensemble can play an important role in final placement decisions.

Placements are communicated via email to students and their teachers in early June. Waitlisted students are notified of their final status by the end of June.

Orchestra seating and part assignment policies

In the VYOA, we seek to place educational effectiveness and community building on par with the pursuit of artistic excellence. We want the VYOA experience to be an oasis in the increasingly stressful and high-stakes environment that our students experience elsewhere. We avoid practices that can lead to rivalries and conflicts between students. These concepts are the impetus for the policies explained below.

Violin section assignments

Our developmental benchmarks (still in pilot stage) provide a clear framework for the levels of skill development required by the parts that each orchestra's string sections will play. After ensemble placements are made, we invite private string instructors to share their assessment of their students' current position proficiency and use this alongside our own observations to determine the most suitable section assignment for each player. Violin III sections currently exist in all orchestras; the presence of a Violin III section in VYO is contingent on the size of the viola section from year to year. Here are the policies regarding section assignments during the season:

- **VYS, VYP:** Violinist section assignments are **held steady for the entire season**. The only exceptions to this occur in cases where VYP violin sections need to be rebalanced in October due to the arrival of non-Reveille attendees.
- **VYO:** Violinists are informally grouped in the following manner based on skill development levels
 - Violinists who primarily play 2nd and sometimes 3rd
 - Violinists who primarily play 2nd and sometimes 1st
 - Violinists who primarily play 1st and sometimes 2nd
 - Violinists who play 1st only

Section assignments will vary from concert to concert. This system offers a variety of experiences to students, enables each section to have experienced players in key positions in all sections, and offers growth opportunities as younger players take on more challenging 1st parts for a portion of the season as opposed to being overwhelmed by playing 1st for the entire season. Some players in leadership positions are assigned to sit toward the rear of sections to strengthen the overall performance of the section and its ability to follow the principal stand players

String seating rotation

Each VYOA orchestra uses rotational string seating throughout the season. Rotational seating is **non-hierarchical** and aims to put more experienced players throughout each section to ensure the best possible artistic product. String seating plans change for each concert. At times, seating may be rotated between rehearsals as part of the educational process, but will be set into concert seating order for the final month of rehearsals.

Wind/brass/percussion part assignments and doubling

Rather than having fixed section seating, WBP players receive a variety of parts for each concert. Typically, more senior players play the most challenging parts, while less experienced players have the opportunity to learn section leadership skills with first chair parts for shorter, less difficult pieces. Percussion part assignments are generally made by the conductor, but may be modified by consensus within the section to create the optimal section layout and choreography.

Wind and brass seating layouts: As a result of the part rotations that take place for each concert's repertoire, wind and brass players are expected to change seats to maintain the correct positioning of voices within the section.

Wind and brass doubling: There will be occasions where more than one player will be assigned to a part. In these cases, the general rule is that passages *mf* and above are doubled, while softer passages (or ones explicitly marked "solo") are taken by one player. The conductor may provide guidance regarding doubling and has the final say on the assignment of solo/exposed passages.

Leadership opportunities

Developing leadership skills in our students is an important element in our organizational mission. The conductors name principal string players and section leaders as a part of this process. While many of the leadership responsibilities are common to each of our orchestras, there are additional responsibilities that are introduced as students progress through the orchestra continuum. Please see our website for additional details.

VYOA Scholarships and Awards

VYP Friendship Award

The VYP Friendship Award was first awarded in April of 2010. This award was created by and is funded by the parents of Aaron Xue to honor his memory and highlight the importance and value of friendship among young musicians. Aaron was a VYP cellist who died unexpectedly in April of 2009. The award, as determined by VYP members' secret nominations and VYOA staff input, is given to the student who demonstrates exemplary character traits throughout the season while interacting with his/her fellow orchestra members, as shown in generosity with their time and energy, caring, willingness to listen, helpfulness, etc. The recipient is announced every year at the VYP Spring Concert in April.

Hermance Prize

The Hermance Prize is awarded annually to a Vermont Youth Orchestra senior who has performed as a soloist with a VYOA orchestra during the current concert season. Established in 1990 by the parents and grandfather of pianist Harry Hermance, this \$1,000 prize is presented at the VYO's final concert of the year in May in honor of Harry's commitment to musical excellence. The recipient of the prize is determined by their adjudicated performance at the Hermance Recital, which features performances by each senior soloist playing solo literature written with piano accompaniment or as an unaccompanied solo work. The 2017 Hermance Recital takes place on Monday, April 17th at 7pm. VYOA students, especially the soloists' VYO colleagues, are strongly encouraged to attend this free event.

Weathers Scholarship

Ann Weathers (1923-2012) was a long-time friend of the VYOA. She shared the Vermont Youth Orchestra Association's interest in helping young students achieve their musical potential. To this end, she established an

annual award to assist a VYOA graduating high school senior with the pursuit of a Bachelor's degree in music. The exact amount will depend on the performance of the scholarship's endowment fund but will be no less than \$3,000. Any high school senior who is currently a VYOA ensemble member and plans to pursue a music degree in the areas of performance, education, or composition is eligible to apply. Applicants must demonstrate: financial need, an enthusiastic commitment toward pursuing a career in music, and a record of past artistic achievement and recognition. Of these criteria, financial need is the first to be considered. The application due date is late April and all senior VYOA members will be notified via email of application requirements and deadlines. Please contact rosina@vyo.org for more information and the application materials.



Additional Services Provided by VYOA

Student Recordings

Students may use the VYOA audio equipment installed at Elley-Long Music Center to create a CD performance recording for college or summer festival applications. The fee for this service is \$50/hour for VYOA members. To reserve recording time, schedule an appointment with Director of Operations Art DeQuasie (art@vyo.org).

Instrument Loans

While students are expected to provide their own instrument, we do have a limited number of instruments available for loan to VYOA musicians. These are instruments that are typically not available via rental (e.g. clarinets in A, double French horns.) There is no fee for the loan if the student's VYOA ensemble repertoire requires a related instrument not typically owned by a student musician. Examples include the piccolo for flutists, English Horn for oboists, and E-flat, A, and bass clarinets. In special cases, these instruments can be loaned for short term, non-VYOA use. A fee is charged for these loans. A portion of this loan fee will be returned to the student when the instrument is returned undamaged and by the agreed upon date. The amount of the loan fee is set according to instrument type.

Renting the Elley-Long Music Center

Our beautiful facility caters to a variety of events including wedding receptions, music recitals, theater & dance performances, business functions, reunions, retirement parties, etc. Nonprofit rates are available. To schedule a walk-through of the facility, for a rental request form, or for more information, please visit <http://www.vyo.org/about/elley-long/> or contact Thom Wood, VYOA Facilities Manager at thom@vyo.org.