



June 10, 2020

Dear VYOA Families,

Thank you for your recent audition submissions. We know there were some challenges and we applaud you for your tenacity and flexibility in submitting an online audition this year. We are excited to move forward in sharing our plans for the fall.

While we expect that next season will look different than usual, I am certain that the scenarios that the staff and I have drafted will offer our musicians the opportunity to perform new music genres and repertoire. Our music director, Mark Alpizar, and VYOA artistic staff are excited to explore works for smaller ensembles that allow our musicians to build their chamber ensemble skills. The musicianship skills that our students will develop over the coming months will make our orchestras come together faster when that time comes.

We know that you have many questions and this letter will hopefully help answer most of them. But this is a changing landscape and we don't know where we will be in the coming weeks. We value your trust in our work developing your musician. We want to make sure that we have your trust in safely coming together to make music in person. With that in mind, we are scheduling **two Q&A Zoom meetings on Thursday, July 30th** so we can share new updates, our process in determining safety protocols and program logistics, and to answer your questions. Zoom meetings will be grouped by ensemble and details will be sent out at a later time.

Programming

We are currently working under the assumption that groups of 25 or less will be able to be together. Our orchestra room and stage can easily accommodate these numbers with a 1.5 - 2.0 meter radius per student. For us to accommodate this, our orchestras will be grouped into smaller ensembles (most likely for the first semester). Each ensemble will have a staggered start and end time. This is so we can maintain traffic and sanitizing regimens between groups. Rehearsals will meet weekly for 90 minute rehearsals and these will be led by the music director, their conductor, or a visiting sectional coach. The window of time that the orchestras will meet will need to be extended to accommodate rehearsals in a safe way. This is indicated on the schedule specific to your orchestra that is attached. Training programs are being moved to Saturdays to allow for these schedule extensions.

Calendar

Reveille! and VYS Minicamp are cancelled for the summer. Given the current social distancing requirements, we are unable to hold Reveille! and VYS Minicamp in the same spirit. VYS and VYP will start rehearsals on Sunday, Sept. 13th and perform concerts in December at Elley-Long Music Center. VYO members will meet in their small groups starting the week of August 17th.

Safety Protocols

These requirements will be in place starting in August.

- No family members will be allowed in the building. Families can park in the lot behind the building and walk their child to the front of the building or they can utilize the drop-off area in front of the building. Cars will be asked to stop so the passenger door opens in front of the building. Cars will not be allowed to stand or park there during the duration of the rehearsals. We will ask individuals to use the handicap parking spots that are located in the parking lot during this time. This ensures pick-up and drop-off will be safer and less prone to bottle-necking.
- Musicians must wear a mask when they enter the building. Upon entering, all musicians' temperature will be taken. Anyone with a temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher will be unable to participate in the rehearsal and will need to return home immediately.
- Musicians must use hand sanitizer before heading to their rehearsal space.
- Musicians should not attend rehearsal if they are sick or symptomatic (with fever, cough, and/or shortness of breath).
- All musicians must wear masks during their time in the building. The exception is when woodwind and brass musicians remove their masks to play. Staff is required to wear masks as well.
- Each musician must bring their own music stand to use. String players will not be sharing stands. All musicians will sit in their assigned seat. Woodwind and brass chairs will be spaced by a 2.0 meter radius. String players will be spaced by a 1.5 meter radius.
- Rehearsals are planned so that they won't have a break other than a chance to stretch.
- Musicians should use the restroom before rehearsal starts.
- All woodwind and brass students will be provided materials where spit valves can be emptied. Musicians will be expected to dispose of these at the end of rehearsal.
- At the end of rehearsal musicians will close up and leave the building in an orderly fashion. Musicians will not be allowed to congregate inside the building.
- VYOA staff will be sanitizing all chairs and hard surfaces after each group's rehearsal. A 30 minute break has been allotted between each rehearsal to allow for sanitizing during the changeover.
- Families must notify the VYOA if their musician or someone in their family has contracted COVID-19 and their musician has been at rehearsal within the 14 day timeframe. Names will be kept confidential when musicians and staff are notified for contact tracing purposes.

Performances

For at least the first half of the season, all VYOA performances will take place at the Elley-Long Music Center. These performances will be live streamed for families near and far. We will not be accommodating any audience members during the rehearsal and performance times. We are optimistic that we will be performing as full ensembles by the end of the season.

Tuition

VYOA tuition will not be increased for the 2020-2021 season. All families will be enrolled in a payment plan for the season. 50% tuition is due August 1st and then remaining tuition will be charged to a credit or debit card on a monthly basis through April 1st. Tuition payments will be as follows:

VYO = \$1,875; August 3rd = \$937.50; September 1st - April 1st = \$117.19/month

VYP = \$1,550; August 3rd = \$775; September 1st - April 1st = \$96.87/month

VYS = \$850; August 3rd = \$425; September 1st - April 1st = \$53.13/month

The VYOA recognizes that this coming season may have unforeseen challenges for some. In an effort to make tuition payments easier for families, we have stretched out payments over the entirety of the season. Financial aid is available for qualifying families.

Dates

July 20: Financial Aid applications are due in the VYOA offices by 5pm.

Please note: The Elley-Long Music Center will not be opened to the public during the month of July. Please mail in financial aid applications. **The offices will be open for in-person drop offs on Monday July 20th from 12pm - 5pm ONLY!** Otherwise, please plan to mail your forms and support documents. Award notifications will be emailed by Wednesday, July 29.

July 30: VYOA Zoom Q&A sessions with staff

August 3rd: Tuition payment of 50% is due

August 15: Final fall program plans will be confirmed

Please know that all programs and schedules are subject to change as per safety directives from the governor and state health department. I am grateful to the VYOA staff for their help in drafting our program scenarios and safety protocols.

No one knows what we can expect next season. Recognizing that changes can happen at any time, we have done our best to outline a year where our students will be successful and continue to grow artistically. We are all in this together and with compassion and understanding, I know it will be a wonderful season.

Very sincerely,



Rosina Cannizzaro
Executive Director



Welcome to Vermont Youth Strings (VYS)!

Please print out this schedule & read this important information carefully.

2020-21 VYS DATES & INFORMATION (Subject to change throughout the year)

Conductor: Asiat Ali

Operations Assistant: Mia Fritze

Email: mia@vyo.org

Please contact [Mia Fritze](#) with any questions you may have regarding participation in VYS. The best form of communication will be via email as Operations staff members do not hold regular office hours.

Seating & Excerpt recordings: VYS seating rotates within sections each week until the last few weeks leading up to the Concerts. Seating charts are set out at each rehearsal. Once in the Fall and once in the Spring, VYS students will record a set of predetermined excerpts from the VYS music they are working on. This will take place during regular VYS rehearsals & will help determine seating order for the Concerts. Aside from principal seats, the seating order is not hierarchical.

IMPORTANT DATES: Please mark these dates on your calendar!

Rehearsals: Sundays; Please block off time from 3-5:45pm for VYS rehearsal. The exact 90 minute rehearsal time will be announced no later than August 15. We appreciate your understanding as we work to make rehearsals for all of our ensembles possible. **Students must bring their own music stand to all rehearsals!**

VYS Fall 2020 Schedule: All rehearsals take place at Elley-Long Music Center

Thurs, July 30	VYS & VYP Parent meeting via Zoom, 5:30pm
September 13	Rehearsal
September 20	Rehearsal
September 27	Rehearsal
October 4	Rehearsal
October 11	Rehearsal
October 18	Rehearsal
October 25	Rehearsal
November 1	Rehearsal **change your clocks**
November 8	<i>No Rehearsal – VYO Fall Concert (Live Streamed only)</i>
November 15	Rehearsal
November 22	Rehearsal
November 29	<i>No rehearsal – Thanksgiving Break</i>
December 6	Rehearsal **students should not miss this rehearsal!**
December 13	VYS Winter Concert, time TBD (Live Streamed only) Please leave the day open to allow for dress rehearsal & performance

VYS Spring 2021 Schedule: All rehearsals take place at Elley-Long Music Center. Please note that if health regulations allow, we will try to resume ~ 2 ¼ hour full orchestra rehearsals somewhere within the time frame of 3:00-5:45pm.

January 10	Rehearsal
January 17	Rehearsal
January 24	Rehearsal
January 31	Rehearsal
February 7	Rehearsal
February 14	<i>No rehearsal – VYO Winter Concert (Live Streamed only)</i>
February 21	<i>No rehearsal – School Break</i>
February 28	Rehearsal
March 7	Rehearsal **change your clocks**
March 14	Rehearsal
March 21	Rehearsal
March 28	Rehearsal
April 4	<i>No rehearsal – Easter</i>
April 11	Rehearsal
SATURDAY, April 17	VYS Spring Concert at Elley-Long Music Center, time TBD Please leave the day open to allow for dress rehearsal & performance

Attendance: For the safety of all students & staff, any VYOA student who has a fever of 100.4 F, cough or respiratory illness should not attend any rehearsal or performance, but should notify their Orchestra Manager of their absence. VYS students who miss more than **2** rehearsals per semester may be asked to check-in with Ace Ali to make sure they are comfortable with their performance repertoire. The success of VYS is dependent upon the full participation of all members!