



2026-2027 Policy Handbook

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Mission and History

The Wichita Symphony Youth Orchestras Program (WSYO) brings classical music to life for young people in South Central Kansas. This program is a key educational outreach arm of the Wichita Symphony and shares in its mission to enrich, educate, and entertain diverse audiences of all ages in our region through performances of orchestral music, thereby enhancing the vibrancy and vitality of Wichita.

Founded in 1947, WSYO's Youth Symphony is a charter member of the Youth Symphony Orchestra Division of the League of American Orchestras. Today, the Wichita Symphony Youth Orchestras Program is made up of six ensembles that serve over 300 students from 25 cities in south central Kansas. WSYO ensembles include the Youth Symphony, Repertory Orchestra, Youth Chamber Players, Introductory String Orchestra, Youth Wind Ensemble, and Youth Concert Band.

Wichita Symphony Youth Orchestras activities are made possible with the generous support provided by:



The Philip J. & Laura C. Knight Fund for Music Education in the Wichita Symphony Endowment

WSYO Staff

CONDUCTORS

Dr. Timothy Shade –Youth Symphony Conductor

Koch Family Foundation Endowed Chair

Dr. Timothy Shade is the Director of Bands at Wichita State University. Previous appointments include Music Director and Principal Conductor of the Alhambra Orchestra (FL), Visiting Director of Orchestras at Florida Atlantic University, and Director of Instrumental Music at Bethel College (KS). Equally comfortable in the orchestral and wind realms, Shade has worked with Greater Miami Symphonic Band, The New River Orchestra, The Naples Philharmonic, The Frost Wind Ensemble, The Florida Youth Symphony, The Wichita Wind Ensemble, The Newton Mid-Kansas Symphony Orchestra, and the Delano Chamber Orchestra.

Frances Oare – Repertory Orchestra Conductor

Delmar and Mary Klocke Endowed Chair

Frances Oare has taught for 39 years in multiple states including Hawaii, Washington, Michigan, and Kansas. She holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Michigan, and a master's with emphasis in string pedagogy from Cincinnati Conservatory of Music. She is a level 3 certified Kodaly teacher and has extensive training in the Suzuki method. Mrs. Oare has been a guest clinician/adjudicator for both large group and solo and ensemble festivals in Western Washington, Michigan, and Kansas, and has presented workshops at KMEA as well as the American String Teachers National Convention, and the Mid-West Clinic in Chicago. Mrs. Oare was chosen as the 2013 Distinguished Middle School Teacher for the Wichita Public Schools and received the 2016 Certificate of Merit from the Kansas chapter of the American String Teachers Association. Mrs. Oare also performs on French horn with the Delano Chamber Orchestra and the Wichita Wind Symphony. When she is not teaching, she enjoys spending time with her family; husband Steve and grown children Jacob, Katelyn and Rebecca.

Catherine Tummons – Youth Chamber Players Conductor

Ms. Catherine Tummons is a native of Wichita, Kansas. She has taught band and orchestra in Wichita Public Schools since graduating from Wichita State University with a Bachelor of Music Education in 2012. She subsequently completed Kodaly certification Levels 1-3 and her master's in music education in 2018 at WSU. Ms. Tummons currently teaches at Christa McAuliffe Academy and Heights High School, plays violin/viola in local orchestras, works several summer music camps, maintains a small private studio, is an active member of KASTA, and is excited to direct the Wichita Youth Chamber Players! She was named Young Teacher of the Year by the Kansas American String Teacher Association and was awarded a Distinguished Classroom Teacher Award from Wichita Public Schools. When not in rehearsal, you'll find her reading, hiking, playing board games, or doting on her two cats!

Madeline Harder – Introductory String Orchestra Conductor

A product of the Wichita Symphony Youth Orchestra program, Madeline Harder is excited to continue her journey with the WSYO as the conductor for the Introductory String Orchestra after having previously served as the rehearsal assistant for the Youth Chamber Players. Ms. Harder graduated from Wichita State University in 2017 where she double majored in cello performance and music education. She later continued her education at WSU, graduating with her Master of Music Education in 2023 and completing levels 1-3 Kodaly certification. After teaching at a middle school orchestra with Wichita Public Schools for her first 4 years, Ms. Harder transitioned to Wichita Northwest High School where she

currently serves as Director of Orchestras. In addition to teaching, Ms. Harder enjoys subbing in the Wichita Symphony cello section. Ms. Harder also prioritizes spending time with her d two children.

Bryan Kirk – Youth Wind Ensemble Conductor

Bryan Kirk is an active educator, clinician and musician. He has taught bands in Kansas for 25 years. Currently, he is Director of Bands at Andover Central. He is also the Performing Arts Chairperson for the Andover Public Schools. Mr. Kirk serves as Executive Director of the South Central Kansas Music Educators Association. He served as president of SCKMEA from 2017-2021. Mr. Kirk was assistant director of the Wichita Wind Ensembles for 13 years, serving as director of the Intermediate Band, Advanced Band, and Assistant director of the Wichita Wind Ensemble Professional Band. Mr. Kirk's ensembles have been selected 10 times to perform at the Kansas Music Educators Association In-Service Workshop. He holds degrees from Friends University and Kansas State University. He is a member of the Kansas Music Educators Association and the National Association for Music Education. He has served on the worship staff at Wichita First Church of the Nazarene for 18 years. Mr. Kirk is married to Jennifer Kirk, a private flute teacher and band director in the Wichita Public Schools. They reside in east Wichita with their 2 sons.

Erik Stone – Youth Concert Band Conductor

Erik Stone is a band director, music teacher, and AVID site coordinator with Wichita Public Schools at Gordon Parks Academy. Mr. Stone is an experienced guest conductor, clinician, and published author working with students from the beginning years of instruction to professional level ensembles. Since graduating from Wichita State University with both his bachelor's and master's degrees, he has had tremendous success working with students at all ages. In July of 2017 he was recognized by the Kansas Bandmasters Association as the year's recipient of the Outstanding Young Bandmaster Award. Most recently Erik was recognized by Wichita Public Schools as their Distinguished Classroom Teacher of the Year in 2023. He is currently their candidate for The Kansas Teacher of the Year for 2025. Additionally, he serves as a Social Media and Marketing Manager for The Kansas Music Educators Association, the Kansas Bandmasters Association, and several educational organizations. When he is not actively working on all things band and education, Erik can be found at home singing to his favorite musicals while cleaning, doing home improvement projects with friends, or spending time with his miniature dachshund, Maleficent.

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Alyssa Winkleman – Education and Youth Orchestras Manager

Email: youthorch@wso.org

Office Phone: (316) 267-5259, ext. 107

Maya Grossman – Director of Education & Youth Orchestras

Email: mgrossman@wso.org

Meet the Ensembles

WICHITA YOUTH SYMPHONY

Founded in 1947, the Youth Symphony is recognized as the foremost youth orchestra in central Kansas featuring the top students throughout the area. Members perform a wide variety of standard and emerging orchestral masterpieces, including full symphonic pieces and works by living composers. The Youth Symphony rehearses on Sunday afternoons September 2026 – March 2027, with two performances at Century II Concert Hall. Membership is by audition. Intended for advanced high school string, wind, brass, and percussion students.

WICHITA REPERTORY ORCHESTRA

The Repertory Orchestra provides members with the opportunity to perform orchestral masterpieces and contemporary film music. This intermediate full orchestra prepares its members for musical participation in the Youth Symphony, and members also meet in regular sectionals with professional community musicians and members of the Wichita Symphony Orchestra. Membership is by audition. Intended for intermediate and advanced high school string, wind, brass, and percussion students.

WICHITA YOUTH CHAMBER PLAYERS

The Youth Chamber Players is a string orchestra that prepares students to advance to a full symphony orchestra, such as the Repertory Orchestra or Youth Symphony. Members improve individual playing technique, develop ensemble skills, and gain valuable performance experience. Membership is by audition. Intended for students in 6th – 10th grade.

WICHITA INTRODUCTORY STRING ORCHESTRA

The Introductory String Orchestra develops young musicians' playing technique and ensemble skills in a concentrated, small group setting. It prepares young musicians to advance into the Youth Chamber Players and Repertory Orchestra as they develop their skills and gain valuable performance experience. Membership is by application and nomination. Intended for students in 4th – 8th grade, with literacy in 1st position.

WICHITA YOUTH WIND ENSEMBLE

The Wind Ensemble is comprised of a small group of elite wind, brass, and percussion players, and focuses on a "one-to-a-part" model. Repertoire performed by the Wind Ensemble is drawn from the pillars of the wind band literature, as well as newer works by living composers. The Wind Ensemble rehearses on Monday evenings January – March, with a final performance at the Century II Concert Hall. Membership is by audition. Intended for advanced high school students.

WICHITA YOUTH CONCERT BAND

The Youth Concert Band is an intense 6–8-week ensemble consisted of intermediate and advanced middle school wind, brass, and percussion students with at least one year of band experience. This ensemble is designed for students to hone their skills in the spring and prepares them to advance into the Youth Wind Ensemble, Repertory Orchestra, and Youth Symphony. The Youth Concert Band rehearses on Monday evenings March – May, with a final performance. Membership is by application and nomination. Intended for middle school students.

Stay Informed

- Our main method of communication is email. Check your email regularly for weekly notices, updates, and reminders from the Manager of Education and Youth Orchestras at youthorch@wso.org. We will notify you as soon as possible with any schedule changes or important information.
- Registration as well as class information can be located through Cheddar Up at the link listed here: <https://wsyo.mycheddarup.com>
- All WSYO documents, forms, and signups can be found online on the Student Information Portal: WichitaSymphony.org/WSYOStudentInfo. Bookmark this page for quick access - you'll need to visit it regularly.

Membership Requirements

- Membership is by application and audition/nomination only (see the Membership Audition Policy p. 14) and, as a member, **you must maintain active membership in your school's band or orchestra program on the instrument you are playing in WSYO.**
- Concert Band and Introductory String Orchestra must have the recommendation of your orchestra and/or band instructor. Exceptions are made for students from schools that have no orchestra or band program. Those students must be recommended by their school officials and their private teacher and remain active in private lessons throughout the school year.
- Students in grades 9–12 are required to complete at least one volunteer opportunity each semester. Larksfield Chamber Music Series counts as both required hours for the season.
- **WSYO Membership is a yearlong commitment. Dropping out of the WSYO program mid-season may forfeit your membership in future seasons.**
- **Dropping out of the school orchestra or band program at any time means forfeiture of WSYO membership.**

Behavior & Conduct

FOR WSYO MEMBERS:

BE PRESENT

- Attend all rehearsals and performances (see Attendance Policies on p. 11-12 for complete details).
- Turn off and put away cell phones during rehearsals, sectionals, and performances. Cell phones may only be used at the request of the music director or sectional coach (i.e. for a tuner or metronome app, if applicable).
- **Arrive at least ten minutes before rehearsals** and sit in the appropriate chair with the necessary instrument and music.
- Bring a pencil, your music, and a **music stand** to every rehearsal.

BUILD AND SERVE THE WSYO AUDIENCE

- Tell your friends and family about your WSYO experience.
- Invite people to WSYO concerts.
- Complete any WSYO questionnaires or forms and return them to WSYO staff by the deadline.
- Stay in touch! **Let WSYO staff know if you are not receiving emails or if your contact information changes throughout the year.**

KEEP IT CLEAN

- Do not bring food, gum, or beverages into rehearsal or concert areas. These items are not allowed by the facilities we use.
- Leave rehearsal and performance spaces in the same or better condition than when WSYO members arrived. As guests of Wichita State University and Century II Concert Hall, WSYO members are responsible for picking up after themselves.
- Damage to, or destruction of, property is strictly prohibited.

SHOW RESPECT

- Always show respect to fellow musicians and WSYO staff.
- Refrain from distracting or demeaning communication of any kind (including inappropriate hand gestures, facial expressions, note passing, texting, or other disruptive behavior).
- Foul language is unacceptable.

STAY SAFE

- **Bullying will not be tolerated.** Any bullying situation must be reported to the nearest WSYO staff member immediately.
- Unruly behavior can become dangerous and/or damaging to property and will not be tolerated.
- Possession or use of any item which might inflict personal injury or property damage is prohibited.
- Report any suspicious activity at WSYO events to the nearest staff member.
- Verbal or physical assaults, any act or words that show threat of harm, or any verbal or physical behavior that endangers the safety of others will not be tolerated. Report dangerous behavior to the nearest WSYO staff member and to law enforcement immediately.

FOR WSYO MEMBERS, PARENTS, AND AUDIENCES:

- WSYO staff's supervisory responsibility for student musicians extends only to the scheduled times of all functions. **Students are expected to always remain in specified areas.** WSYO cannot assume responsibility for students leaving specified areas.
- Federal law prohibits smoking on or around public-school property and Century II Performing Arts Center. The consumption of alcoholic beverages by anyone under the age of 21, the purchase, sale, or use of illegal drugs or controlled substances is not permitted during any WSYO activity.
- Failure to abide by any WSYO regulation will result in disciplinary action, such as expulsion from the WSYO program, and forfeiture of any tuition and fees paid.
- WSYO is committed to the safety of all students, if you see any suspicious behavior, threats of violence or mental distress it should be reported immediately to a staff member. All reports will be taken seriously, reviewed promptly, and handled as confidentially as possible.

Tuition & Fees

- Tuition & Fees can be paid in full or on payment plans*

*Payment Plans will be +10% of full tuition cost with fees.

- Full Tuition and first installment payments are due on or before **August 3rd, 2026**.
-

Full Tuition Prices:

(Includes Music Library and Cheddar Up Fees)

Orchestras (September – March)

- **Introductory String Orchestra: \$348**
- **Youth Chamber Players: \$358**
- **Repertory Orchestra: \$374**
- **Youth Symphony: \$472**

Bands

- **Youth Wind Ensemble ONLY: \$245 (January – March)**
Second Ensemble discount price: \$156**
- **Youth Concert Band (March – May)**
Early bird (register on or before August 3rd, 2026): \$131
After August 3rd, 2026: \$156

****Second Ensemble Discount: \$156**

For students participating in both an orchestra and Youth Wind Ensemble.

Family Tuition Orchestra Discount: \$278

Applies only to additional students from the same household. One student per household must pay full tuition.

Tuition Assistance:

A limited amount of need-based tuition assistance is available. Information on how to apply for assistance will be sent with audition results.

Tuition assistance and tuition waivers are available before the season begins. Students who accept assistance must remain in good standing with the program for the duration of assistance coverage.

Refund Policy:

No refunds after September 21st. A \$35 surcharge will be deducted for any requested refunds prior to September 21st.

Please Note: Tuition, fees and ticket sales cover a small portion of the WSYO budget. Donations are appreciated and encouraged.

Attendance Policies

Attendance at all rehearsals and concerts is expected. Please weigh all other commitments (ACT/SAT testing schedule, clubs, educational activities, family vacations, sports, etc.) to assess possible conflicts before the WSYO season begins.

- **WSYO musicians must arrange to be picked up immediately following any event.** Please be considerate and arrange alternate transportation if you are unable to pick up your WSYO student at the end of a rehearsal or concert.
- Attendance is recorded at each regular rehearsal, dress rehearsal, and performance.
- **Students may have up to 2 absences during regular rehearsals each semester if prior notification is given.** Students who accumulate three or more absences in a semester may be required to re-audition to maintain active membership and may not be allowed to play the concert.
- All scheduled absences must be reported at least one week prior to the anticipated absence. Dress rehearsal and seating audition absences must be reported at least two weeks prior.
- To report absences, complete the Student Absence Form, which can be found on the WSYO Student Information Portal: WichitaSymphony.org/WSYOStudentInfo.
- Failure to abide by these attendance policies may result in the loss of a chair position or forfeiture of membership in WSYO at the discretion of the conductor and WSYO staff committee.

ABSENCES DUE TO ILLNESS OR EMERGENCY:

- **If you are sick, stay home!**
- Complete the Student Absence Form, located on the WSYO Student Information Portal. (WichitaSymphony.org/WSYOStudentInfo) to notify WSYO staff of absences due to illness or emergency.
- For an illness or emergency that occurs after a WSYO member has arrived at a WSYO event, contact WSYO staff in person, if possible.
- WSYO musicians absent more than twice in any semester may be required to re-audition for membership to continue in the program and may not be allowed to play the concert. (See the Attendance Policies on pp. 11 for complete details.)

EXCUSED ABSENCES:

- Only events that are required by the student's music program at school will be excused absences and not count towards their total number of absences each semester. **Written confirmation from the teacher is required one week in advance for these absences.** Have your school music teacher contact WSYO staff at youthorch@wso.org with details about school music-related absences.

TARDINESS:

- All WSYO musicians must plan to arrive at least ten minutes prior to the start of rehearsal.
- Musicians are considered tardy if they are not in their seats with their instrument out and the correct music on the stand by the beginning of the rehearsal or sectional. **Arriving late or leaving early is counted as one half (1/2) of an absence.**

DRESS REHEARSAL ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Attendance at all Dress Rehearsals within the week prior to the concert is mandatory in order to perform in the concert. If a WSYO member fails to attend, they may not be allowed to perform in the concert, at the discretion of the conductor.

- Any request for an absence from a Dress Rehearsal must be delivered no later than **two weeks** prior to the concert.
- Dress Rehearsal absence requests will be considered on an individual basis.
- **School-Related Dress Rehearsal Absence Requests:** Have your school music teacher contact the WSYO Manager directly at youthorch@wso.org to address school music-related conflicts with WSYO Dress Rehearsals. WSYO staff and teachers will work together to reach a solution and notify you of the outcome.
- **Illness or Medical Emergency Dress Rehearsal Absence Requests:** WSYO members are required to provide a doctor's written notice that an illness or medical emergency necessitates that they miss a Dress Rehearsal and also that they may be permitted to perform in the concert. (This could apply to situations where the musician is prescribed an antibiotic and is deemed non-infectious after 24 hours, recovery from a concussion, etc.). If a student has already missed two rehearsals in a semester they may not be allowed to play the concert if a dress rehearsal is missed due to illness.
- **Final absence request decisions will be made by a committee consisting of the WSYO conductors and staff.**
- **Missing a Dress Rehearsal may disqualify the WSYO member from performing in the concert at the discretion of the WSYO staff and conductors. All WSYO decisions are final.**

CONCERT ATTENDANCE POLICY:

- Concert attendance and participation is mandatory for membership in WSYO.
- Concert absence may forfeit WSYO membership at the discretion of the conductor and WSYO staff committee.
- All WSYO musicians must plan to arrive in their seats with the proper music and instrument *before* call time for the concert.

LOCATIONS OF REHEARSALS AND CONCERTS:

- The majority of WSYO rehearsals will take place at Duerksen Fine Arts Center at Wichita State University. Address: 1845 Fairmount St. Wichita, KS 67260
- Dress rehearsals, performances, and some regular rehearsals are held at Century II Concert Hall and other rooms as posted. Address: 225 W. Douglas, Wichita, KS 67202
- Specific rehearsal and concert dates are listed in the ensemble schedules, which can be found on the Student Information Portal. Any changes from the printed schedule will be announced at rehearsals, posted on the Student Information Portal, and emailed.
- Parents and guardians are invited to attend all rehearsals at Duerksen Fine Arts; the conductor reserves the right to ask anyone who is causing a distraction to leave.
- Rehearsal and Concert facilities prohibit the sale of outside food and drink at WSYO events.

WEATHER CANCELLATION POLICY:

In the event that weather conditions force the cancellation of a rehearsal, dress rehearsal, or concert, an email will be sent from youthorch@wso.org with the earliest possible notice. An announcement will also be made on WSYO social media channels.

Instruments – Music – Music Stands

- WSYO members must attend rehearsals and concerts with their instrument and all necessary equipment (strings, reeds, mallets, etc.). It is the responsibility of WSYO members to keep instruments they own in excellent condition.
- Any WSYO member that plays an instrument owned by the WSO is responsible for signing it in/out and treating that instrument with proper care. It is required that any instrument repairs or replacements necessary due to improper care or loss must be preapproved by the Education and Youth Orchestras Manager. The WSYO member responsible for the care of the instrument will be billed for the full amount of the repair or replacement. Contact WSYO staff for preapproval confirmation regarding any WSO instrument repair or replacement. If a WSO instrument is stolen, please file a police report and notify WSYO staff immediately.
- **Percussionists** must assist in setting up, moving, dismantling, and putting away all percussion equipment used during rehearsals and concerts. The equipment must be handled with care and stored neatly. Percussionists must also supply their own sticks and mallets. Plan to arrive at least 15 minutes early to set up the section and stay late until all percussion equipment is put away.
- **All WSYO members must bring a music stand to each rehearsal.** Names should be marked clearly on stands for proper identification.
- Music will be issued to every WSYO member at or prior to the first rehearsal of each semester. Each musician is responsible for the set of music checked out at that time and will be charged for any music not returned following the concert.
- A music folder will be issued to every member at the first rehearsal of the season and must be returned following each concert. Failure to return the music folder will result in a replacement fee of \$20.00. Students who do not return their folder after the fall concerts will not receive a new folder for the spring semester until the original is returned or the replacement fee is paid.

Auditions

WSYO MEMBERSHIP AUDITIONS:

Application and auditions/nominations for all orchestras are held in the summer prior to the fall season.

Audition announcements are provided to all returning members and instrumental directors in the local public and private middle schools and high schools.

- Audition information will be announced in advance of the audition date and listed on the WSYO website. WSYO applications are made available on the WSYO website at WichitaSymphony.org/WSYO. (Please Note: audition music changes from year to year.)
- Acceptance into WSYO is based solely upon the quality of the audition performed and will be evaluated on technical proficiency, tone quality, dynamic range, musicality, rhythmic accuracy, and intonation. Audition materials will include scales, excerpts, and solo material.
- **Audition Process:** Auditions will be heard by a WSYO conductor, sectional coach, and/or a professional musician from the community. Within one month following the close of auditions, all auditionees will be notified if they have been accepted, placed on an alternate list, or not accepted. Those who are accepted as alternates may be offered a position if a vacancy occurs in the appropriate section. **WSYO placement decisions are final.**
- Repertory Orchestra and Youth Symphony membership is open to orchestral instrumental musicians who will be in grades seven through twelve at the start of the fall concert season.
- Youth Chamber Players membership is intended for string players who will be in grades six through ten at the start of the fall concert season.
- Introductory String Orchestra membership is open to string players who will be in grades four through eight at the start of the fall concert season.
- Wind Ensemble is open to woodwind, brass, and percussion players who will be in grade nine through twelve at the start of the fall concert season.
- Concert Band is open to all woodwind, brass, and percussion players who will be in grades six through eight at the start of the spring concert season.
- **Current members of WSYO are required to audition every year to maintain membership. Previous year's placements do not guarantee continued membership in the ensemble or section.**

SEATING AUDITIONS:

- All Youth Symphony, Repertory Orchestra, Youth Chamber Players, Introductory String Orchestra and Youth Concert Band musicians will be required to audition for seating at the beginning of each semester. The spring auditions will also consider the students' behavior and attendance in WSYO sectionals, rehearsals, and concerts (as determined by WSYO staff and conductors).
- Dates for seating auditions are listed in the rehearsal schedule. Audition excerpts will be selected and announced by the conductor and distributed at rehearsal and via email. Members will receive the results of the seating auditions via email during the week after the audition.
- If a student is absent from seating auditions, they will automatically be placed last chair. No exceptions.

****Audition procedures and policies are subject to change.****

PRINCIPAL PLAYERS' RESPONSIBILITIES:

Acceptance of a Principal position in a WSYO ensemble includes a higher level of accountability for attendance and performance. Principal players should bring a positive and helpful mindset to rehearsals. Make it a goal to praise other members of your section for their hard work and encourage those around you.

- Principals who miss a third rehearsal (regular or dress rehearsal) will be subject to removal from that position and rotated to a section position.
- Failure to abide by WSYO attendance policies may result in the loss of a chair position or forfeiture of membership in WSYO at the discretion of the conductor and WSYO staff committee.

Principal players may have the opportunity to play in one of the WSYO Principals Chamber Ensembles. These ensembles rehearse for one hour per week outside of the WSYO rehearsal schedule. They may represent WSYO at performances before Wichita Symphony concerts and at various locations in the Wichita community. They may also perform at the Fall and Spring Youth Orchestras Concerts. Each ensemble coach will set the rehearsal schedule in collaboration with the ensemble members. Ensembles will be formed after fall seating auditions, and personnel will remain the same throughout the entire season.

- **Paul A. Stephens String Quartet** – featuring Youth Symphony principal string players
- **Mitchell A. Berman String Quartet** – featuring Repertory Orchestra principal string players
- **Youth Symphony Brass Quintet** – featuring Youth Symphony principal brass players
- **Youth Symphony Woodwind Quintet** – featuring Youth Symphony principal woodwind players

WICHITA SYMPHONY YOUTH ORCHESTRAS HOLIDAY STRING ENSEMBLE:

- Featuring string players from Youth Symphony, Repertory Orchestra, and Youth Chamber Players. This volunteer ensemble may perform at the Wichita Symphony Holiday Pops Concert and other holiday partnership locations depending on the year.

WSYO USHER PROGRAM:

The WSYO Usher Program has been established to provide a meaningful educational and musical experience for WSYO members, while providing a needed service at Wichita Symphony performances.

- **All WSYO members in grades nine through twelve are required to log one hour of volunteer activity with the Wichita Symphony Youth Orchestras each semester.** Ushering counts toward that goal.
- Ushering is open to students in grades seven and above. Each WSYO student usher may receive one complimentary ticket for the WSO concert for which they usher to be given to a parent/guardian. Tickets must be claimed by 4:00 pm on the Friday before the concert and are subject to availability. Additional information will be sent to ushers the Monday preceding the weekend for which they are signed up to usher.
- **WSYO Usher Directors** Each season, two to three high school juniors or seniors may be selected as Usher Directors to assist with the coordination and management of the program. Directors are chosen from experienced WSYO ushers based on leadership, reliability, and commitment. They act as supervisors during Wichita Symphony concerts, providing guidance and support to volunteer ushers and working under the direction of the Ticketing and Audience Services Coordinator to ensure smooth front-of-house operations. This is a paid position.

WSYO STAGE ASSISTANTS:

Two stage assistants will assist the WSU stage manager with the physical set-up and tear-down of all rehearsals at Wichita State University. Students must apply before WSYO Stage Assistants are chosen based on excellent attendance, attitude, and reliability. In this role, students will collaborate weekly with Wichita State University students and may be assigned additional duties as needed. This is a paid position.

YOUTH TALENT AUDITIONS:

Youth Talent Auditions will be held every December in Duerksen Fine Arts Center at Wichita State University.

WSYO seniors are eligible to audition for the Young Artist Concerto Competition and all WSYO members are eligible to audition for the Stephen Paul Wunsch Foundation for Young Musicians Award. Each audition must be performed from memory and with piano accompaniment. Accompanists must be secured by the auditionee.

Those chosen for an award must comply with the WSYO Membership Responsibilities or they may forfeit the award.

❖ **Young Artist Concerto Competition**

Open to all high school seniors in the WSYO Program. The winner may perform with the Youth Symphony in the spring concert. Each auditionee must audition with the musical selection to be performed with the orchestra from the approved repertoire list.

❖ **Stephen Paul Wunsch Foundation for Young Musicians Award**

Open to all members of the WSYO Program. This award provides a partial scholarship to attend the Interlochen Music Camp, Aspen Music School, Brevard Music Festival, or other comparable music camp. Students that have previously won this award are not eligible to compete in following seasons.

Honors and Awards

AWARD AND SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

To mark the conclusion of the season, outstanding students will be honored with an award in recognition of their exemplary performance and dedication during the spring concert. Students interested in being considered for a scholarship and award must submit an application. Scholarship applications will open during the spring semester, and all eligible students will be provided with information regarding the application and deadlines. Awards that have been presented in previous years are as follows:

❖ **Janice Hupp Memorial Fund Award (Application based scholarship)**

The Janice Hupp Memorial Fund was established in 1999 to recognize her dedication and service to music and music education in South Central Kansas. A product of the Wichita Public School system herself, Ms. Hupp was a member of the Wichita Youth Orchestras as a student. From 1978-1988, she served as Manager of the Youth Orchestras program.

❖ **Paul Conrad Woolwine “Rising Star” String Scholarship (Application based scholarship)**

This scholarship was awarded annually to a graduating senior continuing music studies in college, with preference given to string musicians.

Parent Information

VOLUNTEER:

WSYO relies on the help of parent volunteers to make our program a success, and we need your help! If you are able to volunteer your time and would like to learn more about volunteer opportunities, please sign up to volunteer as your schedule allows. Information on how to volunteer will be sent at the start of each semester. Parents are needed to assist in providing snacks to students at rehearsals, supporting students during seating auditions, directing students during dress rehearsals at Century II, as well as serving on the Parent Advisory Committee.

PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE:

The WSYO Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) is a group of parent volunteers who provide essential support for the Youth Orchestras by assisting with WSYO events, assisting volunteers, and fundraising. PAC members are chosen from among the WSYO parent volunteers. The PAC has three primary focuses.

Foster Community: The PAC works to build a welcoming and connected community among WSYO families. Through monthly social gatherings, active presence at rehearsals and events, and personal outreach to new families, PAC members help create an inclusive and supportive environment for all.

Fundraising: PAC members help meet fundraising goals to sustain and grow the WSYO program. Their efforts include participating in annual campaigns, communicating goals with WSYO families, and gathering prizes for raffles and other fundraising initiatives. Funds raised directly support student opportunities and program development. You can help by spreading the word about WSYO fundraising activities, contacting local businesses to buy program book ads, and many other ways. Contact the Director of Education & Youth Orchestras at mgrossman@wso.org if you are interested in fundraising for the program.

Event Support: PAC members assist with a variety of WSYO events throughout the season. This includes organizing snacks for rehearsals, assisting parent volunteers at seating auditions, and offering general support wherever needed to ensure events run smoothly and successfully.

WSYO COMMUNICATION/PHOTO/PRIVACY POLICY:

The Wichita Symphony Youth Orchestras (WSYO) reserve the right to record audio and/or video and photograph any and all WSYO activities for later use, which may include printed or electronic materials and radio/tv/film/online broadcast. WSYO member and/or parent/guardian likeness, including print, electronic, audio, or video recordings may be used for any purpose, with or without the use of name, school, grade and other pertinent information, and without remuneration by WSYO and its assigns for the purpose of internal and external communications. Should you not feel comfortable with you or your student being photographed or used for social media, email youthorch@wso.org.

WSYO may distribute information to members and their families regarding WSYO events, WSYO schedule changes, Wichita Symphony events, and unique musical or educational opportunities.

- Contact Information (name, address, phone number, and email) may be released to other organizations representing unique musical or educational opportunities for WSYO members and their families at the discretion of WSYO Staff.
- Contact Information for WSYO members and parents is never sold to third parties.

NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY:

Wichita Symphony Youth Orchestras Program (WSYO) does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, ancestry, age, religion or religious creed, disability or handicap, sex or gender, gender identity and/or expression, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal, state or local law. Retaliation is also prohibited.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY:

Wichita Symphony Youth Orchestras Program (WSYO) does not tolerate sexual harassment as defined: an uninvited and unwelcomed verbal or physical behavior of a sexual nature, especially by a person in authority toward a subordinate (as an employee or student) or student to student.

BULLYING POLICY:

Wichita Symphony Youth Orchestras Program (WSYO) does not tolerate bullying as defined: any intentional gesture or any intentional written, verbal, electronic, or physical act or threat either by any student, staff member, or parent towards a student or by any student, staff member or parent towards a staff member that is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that such gesture, act or threat creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment that a reasonable person, under the circumstances, knows or should know will have the effect of: harming a student or staff member, whether physically or mentally; damaging a student's or staff member's property; placing a student or staff member in reasonable fear of harm to the student or staff member; or placing a student or staff member in reasonable fear of damage to the student's or staff member's property; or cyberbullying.

WSYO Concert Dress

Each WSYO ensemble has a required dress code for each concert. Each WSYO ensemble must present a unified appearance. Musicians in violation of the dress code will be instructed to contact a parent to ask for appropriate concert dress prior to concert time. If a musician is not in compliance with the dress code, they may not be allowed to perform with the ensemble and may forfeit membership.

YOUTH CHAMBER PLAYERS, YOUTH CONCERT BAND, & INTRODUCTORY STRING ORCHESTRA: **Students wear white on top and black on bottom.**

- **Top:** Bright white long-sleeved (at least $\frac{3}{4}$ length) blouse or bright white long-sleeved button-down shirt.
- **Bottom:** Long black dress slacks or floor- or ankle-length black skirt, black socks or tights (no bare legs or feet), black dress shoes (no open-toed shoes, sandals, or sneakers).

REPERTORY ORCHESTRA, WIND ENSEMBLE, & YOUTH SYMPHONY: **Students wear all black.**

- **Top:** Long-sleeved (at least $\frac{3}{4}$ length) black blouse or dress shirt or floor- or ankle-length long-sleeved black dress.
- **Bottom:** - Long black dress slacks or floor- or ankle-length black skirt, black socks or tights (no bare legs or feet), black dress shoes (no open-toed shoes, sandals, or sneakers).

If you would like to donate gently used concert clothes for students in need, please reach out to youthorch@wso.org. Clothes must be in fair condition (no holes, rips, or stains, please)

WSYO Concert Information

WSYO will present two Fall Concerts on **Friday, November 6 and Sunday, November 8, 2026**, and two Spring Concerts on **Saturday, March 5 and Sunday, March 6, 2027**. Youth Concert Bands' performance will take place on May 10th.

Purchase of one ticket for the Fall Concerts grants you admission to both performances; likewise in the spring.

- If you wish to record video of the concert, please do not set up in areas that will obstruct the view of others nearby or obstruct access to seats or exits.
- Flash photography is not allowed, as it may distract the performers.
- Reserved seating is unavailable prior to the opening of the house doors for audience members. Any items left on seats prior to the house doors opening will be removed by Century II or WSYO staff.

WSYO concert tickets may be purchased online at [WichitaSymphony.org](https://www.wichitasymphony.org) or over the phone at 316.267.7658