The Worcester Youth Orchestras

2013 – 2014 Attendance & Commitment Policy

**Why is Attendance & Commitment Important?**

Our attendance policy is strict in order to guarantee a program of the highest quality, which is possible only if all members of the orchestra are fully committed. Commitment comes in many forms: practicing your part at home and/or with your teacher, being alert and engaged in rehearsal, and, above all, being present at all rehearsals, dress rehearsals and performances. Your commitment to attend is not just to WYO and your conductor, but most importantly, to your fellow players. An orchestra is a group effort; every member is important and contributes to the success of the ensemble.

**Attendance** is required at all regularly scheduled rehearsals, dress rehearsals, and performances. Students are expected to be ready at 9am, tuned and ready to play. That means the student must arrive at least 10 minutes prior to the rehearsal time. Rehearsals, including dress rehearsals, start promptly at the appointed time.

**Tardiness** – Anyone arriving more than 10 minutes late to a rehearsal will be considered absent without prior approval from the General Manager (GM). If you anticipate being late ahead of time, please notify us in writing via the online “Absence Request Form”. If you are running late on the day of a rehearsal and/or concert, please make every effort to telephone us.

**Extended Absences** – Students that require extended absences must contact the Executive Director and General Manager via email. WYO fully understands that family emergencies, illnesses and other unforeseen circumstances arise during the semester, and we want to ensure your child is well cared for. In this case, the student may be asked to take a semester off and take a “Leave of Absence” and return the following semester without penalty. Parents should contact the General Manager and Executive Director (ED) as soon as possible regarding this matter, and it will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

**Illness on day of rehearsal –** If your child is ill on the day of the rehearsal, please email WYO **and** call us (978) 390-4941 to speak with the GM or ED. The first absence will be considered excused, all subsequent absences will be reviewed by the ED and handled on a case-by-case basis. Excessive same-day rehearsal absences may result in a hearing with the conductor to ensure the student knows their part, and/or may result in a probationary period.

**Injury or Instrument Repairs –** If you sustain a minor injury that prevents you from playing your instrument, or, if repairs are being done to your instrument, you are still required to attend rehearsals, sit in your section and follow along with your part and take notes.

Absence Policies:

* There are **no unexcused** absences from rehearsal, dress rehearsal or concerts.
* Two excused absences are allowed **per** semester (Fall & Spring). Absences must be submitted **in writing at least two weeks prior to the date of the absence** via the online “Absence Request Form”. Visit www.worceseryouthorchestras.org/absencerequestform
* Students cannot miss **the last three rehearsals prior to the concert**, this does not include dress rehearsal. If the student misses one of these rehearsals, they will need to meet with the conductor to demonstrate knowledge/playing ability of their part. They may also be placed on probation for the following semester.
* Students must be present at the dress rehearsal in order to perform in the concert. Students who miss the dress rehearsal (except in the case of an emergency) will not be allowed to perform in the concert.
* After 3 absences (including the two previous excused), the student will need to demonstrate knowledge/playing ability of their part in a private hearing with the conductor.
* After 4 absences (including the two previous excused, and the 3rd unexcused), the student will not be allowed to perform in that semester’s concert. If you anticipate more than 4 absences in the semester, please contact the GM & ED to discuss the matter. WYO strives to be as accommodating as possible, but we need to be sure that students are adequately prepared for concerts as well as demonstrating dedication and commitment to their ensemble.

**Approved Excused Absences:**

1. MMEA/MICCA/All-State Music Festival Performances/Conferences or Auditions.
2. Elementary/Middle/High School Ensemble Concert Performance or Dress Rehearsals in which the student is performing.
3. Family Emergencies/Grievances.
4. Pro-longed illness.
5. Sports Game (Only approved if submitted at the beginning of the semester).
6. Religious Holidays & Observances (in general, WYO makes every attempt not to hold rehearsals and/or concerts close to these holidays such as Yom Kippur, Rosh Hashanah, Christmas, Easter etc.).
7. SATs, ACT, SAT II Exams, College Interviews and Auditions, with prior notice at the beginning of the semester.

Other commitments, no matter how compelling, cannot be permitted. Please look at your upcoming year carefully; and plan your schedule in accordance with the WYO calendar.

**Record Keeping**

Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each rehearsal/performance by the GM. This will be entered into a log which will be viewed by the WYO conductors, Artistic Director, Executive Director and WYO Board. All correspondence regarding attendance, including Absence Request Forms, will be kept in each student’s personnel file. Parents/Students should keep track of their own attendance and absences, but may request in writing to the GM and ED to see their child’s attendance record and correspondence.

**Consequences**

The consequences for members who do not adhere to the attendance policy include: not being allowed to participate in a concert, being re-seated for a concert, and/or being asked to withdraw from WYO. These decisions will be made by the Executive Director in consultation with the ensemble Conductor and the WYO Board. WYO reserves the right to re-seat members who are absent for a concert, including those members whose absence is excused.

**Re-Audition**

Members who are asked to withdraw under this attendance policy may request to formally re-audition to rejoin the orchestra. Requests to re-audition must be made in writing and addressed to the Executive Director. In addition to satisfactory musicianship, members who re-audition must demonstrate a commitment to full attendance at rehearsals and regularly scheduled concerts. Members who satisfactorily re-audition will not be required to pay additional membership dues for the season.

 **Other Grounds for Dismissal**

In addition to violating the attendance and commitment policy, the ED and WYO Board reserves the right to dismiss members in cases of: Inappropriate, disruptive, threatening, physical or criminal behavior directed towards or injurious to other WYO members and staff, parents, family members and/or guests during rehearsals/concerts/meetings and/or the community at large. Destruction of property and/or equipment of WYO, Pakachoag Church, or Pakachoag Music School of Greater Worcester and/or any rehearsal/performance space and equipment where WYO is a guest.

**Appeals**

Members asked to withdraw under this attendance policy may appeal to the WYO Board.

Appeals must be in writing and addressed to the Executive Director & WYO Board Chair.

**Tuition Reimbursement**

If a child is asked to withdraw/dismissed from the orchestra due to violation of the Attendance and Commitment Policy, s/he will not receive a tuition reimbursement.

If the student decides to permanently withdraw from the orchestra, s/he may qualify to receive a portion of their tuition reimbursed. Reimbursements will be for tuition only, Audition and Registration fees will not be reimbursed.

After the 1st rehearsal of the semester, tuition will be reimbursed at the following amounts:

Within 2 weeks: 75%

Within 3 weeks: 50%

Within 4 weeks: 25%

After 4 weeks: No tuition Reimbursement

Reviewed & Adopted by the WYO Board, May 2013

**Worcester Youth Orchestras**

I have read and understand the 2013 - 2014 WYO Attendance and Commitment policy.

Member’s signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent’s signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Exec. Dir.’s signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Reviewed & Adopted by the WYO Board, May 2013