

COVID-19 Addendum to the Vail Youth Symphony Student Handbook, **August 2020**

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected every facet of our community, and is likely to continue to do so for the foreseeable future. The Vail Youth Symphony Board of Directors takes the health and safety of our students, their family members, and our community seriously. In an effort to reduce the risk of facilitating transmission of the virus, while continuing to provide our students with access to quality musical instruction and experiences (and fun!), we have adopted the guidelines, policies, and procedures outlined in this Addendum to our Student Handbook.

PHASED PARTICIPATION--OVERVIEW

The Vail Youth Symphony has elected to continually review the statistics, reports, and recommendations released by 1) the CDC, 2) governments at the national, state, county, and city level, and 3) the actions of the Vail School District Governing Board in order to determine which of three levels of “phased participation” we will offer to our students. This continual review of information should enable the Vail Youth Symphony to act nimbly in response to the changing situation involving COVID-19. We *WILL* be providing quality instruction to our students every Monday night in accordance with the Vail School District K-8 student calendar, regardless of whether or not the educational opportunities afforded by the School District are of the “in-person” or “distance learning” varieties. Of course, we recognize that face-to-face rehearsals are the most enjoyable and satisfying for our students and directors, and it is our goal to safely provide that experience as soon as possible. Starting on August 10th (the first meeting of the Vail Youth Symphony-which will be strictly informational and virtual) students and their families will be able to consult the homepage of our website (vailyouthsymphony.org) where they will see our current “phase of participation” prominently displayed. We ask that our students’ families please refer to the website each Sunday evening to ensure that all students are aware of the most current status for participation in rehearsal the following day. The Vail Youth Symphony is continuing to explore additional ways to communicate efficiently with our students and students’ families--we will provide updates to this process in a timely manner. We hope that we will be able to see a steady positive progression through our phases of participation, but we will be very mindful of the state of the pandemic--and make our determinations accordingly.

RED PHASE-

When in the “RED PHASE” of participation, students will be asked to participate in rehearsals from the safety of their own home. Each director will issue an email to students’ email addresses (as provided by each family in the Student Information Form available on our website, vailyouthsymphony.org) on Monday with an invitation to a zoom meeting. Each zoom rehearsal invitation will be unique to that day, in an effort to provide greater security to our students. Please understand that we are unable to send zoom meeting invitations directly to a “vailstudents.org” or “vailstudents.com” email address. It is our current understanding that district-issued student devices will be able to support our zoom meetings, however we cannot guarantee that will continue. Students and student families are asked to provide their own zoom-capable devices and internet connections, as the Vail Youth Symphony is unequipped to do so. As we explore additional methods of communication, we may be able to offer additional ways to communicate zoom links to families. Directors will take attendance through the zoom platform. Attendance in zoom meetings while in the “RED PHASE” is mandatory. Provisions will be made for students who experience technical difficulties during the zoom rehearsal-we simply ask that you email your child’s director to inform them of your need. Every effort will be made to see that your child both receives credit for their participation, and that they benefit from the instruction that they inadvertently missed.

For households that have more than one VYS student, we understand that the technological requirements might be more daunting. If more than one student is in the same ensemble, they may use one device for their zoom rehearsal-but please ensure that all students are visible to the camera. If the students are in separate ensembles, the Vail Youth Symphony asks that a separate device be made available as the zoom rehearsals are differentiated instruction and will use different links. Ideally, the directors should be able to view all students in the zoom meeting. This will greatly aid them in providing feedback to the student.

Much effort has been expended in order to make these zoom rehearsals of great value. We look forward to providing your students with excellent and innovative musical experiences. In addition to a “distanced” model of typical rehearsals, your students will enjoy masterclasses featuring prominent local artists and educators, as well as a more expansive immersion in music theory and history. We hope that our students and their families will embrace the opportunities that have been afforded to them by our need to adopt a non-traditional approach to youth symphony participation this year.

YELLOW PHASE-

When in the “YELLOW PHASE” of participation, student families will be given a choice in how they would like to participate in rehearsals. Students may continue to engage in rehearsals from the safety of their own home, using zoom meetings in the same manner as they did while in the “RED PHASE.” Please contact your director by the Sunday before each rehearsal in order to ensure that you are sent an invitation for the zoom rehearsal. It is our hope that as many students as possible elect to return to in-person rehearsals, as soon as possible. For those students who attend live rehearsals, we will provide the traditional rehearsal experience-with a few modifications. Students, sectional coaches, and volunteers will be asked to fill out a health screening form and have their temperatures checked before they enter campus. Students will be asked to wear a mask and remain socially distant while on campus. (Wind/Brass players will receive specific instruction regarding their instruments from their director.) Rehearsal spaces will be cleaned prior to student arrivals, and directors and volunteers will rigorously adhere to a checklist of procedures designed to minimize the risk to students, while maximizing their enjoyment. Please see the “In-Person (Yellow and Green phase) Student/Family/Volunteer Participation Guidelines” included later in this document for more information.

The Vail Youth Symphony asks that any students or student families who learn that they may have been capable of transmitting COVID-19 at any Vail Youth Symphony activity (during any phase of participation) promptly notify a member of the Board so that appropriate (and confidential) communication of risk can be undertaken for other participants who might have been exposed, and so that we may comply with any contact tracing efforts.

The Vail Youth Symphony has spent the summer learning about various technologies and their uses in a “hybrid” rehearsal setting. We appreciate your patience as we strive to resolve technical issues; we are confident that we can offer our students the opportunity to cultivate their skills in a loving and engaging environment which supports the individual health and safety needs of their families. Our goal is to work as much as possible behind the scenes in order to make the safety of our students as unobtrusive as possible. We cannot wait to celebrate making music with our students, and we will do all in our power to create a fun environment.

GREEN PHASE-

When in the “Green Phase” of participation, we will ask ALL students to return to in-person rehearsals, though those rehearsals will still reflect the safety measures established in the “YELLOW PHASE” of participation. When we enter the “GREEN PHASE”, we will no longer provide the option for students to remain at home and participate in rehearsals virtually. As always, please feel free to email your director or a member of the Board if you have specific needs or concerns associated with the Vail Youth Symphony’s determination to discontinue the option of virtual rehearsals.

LIFTING OF ALL RESTRICTIONS

The Vail Youth Symphony joyously anticipates a future when all restrictions regarding rehearsals can be lifted, entirely. At such time, our rehearsals will return to the format our students and families have come to love over the years. We will no longer require temperature checks, health screenings, or continue performing extra sanitizing procedures. The snack bar will reopen, students will be free to congregate during their rehearsal breaks, and we will start asking students to help set up for rehearsals and clean up afterwards.

RISKS OF PARTICIPATION

The Vail Youth Symphony has made a good faith effort, using the information reasonably available to the Board, to provide our students with a safer environment in which they may enjoy quality musical instruction and the association of other students who appreciate the pursuit of musical excellence (and want to have fun!). However, the Vail Youth Symphony cannot guarantee that students, students' families/households, volunteers, sectional coaches, or any other persons will not become infected with COVID-19. Attending Vail Youth Symphony activities could potentially increase the risk of such an infection. Additionally, the Vail Youth Symphony can be in no way responsible for the actions of people unassociated with the Vail Youth Symphony, even if they may be in proximity to our rehearsal spaces.

By participating in any Vail Youth Symphony activities, students, students' families/households, volunteers, and any other persons acknowledge the contagious nature of COVID-19 and voluntarily assume all risks associated with COVID-19 infection. All such persons further acknowledge that exposure to COVID-19 may result in personal injury, illness, permanent disability, and death; such exposure may result from the actions, omissions, or negligence of participants and others, including but not limited to directors, board members, volunteers, sectional coaches, students, students' families/households, and any other persons tangentially or peripherally involved in Vail Youth Symphony activities.

Any degree of participation in Vail Youth Symphony Activities, by any person, shall represent those persons' agreement to assume all of the foregoing risks and accept sole responsibility for any injury including but not limited to personal injury, disability, death, illness, virus transmission to others, loss, claim, liability, or expense of any kind that might occur in connection with the Vail Youth Symphony. Furthermore, any participation in Vail Youth Symphony activities also indicates an agreement to abide by the guidelines described in this Addendum to the Vail Youth Symphony Student Handbook.

*IN-PERSON (YELLOW AND GREEN PHASE)
STUDENT/FAMILY/VOLUNTEER PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES*

Before Rehearsal:

1. Check the website to verify the phase of participation for that rehearsal date.
2. Students should continue to bring all of their own supplies to each rehearsal, as outlined in the Student Handbook. Extra pencils, rosin, shoulder rests, etc. **WILL NOT BE PROVIDED** or loaned to students as they are possible routes of infection transmission.
3. If your student has a **MUSIC STAND** that they would be willing to bring for their own use, that would be highly appreciated.
4. Students must bring their own mask or appropriate face-covering. A limited number of masks may be available for purchase (for \$1) prior to rehearsal. Please understand that we will not have a large supply of masks available--students should **NOT** count on being able to buy a mask at rehearsal, as we may run out or there may be an interruption in supply. Students who arrive without masks (and are unable/unwilling to purchase a mask) will be asked to participate in rehearsal virtually from home (in the **YELLOW PHASE**) or asked to miss that rehearsal, as an unexcused absence (in the **GREEN PHASE**).
5. Students may bring their own snacks and water from home, as the snack bar will be closed until all restrictions are fully lifted. Students will be allowed to eat their snacks during breaks as advised by their director until all restrictions are lifted, in order to help ensure adequate social distancing and safety.
6. Students are welcome to bring other personal hygiene items, such as tissues, hand sanitizer, etc. for their own use. Wind/brass players are especially encouraged to bring their own hand sanitizer so that they may have unfettered access to it throughout the rehearsal.
7. Individuals dropping off students **SHOULD NOT LEAVE** until they are sure that each student has successfully completed the health screening questionnaire and satisfactorily registered an appropriate body temperature.
 - a. Questions asked on the Health Screening Form will include:
 - i. Has anyone in your household been tested for an active/symptomatic COVID-19 infection, or been recommended to undergo such a test in the last two weeks?
 - ii. Has anyone in your household received a positive result on a test for COVID-19 infection within the last two weeks?

- iii. Has anyone in your household traveled to or from a known COVID-19 hotspot, or high-risk environment (such as a cruise ship) within the last two weeks?
- iv. Has anyone in your household had known contact with someone who had COVID-19 or is being tested for COVID-19 within the last two weeks?
- v. Have you experienced any of the following symptoms since the last rehearsal:
 - 1. Fever above 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit, or 38 degrees Celsius?
 - 2. Shortness of breath?
 - 3. New or worsening cough?
 - 4. Sore throat?
 - 5. New/sudden change in taste or smell?
 - 6. New or worsening diarrhea?
 - 7. Runny nose?
 - 8. New or worsening fatigue?
 - 9. Nausea or vomiting?
 - 10. New headache?
 - 11. New abdominal pain or muscle aches?
- b. All students with a temperature exceeding 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit, or 38 degrees Celsius will be asked to return home and refrain from attending rehearsals until they are symptom free for 14 days, as recommended by the CDC. *
- c. Any student who unsatisfactorily answers questions on the health screening form will be asked to stay home until they have been symptom free for 14 days.*

*(In the event that a student is asked to leave rehearsal due to concerns regarding the health screening form or body temperature assessment, students will be able to participate in virtual rehearsals if we are in the YELLOW PHASE, and accommodations for virtual instruction will be made on a case-by-case basis if we are in the GREEN PHASE.)

During Rehearsal:

- 1. Students will be asked to wear their masks at all times-with special provisions and accommodations for wind/brass instruments as communicated by the director. (Wind and brass players should bring their own individual containers of

hand sanitizer, so that they can disinfect their hands after they handle masks or other protective equipment.)

2. Students will be asked to use the provided hand sanitizer as they enter the rehearsal space and/or after they have set up their instrument.
3. Students will be asked to remain seated in their assigned seats and maintain social distancing for the duration of the rehearsal.
4. Students will be required to stay in their assigned seats during the rehearsal break, unless otherwise instructed. Until all restrictions are lifted, students will have a structured break time monitored carefully by directors and/or volunteers, and the snack bar will not be open.
5. Students are responsible for all of their own materials including rosin, pencils, music, and all components of their instrument. Students will be strongly discouraged from sharing or exchanging equipment or personal items.
6. Students will be encouraged to use hand sanitizer as necessary during rehearsal, especially as they touch high-traffic areas, or as they adjust their masks, etc.

After Rehearsal:

1. Students will be expected to quickly and carefully pack up their own belongings after rehearsal.
2. Students will be asked to use hand sanitizer as they exit the rehearsal space.
3. Students will be accompanied by either their director or a parent volunteer to the pick up area directly after the end of rehearsal in order to encourage social distancing.
4. Students need to continue to wear their masks until they are no longer on the premises.
5. Students will be asked to refrain from helping to clean up or pack up group items, VYS/school music stands, etc. Until all restrictions are lifted, directors and parent volunteers will clean and put away all items used for rehearsal except for students' personal belongings.

PARENT VOLUNTEERS

Our amazing parent volunteers are going to be absolutely necessary to the success of our rehearsals in both the YELLOW and GREEN phases of participation. A great deal of effort and work will go into cleaning, setting up, and clearing our rehearsal spaces each week. Additionally, parent volunteers will be invaluable in helping with technological management and monitoring zoom meetings and break-out rooms. PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE--if you have the ability to help us out on Monday nights, contact any member of the VYS Parent Guild or the VYS Board.

CHANGES IN OUR CALENDAR, AND PARTING WORDS

Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic has made some traditional VYS activities entirely impractical. This year, we will not have our pancake breakfast, concerto competition, various community performances and instrument “petting zoos,” or ensemble retreats. Additionally, we have postponed plans for any larger trips. Rest assured, we have EVERY intention of reinvigorating these activities next season, provided that it is safe to do so. We completely understand that this might be a big disappointment to our students and their families. We are working hard to try to make up for these experiences in the most responsible ways possible.

We also understand that families may question the Board’s decision to not further reduce tuition for the 2020-2021 school year. Without our regular fundraising opportunities and gigs, we are unable to offset costs in the way that we have become accustomed to in previous years. Additionally, even though we will not be incurring some of the regular costs that we normally do, we have found it necessary to make a number of larger expenditures. Technology, master-class instructors, extra cleaning/sanitizing supplies, and longer room rental times (to accommodate the needed set up and tear down procedures) all add up very quickly.

Similarly, we have great hopes that we will be able to experience a live concert at the end of the first semester-but we are also trying to prepare for the additional expense that would be required if we are forced to record and professionally produce our students’ performances. These factors, and others, have contributed to our decision to keep our tuition costs at their current level.

Please know that the Vail Youth Symphony Board is deeply committed to doing their best to provide the most complete and enjoyable musical experience possible in the midst of a pandemic. We humbly request that you express any concerns, questions, or complaints directly and immediately to your director, or any member of the Vail Youth Symphony Board of Directors. We pledge to carefully consider anything that is communicated to us, and to do our best to alleviate concerns in a reasonable, responsible, and timely manner. Thank you all so much for your continuing trust and support as we work diligently to spread our love of music and music education to your children in this very uncertain time.

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