



WASHINGTON STATE MUSIC TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Affiliated with
MUSIC TEACHERS NATIONAL ASSOCIATION

Young Composers Project 2025-2026 Rules and Guidelines

The Young Composers Project gives students of WSMTA members the opportunity to submit their compositions for judging and comments by qualified adjudicators. The WSMTA Young Composers Project offers an educational opportunity for students in Washington State* to receive evaluations of their original compositions. Each student will receive written comments from a WSMTA approved adjudicator and a certificate of participation.

Please read the Rules and Guidelines carefully.

No refunds will be granted for entries that do not meet the Rules and Guidelines.

I. Classifications, Levels, and Entry Fees per composition

- Primary Grades K – 2 \$30
- Elementary Grades 3 – 6 \$30
- Junior Grades 7 – 9 \$35
- Senior Grades 10 – 12 \$40

* Non-member fee \$20 per student. Current WSMTA members are exempt from the non-member fee.

II. Special Recognition

One student from each grade level will be invited to perform their composition at the WSMTA State Conference in June 2026 at Central Washington University, Ellensburg WA. In addition, a monetary award will be given to the first-place winner from each grade.

Grades K – 2 are judged as ONE grade level.

The prizes are as follows:

- Primary Grades K – 2 \$30
- Elementary Grades 3 – 6 \$30
- Junior Grades 7 – 9 \$55
- Senior Grades 10 – 12 \$80

III. Specifications

- A. Entries may be composed for any instrument(s) requiring no more than ten performers.
- B. Compositions may be in one or more movements.
- C. The performance time of compositions will be limited to:
 - a. 3 minutes for K-4

- b. 5 minutes for grades 5-8
- c. 7 minutes for grades 9-12

D. Recordings:

- a. Recordings are required for all compositions.
- b. Synthesized recordings of designated instruments are acceptable.
- c. Send a separate audio file for each composition.
- d. MP3 files or YouTube links are acceptable.

E. Manuscripts:

- a. Entries must be legible and written on standard size staff paper (letter, legal, tabloid, ledger) and submitted online in PDF format. A student may enter ONE composition for competition and unlimited compositions for comments only. YCP is primarily an educational program and this allows composition students to receive feedback on multiple compositions. ALL compositions require the appropriate entry fee and form. If entering more than one composition, please mark the noncompetitive manuscripts with the words "COMMENTS ONLY" at the top of the manuscript.
- b. The student must produce the manuscript.
Elementary through 12th grade level entries must be written in the student composer's handwriting OR the student may use notation software.
- c. Primary level students (K – 2) have the option of producing their manuscript as described above or the manuscript may be produced in either hand-written form or with software notation with the teacher acting as scribe.
- d. Write the title, student grade level, and total length of all music study in the upper right-hand corner of each page.
- e. Do not include student names on manuscripts.
- f. Number the left-most measure at the beginning of each staff.

Deadline: January 5, 2026 (midnight Pacific Time)

Evaluations and certificates will be sent to teachers by **late February**.

Online registration will be available at wsmta.org from December 1, 2025 and to January 5, 2026.

Important Considerations: The WSMTA YCP is primarily an educational tool for WSMTA students and teachers, not a competition. The composition must be written primarily under the supervision of the WSMTA teacher submitting the composition.

* Students who participate in WSMTA YCP must be a resident of Washington State and a U.S. Citizen (or hold a U.S. Visa or lawful permanent residence/green card).

Please make note of the following rules:

Winners' Future Eligibility

- 2025 winners will not be eligible to compete in 2026. They can send compositions "for comment only". They can compete again in 2027.
- 2026 winners will not be eligible to compete in 2027
- 2026 winners can submit for comment only in 2027
- 2026 winners will be eligible for competition again in 2028

June 2026 Young Composers Recital

- All solo and duet performances at the June 28, 2026 recital must be live
- Video recordings of a live performance of a winning composition with three or more players will be allowed
- No audio recordings will be permitted

Composition Length

The performance time of compositions will be limited to:

- 3 min for K-4
- 5 min for grades 5-8
- 7 minutes for grades 9-12

WSMTA accepts all persons without regard to race, ethnicity, color, religion, sex, gender identity/expression, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, age, or any other basis protected by law.