

# Youth and Family Enrichment Services (YoFES)

## ***Open Access to Music Education for Children (OAMEC) Policy Agreement for Families***

2020-2021

---

### **ATTENDANCE POLICIES**

The following attendance policies have been created to accommodate the needs of our families, to protect the time and efforts of our music faculty, and to ensure the accountability of YoFES business activities. Please read through them carefully and sign and date where indicated below.

1. The lesson time that you agree on with your child's teacher is a standing appointment to be repeated on a weekly basis, unless prior arrangements have been arranged. Students are expected to arrive promptly to all of their scheduled lesson times.
2. **Tardiness policies:**
  - a. Students are entitled only to the time allotted within their weekly appointment. If a student is late, their teacher may reserve the right not to make up the lost time at the end of the lesson, particularly if they have scheduled back-to-back lesson appointments.
  - b. If a student is more than 15 minutes late to a lesson, they have effectively forfeited that lesson and the teacher may reserve the right to close the Zoom meeting. If this happens, the lesson can be made up only in the case of extenuating circumstances such as emergency or sudden illness.
  - c. If a teacher is late to a lesson or cancels last minute, the student is *absolutely* entitled to make up the time. If an instructor is consistently late to appointments, please do not hesitate to report this matter to a member of YoFES administrative staff. Parents may request to change their child's instructor if this is a recurring problem.
3. **Last minute cancellation policy:** Here at YoFES, we understand that life happens and sometimes cancellations need to be made. That's why we've adopted a fairly lenient last minute cancellation policy - as long as you inform your child's instructor a minimum of 4 hours before the originally scheduled appointment, you are entitled to make-up the lesson. Failure to do so will forfeit your right to a make up lesson, unless extenuating circumstances are determined to be present.
4. **No-Shows:** A "no-show" has occurred when a student fails to show up to their scheduled lesson time or is more than 15 minutes late. No-shows can result in the forfeit of your right to a make-up lesson.
5. In the case of cancellations, no-shows, and/or make up lessons, YoFES staff reserve the right to determine what does and does not constitute an extenuating circumstance. For example, sudden car trouble is an emergency and therefore counts as an extenuating circumstance. In contrast, "I just forgot" usually does not qualify as an extenuating circumstance.

*Once you have finished reading the “ATTENDANCE POLICIES” section, please read the statement below and check the box if you agree.*

- I understand and consent to comply with all terms and conditions laid out in YoFES’s OAMEC attendance policies.

## **TUITION PAYMENT POLICIES**

OAMEC monthly tuition payments are *always* due by the first lesson of every month. However, we understand that many of our families are experiencing increased financial hardship and stress due to the COVID-19 pandemic. If you’re having trouble paying for lessons and need an extension on your monthly bill, please email [admin@yofes.org](mailto:admin@yofes.org) or contact a member of YoFES staff directly. Nine times out of ten, we’ll be able to help you out, but prompt and clear communication is key.

In the event of several missed or late payments without proper communication with staff, your child may be at risk of being temporarily removed from the program. In this case, they can easily be reinstated once bills are settled or a mutual agreement has been reached.

*Once you have finished reading the “TUITION PAYMENT POLICIES” section, please read the statement below and check the box if you agree.*

- I understand and consent to comply with all terms and conditions laid out in YoFES’s OAMEC tuition payment policies.

## **INSTRUMENT BORROWING & RENTAL POLICIES**

In the spirit of providing true “open access” to music education for all young people, YoFES is committed to ensuring that each of our string, brass, and woodwind students have 24/7 equitable access to a quality instrument of their choice. The following policies have been created to ensure the success of this important goal.

### **Borrowing an Instrument from YoFES**

Traditionally, YoFES has provided instruments to students primarily via long term loans that come out of our personal inventory. These instrument loans are made free of charge and students are entitled to keep the instrument for the entire time they study music at YoFES.

Borrowing from the YoFES collection remains an option for all OAMEC students. However, there are a few things families should be aware of should they select this option for the 2020-21 school year.

- All instruments are on loan ONLY for the duration of your child’s musical education with YoFES. If you have a YoFES instrument and at any point decide to discontinue lessons, the instrument MUST be returned so that it can be made available for another child.
- YoFES is able to provide all of our long-term instrument loans completely free of charge. However, please be advised that all repair, maintenance, and supply costs become the responsibility of the borrower while the instrument is in your care. YoFES is happy to

provide recommendations for reputable, affordable local repair shops should the need arise.

- We are only able to provide **one instrument per child**. If your child switches instruments or upgrades to a different size, families must return the original loaner to our inventory in order to receive the new one.
- Our inventory is currently undergoing major updates and repairs. Because of this, we cannot guarantee with 100% certainty we will be able to provide your child's instrument of choice in the correct size or condition.
- If a borrowed YoFES instrument becomes damaged beyond reasonable repair (forced break, neglect in everyday maintenance and care), families are financially responsible for replacing the instrument for their child's personal use. In some cases, families may also be required to provide a replacement instrument for the YoFES inventory or equivalent fee (up to \$200).

### **Affordable Rental Recommendations**

Renting an instrument is a great affordable option, especially for beginning or intermediate players. You have unlimited access to the instrument and the flexibility to return it whenever it is no longer in use. Because most rentals are associated with an instrumental repair business, you'll also be given a go-to resource for repair, maintenance, supplies, and accessories.

YoFES's #1 recommendation for high quality, affordable instrument rentals is **Bedrossian Music** in Warwick, RI (about 1 hour's drive from Boston). Bedrossian is different from other music stores in New England because they charge a low flat rate that applies to the *entire* school year, rather than the typical month-to-month prices. That means you only have to make one payment per year, you don't have to worry about fitting the rental cost into your monthly budget, and your child can make progress on their instrument all year! You can also opt to pay \$24.99/year for repair and maintenance insurance, which will help cover you if anything goes wrong.

Visit [bedrossianmusic.com/rentals](http://bedrossianmusic.com/rentals) to learn more about their offerings and pricing.

Looking for something more local? Here's a list of other great options for rental and/or repairs.

- Johnson String Instrument (Newton, MA): [www.johnsonstring.com/rental](http://www.johnsonstring.com/rental)
- Carriage House Violins (Newton, MA): **Repairs only**  
[www.carriagehouseviolins.com/services/workshop](http://www.carriagehouseviolins.com/services/workshop)
- Music & Arts (Newton, MA): [stores.musicarts.com/newton](http://stores.musicarts.com/newton)
- K & C Music (Norwood, MA): [www.kandcmusic.com/instrument-rentals.html](http://www.kandcmusic.com/instrument-rentals.html)
- Acoustic Strings of New England (Somerville, Arlington, South Shore):  
[acousticstrings.biz/instrument-rentals.html](http://acousticstrings.biz/instrument-rentals.html)

## Instrument Purchasing Tips

So, you've decided to purchase an instrument for your child. Congratulations, that's amazing! You've probably already realized that there are many important factors to consider before making a final purchase, such as cost, brand, size, vendor, longevity, etc. Here's a helpful checklist to consider when you're making those tricky choices.

- **Do your research on brands and manufacturers.** Every instrument brand/manufacturer on the market comes with its own pros and cons. Consider what specific attributes you're looking for in a musical instrument, and take the time to figure out which manufacturers best meet your needs before shelling out the big bucks.
- **Make sure to buy from reputable vendors.** The lower prices available at big box stores like Costco and Walmart or online vendors such as Amazon may be tempting, but remember that with musical instruments, you really do get what you pay for. If your child is committed to their musical studies and plans to use this instrument for a long time, quality and longevity are going to save you more money in the long run than low sticker prices. Consider buying from your local neighborhood music store, from non profit organizations, or from independent sellers on Craigslist or Facebook Marketplace. And if you do decide to buy from a big box store, make sure to thoroughly read all the product reviews you can prior to purchase so that you can make an informed decision.
- **Consider buying used.** Like cheese, some instruments improve with age! There's nothing wrong with buying an older, gently used product if it's made by a reputable manufacturer and is in good condition. You can find used instruments on Craigslist, Facebook Marketplace, at your local music store, or through certain non profit organizations. Most local independent stores have also have a rent-to-own option, which is a great way to space out your payments over time.
- **Still feeling stumped?** We're happy to help. Just contact a member of staff at [admin@yofes.org](mailto:admin@yofes.org), or ask your child's instructor to provide their professional recommendations.

---

*Once you have finished reading the "INSTRUMENT BORROWING & RENTAL POLICIES" section, please read the statement below and check the box if you agree.*

- I understand and consent to comply with all terms and conditions laid out in YoFES's OAMEC instrument borrowing and rental policies.
- N/A -- I don't need to rent or borrow an instrument.

Please select one option. For the 2020-21 school year, I would like to:

- Borrow an instrument from YoFES.
- Rent an instrument from one of the recommended businesses above.
- Purchase an instrument.
- N/A -- I'm a returning student and/or already have my instrument of choice.

*Continue to the next page to sign*

**SIGNATURE**

**Student Name** (*print*)

---

**Parent/Guardian Name** (*print if student is aged 17 or under*)

---

**Parent/Guardian Signature** (*Students over the age of 18 may sign themselves*)

---

**Date:**    /    /20\_\_\_\_

Please return a signed and completed copy of this document to Akela Franklin at [akelafranklin@yofes.org](mailto:akelafranklin@yofes.org). You may retain a copy for your personal records.