



ANNUAL COMPETITION: 2026

Saturday January 24th (snow date January 31st)
Location: University Baptist Church
Rules & Guidelines

Parents, teachers, and students: Please review this document carefully. It contains essential information related to the Competition and is revised and updated every year.

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I. General Rules for All Competitors [\[BACK TO TOP\]](#)

ELIGIBILITY

- Open to students who study with a private teacher or in a school-based program and reside in Central Virginia, to include the city of Charlottesville, Albemarle, and contiguous counties.
- Also open to students who reside outside of this area but who study with a Wednesday Music Club (WMC) member.
- **First (1st) place winners, all categories, are required to perform their pieces at the WMC Winners' Recital on February 8, 2026 at 1:30pm.** (Optional for Composition winner(s)).
All first-place winners will have the opportunity to receive a professional video recording, at no charge, of their performance at the Winners' Recital.
- **All winners in the Senior category** are required to perform their pieces at the WMC Winners Recital (see date above).
- All first-place High School winners, as well as Junior and Senior Camp winners, who were disqualified or who returned their entire prize/scholarship last year, may not apply to compete again for the same prize/scholarship this year.
- Only one instrument is allowed per performance category.
- Students may not compete in two different categories unless they perform on two different instruments. However, a student may enter a submission to the Composition category in addition to performance categories.
- Age eligibility is determined by the student's age as of the date of the Competition (January 24, 2026).

APPLICATIONS (FOR ALL CATEGORIES): DUE BY JANUARY 10, 2026

- **Applications must be submitted online by midnight on January 10, 2026.** Late entries will **not** be accepted.
Note: Composition entries must also be submitted online* by midnight, January 10, 2026.
(*Email score, audio/sound file, and program notes to competition@wednesdaymusicclub.org)
- **A \$15.00 non-refundable fee** must accompany an application form for each category entered, paid electronically through the website: wednesdaymusicclub.org.
- **Application forms must include the student's musical selection** for his/her performance. Changes to this selection may **not** be made after application deadline.
 - *The application fee is waived for students receiving a WMC Tuition Scholarship.*

- *Applicants will be notified by email when their applications have been received.*
- *WMC is not responsible for any consequences arising from incorrect information submitted on the application form.*
- *Every student submitting an application will receive a verification email from the Wednesday Music Club. If you do not receive this email, it is your responsibility to contact us at competition@wednesdaymusicclub.org as soon as possible.*

MUSIC REQUIREMENTS

- **Only published music, or legally downloaded music, is allowed.** (This does not apply to the Composition category).
- **IMPORTANT!!!** Students must bring **three (3) photocopies (an original plus two additional copies)** of their music for the judges.
- *Measure numbers must be added in the margins of each line in the score.*

PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS

- **If a student's selected music calls for a piano accompaniment,** the accompaniment part must be used.
- **Students must provide their own accompanists,** and, if they wish, may use the list of local accompanists available on our website.
- **Piano students must select a solo work.** Pieces (such as a concerto) that require a second piano or keyboard are not permitted.
- **Students may play multiple movements within the same work** but may not mix elements from different works.
- **If a musical selection contains a cadenza, it must be played.** A different, published version of the piece's cadenza may be substituted. A student may not add his/her own written or improvised cadenza.
- **Repetitions may be eliminated,** or cuts made to the music, in order to comply with time limits.

PERFORMANCE PROTOCOLS

Before beginning their performances, students should first introduce themselves by name, and state the name of their piece and the composer. Students will be given a brief opportunity (*up to 30 seconds*) if desired, to do a final tuning of their instrument, run brief scales, check in with their accompanist, and/or take the moment to compose themselves before beginning. (Remember that a "thank you" to the judges at the end of the performance is always appreciated!)

Appropriate dress is expected for the Competition and at the Winners Recital. Students are encouraged to seek further guidance from their music teachers as needed.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE COMPETITION

- ***All prizes at the WMC Annual Competition are awarded at the discretion of the judges, including a decision not to award a prize. The judges' decisions are final.***
- ***Performances at the Winners' Recital will be professionally videorecorded. Videos will be made available, free of charge, to each student performing at the Winners' Recital***
- ***Names of all Competition winners will be posted on the WMC website by 7:30 pm on the day of the Competition.***
- ***If a student's scheduled accompanist cancels the day before or the day of the Competition, WMC will try its best to provide a substitute accompanist but cannot guarantee that one will be available.***
- ***WMC has a limited assistance fund to help with accompanists' fees if needed. The form is available online at www.wednesdaymusicclub.org. Students may submit a request to WMC for 50% of their accompanist's fee. All requests must be submitted by March 15th. This reimbursement will be sent directly to the accompanist. (This assistance is not available to students for whom a teacher or parent serves as their accompanist.)***
- ***Although not a requirement, WMC strongly urges that each student's teacher attend his/her performance.***
- ***To ensure the privacy of students, teachers or parents may take photos or videos of their student's performance but not of other students' performances. WMC reserves the right to take photos and videos of the Competi-***

tion for promotional purposes. All images or videos posted on the WMC website will be presented without students' names or personal information.

- **If any division of the competition cannot be held due to insufficient applications**, applicants from that division would be allowed to compete in another division even if they have previously competed and won a prize in that division's competition category.

II. Music Camp Scholarships [\[BACK TO TOP\]](#)

ELIGIBILITY

- **Junior Camp: open to students ages 10 to 13** on the day of the Competition.
- **Senior Camp: open to students ages 14 to 18** on the day of the Competition. High school graduates are not eligible. Vocalists are permitted to enter the Senior Camp category.
- **A student may win either division (Junior or Senior Camp) only once.**
- **A Junior Camp division winner may not compete in the Senior Camp division the following year.**
- All winners must be prepared to attend a music-based camp (day camp or overnight camp) **during the 2026 calendar year.**
- Winners may request permission to use their camp scholarship prizes for other types of music education experiences, including online or "virtual" offerings. The WMC will make decisions on a student-by-student basis. Please contact our WMC Camp Coordinator.
- All camp scholarship winners (and alternate winners who receive a full or partial scholarship) must provide **a written essay to WMC summarizing their music camp experience (or their "virtual" educational experience).**
 - *Winners' essays must be provided to WMC within 30 days after finishing the camp. Further details will be supplied in a letter from the WMC Camp Coordinator.*
 - *Parents of camp applicants must research requirements related to potential camps in advance, so they can determine a workable match for their child.*
 - *An alternate winner who received up to \$500 in camp scholarship funds for the previous year may compete again in the current year's Competition.*

PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS

- **One (1) piece from memory**
- **Playing time may not exceed 8 minutes**

AWARDS

- **Junior Camp prizes: four (4) scholarships, each covering camp fees up to \$800 each**
- **Senior Camp prizes: four (4) scholarships, each covering camp fees up to \$1,000 each**
 - *If a winner in either division is unable to use all or part of his/her award, any funds exceeding \$200 will be offered to the first alternate in that same division. If neither the first nor the second alternate in one division can accept the award, the funds will go to an alternate in the other division.*
 - *Camp scholarships may not be used for private lessons unless those lessons are part of a camp program.*

DEADLINES FOR WINNERS' CAMP PLANS

- **For summer camps: May 1, 2026.** Winners must notify the WMC Camp Coordinator, by email, of their specific plans to attend a music-based summer camp.
- **For fall camps: August 1, 2026.**

If, by the deadlines, a winner is still awaiting a decision about admittance to a camp, his/her parents must contact the WMC Camp Coordinator.

*If WMC has not heard from the winner 15 days past the deadlines, the prize funds will be released to an alternate.
All scholarship camp programs/workshops must be completed by **December 31, 2026**.*

TRAVEL STIPEND FOR CAMP SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

- WMC may be able to reimburse a winner's travel expenses up to \$100 for his/her travel to camp. Contact the WMC Camp Coordinator for further information.
 - *This reimbursement may cover car mileage at the current US Government rate, and/or air/train fare.*
 - *The travel stipend does not cover room and board during travel, nor meals purchased during travel or at the camp location.*

III. High School [\[BACK TO TOP\]](#)

ELIGIBILITY

- **Open to students in Grades 9 to 11: all instruments, including vocalists. Vocalists in Grade 12 also are eligible.**
 - *First-place winners may not compete in this category the following year, unless competing on a different instrument.*

PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS

- **One (1) piece from memory**
- **Playing time may not exceed 8 minutes**
- **For vocalists: self-accompaniment is not permitted. Duos, trios, or group vocals are also not permitted.**

AWARDS

- **Two (2) first-place prizes of \$500 each and two (2) second-place prizes of \$300 each**
- **Honorable mention** may be given at the judges' discretion but does not carry a cash award.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Depending on the number of applicants, the Competition Committee reserves the right to split the competition into two divisions: one for pianists and one for all other instrumentalists/vocalists.

IV. Senior [\[BACK TO TOP\]](#)

ELIGIBILITY

- **Open to students in Grade 12, not including voice**

PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS

- **One (1) instrument only**
- **Two (2) pieces from memory, by different composers and contrasting styles**
- **Playing time may not exceed 15 minutes**

AWARDS

- **All awards will be based on the judges' discretion, up to three (3) prizes.**

- **Total sum of all awards will not exceed \$3,200.** First prize will be between \$1,200 and \$1,500. Amounts determined by judges.

V. Composition [\[BACK TO TOP\]](#)

NOTE: *This is not a performance category.*

In addition to completing the online application, composition applicants must email the score, audio/sound file, and program notes to competition@wednesdaymusicclub.org.

(First place winner has the opportunity to perform OR have others perform their composition at the Winners Recital.)

ELIGIBILITY

- **Open to students ages 10 to 18**
 - *First-prize winners from the previous year are not eligible to win again this year.*
 - *Two students may collaborate on a composition.*
 - *Vocal compositions, with accompaniment, are permitted.*

APPLICATIONS

Final compositions must be submitted online by midnight, January 10, 2026. Email score, audio/sound file, and program notes to competition@wednesdaymusicclub.org.

- Students and their teachers are required to read the **Composition Guidelines for Students & Teachers** available on our website <https://www.wednesdaymusicclub.org/competition>.
- **Only one composition submission per participant.**
- **Composition playing time may not exceed 8 minutes.**
- **Minimum length** of the score must be **24 measures *without* repeats**. A literal return (as in ABA) will be considered a repeat unless there is variety in the return, such as a Coda.

SCORE

- **A composer's "program note" is required:** a brief statement (1-2 short paragraphs) written by the student, explaining his/her intentions and ideas.
- **Title of the piece, plus the composer's name and age,** must appear at the top.
- **Measures must be numbered** at the beginning of each line in the score.
- **All pages must be numbered.**
- For multi-movement works, **each movement must be marked** with a subtitle or number.
- **Music notation software must be used for the completed score.** (MuseScore is a free notation app, available online). Handwritten scores, or scores annotated by hand, will **not** be accepted. *Careful attention must be paid to accurate and consistent notation, so that it reflects the composer's intentions regarding all aspects of the music.*

(Scores must be submitted as PDF files, generated from the notation software; the final PDF file must print out at 8.5 x 11" or 8.5 x 14".)

INSTRUMENTATION

- A work may be for solo instrument or chamber ensemble (up to four parts). Two students may collaborate on a composition for more than one instrument.
- If any transposing instruments are included, the score must be submitted and labeled as a non-transposing score.
- Works for solo instruments with piano accompaniment are to be scored in the standard format, with the piano part written below the instruments.

AUDIO/SOUND FILE

- An audio or sound file is required as part of the submission. This may be a sound file generated by the student's music notation software or an audio/video recording of a performance of the piece.
- **New for 2026!** A link to a segment of the submitted audio file and score will be featured on a dedicated display board on the day of the competition. This board will be in the competition registration area at University Baptist Church. Competitors can opt out of this display in the online application.

COMPOSITIONS WILL BE JUDGED ON:

- Use of musical elements such as melody, harmony/counterpoint, and rhythm
- Clarity and accuracy of notation
- Overall structure and coherence
- Creativity

AWARDS FOR THE COMPOSITION COMPETITION:

- **Total sum of all awards will not exceed \$700.**
 - *All awards will be based on the judges' discretion.*
 - *Performance(s) of the winning composition(s) at the Winners Recital is optional.*

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