

## YCMEA Minutes- Saturday, January 17, 2026

Notes about the minutes:

1. If you open the minutes in Google Docs and show the Document tabs on the left side, it will allow you to click on any of the headings to jump to that page.
2. Board members' emails have been linked at the beginning of the minutes as have chairmen of events..
3. The titles of our festivals are links that will take you to the specific page on our website.

**Present:** [Jenny Thompson](#): president, [Randy Wright](#): vice president, [Chris Wright](#): treasurer, [Melanie Lynch](#): secretary, Kayla Solorio, Brandon Coz, Shawn Pollard, Megan O'Brien, Deltrina Grimes

**Call to Order: 10:10 am**

**Each member present shared something they are excited for or are celebrating at school:**

Deltrina Grimes- Dr. Grimes has begun a section of choir for mature singers. This allows for focussing on the specific needs of these voices as well as to allow members to come to rehearsals when it is still light out. The class is held Mondays from 3:00-4:30 PM. So far, 8 have shown up and 2 more have registered.

Megan O'Brien- The Kofa choir and other classes have been displaced from her classroom due to flooding. She is getting new carpet and no mold and will be in her classroom.

Brandon Coz- He is excited for the YC band to go to festival this year. They are working on serious literature and have done well fund raising.

Shawn Pollard- Fees that the college has been collecting for private lessons have been held by the college for years. Recently, these fees were refunded to the music department so that it can be spent by the department for equipment and odds and ends. Hopefully some choir risers will come out of this as well.

Randy Wright- He is excited about the scholarship process and successes. He visited many schools to talk to students about scholarships: Crane, Centennial, Ron Watson, Woodard, Gila Ridge, and Somerton all took him up on the offer. We have more applicants than in any year in the recent past.

Chris Wright- She is excited that 2 classroom teachers are working on next year's schedule already and they are including her to make sure it works with the band schedule.

Melanie Morley- Her students have been working on *Stay* by Randall Standridge. This piece is part of a series of pieces focussing on mental health issues. It's slow and beautiful, and the

students have truly embraced the piece and some students who don't usually take things seriously have asked to do more pieces in similar style and message.

Kayla Solorio- All of her ensembles are grasping concepts and not needing all of the constant reteaching they needed at the beginning of the year. Some weaker players are becoming stronger players and even leaders.

Jenny Thompson- She feels like she's finally at the point in her teaching career where she knows what she's doing without as much stress and the kids and she are having fun!

**Approval of Minutes**- Megan O'Brien moves to approve the previous meeting's minutes, Chris Wright seconds. Motion passed unanimously

### **Treasurer's Report-**

Bank Balances:

Checking Account-\$7,743.12

Main savings (Business savings)- \$1,456.21

Second Savings (Ernest Ortega Scholarship Fund)- \$2,366.59

Payments received: RWMS, GSA, ASU Prep- honor band auditions, and some festival of excellence payments

Jenny and Chris went to the bank and gathered the information and paperwork that needs to be present for the bank change. They now have everything needed and will take care of it on a mutually available day.

**Dues are \$25 at the beginning of each year. Dues can be paid separately or can be added on any festival registration. In order to register for any event or festival, you will need to also be a member of the organization or to pay the non-member fee which is equivalent to the membership fee.**

Any checks should be made out to YCMEA.

Please send all dues, registration forms, and payments to:

Chris Wright  
2980 S. Rainbow Ave  
Yuma, AZ 85365  
Cell number: (928)246-6461

Important note: Please make sure that every time you pay for something for YCMEA you include the billing statement. They are all on the website. Without the billing statement, our treasurer will not know who the payment belongs to and what it is for. If you have questions, please reach out to Chris Wright.

## Old Business

### Festival of Excellence ([Honor Band](#) and [Honor Choir](#))-

1. Chairman- [Melanie Lynch](#), Co-Chair [Kayla Solorio](#)
2. Rehearsals have begun and will be once a week during the months of January and February and will be held at Woodard Junior High School. Rehearsals are Wednesdays from 6-8 PM.
3. We will have a “full day” rehearsal during the school day
  - a. The all day rehearsal will happen from 9:00 am- 1:00 pm on Friday, February 27th.
  - b. Transportation for this rehearsal is to be taken care of by the students’ school/director.
4. The concert will be on February 28th at 2:00 PM. The concert will be held at Woodard Junior High School and is open to the public.
  - a. Donations from this concert are what pay for the Ernest Ortega Scholarship.
5. Each year we take a tour with the performers at the end of the season.
  - a. Students generally perform at two different schools and then go to Wild River for bowling and pizza.
    - i. Kayla will be checking on Wild River as they had a fire earlier in 2025 and our plans may have to change.
  - b. Tour will be held on Thursday, March 5th during the school day.
6. Fees
  - a. Honor choir fees are \$30 per student
  - b. Honor Band fees are \$5 per audition (whether the student makes the ensemble or not) as well as \$25 for participation.
  - c. Fees collected are to pay for:
    - i. Honor band/honor choir t shirts
    - ii. Buses for tour
    - iii. Pizza and bowling
    - iv. Any music purchases needed
7. Guest conductors
  - a. Brandon Coz for Choir
  - b. Sheryl Clifton for Band

### [Honor Band](#)

1. The YCMEA honor band is open to students currently in grades 6 through 9.
2. Students were chosen by audition:
  - a. There were 71 auditions
  - b. 40 Students were selected for the honor band.
3. Thank you to our wonderful judges for donating their time!
  - a. Flute- Sheryl Clifton
  - b. Clarinets-Chris Wright
  - c. Saxophones- Dave Vosler

- d. Trumpets- Randy Wright
- e. Low Brass- Shawn Pollard
- f. Percussion- Brandon Coz

#### Honor Choir

- 1. The YCMEA Honor Choir is open to students in grade 6-12.
- 2. We have 32 students signed up for this year's honor choir.

#### Solo and Ensemble

- 1. Chairman- [Kayla Solorio](#)
- 2. Registrations due: March 27th
- 3. This festival is open to any musicians (band, choir, orchestra, guitar, etc) at any level elementary through college whose teacher is a member of YCMEA.
- 4. The festival will be April 18th at Crane Middle School
- 5. Cost is \$5 for solo and \$15 for ensemble
- 6. Accompaniments may be live or pre-recorded.
  - a. If you use pre-recorded, please bring a device to play the accompaniment on.
  - b. Piano will be provided.
  - c. If you need any large equipment, please reach out to Kayla ahead of time to make sure she can accommodate the request.
- 7. Please bring an original of the music for the judge.
- 8. If you are interested in judging, reach out to Kayla.
- 9. Dr. Vasquez is interested in being more involved and may be a good option for judging.

#### **High School Honor Band**

- 1. Brandon gave an update about this year's group
- 2. Auditions recorded and due by Friday, January 23rd
- 3. Concert TBA

#### Junior High/Senior High Choir Festival

- 1. Chairman- [Megan O'Brien](#)
- 2. The festival is scheduled for March 12th
  - a. It will be at Kofa High School
  - b. This festival is open to choirs of all sizes and grade levels.
  - c. If you are interested in judging the festival, please reach out to Megan.
  - d. Registrations due February 12th.
- 3. Dr. Grimes has a large piece that we can do at the end of the festival as one large ensemble..
- 4. AWC's choir will perform as an exhibition performance

#### Large Ensemble/ ABODA Festival

- 1. Last year, Todd Livingston from Arizona Band and Orchestra Directors Association reached out as ABODA is making an effort to include more rural areas in the state.

- a. Registration opened for the event, but we were unaware of it. No one registered for the festival so it was cancelled.
2. Since the ABODA festival has been cancelled, Melanie suggested we could do a more casual performance for each other rather than a festival.
3. An idea would be to do it outside Harkins like the play-a-thon in the past.
4. If we do it, we can use the old MENC/NaAfME speeches about the importance of music, etc.
5. Dr. Pollard will reach out to Steve Henig to get some general information and contact information for the mall.
6. Tentative date- March 14

### Celebration of Strings

1. Chairmen- [Megan O'Brien](#)
2. This is a large orchestra festival where students from across the county come together to create 2-3 combined orchestras of different levels.
  - a. Level 1 is for beginners
  - b. Level 2 is intermediate
  - c. Level 3 is for more advanced students
    - i. We have not done level 3 for several years and will not do so this year either.
3. Cost for the festival is \$5 per student
  - a. This pays for their dinner
  - b. If the director and/or any chaperones would like to have dinner that day, please include that at registration. Cost is \$5 per meal.
4. Additionally, there is a \$25 fee for each director who registers students.
  - a. This goes towards purchasing music for the event and other expenses.
5. Rehearsal goes from 1:00 PM until 4:00
6. After the rehearsal there will be
  - a. A practice for getting on and off stage
  - b. A guest performance- hopefully
  - c. Dinner
  - d. A quick gathering/tuning
7. The concert will start at 6:30 PM in Post Auditorium
8. Paperwork is complete for facilities use
9. Music is being updated to the drive this week.
10. Festival is May 1
11. Registrations are due by March 15th
12. We do have Post and 4th Ave
13. We should reach out to Dr. Christina Kim as a clinician
14. Chamber strings is asked to perform
15. Megan brought music to the meeting to look at.

### Desert Band Festival

1. Committee: [Melanie Lynch](#), [Eloisa Arviso](#) and committee

2. This festival is a large festival for our newer band students.
  1. This can be students from grades 5 up including high school beginning band students.
  2. Performers will be divided into three levels: elementary band, middle school beginning band, and middle school intermediate band
3. Festival Dates: May 7 and 8
  1. Students will participate on one of the days; we do two days to accommodate the large number of students participating.
4. Fee- \$25 director fee and \$5 per student. The director fee is separate from the membership dues.
5. The music was uploaded to the drive and sent out to directors in December
6. Cost for the festival is \$5 per student
  1. This pays for their dinner
  2. If the director and/or any chaperones would like to have dinner that day, please include that at registration. Cost is \$5 per meal.
7. Additionally, there is a \$25 fee for each director who registers students.
  1. This goes towards purchasing music for the event and other expenses.
8. Rehearsal goes from 1:00 PM until 4:00
9. After the rehearsal there will be
  1. A practice for getting on and off stage
  2. A guest performance
  3. Dinner
  4. A quick gathering/tuning
10. The concert will start at 6:30 PM in Post Auditorium
11. Melanie did the paperwork for Fourth Avenue JH and will request dinners
12. Registrations due March 21st
13. Randy will direct both days, Chris on Friday, Brandon will do Thursday. We will need one additional director.
14. Yuma Big Band will perform Thursday, Saxes Sax quintet will perform Friday

### Scholarships

1. Chairman- [Randy Wright](#)
2. Committee- Chris Wright, Jenny Thompson, Joel Santana, Melanie Lynch
3. Each year, YCMEA awards scholarships for summer music camps
4. The process has several steps
  - a. Applications
    - i. There is an online application
    - ii. Students should answer in complete sentences
    - iii. Along with the application, students need a letter of recommendation from their current music teacher.
    - iv. Due January 16th
    - v. The committee will meet to review applications.
  - b. Selected students will move on to the audition process. The audition consists of
    - i. A prepared solo

1. Pieces may be accompanied or unaccompanied.
  - a. If the piece has accompaniment, it should be performed as such, but the accompaniment may be recorded or with a live accompanist.
    - i. Finalists will be given one rehearsal with a pre-selected accompanist. These will be schedule through YCMEA.
    - ii. Finalists may also use their own accompanist.
- ii. Scales
  1. Middle school students- full range major scales up to 4 sharps and 4 flats and full range chromatic
  2. High school students all major scales and chromatic full range
  3. Scales should be memorized
- iii. Sight Reading
- iv. Interview
  1. The committee will conduct a short interview with each finalist
- c. Updates- Randy offered to visit all schools to talk to the students about the scholarships and was able to visit half a dozen schools.
- d. The committee will review the applications January 23rd at 5 PM, location at First Christian Church; Randy will bring dinner.
- e. Auditions will be held March 11 at Woodard beginning at 4:30

**Other news:**

- [Shannon Bates](#)- Our Bertrands Rep- Couldn't come because of CASMEC. If you have any needs, she has been coming to Arizona more often. Give her a call 858-472-5417
- AWC Faculty Recital January 25th, 5 PM, St. Paul's
- Rob Torsin- Masterclass, 3 PM, AWC Next Thursday, bassist
- Village Jazz Series started last week.
  - Yuma Big Band, 2/12 and 3/26
  - AWC and Kofa on April 23
- Community Band Concert, March 9
- Choir Concerts: Sunday March 8 (4:00 PM at Trinity) and Friday 13 (7 PM at St. Paul's)
- Southwest Christian School Concerts: March 5- Band, 6th- Orchestra , 6 PM
- Kofa Choir, March 5th,
- Kofa Senior Fine Arts Showcase March 6th 6 PM
- GRHS Choir Concert March 10,
- Kofa Seussical the Musical March 20-22
- AWC will be doing a 250th Anniversary Concert on July 2nd; venue TBA

**Next meeting: February 21, 2026, 10 am at Crane**

Melanie Morley moves to end the meeting at 11:47, Megan O'Briend seconds. Passed unanimously.

Meeting Adjourned: 11:47 AM