



A 501(c)(3) Nonprofit School of Music – 144 West Third Street Suite 201, Williamsport, PA 17701 (570) 329-0888

## **Drug and Alcohol Policy**

### **Policy and Rationale**

The possession, use, provision or sale of alcohol, marijuana, or any illegal narcotic substance, or any paraphernalia or equipment associated with the use of these substances is not permitted on Uptown Music Collective grounds at any time, or at off-site events or functions.

In addition to the physical and psychological dangers resulting from drug or alcohol use, a student under the influence of marijuana, illegal drugs, or alcohol is not prepared to participate in the type of lessons, classes, workshops, rehearsals or events that the Uptown Music Collective seeks to provide. Without question, there is an absolute incompatibility between the state of mind needed for the study and mastery of music, and that state of mind influenced to any degree by the use of alcohol or drugs

The Uptown Music Collective also believes that experimenting with marijuana, alcohol, or other illegal drugs outside of the school and its events is dangerous and potentially harmful to its students. The extended use of these substances will harm the lungs and other organs, impair mental functions, weaken the ability to concentrate and think, and significantly affect a student's motivation and subsequently his or her ability to accomplish goals and perform up to the schools high standards, both on and off stage.

### **Purpose and Intent of Disciplinary Actions**

The Uptown Music Collective has developed a course of action for the school, the student, and his/her family to take when a student has possessed, used, provided or sold alcohol or illegal drugs on school grounds, at official school events and when it is suspected, through a student's actions or otherwise, that he or she may be using or selling illegal drugs or alcohol outside of the school. The purpose of these actions is to send a clear and powerful "zero tolerance" message when it comes to the use of drugs and alcohol, both on site and off.

The Uptown Music Collective recognizes the varying degrees in which students could find themselves in violation of the school's Drug and Alcohol Policy and realizes the importance of treating each infraction on a case by case basis. While the Uptown Music Collective recognizes that in some cases dismissal from the schools programs may be necessary, it also recognizes that a wider range of actions is needed for several reasons. First, there is a significant difference between the selling of illegal drugs on site by a student and a single purchase of drugs by another experimenting for the first time. Both infractions require strong and immediate action, but with that said, the action needs to be contoured to the individual student's specific conduct and situation.

Secondly, although logic may imply that if the consequence is severe enough and the message unequivocal, then students won't use illegal drugs on or off school grounds. As sound and just as this logic may be, the continued problems of drugs and alcohol in society has proven this approach to be largely ineffective. Thirdly, in many cases severe punishment, such as long-term suspension or expulsion from the school, will often take the offender out of an activity or environment that might inspire them to change their behavior and in turn giving them more reason to continue using or selling illegal drugs and alcohol.

The Uptown Music Collective firmly believes in the power of music and music education to change student's lives for the better. It is the Uptown Music Collective's wish that its policy allows students to learn from their mistakes, change their behavior and to be reintegrated into the school community where possible. By creating a policy that provides an alternative to the most extreme consequences it is hoped students will be encouraged to discuss the actual situation more candidly, ultimately encouraging them to work more freely with adults, parents, and teachers to combat effectively the use of alcohol and illegal drugs.

Unfortunately some infractions of the policy will require the most severe of actions including expulsion from the school and the notification of outside authorities. Any action by a student that threatens the safety or health of other students of the Uptown Music Collective must be dealt with severely.

### **Emphasis on Prevention through Empowerment and Education**

#### **Empowerment**

In the delivery of all of its programs, the Uptown Music Collective strives to create an environment that engages its students on all levels. This environment engenders a powerful family-like atmosphere where the school's students and staff support, inspire and watch out for one another both inside and outside of the school. The schools Drug and Alcohol policy on prevention intends to take advantage of this climate, enabling students and adults to discuss openly the actual or potential use of drugs or alcohol and how to avoid or confront the issue.

Students are reminded on a regular basis by the schools staff and administration of the importance of being "their brother's keeper" and are encouraged to hold one another to higher standards both inside and outside of the school. Through regular open discussions at the Uptown Music Collective about the problems and consequences of drug or alcohol use, it is hoped that students will feel empowered to intervene with one another before a problem develops. It is also hoped that through this empowerment and regular communication that students will also be more likely to discuss with staff their concerns about their own or others problems with drugs or alcohol.

#### **Education**

The Uptown Music Collective will hold a yearly drug education and prevention event for all of its students. This event will feature specialists in the field and will be geared towards the needs of teenage and preteen students. The school will include regular discussions, where and when appropriate, reminding all students of the schools drug policies and the disconnect between the use of drugs and alcohol and the completion of goals and the meeting of the high standards set by the school.

### **Disciplinary and Guidance Actions**

#### **Infraction:**

**A.** When a student is found to have sold and or provided alcohol, marijuana, or other illegal narcotic substances, or any substances or paraphernalia or equipment associated with the use of these substances on school grounds or during a school-sponsored event off campus.

1. Law enforcement will be notified immediately.
2. The student's parents will be notified.

3. Due to the potential health and safety risk to other students, this infraction will require immediate mandatory expulsion.

**B.** When a student is found to have possessed or used alcohol, marijuana or other illegal narcotic substances or paraphernalia or equipment associated with the use of these substances on school grounds or during a school-sponsored event off campus.

1. The student's parents will be called immediately and law enforcement may or may not be notified depending on the situation and its severity.

2. The student will be suspended from the school and its functions pending a meeting between the school administration and the student and his or her parents and the development and implementation of an action plan created using the action plan components.

3. A second infraction of this type will result in mandatory expulsion.

**C.** When there is sufficient evidence to suspect that a student has possessed, sold or provided or used alcohol, marijuana or other illegal narcotic substances or paraphernalia or equipment associated with the use of these substances outside of the school and its functions.

1. The student will be confronted by members of the administration and staff.

2. The student's parents will be notified

3. The student will be suspended from the school and its functions pending a meeting between the school administration and the student and his or her parents and the development and implementation of an action plan created using the action plan components.

With the exception of Infraction A, which calls for mandatory expulsion, the school will consider the following disciplinary actions as part of its action plan; long-term suspension, expulsion from school, or a series of educational and guidance actions. The school administration retains the absolute right to determine what plan of action may be offered to the student and his/her family.

A plan of disciplinary, educational and guidance actions, as an alternative to long-term suspension or expulsion from school, may be offered if the student and his/her family express a clear willingness to engage in a strenuous regimen of activities designed to understand the meaning and implications of the behavior and to change irrevocably the behavior. In some cases evidence that the student is not using illegal drugs off campus will also be required.

## **COMPONENTS OF THE ACTION PLAN**

The plan of action will be developed in consultation with the school administration, the student, and his/her family. The plan of action will be appropriate to the age of the student and to the specific behavior that violated the policy; not all of the components listed below will be used in every case. The school administration has the absolute right to determine the specific final components of the plan; the school administration also has the absolute right to determine if the student has satisfactorily completed the requirements of the plan. Re-admission to The Uptown Music Collective after a violation of the alcohol and illegal drug policy is at the sole discretion of The Uptown Music Collective.

### **I. Long Term Suspension from the School**

The student may be suspended from all school activities, including private lessons, workshops, classes and events for a predetermined period of time or a pending the outcome of other components of the action plan.

### **II. Suspension from Events and Special Programs**

The student may be suspended from specific school programs and events for a predetermined period of time or a pending the outcome of other components of the action plan. These programs may include the Performance Program, iOn Uptown, Tech Monkey, etc.

### **III. Counseling**

The student will voluntarily enter a course of counseling appropriate to the infraction. The appropriate course of counseling will be mutually determined by the student, parents, and school administration. The counselor will report to the school on the student's attendance and good faith efforts on the part of the student and his/her family.

### **IV. Drug Testing**

The student's parents will be required to provide the results of monthly drug tests to school administrators. If the results of drug testing indicate continued drug use, further action may be taken up to and including expulsion from the school.

### **V. Community Service**

The student will participate in a project or organization to "make up" for what was done wrong or "restore" what was harmed. Participation should be voluntary and substantial. It will extend over a period of time. The intent is for the student to experience how a person can be significantly affected by helping others.

## **Implementation and Schedule**

The student may be re-admitted to school following consideration by the administration of:

1. Declaration of a good faith effort to develop and complete a plan
2. Development of a specific and detailed plan
3. Completion of phases I and II and the beginning of phase III