



Suzuki Talent Education Program

2019-2020 Private Lesson Information & Policies

Private Lesson Information

The Suzuki Method differs in several essential ways from traditional programs of music instruction. The key components of the method are that:

- The student listens daily to CDs of the Suzuki repertoire
- Suzuki students play and perform all pieces by memory
- In tandem with the private lessons, Suzuki students attend Group Classes
- Parents attend the lessons and assist in the daily practice session
- The lessons begin and end with a bow, which indicate mutual respect between the teacher and student, and contributes to the student's stage presence

As part of STEP, each student receives one-on-one instruction with a Suzuki-trained teacher on a roughly weekly basis, from September to June. You will have approximately 30 lessons per year. Depending on availability of the student and teacher, lessons may continue through summer. The length of lesson time varies depending upon the age and ability of the student. Lessons are held at the studio of the teacher and are arranged for a mutually convenient time.

i. Teacher assignment: The Artistic Director will assign a Suzuki-trained teacher to a new student based on studio space available. Parents may request a particular teacher, but may be delaying the child's opportunity to start if that teacher's studio is full.

ii. Observation: Since children learn well from their peers, observing peers in individual lessons and group class is highly beneficial and strongly encouraged. Discuss appropriate times with your teacher when you and your child can observe. You can expect other students to attend your lesson as well.

iii. Individual Teacher Fees: STEP teachers are independent professionals and as such set their own rates and schedules. Fees vary according to the teacher. STEP Teachers Fees are paid in advance – usually with post-dated cheques, at the beginning of the year. Fees for group classes are not included in the individual teacher fee; Group Class fees will be paid directly to STEP.

iv. Questions or Concerns: Generally, any questions or concerns with respect to your child's private lesson should be addressed with your private teacher directly. This is particularly true if you are concerned about the lesson dynamics or your child's behaviour towards the teacher. The Suzuki triangle of Parent-Teacher-Student depends on open communication between all three sides. Your teacher will want to know about any questions or concerns as soon as possible.

If you feel that you are unable to raise a specific concern with your teacher directly, please contact our Artistic Director. Confidentiality will be respected. If you still feel after discussing the issue the Artistic Director that your issue has not yet been satisfactorily resolved, please contact Sabina Wilhelm, Vice-Chair at: step.vicechair@gmail.com.



Private Lesson Policies

i. Absences: If a STEP teacher cancels a lesson, it will be made up or refunded. Because STEP teachers all have fixed schedules and limited time, lessons missed by the student for any reason cannot be made up. STEP teachers do not object to students swapping lesson times: some teachers even provide their students with a master studio schedule to facilitate this. This allows students to call and switch lesson times with another student of the same lesson length if a conflict arises. **Please inform your teacher of any changes you have arranged.**

If your child is sick enough to stay home from school, and has a communicable illness, please refrain from attending the lesson. Sick students do not learn well, and as playing the violin/cello is a demanding physical activity; it may prolong their illness. They may also cause the teacher or other students to contract the illness which, in turn, may result in more missed lessons.

ii. Changing Teachers: Occasionally, circumstances demand a change of teacher. Please discuss this first with your studio teacher, and then contact the Artistic Director. He/she will help find a suitable replacement. One month's notice to the STEP teacher is required before changing teachers – if that notice is not given, then payment for one month's lessons will be expected.

iii. NSF Cheques: STEP requests that you reimburse the studio teacher for the full amount of the cheque as well any additional administrative fees incurred by the teacher.

iv. Outstanding Fees: Families must pay all outstanding fees for lessons given by a STEP teacher. If fees are not paid in full by the end of August, the student/parent cannot expect to enroll in the program in September with any STEP teacher.

v. Termination of Lessons

By the teacher

Students learn best when the Suzuki philosophy is maintained in both the lesson and home environments (regular practice with the Suzuki parent; regular listening; attendance at group classes). If the STEP teacher feels, after due discussion and instruction that Suzuki's method and philosophy are not being followed then they reserve the right to recommend the family try another method, and discontinue lessons.

By the student

One month's notice, or payment in lieu of notice, is required.