

Commitment & Expectations

My Commitment to Your Students

As instructor, and therefore another adult leader in each of my students' lives, I promise to be patient, encouraging and honest as they learn. I do not provide lip-service to students or move forward prematurely. But, rather, I challenge them according to their individual strengths/weaknesses & celebrate progress using their personal & unique starting point as the yard stick. This looks different for every student. However, the main goal- **Progress**- remains the same!

In any learning environment, one must be willing to teach in an honest & practical way, and one must be willing to listen & put into practice what has been taught. And in this case, a 3rd party (the parent or guardian) must be willing to help reinforce this concept with a young person at home.

It can be detrimental to a student's future relationship with music training if this commitment is not taken seriously. A student can easily participate in music lessons along with many other activities, as long as he/she works along side a parent or guardian who can help him/her figure out & maintain a consistent & realistic practice schedule.

As a parent or guardian, you want to see your student having FUN! At the same time, you are investing your time, energy & salary, so you also want to see PROGRESS. In order for 'Fun' and 'Progress' to live happily ever after, everyone must be part of the team. So, if, at any time, I feel like the parent or the student is not contributing to the overall goal, I reserve the right to discontinue lessons (according to the terms outlined on page 6.)

In an effort to provide a quantitative way to measure progress, I provide the following short-term and long-term goals for all students. These general goals, if followed, allow me to make more personalized recommendations & assessments as I get to know each student.

***Short-term Goals:** 1.) Attend weekly lesson. 2.) Follow-through with the practice goals that are outlined by Sarah Carroll when lessons begin. 3.) Complete all written work the week that it is assigned.

***Long-term Goals:** 1.) Memorize 1-2 songs approx. every 2-3 weeks. 2) Memorize 1-2 scales and corresponding chords each semester 3.) Participate in the student recital at the end of the semester.

*Ultimately depends on student's age, level of study & major instrument (voice or piano)

Commitment & Expectations (cont)

Student Commitment Responsibilities

Students are expected to follow the practice guidelines that I outline for him/her. Because every student is different, these guidelines will look different for each student.

Nevertheless, a good rule of thumb is that students should practice a little bit every day. The bulk of learning how to sing and/or play the piano is a combination of quick brain signals and muscle memory.

In piano, for ie, the brain sees a note on the page, determines what it is and then tells the fingers what piano key to play; the finger then presses that key so that it is played at the right time & with the right amount of pressure.

This is the basic process of playing the piano. The above scenario starts happening very slowly when a student begins, but eventually accelerates as the student learns the language of music and teaches his/her muscles how to perform. If the muscles are not going through the correct motions on a regular basis, that process never accelerates. As a result, the student does not progress as he/she should, becomes bored with the same songs, over and over again, and loses interest.

For vocal students, much of the process is the same. However, rather than just the fingers responding to brain signals, a singer's entire body must respond in order to produce the correct note, with an adequate amount of breath connection to hold it for a sufficient amount of time, depth & volume, without doing damage to their instrument. In addition to following the practice guidelines, students must also commit to practicing correctly, based on what was taught to them in their lesson.

Practice doesn't make perfect. Perfect practice makes perfect.

Commitment & Expectations (cont.)

Parent/Guardian Responsibility

As you can see, choosing to participate in private music lessons is a big responsibility. There are many elements that are a lot like school. Although, I try to assign appropriate amounts of homework (written and non-written) based on the student's age, grade level, years of experience, etc, there are still times when some good-ole' hand-holding is necessary.

- Guardians should encourage attendance to all lessons.
- Guardians should provide a location that allows for uninterrupted practice (but not so far away that you can't peak in, when necessary, to make sure that the student is staying on task)

For Piano Students- Guardians should provide the best piano they can, keeping it in tune and without broken parts. If a beginning student is using a keyboard, please talk to me first to find out what specifications to look for before making a purchase. Not all keyboards are learning keyboards.

For Vocal Students- Guardians should provide some sort of music player that can be heard without the use of earphones. I provide practice CDs and/or MP3's on a regular basis. A mirror (in the practice room) and a recording device are encouraged. These both help the student to be aware how they really sound and what they actually look like when they sing.

As guardians, you also hold the financial burden of paying for the lessons and any music that must be purchased. (Due to copyright laws, making copies is prohibited.) If at any time, money becomes the primary reason why a student must discontinue his/her lessons, please let me know so that we can talk about your individual situation (see Page 6, Discontinuing Lessons).

Finally, I ask parents/guardians to support my communication efforts by:

- 1.) Reading & taking note of the info in the monthly group e-mails that are sent
- 2.) Responding to individual e-mails re: their student(s).
- 3.) Supporting the student highlights on social media by liking & commenting with encouraging words (& even sharing if you feel lead)
- 4.) Using the Carroll Music Studio website as a resource for important dates, payment amounts, etc.

I encourage students and parents to text me when necessary, but please make sure you have used all of your resources (mentioned above) before you do.

(*Please keep texts/calls between the hours of 9am-9pm. If you need to communicate with me earlier than 9am or later than 9pm, please send me an e-mail.)