



Student Handbook

musiccenternw.org • 206-526-8443 • 901 N 96th Street, Seattle

Music Center of the Northwest is a non-profit community music school located in North Seattle. We believe in the transformative power of music in the lives of people and our community. With a commitment to music education and live performance, Music Center provides access to exceptional musical experiences for people of all ages and abilities, regardless of means.

Your decision to join us creates a partnership that we take seriously, and our faculty and staff stand ready to help you attain your musical and personal goals. We are committed to a structured and positive learning environment for people of all ages and ability levels. Our programs are designed to instill a lifelong joy of music-making. Whatever your musical aspirations, we are here to be your advocate along the way.

Music Center welcomes everyone and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin, religion, marital status, political belief, sexual orientation, and disability in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship programs, and other school-administered programs. We believe that the true power of music lies in its ability to connect people through a common language, crossing generational, social, and ethnic barriers.

In our experience, music is most fulfilling when enjoyed in community. To get the most from your Music Center experience, we recommend that you interact with others who are part of our musical family. Music Center hosts many public concerts and student recitals, and there are many ensembles and group class opportunities.

Finally, please review and understand the information contained in this handbook. When you or your child register as a student, you are agreeing to abide by the policies of Music Center of the Northwest. The purpose of this handbook is to reflect the prevailing policies and procedures of Music Center of the Northwest that, along with the bylaws, govern the conduct of all Music Center activities. Please do not hesitate to reach out to staff member with any questions or concerns. We are excited and honored to be a part of your musical journey.

Administration & Contacts

Chas Arnold
Executive Director
chasarnold@musiccenternw.org

Janice Gockel
Director Emeritus & Music Together Director
janicegoekel@musiccenternw.org

Monica Allen
Music Together Director
monicaallen@musiccenternw.org

Kate Schnieder
Music Therapy Coordinator
kateschnieder@musiccenternw.org

Nicole Reimer
Office Manager
nicolereimer@musiccenternw.org

Seanna Sweeney
Student Services Coordinator
seannasweeney@musiccenternw.org

Mariah Fraser
Social Media & Marketing Coordinator
mariahfraser@musiccenternw.org

Registration & Billing
studentservices@musiccenternw.org

General Inquires
office@musiccenternw.org

Founded in 1989, Music Center of the Northwest is a member of the National Guild for Community Arts Education, the Suzuki Association of America, an Associate Member of the Washington Education Association and a non-profit 501(c)3 organization. Donations are tax-deductible to the extent provided by the law.

General Policies

Animals - With the exception of service animals, no animals are allowed inside the building without permission from the Music Center office.

Conduct - Students are expected to observe standards that reflect personal accountability and responsibility for the common good; demonstrate regard for the safety and security of others; maintain the atmosphere needed for learning; show respect for individuals and property; and value personal integrity.

Discounts & Credits - All discounts and credits must be used during the current academic year and are non-transferable. Discounts include: multi-student and multi-instrument private lesson discount, multi-class adult student discount, "refer a friend" private lesson credit. Please visit musiccenternw.org to learn about additional program discounts.

Inclement Weather & Acts of God - We are committed to remaining open whenever possible, but the safety of our students and staff is our foremost concern. Music Center of the Northwest will typically follow the emergency weather closure procedures of Seattle Public Schools. In the event that the school is closed due to inclement weather or acts of god, a message will be posted on the website at musiccenternw.org and on our voicemail at (206) 526-8443.

All individual lessons may be moved to virtual. Scheduling changes are allowed and should be made directly between the teacher and student. Group classes and ensembles are assumed to be cancelled and students should look for communication from their instructor.

In the event individual lessons or group class/ensembles are cancelled due inclement weather, rescheduling may occur but is not guaranteed. Refunds are not provided.

Personal Liability - By agreeing to participate at Music Center all participants hereby release, indemnify and hold harmless Music Center and it's employees with respect to any injury, disability or damage to personal or property to the fullest extent permitted by law. Music Center does not assume liability for personal property, including musical instruments used in lessons, classes, ensembles, workshops or other school sponsored activities.

Photographs & Recordings - Music Center of the Northwest uses photographs and recordings of school sponsored functions involving students in its publications, brochures, and website. If you prefer not to be included, please notify the office with a written notice. Verbal notices are not accepted.

Health & Safety - The health and safety of our participants, faculty and staff are of the utmost importance. Please refer to Music Center's Health Safety Plan for up to date information on Music Center's Health Policies. Music Center will follow the CDC's guidelines. Students or participants who are feeling sick, should request a virtual lesson with their instructor and/or with the Music Center Office. Requests should be made to the instructor and the office by noon the day of the lesson, or three (3) hours prior to lessons outside of after school hours and on weekends. Music Center faculty and staff reserve the right to deny entry or end lessons early to those whom they suspect are ill, with no refund provided.

Tuition Assistance

Fees owed to Music Center of the Northwest may be reduced by participation in our Tuition Assistance program. To apply, complete and return a Tuition Assistance form. Our desire is to make musical study and participation available to all who sincerely want to pursue it, regardless of their financial status. Students who receive tuition assistance must take their involvement seriously, maintain regular attendance, and make satisfactory progress (based on teacher evaluation). Tuition Assistance awards are for either one class/ensemble or for 30-minute private lessons. Assistance will be suspended if four (4) or more private lessons or group classes/ensemble sessions are missed due to student absence in a given school year.

Private Lesson Policies

Tuition - Tuition is for *enrollment*, not just attendance at lessons. When you register for lessons at Music Center of the Northwest, the lesson time agreed upon by teacher and student/parent is a mutual commitment. It is a contract stating that you have reserved your teacher's time at that specific time period each week. Students gain the highest benefits from their lessons when they attend each lesson. The academic year runs from September through June and includes a total of 37 lessons. Payment plan options are available. Tuition for lessons is prorated for those who start mid-year. The summer months (July & August) offer more flexibility. Students may sign up for a predetermined number of lessons at the regular lesson rate. An annual non-refundable registration fee of \$75 is charged for students (per family) participating in private lessons.

Introductory Lessons - Prospective students looking to begin private lessons are encouraged to register for an introductory lesson. This 30 minute trial lesson allows students to meet their potential instructor and experience private lessons before making any commitments. Introductory lessons are offered at a reduced rate and must be paid for in advance. Introductory lessons must be cancelled with 48-hours advance notice to the office in order to receive a refund or reschedule (when available). Your introductory lesson time with your instructor will be held for 1 week after your lesson, after which it will become available to all students.

Attendance and Absences & Digital Lessons - No credits or refunds will be given for student absences. Students are charged for all lessons they schedule with the teacher, including those missed due to student absence (vacation, field trips, school music obligations, sports, illness, etc.). Teachers are NOT required nor obligated to reschedule lessons due to student absence. If you must miss a lesson (especially for illness) you should stay in contact with your teacher for additional assignments or practice ideas. Any lesson missed due to teacher absence will be made up. Scheduled make-up lessons must be cancelled with 48-hours advance notice to the office and your instructor to receive a reschedule.

Federal holidays falling within the academic year will be observed on the actual holidays and will be listed as 'Holiday Schedule' days on the lesson calendar. Lessons that fall on 'Holiday Schedule' days will automatically be marked as a lesson credit. Lesson credits may be used on the holiday or used at a later date, including summer term. Teachers have the option of offering regular lessons on the holiday or moving the lesson to a later date. 'Holiday Schedule' lessons will be scheduled directly between the teacher and student at a mutually agreeable time. If students are unable to schedule the lesson by August 31, the student will be refunded the lesson credit.

Students who wish to alter a scheduled in-person lesson to a digital lesson must provide advanced notice to their instructor and the office. Students with weekday afternoon lessons must request a digital lesson by 12:00 pm. Students with morning or weekend lessons must provide 3-hour advance notice to request a digital lesson. Failure to provide advance notice may result in a student absence. Teachers are not required to accommodate a change in lesson-type if there is not proper notification.

Discontinuing Lessons & Leave of Absence - If it is necessary for a student to stop taking lessons, students/parents should complete a Withdrawal Form and return it to the office. The Withdrawal Form requires both the student and teacher's signature. Verbal notification of intent to withdraw is not sufficient. At the time the office receives the Withdrawal Form, the student is responsible to pay for four (4) more lessons (which they may attend if they choose). No refunds will be given for students withdrawing from lessons during the last four weeks of the year. If a Tuition Assistance recipient withdraws from lessons, the amount paid will be applied to determine the final balance.

Students may take a leave of absence from lessons due to extended illness or bereavement lasting 4 or more consecutive weeks. Leave must be approved by the office through the Leave of Absence Form which requires both the student and teacher's signature. A leave of absence requires two (2) weeks notice, prior to leave, in which tuition charges still apply. Once a leave of absence begins, tuition charges will be suspended, however, your instructor may not be able to "hold" your lesson time. Every effort will be made to resume lessons at a mutually agreeable time upon your return.

Transferring Instructors - Should a student at Music Center feel the need to continue their private lessons with a different instructor at Music Center, they are encouraged to first speak with their current teacher to provide feedback about their experiences. Students that still wish to proceed with a teacher transfer will be referred to the Executive Director for assistance.

Single Lessons - Students may schedule and pay for single lessons with the permission of the teacher and Music Center. Faculty members are not required to accept students wishing to pay per lesson. Single Lessons are not eligible for any tuition discounts and are subject to higher tuition rates. In the event that a student must cancel a Single Lesson, a full refund will be issued if notice was given with at least 48 hours notice. If less than 48 hours notice was given, the student will be charged for the lesson in order to compensate the instructor.

Group Class & Ensemble Policies

Refunds & Cancellations - Classes, ensembles, and workshops take place throughout the year and rates vary depending on their length and duration. Fees are due in full at the time of registration. Students who withdraw from a class or ensemble, one week or more before the first class, will receive a full refund, before the second class, 50%. No refunds will be given after the second meeting. Students withdrawing from workshops by the registration deadline will receive a full refund. No refunds will be made after the registration deadline, and all refunds are subject to a \$15 drop fee. If a class is canceled at the beginning of the term by Music Center, students will receive a full refund.

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