



Suzuki Flyer



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Welcome Back!

Welcome to all new and returning students! I hope that everyone has enjoyed their summer. Our first lesson of the school year is a kick off Group Lesson on September 10, 2010. All students should attend this first group lesson at 4:30pm – 6:30pm. We will meet at Hidenwood Presbyterian Church in the Music Room. This kick off group lesson will be an informal group/recital, allowing all students an opportunity to showcase what they have worked on this summer, even if it is simply clapping a twinkle rhythm. Students who have not taken lessons this summer are also encouraged to perform. The students will also review pieces as a group.

Future group lessons will following the Group Lesson times indicated in the chart below. Students should check the chart for their assigned groups and times.

Enclosed in this mailing, please find the following:

1. **A registration form.** Use to update your information such as address or phone numbers if it has changed. If your information has not changed, simply write “SAME” on the form.
2. **September invoice** which is due at your first lesson in September. The annual registration fee is also included in each invoice. The \$35 fee is applied to your membership with the Suzuki Association of Americas.
3. **Two 2010-2011 Suzuki Violin Calendars.** Outlines all lessons, group lessons, recitals, workshops, and other activities. Each family will receive a magnet calendar to place on your refrigerator, and a paper calendar.
4. **Lesson day & times are listed on each invoice.**

Please be sure to keep your Suzuki calendars and follow the dates for lessons/groups/recital etc. It is no fun to be in the wrong place when the calendar spells out where you should go on specific dates. Check the schedule with your own personal schedules so that conflicts may be brought to my attention. If there are any conflicts where you already know you will miss a lesson or recital, please let me know in advance.

Studio Activities

Lessons:

Attendance and participation are very important factors to the progress of students. Students are expected to be present at their scheduled lessons except in cases such as illness or other extenuating circumstances. Lessons are scheduled back to back,

so **please be prompt.** For the consideration of other students, late students may receive a shorter lesson in order to keep other students on their schedule. Refunds are only give for excused absences and will not be given for lessons casually missed.

If I need to cancel a lesson because of a conflict with a performance, I will make every attempt to offer a make up date. The make up lesson will not be required. If a student can not make up the lesson, or I can not offer a make up lesson, a refund in the form of a credit towards the next month’s tuition will be given.

There is a **lesson conflict on September 21, 2010.** Our family quartet is performing at James Madison University on September 21st, therefore, we will be out of town. Make up lessons for September 21st will be on October 5, 2010. Students who can not attend a make up on that date should let me know.

Group Lessons:

Group Lessons are both fun and motivating, and help reinforce individual lessons. They also provide valuable opportunities for children to observe and learn from other children at different skill levels. Group lessons allow students to work alongside others who share common repertory, musical skills, and aspirations. Social interaction and the opportunity to play as a group are important features that make private lessons productive and satisfying.

Because Group Lessons & Recitals provide opportunities for students to perform for others on a regular basis, and enable students to develop musical fluency, students learn to feel at ease when playing for others. Group Lessons are a valuable part of the learning process, therefore, attendance is required in the same way that attendance is required in the private lesson. The fee for group lessons is included in your tuition.

Students are assigned into 4 groups. Please check the assigned groups below.

Group A – 3:45pm – 4:30pm (Pretwinkle – Early Book 1)

Elias Anderson	Sophie Elder
Tai Behel	Johanna Saxton
Maggie Sykes	Debra Saxton
Abigail Wilson	

Group B – 4:30pm – 5:30pm (Mid Book 1 – Early Book 2)

Tyler Pope	Zipporah Saxton
Allison Herber	Kaila Paullus
James Miller	

Group C – 5:30pm – 6:30pm (Mid Book 2 – Book 3)

Aresman MacLaren	David Saxton
David Whitlock	Benjamin McGee
Dana Carroll	Mila Hill

Group D – 6:30pm – 7:30pm (Book 4 and beyond)

Gaby Sandoval	Marshall Padilla
Lauren McGee	Promise Paulden
Emily Walkenhorst	Thomas Rotering
Justine Elliott	Brendon Elliott
Sterling Elliott	Nathan Walkenhorst

Students who are beginning the next book are free to stay for a portion of the next group lesson if they would like. Parents who play are free to join in the group that they are the most comfortable.

During January - March group lessons will primarily be for students preparing for the Virginia Symphony Young Artist Showcase performance. Parents will be notified at those times, and only the students participating in the performance need to attend. Non participating students will receive a credit on their invoice.

Recitals:

Recitals also are an important part of the learning process, as they give the student further incentive to study by making him/her set and attain a goal within a certain timeframe. They also help students gain confidence performing as soloists. All students are expected to participate in the recitals. Students who participate in the recitals make more progress than those who do not because they are always setting musical goals for performance. Recital fees are added to the tuition. If a student has an extenuating circumstance that prevents them from participating in the recital, a credit will be issued to their invoice for that month.

Studio Young Artist Showcase Performance

For several years, we have been very fortunate to have such talented students enabling our studio to perform for Virginia Symphony's Young Artist Showcase. In the past, these pre-concert VA Symphony performances have been on our side of the water, at the Ferguson Center for the Arts.

Each year, I have carefully coordinated our performances in the Spring on a date that allows students to attend the main VA Symphony concert, featuring a violin soloist. However, this year there are no violin soloists performing at the Ferguson Center of the Arts in the Spring. Therefore, I have tentatively arranged for our students to perform for a VA Symphony Young Artist Showcase in Virginia Beach at the Regeant Theatre on March 18, 2011.

This will be our first year performing at the Regeant Theatre, and should be very exciting! However, since the performance is in VA Beach this year, I am a bit concerned about having enough students willing to drive to the "other side". So I will be taking a

poll of the students early in the year to determine if we will have enough students who are able to participate. Please begin considering now if your child will be able to participate. If we don't have enough students, the event will be cancelled. Participating students will receive comp tickets to the VA Symphony Concert for a small fee (I think it was \$3 last year).

It is important that all participating students attend the rehearsals outlined in the rehearsal schedule for this event. There will be 6 – 8 rehearsals on Fridays at Hidenwood Presbyterian Church. A copy of the rehearsal schedule will be provided to students. Rehearsals are tentatively scheduled to begin in January 2011. Late book 1 students and up are encouraged, but not required to participate in this event. Ensemble skills are an important part of studying an instrument. Students also get a chance to practice their music-reading skills. There is no fee for this event.

Other Suzuki Activities

Suzuki Teachers Association of Hampton Roads (STAHR):

STAHR is an organization formed by local Suzuki teachers from Hampton Roads. They organize numerous enriching Suzuki events for students and parents, which are held in Norfolk and Newport News. STAHR membership is recommended but not required. Families, who are certain that they will participate in STAHR events, should consider becoming a member. Membership is \$20/year per family.

Benefits are; Free participation in STAHR performances, Newsletters and periodic reminders of upcoming events, Updated information about Virginia Symphony events for youth, Occasional discounted tickets, and a Family discount for the annual Suzuki Violin Workshop. Non-members are asked to pay a \$10 fee per event. See the enclosed [STAHR newsletter](#) for more details.

The first STAHR event is a Young Artist Showcase on September 11, 2010 at Chrysler Hall in Norfolk. Students who are interested should let me know so that I can be sure they get the required repertoire.

Important Tips



Practice Tips:

Practice everyday! Regularity is vital. Dr. Suzuki said that we should practice on all the days that we eat! Here are some good tips:

- ✓ Don't waste your practice time by allowing your child to argue with you!
- ✓ Set a regular time each day for practice so that your child will expect it. It will be much easier for you later on.

- ✓ Reward your child for practice with incentives such as stickers, prizes, etc.
- ✓ Mistakes are ok. We learn from mistakes, it is not the end of the world.

Practice should include; scales, review, sight-reading or etudes, and work on current piece.

How Much Should You Practice?

I've printed the following information in many newsletters in the past. But I don't feel it can be stated enough, so I am printing it again!

If you are going to study the violin, then you should study to be the best you can be. Not everyone has to be at prodigy level, but at least we should strive to be proficient. We encourage our children to practice so that they may develop the proficiency needed to enable them to enjoy playing. This is a gift that our children will have for a lifetime.

So you ask, how much should they practice? Here is the minimum in my opinion:

Book Level	Amount of Practice
Pretwinklers	15 minutes to 30 minutes
Book 1 – Book 3	30 minutes to 45 minutes
Book 4 – Book 5	1 hour to 1 1/2 hour
Book 6 – Book 10	2 hours to 3 hours

The range shows that as one gets to the high end of the category, they should be practicing the higher time e.g. Book 1 – 30 minutes, but by the time you arrive to Book 3 it should be at least 45 minutes.

Here is another handy chart that many of you have seen before. This one compares the rate of progress to the amount of practice time.

Amount of Practice	Rate of Progress
20 mins, 2 or 3x per week	4 years per book
20 mins daily	2 years per book
1/2 - 1 hr daily	1 book per year
2 hrs daily	2 books per year

This only applies to efficient practice, which means practice time that is used wisely and not wasted!

Mastery:

I can't say enough that we should be more concerned with **HOW** our children play vs **WHAT** they play. When I see parents so caught up in what piece their child is on, I feel sad that they are

missing out on helping them learn to take the small steps necessary to carefully master each piece. It is not fair to subject an audience to a piece that is riddled with mistakes. Help your child learn to practice carefully and slowly to get it perfect. Don't be so concerned with how long it takes them to master a skill. If given ample time, the skill will come. Move in small steps so the student can master the material with a total sense of success. Students should continue working on a piece until it becomes effortless to them.

Memorization:

Once music is memorized, students can focus better on the specific skills necessary for playing the piece. If memory is a problem, be sure that the student is consistently practicing using **repetition** of trouble spots. It is also vital that students are **listening** to their pieces daily. Rate of progress is positively correlated to the amount of listening done. Learning takes much longer if students aren't listening to their piece.

Review:

Follow the Suzuki repertory sequence so that each piece becomes a building block for the careful development of technique. Constant repetition of the old pieces in a student's repertoire is the secret of the ability to perform with ease. Review raises one's ability by making pieces easier to play. After a student has learned a piece, they should practice by comparing themselves to the CD. Students should also be playing their review pieces with Smart Music, as close to the original tempo as possible. This reinforces musical rhythm, tone, and musicianship. Simply learning the notes of a piece does not mean that a student is finished with the piece, this is just the beginning of the mastery process. Many parents think that "going to the next piece" means becoming more advanced. However, this is far from the truth. Fine ability is created with the older pieces; this is how the ability to play well will grow.

Workshop Scholarship Fund

The annual Suzuki Workshop will be held on March 4th and 5th 2011 at Hidenwood Presbyterian Church in Newport News again this year.

Students enjoy the freshness of being around different students and teachers for 2 days during the workshop. Oftentimes, hearing advice from another teacher is all it takes for a concept to finally "stick". Students also enjoy making new friends and watching others perform at their level and beyond.

Last year many parents donated used instruments to our Workshop Scholarship Fund. Parents rented the instruments for \$40/year, and all the money was put into the scholarship fund. It was a huge success, and we were able to send two deserving students to the workshop with the scholarship funds. The STAHR organization even decided to adopt their own Suzuki Workshop Scholarship program as a result of hearing about our success.

Students who are currently using these donated instruments should pay the \$40 fee in January. The fee will be added to their monthly tuition. If anyone is interested in donating an instrument, or renting an instrument, let me know. Parents can also donate money by adding a little extra to their tuition or by rounding up their tuition. Just indicate on the check the amount earmarked for the scholarship fund.

calls are not excused and do not qualify for a refund. Fees for these lessons are therefore forfeited.

Get to know our New Students!

Last Minute Reminders

Attendance:

Most families understand the constant juggling of activities that comes with the start of school. My family is no exception and I stay quite busy on the days that I do not teach. Therefore, please be advised that during the school year, there is usually very little flexibility in my schedule, which is why I do not offer make-up lessons for student cancellations.

Due to the nature of private music instruction, consistency in both lesson attendance and practice are essential to the students' success. The student's weekly lesson time slot is permanently reserved for the student. Moving the lesson for irregular periods of time due to schedule conflicts is not available. There are no short-term students to fill those times. Therefore, tuition is paid to reserve the time slot for a lesson whether a student is present or not. If a student needs to change his lesson time, it is the responsibility of the parent to attempt to swap the lesson by contacting another parent of a student.

Payments:

Tuition reserves a lesson time specifically for the student and is **not refundable**. Tuition is divided into **10** equal payments due at the first lesson of the month from September 2010-June 2011. Tuition is based on an annual number of lessons, so the monthly tuition fee remains the same if there are 2, 3, or 4 lessons in the month. Tuition is **always** due at the first lesson of the month. Monthly invoices are sent out as a reminder and also to help parents keep track of what is owed. However, payment is due at the first lesson regardless of if the invoice has been received or not. Please do not wait to be asked to pay the tuition. My job as your teacher is an important source of income to my family just as any other type of employment is to others.

Refunds:

Refunds are only given for excused absences. Excused absences are the following: Sudden illnesses, family emergencies, or other extenuating circumstances. In the event of a planned absence (vacation, school/extra-curricular activity conflict, etc.), 7 days' notice must be given for the absence to be excused. Except for in the case of sudden emergencies, please make every effort to notifies me of a cancellation more than 24 hours in advance of the lesson. The best way to contact me is by email, but parents may also contact me by phone. The appropriate phone numbers and email are listed on the Studio Calendar.

In the case of an excused absence, a credit for the missed lesson will be granted on the next tuition payment. No-shows and no-



Sophie Elder

Age: 3.5 years old

Length of Study: 2 months

Instrument: Violin

Current Book: Pretwinkle



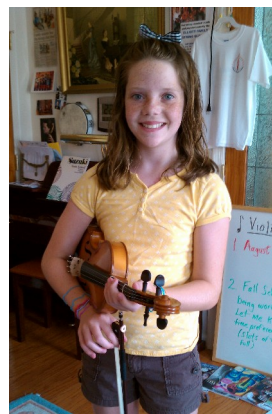
Elias Anderson

Age: 6 years old

Length of Study: 2 months

Instrument: Viola

Current Book: Pretwinkle



Allison Herber

Age: 12 years old

Length of Study: 1 year

Instrument: Violin

Current Book: Book 1



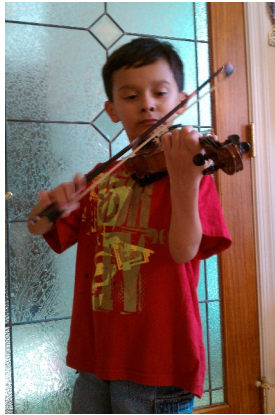
Aresman MacLaren

Age: 15 years old
Length of Study: 7.5 years
Instrument: Violin
Current Book: Book 3



Abigail Wilson

Age: 7
Length of Study: 1 year
Instrument: Violin
Current Book: Pretwinkle



Tai Behel

Age: 6 years old
Length of Study: 11 months
Instrument: Violin
Current Book: Book 1



Maggie Sykes

Age: 4.5 years old
Length of Study: 2 months
Instrument: Violin
Current Book: Pretwinkle



Johanna Saxton

Age: 3 years old
Length of Study: Starts September
Instrument: Viola
Current Book: Pretwinkle



Gina Reyes

Age: Adult
Length of Study: 3 years
Instrument: Violin
Current Book: Book 1



Kaila Paullus

Age: 11 years old.
Length of Study: 1.5 years
Instrument: Violin
Current Book: Book 1

(sorry, no photo)

Local Orchestras

The Peninsula Youth Orchestra and Sinfonia will be having an open rehearsal on September 13th and 20th at 6:00pm for students interested in learning more about the orchestras. Auditions for the orchestra will be held the following week on September 27th. Rehearsals are held at Crittenden Middle School in Newport News. For more information visit their website at www.pyo-nn.org. Other popular orchestras in the area are, The Bay Youth Orchestras - www.bayyouth.org in Norfolk Virginia, and the Williamsburg Youth Orchestra - www.wyomusic.org in Williamsburg Virginia.