

DRACUT PUBLIC SCHOOLS—PRIVATE LESSON PROGRAM

To: All Music Parents
From: Amy Bailey, Supervisor of Fine and Performing Arts
September 9, 2011
Re: Private Lesson Program

Dear Parents,

As I begin in this district, I have been continually impressed by the achievements and passion of student musicians, music staff, and families who support this strong tradition in Dracut Public Schools. I have been told that we have had many successful students who have gone on to play at Harvard, Tufts, Syracuse, Penn State, UMass, Holy Cross, Boston College, etc. They have played at NCAA finals with front row seats! They have played in nationally televised bowl games. We have had singers who have performed in college choirs and have toured throughout the U.S., Europe and Asia. We have had band, orchestra and chorus students who have received significant music scholarships. They have had these experiences because of their playing or singing ability, not simply because they were in the school band, orchestra or chorus. Unfortunately, we have had disappointed students who were not prepared well enough for these exciting opportunities.

The individual efforts of the student are one piece of the puzzle in developing strong musicianship. In band, orchestra, and chorus rehearsal, students develop the skills of ensemble playing. However, the individual developmental needs of the students still need to be addressed. Significant progress can be made through private instrumental or vocal study. Many students, who do not take private instruction, find themselves with a significant disadvantage when it comes time for state and district festival auditions.

I do not want anyone to miss out on the opportunities that the future may present. I also want each and every student to get the best musical experience possible. I strongly urge all parents to seek private instruction for your child.

A few recommendations are:

- 1) Seek out a teacher who specializes in your child's instrument.
(Unfortunately, some music stores have teachers that don't play the instrument, but say they are comfortable teaching it!)
- 2) The teacher should have a music degree, or should be close to earning it. (You could end up paying the same amount of money to someone who was a so-so player in high school, or to someone who has a performance degree from an established conservatory or university)
- 3) The teacher should not only know how your child should play, but also what your child should play. He/She should have an excellent knowledge of repertoire and methodology.
- 4) The most important aspect of private instruction is the chemistry between teacher and student. They must respect and enjoy each other's efforts.

You are the consumer. Don't be afraid to ask these questions and any others that you may have for prospective teachers.

Once again, we will offer private instruction to any student who wishes to take them after school in the high school music room. If you have any questions regarding private instruction or the after school lesson program, please call me at (978) 957- 3330 ext 240. For string students, you may also contact Mrs. Mallory at rmallory@dracutpublicschools.net.

AFTERSCHOOL PRIVATE INSTRUMENT LESSON PROGRAM

- 1) Lessons will be \$22. Per half hour.
- 2) Professional teachers/ musicians will give lessons.
- 3) There will be a NO CANCELLATION policy. Students will pay even if they are absent from a lesson.
(Please see explanation below*)
- 4) Students will pay one month in advance.
- 5) If a teacher is ill or if school is cancelled, a make-up day will be established.
- 6) Lessons will be given at the high school music suite.

I UNDERSTAND AND AGREE TO THE CONDITIONS ABOVE.

(Signature of parent/ guardian)

Student's name _____

Address _____

Home phone _____

Cell phone _____

Email address _____

Instrument _____

NO CANCELLATION POLICY: Our teachers are professionals who depend on these lessons for their livelihood. When students cancel lessons, even with sufficient notice, these teachers are deprived of their source of income. Our prior, liberal cancellation policy invited abuse, and resulted in the loss of several fine teachers. We feel strongly that this **NO CANCELLATION POLICY** (currently in effect in most area schools) will respect the high caliber of our teachers, and ultimately provide more consistent progress for our students.

*Each student should obtain the name and number of other students taking lessons with a particular teacher. In this way, they can swap off when someone is sick, and therefore no one ends up paying for a lost lesson.

AFTERSCHOOL **VOICE** LESSON PROGRAM

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