



SEBASTRIAN  
SCHOOL  
OF MUSIC  
& FINE ARTS

Student Handbook  
and Policies

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# WELCOME

Dear Parents and Students,

Thank you for choosing me to play an integral role in your life as you either begin or continue your musical journey to becoming a great piano player. I am so excited to assist you in your musical appreciation and comprehension.

Up until the age of four years old I was unable to hear anything besides musical vibration. In my world music was the only "sound" that existed. By the time I turned five, I heard and spoke for the first time and music had already been permanently etched in my soul. I knew that it was my destiny the moment my fingers graced their first piano keys. I started playing by ear in the church by the time I was five years old which was the beginning of what I know now to be a successful music career. In college I majored in music with a concentration in piano (including classical piano) and have been blessed to be trained by and know some of the world's best musicians,

My students have made amazing progress in the field of music due to my extensive music program and teaching style. Many music teachers will put emphasis on the practical and technical skills of piano playing but my curriculum goes beyond just learning how to play but also provides the student with an understanding of music and music theory. A deeper knowledge of music allows for the growth of a true love for playing, making it possible for students to create their own works.

I instill in my students a love for practicing the craft without shame or embarrassment. Through each of our private lessons a greater confidence is built and students will quickly feel comfortable playing in front of others. Parents and students are often amazed at how much progress is made in

# WELCOME

such a short time. Through consistent practice it is possible to be the master pianist you have dreamed of becoming.

This handbook has been carefully designed to assist you in making the most out of your piano instruction. A great amount of effort has gone into the creation of this document. Please read it thoroughly and consider implementing the ideas contained within it. As usual, I'm always available to answer any additional questions or concerns that you may have.

Thank you,

*Sebastrian Williams*

**SebastrianWilliams@gmail.com**

**Tel: 281-964-8010**

If you want to get the most from your piano lessons:

**Don't practice until  
you get it right,  
practice until you  
can't get it wrong.**

**PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE.**

The more you practice, the better you will become.

Aim to practice for at least 30 minutes a day if  
possible.

**To play a wrong note  
is insignificant, to  
play without passion  
is inexcusable.**

**- Ludwig Van Beethoven**

## **BE CONSISTENT.**

You're going to play a wrong note sometimes. It is ok. What is important it that you don't give up when you do. Keep going! Even the greatest pianists make mistakes. The more consistent and determined you are, the more passion you put into your music, the less mistakes you will make.

**The slower you go,  
the faster you'll  
get there.**

- John Link

## **SLOW AND STEADY**

The piano was made to be mastered and in order to master it you must SLOW DOWN. It doesn't matter how well you know a piece, play a song slowly at least one time for every three or four times you play it fast. When learning a new piece it is very important to go at a slower pace. This helps you to not skip any notes and to keep the song neat and tidy.

**When you play,  
never mind who  
listens.**

**- Robert Schumann**

## **IT'S JUST YOU AND THE PIANO**

When you are playing piano, do not focus on anything else. Don't worry about who is around, what anyone says or what others think. Allow yourself to get lost in the music and be alone with the keys.

## PARENTS

Your involvement in the learning process of your young piano student directly impacts his or her success. You do not need to have a background in music to work along side the piano teacher to assure that each piano lesson is one that is transformational, positive and rewarding. A few suggestions are:

- Assist the student in coming up with a practice schedule. If your child is younger you may find it helpful to supervise practice sessions.
- Encourage the student to practice during their practice schedule and to keep a journal of their practice times.
- Show enthusiasm for your child's piano playing and accomplishments. Let them know they are doing a good job. Sit with them after lessons to review what they have learned.
- Once a month be your child's audience and have him or her play any pieces that they've learned. Expressing a genuine interest in your child's playing gives them extra motivation and confidence.
- Provide the student with a quiet, well lit, positive space where he or she can practice. Keep the piano well maintained and tuned to assure optimal playing and best sound.

## PUNCTUALITY & PREPARATION

Please arrive on time for your lessons. Punctuality assures that you get the most out of each lesson. **Students who are late may not go over their scheduled time nor will the time be made up. No refunds shall be given for the time lost.** Have all of your study materials (books, pens/pencils, practice journal) with you when attending a lesson.

# MISSED LESSONS

## MISSED LESSONS & CANCELLATIONS

If the instructor needs to delay, postpone, or cancel a lesson you will be notified at least 2 hours prior to the lesson, unless it is a dire emergency.

Try to give the instructor at least 2 hours notice if you will not be able to make a lesson. It is understandable that this is not always possible so please try to give as much advance notice as the situation allows. If a student does not show up for a lesson without contacting the instructor to cancel, there will be a \$15 no-show fee. **No makeup lesson is provided when a student does not contact the instructor.**

In the event that you have a contagious illness. please call the instructor to reschedule. It is unfair to the instructor and to the student to have to work under those circumstances.

Please use your best judgement when it comes to inclement weather. In the event of a storm, hurricane, or tornado watch lessons may be cancelled by the instructor for which a makeup lesson will be rescheduled.

Every effort should be made to make every lesson. There will be no credits or refunds given for missed lessons. In the event that a student cannot make a lesson, a make-up lesson shall be scheduled for a later date.

Should the instructor be unable to attend a lesson a make-up lesson shall be rescheduled for a mutually convenient time and date.

**To cancel a lesson with less than 24 hours in advance please call or text Sebastrian Williams as (281) 964-8010.** If you are able to provide further advance notice you may email your cancellation to:  
**SebastrianWilliams@gmail.com.**

# **FIFTH LESSONS**

## **FIFTH LESSON DAYS**

When any given month has 5 lesson days (ie. a student's lesson day is a Monday and there happen to be 5 Mondays in a particular month) there will be no extra charge for the fifth lesson. Instead the fifth lesson will be applied to Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Spring Break. The monthly tuition remains the same for November, December, and March/April.

## **SUMMER LESSONS**

Piano lessons can be demanding and challenging and it is because of this that it is important for students to continue lessons year round. Students are expected to enroll in lessons throughout the summer as long as they are available and in town. When a student does not enroll in summer lessons they are missing out on receiving lessons for one-fourth of the entire year.

## TUITION

**Effective August 2016 the tuition for piano lessons is \$100\* per month (4 lessons).**

Tuition changes for students who were on the roster prior to August 2016 will go into effect in September 2016.

\*Music books are included in tuition.

**Piano lessons are paid for by month only.** No payments for individual lessons are accepted. The tuition for each month is due by the date of the last lesson of the month before. For example, October's tuition is due by the date of your last lesson in September.

Starting in September parents/students shall receive a statement by the third lesson of each month via email. The statement shall include a list of all lessons for the coming month.

Payments are accepted online via PayPal, in person (Visa, Mastercard, Discover Card, American Express), cash, or check.

A \$15 late fee will be assessed for payments not made by the last lesson of the month. If there is a problem with payment please contact Sebastrian Williams. No late fee shall be charged if arrangements are made in advance.

There will be a \$25 fee charged for all returned checks. If two checks are returned within a one year period all future payments must be made via credit/debit card or cash.

# TUITION & FEES

## FEES

The following fees apply to all students of Sebastrian School of Music and Fine Arts:

\$100: Tuition per month (4 lessons)

\$15: Inconvenience fee for students who do not show up for a class with no prior notice.

\$15: Late fee for failure to make a payment by the last lesson of the month.

\$25: Returned check fee

## SAVE MONEY & EARN FREE LESSONS

I am thankful to everyone who has ever referred me. Sebastrian School of Music and Fine Arts thrives off of referrals and because we do I wanted to come up with a way to show my appreciation. **For every new student that you refer who enrolls in classes, I will credit you \$50.** That equals 2 free lessons!

Also...

**Pay for 5 months in advance and get the 6th month free!**



## **DISCIPLINARY PROCESS: WARNING, PROBATION & DISMISSAL**

When a student displays inappropriate behavior, lack of satisfactory progress, inconsistent practice habits or habitual lesson cancellations, the student and parents will receive a letter of warning. This letter outlines the source(s) of friction or dissatisfaction, proposes possible solutions, and offers the possibility of scheduling a parent-student-instructor conference.

A probation letter is e-mailed to the parent(s) when the student has received a warning and the situation has not improved after a reasonable amount of time (usually two to four weeks). The scheduling of a parent-student-instructor conference with the intent of finding solutions is mandatory in order to continue instruction.

If, after a student has been placed on probation for a period of at least one but no more than two months, the situation has not been resolved or improved, the parent(s) will receive a dismissal letter. Lessons will then be discontinued without refund.

## **TERMINATION**

Piano is my passion but it is also a business that I take seriously and depend on as part of my livelihood. Though students do not sign a contract binding them to a specific number of lessons, I do ask that you please give at least 2 months prior notice before termination of lessons. This may be done via email or verbally (in person).

# SEBASTRIAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC AND FINE ARTS

## STUDENT ENROLLMENT FORM



Name Of Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

Has this person taken lessons before? Y N

If yes, how long ago and for how long? \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

(Parent's) Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

(Parent's) Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

There are a limited number of available slots for private lessons. Lessons are given on a "first come" basis. Any student who is not applying themselves or taking lessons seriously may be asked to forfeit their slot. Lessons are offered on a weekly basis in 45 minute time slots at the rate of \$25 per lesson (\$100 per month).

### **Student's Responsibilities and Agreement:**

**Students are expected to bring all books and needed materials to every lesson.**

**Students are expected to keep a lof of their practice time and bring it to each lesson.**

**Students are encouraged to practice a miinimum of 30 minutes each day. Parents are urged to be involved in their child's practicing by listening to weekly song assignments and setting aside a scheduled time for their child to practice each day.**

**Students are expected to arrive on time. Please try to give at least 2 hours advance notice for cancellations. If a student arrives late for a lesson they may not be allowed to go over their scheduled time slot and no refund shall be made for time lost nor shall the time be made up.**

**Students who do not arrive for their scheduled lessons without prior notice will be charged a \$15 inconvenience fee.**

**Tuition is \$100 and is to be paid by the date of the last lesson of the month prior. A \$15 late fee shall be assessed for failure of on time payment unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor.**

**A \$25 fee shall be charged for all returned checks.**

**Any child who exhibits disciplinary problems, consistent lateness, absenteeism, or failure to work may be terminated from lessons.**

I have read the Student's Responsibilities and Agreement and agree to follow the guidelines outlined.

Parent's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_