



PRACTICE

- Regular practice is essential for student success. Students should practice 5 days a week or more. Parents should clearly state the expectation of regular practice with their student. Making practice a regular part of the daily routine, such as doing homework, works best. For best results, help students understand that quality practice is an expectation for successful learning. Many parents require practice before any screen time; this works well in many households. Parents should find a time that works best for their student and then stick to that time for each practice day.
- For extra busy students, it is best if the teacher, student, and parent sit down together to figure out a practice schedule that will work; sometimes this schedule will need to be re-worked at the beginning of each week.
- The most important time for students to practice is right after their lesson, to solidify what they have just learned. Research has shown that retention of new knowledge drops to 60% after just 24 hours.
- Parental support is an extremely important factor in musical training for children. For younger students, I strongly recommend sitting with your child during their practicing the first day or two after the lesson.
- Sincere praise is also encouraged for any age of student. Take interest in your student's learning by asking questions and requesting that your student play for you.
- For students not practicing using the Tonara app, the teacher will write assignments each week that will be placed in the student's binder. Parents of younger students, you are ultimately responsible to see that your student is practicing the correct pieces and technique assignments, as well as checking that your student has completed any written theory assignments. You know your child best. If you know you have a very responsible child, you may shift the responsibility to them, but for younger children (and older children who have not developed the habit of checking their assignment page) the parent must be the one checking assignments.

TONARA PRACTICE APP

- The teacher uses Tonara for about 50% of the students, instead of a written assignment page. The app allows the teacher to input specific practice assignments, technique assignments, theory assignments, and even videos of how to play a piece.
- Tonara is a fun practice tool for students. Tonara allows the student to track their practice time, earn points for practicing, communicate with the teacher between lessons about assignments, record their playing for teacher feedback, and take pictures of theory assignments for the teacher. Points can be redeemed for virtual stickers, frames, and vibes in the "reward store".
- Each student receives a username and password. For multiple students in the same household using Tonara, it is recommended to have a device for each student to log in to. Otherwise, when using one device, each student will need to log in and log out before the next sibling practices.
- Feedback from parents suggests that Tonara makes students more accountable for their practicing and assignments. I've found that Tonara is a helpful tool for the more competitive student because of the opportunity to earn practice points and move up the leaderboard as more points are earned. It can also be helpful for the student who has trouble focusing.

THE SWAP LIST

- The swap list is a way for your student to swap lessons with another student in the studio in the event your student has something come up that will make it impossible to come to their lesson. *You will be automatically added to the Swap List unless you tell me otherwise.* The swap list will be a shared Google Doc and will be kept updated. You will have access to the doc at any time during the year since it will be a shared doc. Once a swap has been made, please notify the teacher. ***The Swap List is not a guarantee that you will be able to reschedule your lesson. If you cannot find a swap, your child will simply miss the benefit of that lesson.***

VIRTUAL LESSON (WHEN A STUDENT IS SICK)

- When a student is sick, please do not bring them to the studio. Let me know as soon as possible so we can do a virtual lesson during their regular lesson time. Platforms that I prefer are FaceTime and Google Meet.

PERFORMANCE CLASSES

- Performance classes are offered twice in the Fall Semester and twice in the Spring Semester. A parent may sign up their student through the My Music Staff portal (access through my website). These are opportunities for your student to learn performance etiquette, practice performing in front of peers, and for building studio camaraderie. These classes are free to all existing students and may also be used to supplement missed lessons. Classes are 50 minutes long.

COMMUNICATION

- I will communicate with the studio as a whole through email. You may also opt in to the Remind app where I will also put announcements.
- Please note that my sound is turned off during teaching hours. I do not check voicemail or text messages while I'm teaching. If you have something urgent to communicate, please reach out early in the day or plan to attend your child's lesson and use part of their lesson time for communication.
- On a quarterly basis, I will do my best to reach out to parents and "check in" to review your student's progress and any concerns.
- Please do not wait to contact me if you see any signs of burnout or decreased interest in piano lessons from your student. There are little changes I can make that may re-energize them and keep them going for longer, if that is your desire.

MY MUSIC STAFF

- I use My Music Staff, a web-based application, to schedule lessons, send group email to parents, send lesson reminders, schedule studio closures, do billing and invoicing, and more.
- Benefits to you: You will be able to see scheduled lessons, the calendar, attendance history, invoices and payment history, a message history and more. You won't ever need to search for an email in your email inbox again! Just log in to My Music Staff and click on "Message History".
- Tuition is paid through Stripe (online payment) which is integrated into My Music Staff. You have the option of setting up autopay so that your payment is automatically withdrawn on the same date each month. The first of the month is automatically entered, but you can change the date you wish to have the withdrawal occur. If you do not wish to have autopay set up, you can simply click the "pay now" button on your invoice. Invoices are auto-emailed on the first of each month.
- Contact me for your username and to create a password.
- To reach My Music Staff, go to my website www.juliefollett.com and click on Parent Portal log-in.

INCENTIVE PROGRAM

- The studio implements an optional incentive program to help build well-rounded musicians and to make learning fun and motivating. Students that opt in will be required to complete specific assignments at home in addition to their regular practicing. Students can earn “Music Money” for their extra work and then can purchase items at the “store” (prize boxes) the last week of each month.

RECITALS

- There are many benefits of performing in recitals (Read more here: [Why Recitals are So Important](#)) Please communicate with me if you feel your student should be exempt from performing because of severe performance anxiety or other reasons. In addition to regular practice of their recital piece, the following are strongly recommended: practice performances and recordings. Students that may experience anxiety at a recital will benefit from having practice performances. These can be small gatherings of friends or family in your home, prior to the recital, where your student can perform. A practice performance could also be your student playing their piece in their music class at school. Recordings also help prepare a student for a recital. Your student may be asked to record himself at home using a phone, Tonara app, or another recording device and send it to the teacher. Recording helps create a bit of anxiety, similar to a performance situation. It also can be a tool for the student to listen back and evaluate if there are any pauses that shouldn't be there, or parts in the piece that still need work. ***This year, free Saturday performance classes will be offered.***

OPTIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENT GROWTH

- EVMTA EVENTS: I am a member of EVMTA (affiliated with ASMTA and MTNA). Parents may choose to enroll students in a variety of performances offered and organized by the East Valley Music Teachers' Association. There are small fees required for these. Some events are Music in the Mall Recital, Piano Ensemble (my favorite), Fall Recital, Spring Recital, Senior Recital, and Composer Celebration Concert. For more information about events offered, go to www.evmta.org. Scholarships are also offered by EVMTA. I will notify families of the dates of these events throughout the year.
- ARIZONA STUDY PROGRAM. The Arizona Study Program (ASP) is a graded course of study developed by the Arizona State Music Teachers Association to provide for the development of musical performance, technique, and theory. It requires continual work throughout the year and a high level of dedication. Students MUST complete a theory workbook over the course of a year as well as learn and memorize repertoire and technique. The second weekend of May, students will perform and be evaluated by a master adjudicator, as well as complete a written theory test. There is a required enrollment fee and a workbook fee. This program is a good way to measure your child's progress over the course of a year and could be compared to a school-year curriculum. For more information, please go to www.asmta.org and click on the Arizona Study Program tab. ***This program will be recommended to the student by the teacher.***