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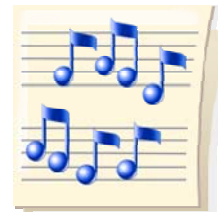
Sarah Smongeski, Executive Director
Karmen Bogdesic, Manager of Development
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Mission

Pakachoag Community Music School is dedicated to providing the highest quality music instruction and performance opportunities to the broadest possible student base, from infants to the elderly, by creating excitement, joy and high expectation for intellectual, emotional and creative self-development

Private Instruction Music Program



Student Handbook

The information in this handbook provides an overview of the private instruction program at PCMS, along with complete policy information.

This information will help you or your child/ren to reap the full benefits of lessons at PCMS. Your registration at PCMS assumes your agreement with the policies outlined in this handbook.

This handbook includes information regarding:

- Program Overview
- Student Make-Up Policy
- Payment Policies
- Inclement Weather Procedures
- Building Use & Parent Supervision

This Handbook is accompanied by additional program information and administrative notices . This complete package of information is posted on the school's web site under the "Register" keyboard tab: "Download Forms"; or is available as a hard-copy by requesting a Private Instruction Student Folder from the front office.

Welcome to PCMS

Thank you for choosing Pakachoag Community Music School for your music studies. We are pleased to welcome back our continuing families along with those of you joining us for the first time.

During the year, this information may be supplemented via notes most often distributed by e-mail. In addition to keeping this handbook available for on-going reference, please also review the other program information documents available at the school's website under "Register: Download Forms" section.

Please call the office anytime if you have additional questions. We look forward to making music together.

Sincerely,
Music School Staff and Faculty

I. General Program Information

A. Overview – What to Expect During your Tenure at PCMS

The PCMS private instruction program is primarily a traditional, classically oriented, performance-based program. Some teachers are also adept at teaching in the jazz and pop/folk idioms.

For young beginners, this means children will typically be learning songs from the folk tradition or 'popular' culture, some of which they may recognize. As students progress into the intermediate stage (usually after two to four years of study, depending upon the student and instrument), instructors will guide students as appropriate to the teacher's own teaching-orientation and the student's interest. The classical tradition generally provides a solid grounding in developing sound musicianship and appropriate instrumental technique, and therefore is most often incorporated into teaching activities. We generally try to ascertain a student's interest before assigning a teacher, but if you or your child has a specific interest in pursuing a different type of music than that being used in lessons, please consult with your teacher and the Director.

Voice and guitar students are the most frequent exception to this classical focus. Because voice and guitar are particularly strong within the 'popular' (non-classical) music tradition, teachers of these instruments will work with students to select music from outside the classical tradition if desired. These students should speak with their instructor regarding their musical interests. Choice of music is usually made by the teacher in consultation with the student keeping in mind what is appropriate from a physi-

Student Information Packet

In addition to this Student Handbook, the following notices are part of your Student Information Packet, and posted on the School Web site under "Register: Download Forms".

Please review this information during the first month of lessons.

The items highlighted in green are forms that you will need to complete and return to the office or your teacher.

- Office Staff and Office Hours
- How to Prepare and Sign up for Performance Classes

◆ **School Recitals: Confirmation Form**

This form has to be returned each semester by the specified deadline for any student who might participate in a student recital.

◆ **PCMS Volunteers: Overview Information; Interest Form**

◆ **Student Profile Form**

- How to sign up for an Accompanist Rehearsal (for students studying an instrument other than piano).

- School Calendar
 - ◆ Including performance class dates
 - ◆ Recital Dates
 - ◆ Deadline dates for Recital Confirmation Forms

- "Practicing with Success" Information Sheet

◆ **Musicianship/Theory Registration Form**

(due back first week of lessons).

- Deferred Payment Plan information:
Includes payment amounts and due dates

Please go to: www.pakmusic.org: "Register: Download Forms" to download, view, and print the above documents. Notices highlighted above in green should be completed and returned to the office. Thank you.

Boston Music, Boston	617-528-6100
Music Espresso	617-424-9322

Local Music Stores (check the Yellow Pages – these stores often stock basic beginner method books and popular sheet music).

Why Music must be Purchased rather than Copied:

PCMS, like all other institutions and users of music, is required to adhere to copyright laws. (Several schools of music nationwide have been fined \$25,000 for violating copyright laws by using copied music in public performances.) When your teacher assigns a method book or new solo piece, we ask that parents obtain any needed information from your teacher (name, composer, publisher) so that you may order the music within one or two weeks of it being assigned.

We recognize that the purchase of music can be a significant investment over time as in some cases a particular piece may only be available as part of a larger volume of music. None-the-less, it is worthwhile for students to build their own library of music which will serve them for years to come.

If ordering music presents a financial difficulty please speak with the Director. We occasionally have used books that have been donated by past students available.

The School expects that all students will use purchased music and students may not play using copied music in a performance class or recital.

VII. Other Questions?

If you have additional questions regarding:

- Instructional issues or performance programs —
Please speak with your instructor.
- School policies or long-term scheduling issues —
Please speak with the Director
- Billing or payment questions —
Please speak with the Office Manager.

Thank you. We look forward to making music together!

cal and developmental stand-point (e.g., vocal range, finger span ability). Families are strongly encouraged to speak with their instructor (or the director, if a new student) regarding their musical interests.

Advancing students with an interest in popular music are sometimes encouraged to explore this music independently or to pursue their studies (outside of PCMS) with a teacher specifically oriented toward the study of popular music.

While performance programs are a key component of the private instruction program and we strongly encourage our students to participate (when ready), students are not required to perform if they do not wish to do so. Please see additional information regarding our performance programs in this handbook.

B. Family/Teacher Communication

PCMS encourages parents to consult at any time with their child’s instructor if they have any concerns or suggestions regarding their child’s instruction. If a child is having difficulty with their daily practice or did not understand an assignment the prior week, it is helpful if this is addressed with the teacher as soon as possible. We suggest that you drop off and pick up your child at the studio door each week which allows an opportunity to keep the flow of communication active. This also provides the teacher an easy moment to touch base with you if needed regarding assignments for the week and student progress. You may also speak with the Director regarding instructional issues.

Visits into the lobby can also help keep you informed. PCMS regularly posts updates and event information on the lobby bulletin board.

C. Daily At-Home Practice

Practicing is one of the most important factors in determining musical success and growth. A commitment to daily practice is essential for all students. While PCMS understands that music lessons may not be the first priority for all students, we do expect it to be one of several priorities in terms of regular attendance at lessons and daily at-home practice. Developing an ability to practice well and regularly may take several years for students to fully develop. For younger students, we suggest that parents set a daily practice schedule with their child and help their child adhere to the schedule. Parents should talk directly with their teacher for further information regarding at-home practice expectations. If a student is having difficulty staying motivated, we suggest that you consult with your teacher as soon as possible. Information for “Practicing with Success” is included as part of your student information package.

II. Special Events and Activities

A. Performance Events:

Key to the PCMS private instruction program are our various performance opportunities. Students (when ready to do so) are encouraged to participate in PCMS performance programs, but students are not required to perform. Your instructor will let you know when you are ready to perform. Students who are new to the program often wait one or two semesters before participating. Choice of performance piece is made at the discretion of the teacher, in consultation with students, keeping in mind the student's level of ability and length of study.

Performance Events at PCMS include:

Performance Classes:

Scheduled several times each month (usually on Monday or Tuesday evenings), performance classes provide students the opportunity to "practice" performing in front of a live audience. Family members and friends are invited. Most classes run 45 minutes to 1 hour, usually starting at 6:30 pm. If participation warrants, a second session is scheduled for 7:15 or 7:30 pm. Not all students perform in all performance classes. Students new to the school may not be ready to participate during their first year of study. Your instructor will keep you informed when your child is ready to perform. Performance class dates are listed in the school calendar.

Please see the Performance Class/Recital Information Sheets included as part of the student information package which explain sign-up and scheduling confirmation information.

We do recommend that new students attend a performance class early in the year (prior to performing themselves). This helps students get comfortable with what to expect prior to their first performance.

Recitals:

Scheduled on Saturday and/or Sunday afternoons and evenings in November, December, March or April, and May, recitals provide a formal opportunity for students to share their progress with family and friends. In order to participate in a recital, students must have performed in at least one performance class during the semester. Teachers may also require that a student perform their recital piece(s) in a performance class prior to the recital. In order to participate in a school recital, students are expected to be sufficiently prepared as determined by their teacher. If a teacher feels a student may not be sufficiently prepared, a decision regarding recital participation may not be made until one or two lessons prior to the recital or following the outcome of a performance class. Our goal is to try to the best of our ability to assure that students are well-prepared so that the recital experience is one which is successful and positive.

Sibling Discounts

PCMS provides a 10% discount off the tuition amount for families that have more than one student enrolled for a full semester of private instruction. Your invoice will reflect this discount.

V. Student Supervision and Building Use

Please note that PCMS cannot be responsible for students on the premises at any time except during a scheduled lesson. Because the church building is often vacant of other personnel, parents are required to take responsibility for students before and after lessons. Chairs are available in the lobby area and we encourages families to wait here quietly during lessons. Please be available to pick up your child outside their assigned lesson room, this aids the teacher in communicating with parents.

PCMS is fortunate to enjoy the use of the Pakachoag Church building courtesy of the Church. Please treat the building with respect. If you use the coloring book table, please leave the books neatly stacked and return crayons to their container. Children may not play or run in the hallways. In good weather, the grass area to the right of the building (when entering the parking lot) may be used for playing. The church kindly requests that children do not play in the driveway / parking lot for reasons of safety.

VI. Ordering Music

At various times during the year, your instructor may ask that you order new music or they may provide music to you directly for purchase. If a teacher provides music to you directly, please reimburse your teacher (rather than the school). If ordering music yourself, please ask your teacher for the complete name of the piece or book, along with the composer or editor name and the publisher's name. This will help you in finding what you need. Mail order is often the easiest way to find music quickly. Some possible places you may wish to try when ordering music:

Spectrum Music in Lexington	781-862-0088
N.E. Sheet Music Service 689 Main Street, Waltham	781-891-7502
Yesterday's (Music) Service Mass. Ave., Cambridge	617-547-8263

F. Summer Lesson Schedules

Summer private lessons are arranged according to teacher availability and student interest. Specific summer registration information is provided to continuing students in April. PCMS is unable to provide make-up lessons (or refunds/credits) for summer lessons missed by a student.

G. Fall Pre-Registration for Continuing Students

PCMS provides the option of Fall pre-registration to allow currently enrolled students to confirm a slot with their teacher for the upcoming year before new or wait-listed students are accepted into the schedule. Complete information regarding pre-registration is sent home in April (with summer lesson information).

H. Lesson Withdrawal

If it becomes necessary to withdraw from lessons, please notify the Director as soon as possible. Please see the Payment and Refund section.

IV. Payments and Refunds

Tuition and fees are due at the time of registration. Payments may be made with personal check, bank or charge card check, or in cash. If full payment has not been made prior to the first lesson of each semester, PCMS will assume that you are selecting to pay by the deferred payment policy plan. A \$15 service fee will be added to your second payment if you choose the deferred payment plan. This fee helps offset some of the time involved in tracking and managing multiple payments and associated invoices. Families may wish to consider the option of using a charge card check to make full tuition payment at the beginning of the semester to avoid this additional fee. For complete information, please refer to the Deferred Payment Plan information sheet and payment schedule available as part of the Student Information Packet.

If tuition payments are not received in the office by the due date, a \$10 late fee is charged monthly. The School reserves the right to suspend lessons until payment is received. There will be no make-up lessons or refunds for any lessons missed because of late payment.

Refunds are limited. If discontinuing lessons mid-semester, families will be billed for four subsequent weeks following the date of which notice is given to the school director. Students may choose to finish lessons during that four week period, or withdraw at the time notice is provided. In either case, payment for those weeks is required.

Special Outreach Activities:

Students are invited to participate in outreach concerts by invitation of the Director. This might include nursing home visits, performances for various civic organizations or for special community events. In order to be included, students should have performed in at least one PCMS recital. Selection of students is based upon the particular needs of the event. We do make an effort to include as many students as possible throughout the year. The number of outreach activities varies from year-to-year. If your child would like to participate (and has not done so previously), please let the Director know.

B. Musicianship/Theory Classes:

Your private lesson tuition includes the opportunity for students entering grade 2 through 9 to attend Musicianship/Theory classes. The quality of education your child receives at PCMS is significantly enhanced by these classes. Students are strongly encouraged to participate. For students unable to participate, we recommend a minimum 45-minute lesson. The Musicianship/theory Class information sheet and enrollment information included in your school folder provides more complete information regarding the classes.

C. Student Chamber Ensemble, Master Classes, and Certificate Examinations

Each of these programs are targeted toward different student populations. Participation is by faculty recommendation and made according to individual students needs and faculty availability.

If your child is interested in participating, please speak with your teacher or the School Director.

Master Classes, offered occasionally (not necessarily every year) target advancing students, although all students are encouraged to attend classes. Additional information is available upon request regarding these classes.

Examinations, currently offered for piano students, are designed for students interested in an additional challenge. Students (of any instrument) interested in participating should speak with The Director or their instructor.

D. Faculty Recitals:

Individual faculty occasionally offer to present a special recital. Students and family members are urged to attend. Hearing one's teacher in performance enhances the learning experience and helps inspire and motivate students toward achieving a higher level of musicianship. Recital dates are announced during the school year.

III. Scheduling and Related Policies

A. Lesson Cancellation Policy

Students are allowed one make-up per semester for a missed lesson. Make-up lessons are scheduled during the week following the end of the semester (or through special arrangements with the teacher during the regular semester). Please consult with your teacher to confirm make-up day and time. *PCMS would be most appreciative if you would inform the office ahead of time by phone of any lesson that will be missed due to sickness or other circumstances.* The first lesson missed each semester by a student will be eligible for make-up. (Make-ups are not available for summer lessons.)

While we do understand that additional student absences may occur during the course of the semester due to circumstances outside of your control and for reasonable reasons, PCMS teachers are not required to make up additional missed lessons.

B. Teacher Absence

If your teacher must cancel a lesson due to sickness or other unavoidable conflict, we will contact you as soon as possible. Please check your answering machine for messages prior to leaving for your lesson each week. Any teacher absences will be made up (or, if a make-up is not possible, refunded).

C. Weather Procedures

In the event of bad weather, PCMS will make a decision to close by 1:00 p.m. (or for students that may take lessons in the morning – at least one hour in advance of your scheduled lesson time). If the school decides to close, we will put an announcement on our answering machine indicating our closure.

If the School is not closed but an individual teacher is canceling lessons (due to sickness or bad weather conditions outside of the Greater Worcester area which might impact their getting to the school safely), we will call student's of that teacher individually.

As always, please check your answering machine before coming for lessons each week in the event of individual teacher cancellations.

PCMS makes the decision to cancel lessons based on a number of factors, including where teachers are traveling from and the length of their teaching schedule, as well as weather reports for the entire day. Because teachers begin teaching at different times, we must sometimes make a cancellation decision based on weather conditions that may occur earlier or later in the day—not necessarily according to the weather anticipated at the time of your individual lesson.

Please note that a public school cancellation does not necessarily mean PCMS will be closed. Also, while weather conditions may have improved by the time your lesson is scheduled, it is possible classes have been cancelled because of conditions earlier in the day. If questionable weather is expected during the day or evening, please call the office to check the status of the school's opening or closing.

D. Lesson Scheduling and Attendance

Lessons are scheduled on an individual basis by the office according to teacher availability. Please be punctual for lessons as your instructor will usually have other students scheduled following your lesson time. However, please also be prepared for times when a teacher may occasionally choose to keep a student a few minutes over the designated lesson time in order to properly cover the topic under discussion before adjourning for the coming week. This flexibility in starting and ending times of lessons helps our teachers meet the individual needs of each student and provide the in-depth instruction music study requires. If these occasional disruptions in lesson times present a problem, please consult with your teacher.

The School may sometimes request a change in lesson time to help accommodate a teacher's schedule. We appreciate your willingness to consider requests for changes.

E. School Calendar

Semester schedules, including holidays, events and vacation weeks are outlined in the school calendar provided as part of the Student Information Packet.

Please note that some teachers, if they are behind the regular school calendar due to teacher sickness or weather cancellations, may ask students to take a lesson on a holiday, between regular semesters, or during a vacation week. Students are not obligated to attend lessons on school holidays or during PCMS School vacation weeks, although families will need to confirm with a teacher if they will or will not attend. (If a student has agreed to take a lesson during a vacation week or on a holiday and does not attend, the lesson will be considered unexcused, unless no other prior lessons have been missed in which case the student will be allowed one make up at the end of the semester.)