

Vandeventer Middle School Orchestra

Private Lesson Handbook

Thank you for your interest in teaching and taking private lessons at Vandeventer Middle School. This document is intended to be a definition of professional expectations associated with this position and service.

Table of Contents

[Overview & Expectations](#)

[Compensation](#)

[Attendance Policy](#)

[Private Teacher Responsibilities](#)

[Student Responsibilities](#)

Overview & Expectations

The purpose of our private lesson program is to give orchestra students the opportunity to study with a professional musician. The Private Teacher Staff provides the students with many things to emulate: a characteristic sound, posture, proper hand position, technical ability, and superb musicianship. Private teachers are also responsible for nurturing the love of the instrument by encouraging concert/recital attendance, historical background, and performance practice. Private teachers are expected to challenge the students who are advanced and remediate the weaker students. There is no such thing as a “one-size-fits-all” curriculum in a private teaching studio, as this is the time when individual needs of the student are paramount.

Compensation

Frisco ISD Fine Arts Private Lesson Rates

½ the class period \$25.00

Full class period \$50.00

The students pay the private teacher directly! Unlike many other school districts, Frisco ISD does not act as an “intermediary” between the student and private teacher. **The parents should make their checks out to the PRIVATE TEACHER and NOT to the SCHOOL!** It is entirely up to the teacher to account for and collect money from the students.

VMS students taking lessons during the school day will receive a 21-minute lesson, or one-half of a regular class period. These lessons are held once a week.

Attendance Policy

Excused Student Absence: The teacher is contacted either 24 hours or more before the missed lesson. This should not happen more than once a month or they will ask you to compensate the lesson teacher for the missed lesson.

Unexcused Student Absence: No show with no prior communication. Parents will be expected to compensate the private teacher.

Private Teacher Responsibilities

Communication (with Orchestra Staff): Private Teachers should maintain good communication with the Directors, particularly those Directors who are responsible for the beginning instruction of their instrument specialty. Directors should have frequent updates as to the progress of the students! A large part of an orchestra's success is the wonderful collegial relationship we have with our Private Teachers.

Communication (with Parents and Students): Private Teachers should only communicate directly with parents in setting up private lessons. Vandeventer Parents are highly involved in all aspects of their child's education, including their musical progress. Private Teachers should not contact students via phone, text, or social media. As a professional practice, Directors do not "friend" or allow "friending" with students on social media until after they have graduated high school, regardless of district. **Communicate only with the parent directly via phone or email.**

Book Keeping: Parents typically pay in advance for their lessons, preferably ONE MONTH in advance; however, it is up to the private teacher's discretion on how to arrange payment with the parent. **The only exception is that teachers should NOT be asking for an entire semester's tuition at a time.** It is the private teacher's responsibility to ensure that they deposit the checks received in a timely fashion and that they accurately credited students for the money paid. Please ask that the students bring a check with them (made out to the private teacher) for the first lesson.

Student Responsibilities

The students and parents have read this and have signed and returned an acknowledgment of the policy.

Student's/Parent's responsibilities to the supplemental lesson teacher:

1. Be fully prepared for each lesson.
2. Bring a pencil, method books, and any other required material to each lesson.
3. Keep a notebook or written assignment for each lesson.
4. Notify the private lesson teacher at least **24 hours in advance** in the event a lesson will not be attended. Failure to do this results in an unexcused absence and the lesson must still be paid. Excused absences by the student or the teacher shall be rescheduled. In cases where rescheduling is not possible, the money will be refunded.
5. The cost of lessons should be paid one month in advance, or as arranged.
6. **Due to the nature of the instructors' financial arrangement, we ask that any student wishing to discontinue the lesson program wait until the completion of the semester.**