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*Soundpost  
Strings  
Academy*

SOUNDPOST  
STRINGS  
ACADEMY

PRIVATE LESSONS:  
ATTENDANCE & BUSINESS POLICIES

Client Guide to Success | Eileen Riechard Drew

Hi Clients,

Here is your copy of the Soundpost Strings Academy Client Guide to Success. There is a lot of material for you and your student to read but it should only take a few minutes to review. Basically, if something has gone wrong or a parent/student has taken advantage of my good nature in the past, then that topic is covered in this Guide. 😊

Don't be intimidated by the lengthy nature of the Guide. In reality, being a student at *Soundpost Strings Academy* is just as easy as you would expect it to be. You show up on time, you participate in your lesson, you learn exponentially and you leave. Seriously, it's that easy!

If anyone has questions about the material listed in the Guide then don't hesitate to ask. You never know – there might be a funny story behind it!

I look forward to building a relationship with both you and your student!

Eileen Riechard Drew



## Welcome to *Soundpost Strings Academy*!

Our mission is to advance each student's playing abilities through technical exercises and progressive music selections, while helping every student develop a love for music of all styles and origins.

Music is the International Language of the World: It knows no boundaries, and can connect hearts thousands of miles apart.

In order to best meet every student's needs, we ask that you please read the following Attendance and Business Policies for *Soundpost Strings Academy*. These procedures have been carefully put into place to encourage the best learning environment and routine for every student, and a comfortable studio experience for every parent and teacher.

Please fill out the Intake Form at the end, and Sign at the required Client and Student signature marks.

*Eileen Drew*



# *Soundpost Strings Academy*

## **PRIVATE LESSON STUDIO POLICIES**

### **Curriculum**

- The teacher prepares a specific and customized curriculum for each student based on the student's individual strengths and weaknesses.
- The weekly curriculum will be based heavily on scales, arpeggios, and etudes (exercises); students will also learn solo pieces chosen by the teacher to specifically match the student's abilities and needs. These solo pieces can be performed in the *Soundpost Strings Academy* recitals (see *Recitals* section below for more information).

### **Materials**

- Parents should purchase the required books and equipment for their student to use in class and during home practice in a timely fashion. Most materials can be bought or ordered from a local music store. All materials can be ordered online. Each parent will receive a list of needed materials to buy after the teacher meets and evaluates their child.
- Materials for home use generally include, but are not limited to, three music books, a personal instrument and bow, music stand, rosin, rock stop (cellos), shoulder rest (violins, violas), and a metronome for home use. Some students may benefit from a chromatic tuner at home.
- The teacher will provide a metronome, tuner, music stands, chairs, and pencils for classroom use.

### **Attendance**

- Students are expected to attend weekly lessons as part of their scheduled commitment. Regular and consistent attendance provides each student the opportunity to learn required materials and continue growth on their instrument.
- Students should arrive 5 minutes prior to their lesson. They may walk down the left sidewalk and enter the double doors into the Waiting Area where they can unpack and warm up; bags and cases should stay in the Waiting Area. Students

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should be unpacked and ready to enter the studio on time for their lesson. After their lesson, they may pack-up in the Waiting Room after the lesson ends. Using the Waiting Room for un-packing/packing keeps lessons flowing on time.

- Students will not be admitted into the studio more than 5 minutes before a lesson starts. This keeps parking open and traffic flowing for entering and exiting clients, and lessons running on time.

## **Lesson Preparation**

- Students are expected to bring all required materials to each lesson. This usually includes, but is not limited to, assigned music books, instrument, bow, rosin, rock stop (cellos) and shoulder rest (violins, violas). The teacher will provide a music stand, metronome, pencils, and tuner for class use.
- Students are asked to be prepared for each lesson by practicing and studying their assignments at home regularly between lessons.

## **Practicing and Studying**

- Each student is required to practice a minimum of 20 minutes, 4 days per week, more for older and advanced students.
- Skipping regular practice lets students easily forget 50% of the new lesson material, and slide backwards in progress between lessons.
- Regular and consistent practice allows the new weekly lesson material to be processed and mastered by the student.

## **Parking, Drop Off, & Pick Up**

- Parents must drop off and pick up their student on time.
- Parents who stay to observe the lesson **MUST** park on the driveway in the parking spaces on the left. Please leave a clear path on the far right side of the driveway for family members to be able to pull up and into the garage.
- **Please do not park in the street.** Parents who park in the street will be asked to go back and immediately move their vehicle. This policy ensures a respectful flow of traffic for the surrounding houses.

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## **Parent Observations**

- Parents are welcome to observe their student's lesson.
- Parents who stay for the lesson are asked to wait in the designated Waiting Area, not inside the teaching studio. This policy reduces distractions and the student's possible preoccupation with a parent in the class.
- Parents who wish to have a conference with the teacher on the day of the lesson are asked to have all conversations during their own student's lesson time, not after their time slot ends. This allows the next client to begin their lesson on time.
- The teacher will gladly schedule a separate conference time with a parent in person or by phone if needed.

## **Siblings Attendance and Behavior**

- Any sibling present in the Waiting Area must sit quietly and not interrupt, disturb or otherwise distract the student or teacher.
- All waiting parents, students, or siblings must stay in the designated Waiting Area, which includes a sitting area and rest room. No parents, students, or siblings may enter any other non-studio areas during the lesson.
- All children must be supervised at all times. Parents will be held responsible for any damages that may occur.

## **Payments and Flat Fees**

- Every parent will receive an emailed monthly invoice.
- Parents may pay through the invoice itself by clicking on the Pay Now feature. Parents may also pay through Zelle, checks, or cash.
- *Soundpost Strings Academy* uses a Flat Fee payment plan, based on an average four-week month price. Each month's payment will be the same price all twelve months of the year, regardless of the number of weeks in the particular month. Note: This Flat Fee includes the months of holidays and vacations. (See *Vacations* section)

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- The Flat Fee allows for four unpaid weeks to be left over at the end of a year. The studio uses these extra four weeks to provide four built-in vacations to the client per every twelve months. (See *Vacations* section)
- Late Fees: All lesson payments are due in full by the 7th of each month. If payment is not received by the 7th, a late fee of \$10 will be automatically added to the client invoice. If payment is still not received by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month, an additional \$30 late fee will be added to the invoice (a total of \$40 in late fees).
- Lack of payment will result in suspension of lessons.
- If a student starts lessons mid-month, the Flat Fee will be pro-rated for the remaining number of classes in the month.

## **Trading Times & Make Up Lessons**

Lessons are a serious commitment, involving a standing weekly appointment set aside for each student, and a custom curriculum prepared by the teacher. Frequent absences in a student's weekly scheduled lesson appointments critically affect the student's ability to learn the required materials. *Soundpost Strings Academy* strongly encourages regular weekly attendance from each student.

### **Trading Lesson Times for a week:**

- In case of an occasional time conflict with a lesson appointment, parents and driving students are allowed and encouraged to Trade their weekly lesson time slot with another family's weekly lesson slot to avoid cancellation.
- Each client will be provided a Lesson Trading Sheet schedule, listing all current students and their weekly times, along with contact information. The teacher will provide updated copies frequently through email.
- Clients can use the updated Lesson Trading Sheet schedule to contact other families via phone or email, identify themselves, and request to trade times for the week.
- No-Show traded lessons will not be made up, or refunded for any reason. A No-Show lesson is defined when a student does not appear for his/her lesson appointment time and did not notify the teacher.
- There is no trading option for group Choirs or Ensembles.

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- Clients MUST submit any lesson change or trade in writing to the teacher via text message to 678-459-4865 or by email to [spstringsacademy@gmail.com](mailto:spstringsacademy@gmail.com). No lesson changes will be accepted if not in writing by the client.

## **Make-Up Lessons and Credits:**

- One Make-Up Lesson Credit at a time is available per family to assist the student in the case of emergency cancelations that are unfixable by trading (illness, emergency, additional vacations than the 4 weeks specified in the schedule, etc.).
- Fulfilling the client Make Up Credit is possible when another client cancels and creates an open time slot in the standing weekly schedule. These openings will often be last-minute and unpredictable.
- The teacher will notify all parents via *Remind101* (see below) and/or mass email when an opening occurs in the weekly schedule that anyone can use as a Make-Up Lesson credit.
- Clients may respond to the teacher that they would like to take the Make-Up Lesson Credit offered by texting their reply to the studio at 678-459-4865. First come, first serve.
- NO STUDENT will be allowed to acquire a second Make-Up Lesson Credit for any reason, until the first credit is fulfilled and cleared. This policy encourages students to fulfill Make-Up Lesson opportunities immediately when they open, and discourages students from missing multiple lessons.
- If a student misses a second lesson before the first Make-Up Lesson Credit is fulfilled, the second missed lesson, and any additional misses, will be forfeited and no credits or refunds issued.
- If a student quits lessons or the teacher terminates lessons with a student, any Make-Up Lesson Credit accrued will be forfeited.
- No-Show lessons will not be refunded or made up for any reason. A No-Show lesson is defined when a student does not appear for his/her lesson appointment time and did not notify the teacher.
- There are no Make-Up Lessons available for any group Choirs or Ensembles.
- Clients MUST submit any lesson change in writing to the teacher via text message to 678-459-4865 or by email to [spstringsacademy@gmail.com](mailto:spstringsacademy@gmail.com) to



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receive a Make-Up Lesson Credit. No lesson changes will be accepted if not in writing by the parent.

## **Vacations**

- Students will receive four one-week vacations off from lessons per year (see *Payments and Flat Fees*).
- The studio will be closed and students will receive vacations during Gwinnett County Public School's **First Week of School for Fall** (early August TBA yearly), **Thanksgiving Break** (week of Thanksgiving), **Spring Break** (early April TBA yearly), and **Winter Break** (week of Christmas TBA yearly).
- There are no refunds for any students taking additional vacations beyond the four built into the schedule. However, any student will be allowed to Trade lesson dates with another client, or receive a Make Up Credit for their absence (if the student does not already have a credit accrued on file) to avoid losing their lesson.
- If a student takes the Summer off, there is no guarantee their time slot will be available when they return. The practice of taking the Summer off is discouraged as the break in practice causes relapses of long-term problems and regression in learning.
- If the teacher takes any additional vacation week or day off than those listed above, the client will not be charged for that week or day.

## **Recitals**

- *Soundpost Strings Academy* hosts three recitals per year: Fall Recital, Spring Recital, and Summer Flip Flop Recital. These recitals give students the opportunity to perform solo works they have prepared in lessons.
- Recitals will be held live, or online via Zoom, and will be announced in advance.
- Students will be required to wear dress black for live Fall and Spring Recitals, and appropriate summer attire of their choice for live Summer Flip Flop Recitals. No dress code is required for informal Zoom Online Recitals.
- Any student who has prepared and memorized their solo piece will be invited to perform in the next upcoming recital.
- All private lesson students must memorize their solo to perform in the recital.

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- The teacher may deem a student should not play in an upcoming recital if the student is not musically ready to perform. In that situation, the student will be asked to keep working on their solo and encouraged to play it in the next recital.
- Each student will pay a \$40 fee to participate in a live recital program. This fee covers the cost of the piano accompanist, a private piano rehearsal, rental of the church and costs of the production. If a student is not using a piano accompanist, the fee is reduced to \$10 for that single live performance. The teacher will email an invoice to each student for the appropriate fee per show.
- Zoom Online Recitals are free of charge.
- The teacher will provide parents with specific printed recital information in advance of each program.

## **Summer-Only Lessons**

- New Students are allowed to sign up for Summer-Only lessons. The Summer Semester will begin the first week of June and go until the start week of Gwinnett County Public School's Fall Semester (August). The teacher will provide exact Summer Semester dates to each family at the onset of classes.
- All Summer-Only Students must follow the same rules and procedures as Year-Round Students.
- If a Summer-Only student does not use their Make-Up Lesson Credit by the end of the Summer Semester, the Make-Up Lesson Credit is forfeited.

## **Emergency Help Add-On Lessons**

- Students may request additional lessons that are during or after the normal studio hours. These help sessions are often useful just before an upcoming audition, or orchestra test.
- All extra lessons scheduled will be invoiced individually.

## **Communication with *Remind101* and Email**

- The teacher will email the entire studio regarding important information on a regular basis. Clients are responsible for the information contained in these emails as it pertains to their student and *Soundpost Strings Academy*.

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- The teacher will also text the entire studio short amounts of important information using the *Remind101* texting service. For example, parents will be notified of Make-Up Lesson Credit opportunities through *Remind101*.
- All adult clients, parents, and older driving students are asked to sign up for *Remind101* by texting the number 81010, and entering the code @eileen in the text box.

## Zoom Online Lessons

- The studio now offers convenient **Zoom Online Lessons** year round, in addition to live in-studio lessons.
- Students may mix the usage of Zoom Online Lessons with their standard in-studio lessons any time as needed. The Zoom Online Lesson will occur at the same scheduled hour as the in-studio lesson, only on the computer instead. Clients wishing to mix the usage of Zoom Online Lessons along with their live lessons **MUST** notify the teacher of desired changes weekly.
- Zoom Online Lessons will be mandatory (and in-person lessons will not be allowed) during any public safety concern, including a global pandemic, severe weather (including Gwinnett County Public School declared “snow days”). The teacher will announce mandatory Zoom Online Lessons via mass email and Remind101.
- If a student is sick (colds, flu, and other contagious infections), they should not come to the studio and will be asked to use the Zoom Online Lesson option instead. The teacher will observe the same courtesy in times of personal illness and only teach online.

## Inclement Weather

- The studio will close for all in-person lessons during times of inclement weather for the safety of clients.
- Zoom Online Lessons will be used instead during times of threatening weather conditions.
- The live studio will often (not always) close along with Gwinnett County Public School closures in such emergencies.

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- The teacher will notify each client of live studio closer, and the usage of only Zoom Online Lessons, via *Remind101* and a group email.
- Any client is always welcome to use Zoom Online Lessons from the safety of their own home as they deem necessary.

## **Perfumes, Fragrances, Lotions**

- No scented body products of any kind can be worn into the teaching studio, by a student or parent. This includes perfumes, colognes, body sprays, scented hand lotions, and scented hand sanitizers (regular clear Purell types are ok).
- Many students have asthma and severe allergies and these fragrances are triggers for these conditions.
- The “scents” left by a client are in the air of the studio for hours after the client leaves, affecting others.
- Any client who feels unable to comply will be asked to use Zoom Online Lessons only.
- The studio greatly appreciates your cooperation in this matter and apologizes for any inconvenience it may cause.

## **Dismissal**

- Repeatedly not following these studio policies can result in permanent dismissal from *Soundpost Strings Academy*.



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## INTAKE FORM CLIENT AND STUDENT INFORMATION

Client(s) or Guardian(s) Name(s) printed \_\_\_\_\_ ,  
\_\_\_\_\_

Client(s) or Guardian(s) Primary Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Secondary Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Primary Cell Phone Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Secondary Cell Phone Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact Name and Number: \_\_\_\_\_ ,  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please list any medical condition you feel the studio should be aware of while  
teaching the student:

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I (printed client name) \_\_\_\_\_ have read the above ***Soundpost Strings Academy Lesson Policies and Business Procedures***. I understand the policies and business procedures of the teaching studio and agree to follow them. I understand that the student's name, a phone number, and an email will be listed for other *Soundpost Strings Academy* clients to use as a contact to trade lessons. I also understand that the student's photographs (no names listed) may be used on the *Soundpost Strings Academy* website and Facebook page to promote the academy.

Client Signature(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

I (printed student(s) name) \_\_\_\_\_ have read, or had explained to me by my parent, the above **Soundpost Strings Academy Lesson Policies and Business Procedures**. I understand what is expected of me as a student and participant in lessons, and/or group Choirs or Ensembles.

Student Signature(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_