



*An Educational Program of the
Great Lakes Center for The Arts*



Dorothy Gerber *Strings Program*

PARENT HANDBOOK

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FROM THE DIRECTOR

Welcome to a year of musical growth with the Dorothy Gerber Strings Program! This our 20th Anniversary year, celebrating the generosity of the Gerber family and the thousands of students who have benefitted from the program. Looking ahead to 2021/2022, we are pleased to offer an excellent and affordable opportunity for your child, whether you live in Charlevoix, Emmet, or Antrim County.

Whether your student is about to play an instrument for the first time or has been studying for years, there is a place for them in the DGSP. We have a variety of program options, which will be highlighted in this handbook. If you would like further advice on the best fit for your child, I would be happy to talk with you further.

The benefits of learning an instrument are incredible, as you can see from the article on page 3. The friends that a student makes playing music in a group, the intellectual challenge and development they experience, the increased ability to express themselves and the increased appreciation for art are only some of the benefits. The primary challenge for students and parents is perseverance through inevitable periods when music study does not feel as fun. Every musician knows those times when they got discouraged or felt like something else would be more exciting, but they will also tell you how grateful they were that someone helped them persevere. From a different perspective, the story I hear most from adults is how they regret that they quit playing their instrument when they were young. Every student is capable of learning to play well and, while I am confident that you will experience challenges, I also trust you will experience the joys and benefits.

One of the times you will see the DGSP at its best is our Spring Concert! It is the expectation that every student performs in this exciting concert at the Great Lakes Center for the Arts. You will see the combined classes and students from throughout the region, playing wonderful music together as they demonstrate the growth of a year of study. The concert is “collage-style,” so the audience hears students perform in solos, small ensembles, larger ensembles, and the entire program playing together (100+ students)! This is the time when students experience - in a profound way - how they are part of something bigger and more extensive than they realize. A student from Pellston may sit with a student from Beaver Island, playing the same music together. It is a deeply moving performance that I hope you will experience next May!

I invite you to look through the information in this handbook as well as checking out our website (dorothygerberstrings.org) for more information about the DGSP, including information about our faculty. This year I am joined by Trisha Berquist, Iuliia Fetysenko, Byron Farrar, Elizabeth Bert, Peter Talias, Ann Marie Jones, and others who are master musicians and educators, eager to help your child succeed!

Thank you,

Dr. Reimer

Director, Dorothy Gerber Strings Program



IMPORTANT BENEFITS OF MUSIC IN OUR SCHOOLS

This article is originally appeared on the bachelor's degree website (2014) and has been updated by name (2021).



Nearly everyone enjoys music, whether by listening to it, singing, or playing an instrument. But despite this almost universal interest, many schools are choosing to do away with their music education programs. This is a mistake, with schools losing not only an enjoyable subject, but a subject that can enrich students' lives and education. Read on to learn why music education is so important, and how it offers benefits even beyond itself.

- 1. Musical training helps develop language and reasoning:** Students who have early musical training will develop the areas of the brain related to language and reasoning. The left side of the brain is better developed with music, and songs can help imprint information on young minds.
- 2. A mastery of memorization:** Even when performing with sheet music, student musicians are constantly using their memory to perform. The skill of memorization can serve students well in education and beyond.
- 3. Students learn to improve their work:** Learning music promotes craftsmanship, and students learn to want to create good work instead of mediocre work. This desire can be applied to all subjects of study.
- 4. Increased coordination:** Students who practice with musical instruments can improve their hand-eye coordination. Just like playing sports, children can develop motor skills when playing music.
- 5. A sense of achievement:** Learning to play pieces of music on a new instrument can be a challenging, but achievable goal. Students who master even the smallest goal in music will be able to feel proud of their achievement.
- 6. Kids stay engaged in school:** An enjoyable subject like music can keep kids interested and engaged in school. Student musicians are likely to stay in school to achieve in other subjects.
- 7. Success in society:** Music is the fabric of our society, and music can shape abilities and character. Students in band or orchestra are less likely to abuse substances over their lifetime. Musical education can greatly contribute to children's intellectual development as well.

8. Emotional development: Students of music can be more emotionally developed, with empathy towards other cultures. They also tend to have higher self-esteem and are better at coping with anxiety.



9. Students learn pattern recognition: Children can develop their math and pattern-recognition skills with the help of musical education. Playing music offers repetition in a fun format.

10. Fine-tuned auditory skills: Musicians can better detect meaningful, information-bearing elements in sounds, like the emotional meaning in a baby's cry. Students who practice music can have better auditory attention and pick out predictable patterns from surrounding noise.

11. Music builds imagination and intellectual curiosity: Introducing music in the early childhood years can help foster a positive attitude toward learning and curiosity. Artistic education develops the whole brain and develops a child's imagination.

12. Music can be relaxing: Students can fight stress by learning to play music. Soothing music is especially helpful in helping kids relax.

13. Musical instruments can teach discipline: Kids who learn to play an instrument can learn a valuable lesson in discipline. They will have to set time aside to practice and rise to the challenge of learning with discipline to master playing their instrument.

14. Preparation for the creative economy: Investing in creative education can prepare students for the 21st century workforce. The new economy has created more artistic careers, and these jobs may grow faster than others in the future.

15. Development in creative thinking: Kids who study the arts can learn to think creatively. This kind of education can help them solve problems by thinking outside the box and realizing that there may be more than one right answer.

16. Music can develop spatial intelligence: Students who study music can improve the development of spatial intelligence, which allows them to perceive the world accurately and form mental pictures. Spatial intelligence is helpful for advanced mathematics and more.

17. Kids can learn teamwork: Many musical education programs require teamwork as part of a band or orchestra. In these groups, students will learn how to work together and build camaraderie.

18. Responsible risk-taking: Performing a musical piece can bring fear and anxiety. Doing so teaches kids how to take risks and deal with fear, which will help them become successful and reach their potential.

19. Better self-confidence: With encouragement from teachers and parents, students playing a musical instrument can build pride and confidence. Musical education is also likely to develop better communication for students.

PARENT TESTIMONIALS

"My daughter began taking violin lessons last fall and has enjoyed every minute of it! She loves learning new songs that she can play for family and friends."

"I love how patient our teacher is with each of one my children. They never run short of patience or kindness and boosts my child's confidence along the way!"

"(We're) so grateful for this program...it means a lot to our family to be able to have our daughters involved in learning instruments that they love and doing it in the context of a group so they're learning how to be independent players and team players... life is about learning to do both."

"I think the proof is in the outcome, in the way that... the kids present themselves in the classes and on stage, to have this high-quality music program available to pretty much any student in the area, it's remarkable."

"We've really enjoyed having the boys in the program...so many times they entertain us when we sit down to dinner at night...just to watch the improvement over the last few years and the enthusiasm..."

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Dorothy Gerber Strings Program is a privately funded educational program of the nonprofit organization Great Lakes Center for the Arts. The DGSP provides a valuable resource to the Charlevoix/Emmet/Antrim County region – education in the bowed string instruments (violin, viola, cello, bass). The primary resource that is made possible by the funding of the Gerber family is a team of highly qualified teachers. This includes four full-time artists who moved to the area to fulfill the DGSP mission, as well as several other part-time teachers. This team includes several with graduate degrees in the stringed instruments from highly reputable colleges, universities, and conservatories. Many also perform extensively in the area, including the Great Lakes Chamber Orchestra and the Traverse Symphony Orchestra. These teachers are assigned to a variety of locations in the region, teaching classroom and/or private lessons. Your student has the opportunity study with one of these teachers and to join thousands over the past two decades who have participated in this program and learned to play an instrument, to make music, and to make new friends in the process! Please look over the following details so that you are better prepared to support your child's participation in the Dorothy Gerber Strings Program.

PROGRAMS

- **School-based Strings Classes:** Students learn to play an instrument in a group setting at a local school. These are held twice a week in ten locations throughout the school year. Students must be in 4th grade or above to participate in the classes and may continue until they graduate from high school. Tuition is free and the only cost is for renting an instrument. [See page 11.](#)
- **Traditional Private Lessons:** Students learn to play an instrument in a one-on-one setting with a master teacher. Lessons are offered once every week and are available in five locations. There is a fee for lessons and families would need to get an instrument for the student to use. Scholarship assistance is available for lessons and rentals, as needed. Students may be as young as 2nd grade for traditional method lessons and may study through their senior year in high school. Students in school-based classes may want to add private lessons to help keep up or to seek an additional challenge. [See page 14.](#)
- **Suzuki Program:** This method is famous for being effective in training very young children how to play a stringed instrument. Students may begin as young as 4 years old. The Suzuki Method requires a significant commitment from a parent, including attendance and participation in lessons as well as daily support at home. There is a fee for Suzuki lessons and families would need to get an instrument for their student to use. Scholarship assistance is available, as needed. [See page 15.](#)
- **Dorothy Gerber Youth Orchestra:** This opportunity is for students who are advanced and want to participate with other students in an orchestra setting. The DGYO meets once a week at the Great Lakes Center for the Arts but welcomes advanced students from throughout the region. There is no cost to participate in

the DGYO and there is no age restriction, though prospective students must demonstrate a sufficient skill level to director Dr. Reimer. This year, the DGYO will embark on its first tour. [See page 18.](#)

- **Summer Programs:** The DGSP has offered four different camp options and a Summer School of Music for students who wish to maintain or expand their skills during the summer months. All summer programs include a fee for participation, though scholarship assistance is available, as needed. [See page 19.](#)

INSTRUMENTS



Renting versus Buying: Families are encouraged to rent an instrument rather than buy, especially if the student is not yet ready for a full-sized instrument. Rental companies have a very reasonable rate and provide many services, including repairs, size increases (for when your student grows!), and accessories. If a family is interested in purchasing an instrument, please speak with your instructor before making any purchase. Instruments are expensive investments that are best purchased with professional assistance as there are many cheap options that turn out to be headaches for those who buy them (DANGER: do not buy an instrument online!).

Rental Companies: The DGSP has partnered with SHAR Music to provide you with a quality instrument and great customer service. While the DGSP instructors are happy to provide advice on the rental process, remember that SHAR is a separate company from the DGSP. Each student will need to set up their instrument rental with SHAR by visiting sharmusic.com/rental-teacher-list or calling (800) 248-7427. Please refer to the SHAR page in this handbook or contact Trisha Berquist (tberquist@greatlakescfa.org) for more information. The DGSP does own a collection of instruments that may be available for those who need scholarship assistance. This is particularly relevant for students studying cello or bass, which are significantly more expensive to rent. If scholarship assistance is needed, contact Trisha Berquist or David Reimer.

Instrument and Size: Students are welcome to choose any of the four stringed instruments - the violin, viola, cello, or bass. Families should consider the logistical challenges and added rental cost of the bigger instruments (cello, bass) before making a final decision. If a student has a strong desire to play one of the bigger instruments but the cost is prohibitive, scholarship assistance is available. Each instrument comes in many sizes and families should consult with their instructor to find the correct size. If the family already owns an instrument, please show it to the DGSP teacher to determine if it is the appropriate size, and if it is in suitable condition to be used for the class.

Instrument Safety and Care: Stringed instruments are valuable and fragile. Familiarizing yourself with instrument care procedures can help prevent inconvenience, cost, and potential loss of value incurred in fixing damage due to accident or neglect. Students will learn about good instrument care as part of their classes. Parents also need to assist the student in taking good care of the instrument at home and when it is being transported. Instruments are easy to break, so it is important that they be put away in their cases when not being played. Instruments in a soft case (canvas) need to be kept out of home traffic routes and carefully moved so they do not bang into doorways or other obstacles. If an instrument is damaged, the parent should immediately contact the teacher and/or the rental company to determine how to fix it – a parent should never attempt to fix the instrument themselves.

- **Handling and Instrument:** When handling a stringed instrument, keep in mind that the varnish is very fragile. Players should avoid putting their hands directly on the varnish of the instrument whenever possible. While playing and moving the instrument, care should be taken to protect the instrument from damage by jewelry, buttons, and zippers. While in their cases, violins and violas should be protected against possible damage by using a blanket or instrument bag.
- **Cleaning:** The recommended method of cleaning is to use a soft, lint-free, non-abrasive cloth to remove rosin dust, oil, and dirt from the instrument immediately after each use. Avoid using any commercial or household solvents near an instrument.
- **Humidity:** Humidity control should be a great concern to players of wooden instruments. String instruments are made of several pieces of wood which can be susceptible to fluctuations in humidity. Too much or too little humidity can be the cause of arching distortion, cracks, neck projection problems, glue joint separations, strings which are too high or low, soundposts which are too loose or tight, and many other problems. It is ideal to keep the instrument humidity between 40-60%, although in very dry months 30% can be acceptable.
- **Temperature:** In addition to damage caused by drastic humidity changes, instruments are also susceptible to damage caused by rapid fluctuations in temperature. While in colder climates it is often impossible to avoid subjecting an instrument to low temperatures, it is important to make certain that the rate of temperature change is as slow as possible. Excess heat may soften the varnish which can pick up impressions from fabrics touching the instrument. Instruments should never be left in direct sunlight, next to heaters, or unattended in a vehicle.
- **Strings:** If a string breaks, the student should have a teacher aid in putting on a new string. It is advisable to keep a spare set of strings in the instrument case. To avoid breaking, caution should be taken during tuning, especially for new students. Please have a teacher assist you if your instrument is very out of tune and the pegs need to be used.

MORE INFORMATION

- **Registration:** For a student to participate in the DGSP, the parent needs to register online by following the registration link on the website or go directly to this address: great-lakes-center-for-the-arts.coursestorm.com. If you have registered before, you can log in and update your student's classes for the new school year. This provides the program with all the necessary information to communicate with you throughout the year.
- **Participation:** The DGSP operates on the school calendar and registration for a program is based on a full year of participation. Every student is an invaluable part of their orchestra team and vital to the group's performing success. The full benefits of learning an instrument also take time, so commitment and perseverance are virtues!
- **Parent Supervision:** For students who are in the third grade or lower and for all students in the Suzuki Program, parents must remain onsite or in the studio during class time.
- **Timely Pick-up and Drop-off:** Classes begin promptly at the times indicated. It is important that all students arrive prepared and on time to class as scheduled. Parents are expected to pick-up their student promptly following the end of class. The DGSP is unable to provide supervision of students outside of scheduled class times. If there is an emergency and you are unable to pick up your student on time, please contact your student's teacher.
- **Communication:** It is vital that the DGSP be able to reach parents to communicate details in a timely way throughout the year, including details about classes and concerts as well as class cancellations due to weather. The parent hub on the DGSP website is a great place to look for information. You can find it here: dorothygerberstring.org. The DGSP strongly urges all parents to join the REMIND system for program alerts. You may register on Remind with a phone number or email address at remind.com, The code for the general DGSP account is @gerbersp. Email is the preferred method for the DGSP to communicate more extensive content and to reach individual families regarding opportunities and concerns, so we request that a reliable, regularly checked email address be provided as part of the registration process. If your family does not use email or check it regularly, please let us know the best method to reach you. The DGSP also has a Facebook page, and we encourage parents to follow our page for photos and videos of program events.
- **Practice:** In school, the combination of teacher instruction and homework is essential for academic success. It is similar in music, as students are expected to spend time at home practicing the music that has been covered by their teacher in class and/or lesson. Students are taught how to practice by the teachers and are encouraged to make it a daily habit. This is an area in which parents can have the best impact – helping your student find a good time and location for practice and helping them with positive incentives to develop this habit. The annual practice challenge (February-March) is a required part of the program as students chart

their practice time and parents turn the charts in to the DGSP. The exercise offers fun prizes and recognition for achievement while also providing the program with data on the “state of the program.”

- **Music:** The rental company often provides a music book at the start of the rental process. We recommend that a parent specify whether they are using an Essential Elements book for the classroom program or a Suzuki book for the Suzuki Program. Families with students taking private lessons or who have graduated to more advanced books in the classroom and Suzuki programs are responsible to purchase music as assigned by the teacher. Some options for ordering music include SHAR (sharmusic.com), Performer's Music (performersmusicchicago.com), or J.W. Pepper (jwpepper.com).
- **Concerts:** Performance is the exciting culmination of lessons and classes, so the DGSP provides a variety of concert opportunities for students to demonstrate their growth in public. All students are vital to their group's success, so attendance at all concerts is expected. Performance dates are included in this handbook and on the website. The final concert of the year is the annual Collage Concert, which is scheduled for May 21. Every year, parents are amazed to see and hear the progress made by students in this concert.
- **Publicity:** The DGSP incorporates photos and videos of its classes to promote the program to prospective families by a variety of media, including its website, social media, brochures, newspaper press releases and posters. When a student is registered for a DGSP class, it is presumed that images of them within a DGSP activity are available for publicity purposes. If there is a reason why a student's image should not be used by the DGSP, a parent should notify Ms. Berquist.
- **Cell Phones:** It is important to focus on music education during a class or lesson, so cell phone use is prohibited while a class or lesson is in session. This is true for students as well as teachers (with exceptions such as a teacher needing a phone as a clock or for a specific musical purpose such as use as a tuner or metronome). If a parent is attending lessons, we also encourage a “cell-free zone” to avoid distractions.
- **Dress Code:** Students are expected to attend classes/lessons with clothing that is appropriate and respectful of an educational context. There are some items that are problematic for playing a stringed instrument – for example, earrings or necklaces that rattle on a violin or a hoody that bunches up on the shoulder/neck where the violin/viola sits. For performances, a DGSP polo shirt will often be required and will be provided. Parents will be instructed if the dress code will be more formal (dark dress pants/skirts with nice shoes) or more casual (normal school clothes) for a given performance.
- **Offsite Activities and Transportation:** The DGSP does not provide transportation to or from classes, concerts, or other events. Parents are free to consider carpooling or other transportation arrangements as needed but do so at their own risk. DGSP staff are prohibited from providing transportation to students in their personal vehicles. For events involving an overnight stay, parents are responsible for reserving and paying for their own accommodations. Where possible, DGSP

will strive to reserve a block of rooms at a discounted rate on a first come first serve basis. Parents are required to accompany their child during all off-site activities or make other arrangements. The DGSP does not provide overnight chaperones.

- **Pay it Forward:** The DGSP continues to look for ways to reach more students in the region, which requires more teachers and therefore more financial support. Any donations to the program are greatly appreciated. Checks can be made out to the Great Lakes Center for the Arts, with DGSP in the memo line. Thank you!
- **Questions and Concerns:** Parents are encouraged to communicate with their student's DGSP teacher regarding questions and concerns. Parents are also welcomed to contact Dr. Reimer regarding any questions or concerns about anything related to the program. Every student is unique, so we are committed to finding a good situation/solution for each one.

SCHOOL-BASED STRINGS CLASSES



The Dorothy Gerber Strings Program provides a traditional classroom option for learning stringed instruments throughout the region of Charlevoix, Emmet, and Antrim counties. These classes take place two times each week throughout the school year in more than ten different locations: Beaver Island Community School, Boyne City Middle School, Boyne Falls Community School, Charlevoix Elementary School, East Jordan Elementary School, Ellsworth Community Schools, Shay Elementary School (Harbor Springs), Harbor Light Christian School, Lakeland Elementary School (Elk Rapids), Pellston Elementary School, and multiple schools in Petoskey.

Thanks to the generous funding of the Gerber family, there is no fee for these classes. The only cost is for instrument rental (see the SHAR page in the appendix). If the cost of a rental is too great for a family to be able to participate, scholarship assistance may be discussed directly with Dr. Reimer.

A student must be in the 4th grade or older to be enrolled in a strings class. This age is based on the normal ability of a student to grasp concepts at school and be able to effectively take them home to practice, without relying on a parent. For younger students, it is very possible to learn an instrument, but it should be in a private lesson setting where a parent is more involved in the learning process.

Students may choose to learn the violin, viola, cello, or bass. Each instrument has its own distinctive characteristics, so it is strongly encouraged that a student continues the instrument they have chosen through the end of a school year. If a student wishes to

change instruments between school years, they would be encouraged to either take private lessons over the summer to catch up to the level they had previously achieved on their former instrument or to enroll in the beginner class again for the new instrument.

Instrument study leads to performance, so the students in a strings class are expected to participate in performances by their class, including the May Concert that features the entire Dorothy Gerber Strings Program. Families are strongly encouraged to make a commitment to an entire school year, starting with the beginning of classes in September through the May concert and final classes at the end of May.

Parent Expectations

- **Registration:** Please register your child online.
- **Instrument:** Students need an instrument for class, so parents must provide an appropriate instrument, preferably for the first day of class. Parents are encouraged to rent an instrument from SHAR (or another rental company) and make all arrangements with them prior to the start of class.
- **Encourage Practice:** Learning a stringed instrument is a challenging (yet rewarding!) activity, so daily practice is very important. No child can be expected to have the discipline and motivation to independently practice each day, so it is the parent's responsibility to help the student develop these habits. Parents are encouraged to find a consistent time each day when practice is expected and to use their discretion in terms of incentivizing the student to practice.
- **Maintain Communication:** Please sign up for the REMIND system of notification and provide an email address that is regularly checked. The DGSP needs to reach parents in a timely way when weather or illness causes the cancellation of a class.

Student Expectations

- **Attendance:** The student should attend every scheduled class and always bring the normal accessories needed for study – their instrument (including shoulder rest, bow, cello rock stop or whatever is normal for their instrument), music and a pencil. If it is necessary for a student to miss a class, the parent should notify the teacher and understand what assignments the student would miss so they can make them up at home, in the same way they would for a school class. If a student has a long-term schedule conflict with a class, please discuss the situation with Dr. Reimer.
- **Behavior:** The DGSP employs excellent music teachers and expects that students will be respectful toward the teacher and follow the teacher's instructions. The DGSP cannot send a student to the principal's office and, especially after school, remove a student from the classroom, so we rely on the support of parents to reinforce appropriate behavior in class. A parent will be notified by the teacher or Dr. Reimer if a student is exhibiting consistently inappropriate behavior that will not be tolerated in our classes. In every case, we hope for a positive resolution that will allow the student to continue to study strings.

- **Instrument Care:** Students will be instructed in good instrument care during their first week of classes but need to continue to exercise good judgement about preserving these valuable instruments.
- **Practice:** To make progress on a stringed instrument (and get the most satisfying results), it is important to play the instrument daily. Since class takes place two days each week, students should aspire to practice at least four other days each week (they can still practice on class days, too!). It is often advisable to set a consistent time in the family's schedule for practice. If a student does not understand what to practice or how to organize their practice time, they should ask their teacher or Dr. Reimer.
- **Performances:** The natural result of class and practice is performance. Musicians share the fruit of their efforts with audiences for the enjoyment of all. Performance is also a way to affirm a student, since they have made some level of progress since their last performance, and this is something to be celebrated. Performances are also community efforts, and your student is a valuable member of a team. The DGSP expects students to participate in concerts scheduled for their classes as well as the whole-program concert in May.

CLASS SCHEDULE

September 7	Intermediate and Junior Orchestra Levels Start
September 27*	Beginning Level Starts
October 29	Fall Play-in
December	Holiday concerts planned at local schools
January 31	The Practice Olympics begin!
March	Pre-spring break concerts planned at local schools
May 21	Annual Collage Concert
June 3	Final Day

**Some beginning classes that take place within the school day may start at the beginning of the school year.*

TRADITIONAL PRIVATE LESSONS



Private lessons are the most efficient way to make progress on a stringed instrument.

The expert DGSP instructors can address the specific strengths and weaknesses of an individual student and customize the lesson to that student's needs. Students can begin private lessons at any time of year, whether combined with other programs (class or Youth Orchestra) or as their primary form of study.

- **Schedule:** Lessons are scheduled once a week, for 30, 45 or 60 minutes. Beginning and younger students typically have shorter lessons, while older and more advanced students receive longer lessons. The cost of these lessons is \$25 (30 minutes), \$35 (45 minutes), \$45 (60 minutes). Scholarship assistance is available, if needed (please talk with Dr. Reimer).
- **Locations:** Lessons are available in Charlevoix (Christ Episcopal Church), Petoskey (United Methodist Church), Boyne City (Boyne City Middle School), Elk Rapids (Lakeland Elementary School), Beaver Island (BICS) and the DGSP Studio in Bay Harbor (4233 Main Street).
- **Teachers:** The DGSP has several highly qualified lesson teachers, though there are not teachers of every instrument at every location. Please speak with Dr. Reimer about your options.
- **Practice:** The teacher gives assignments at each lesson which the student should then practice for the other five or six days before the next lesson. Progress is accomplished by the combination of good teaching (teacher) and good practice (student)! If a student is consistently unprepared for their lesson, the teacher may speak with a parent about taking steps to ensure adequate practice.
- **Performance:** Private lesson students perform twice a year in recitals. These are performances in which student soloists perform with piano accompaniment. Students prepare their solos in lessons and then have the opportunity to demonstrate their progress in recitals for family and friends. Private lesson students are also expected to perform on the DGSP Spring Concert in May, as determined by their teacher and Dr. Reimer. A student may join an ensemble for the concert or have the opportunity to perform a solo or in a chamber ensemble.
- **Cancellation Policy:** DGSP teachers travel to numerous locations to provide lessons, so it is important that students arrive to their lessons at the scheduled time, prepared for instruction. If a family has an unavoidable schedule conflict with their lesson time, it would be preferred that the teacher receive a week notice and there be an effort to reschedule the lesson (depending on teacher availability). The minimum notice would be 24 hours. If the teacher does not receive adequate notice, you will be charged for that lesson time. Often, the teacher will have

students before and after your child, so please try to be “on time” so that you get the full lesson. There will be times when the teacher has a schedule conflict, and the same standards apply to the teacher. If there is an emergency, please text the teacher as soon as possible to cancel your lesson.

- **Billing:** You will receive an invoice from the Great Lakes Center for the Arts monthly (usually within the first week of each month) and payment is expected by the end of that month. There are options to pay online or to mail a check. Payment should not be brought to the lesson. If payments fall behind by three months, lessons will be suspended until the account is balanced.
- **Music:** Families are responsible to purchase the music that is assigned by the teacher. This often includes a scale book and a book or sheet music for solos.

CALENDAR

November 19	Solo Recital
April 29	Solo Recital
May 21	Annual Collage Concert

SUZUKI PROGRAM LESSONS



The Suzuki Method teaches children how to play music with the same ease that they learn to speak their native language through a philosophy called the mother-tongue approach. Dr. Suzuki based his approach on the belief that musical ability is not an inborn talent but an ability that can be developed, just as every child has the ability to learn their own native language. Creating a positive learning environment using listening, imitation, and repetition are a few features of the Suzuki approach.

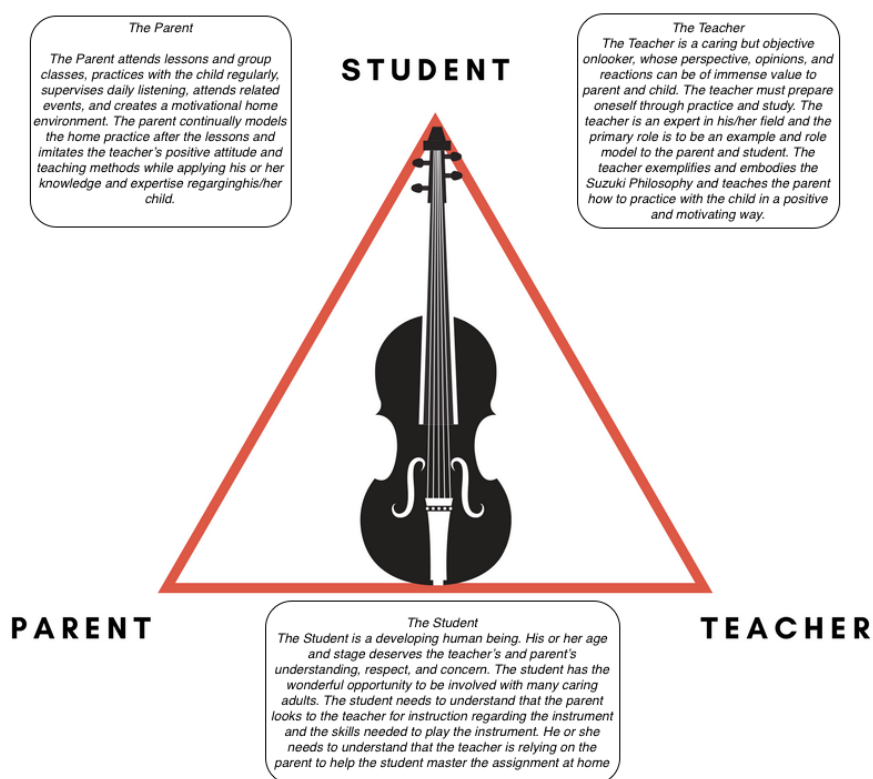
The DGSP Suzuki Program offers weekly private and group lessons. Every student will attend one private and one group class per week. Private lessons cost \$25 per half hour and group classes are 45 minutes, free of charge. Scholarship assistance can be requested from Dr. Reimer (dreimer@greatlakescfa.org). Parents receive an invoice at the start of each month for the prior month's lessons and can pay online or by mailing a check to the Great Lakes Center for the Arts. Parents may set up a lesson time by contacting Miss Iuliia Fetysenko. (ifetysenko@greatlakescfa.org).

Private lessons embrace the total development of the child through learning to play the instrument. Group lessons create a supportive environment that cultivate motivation and

desire to learn as well as giving kids the opportunity to experience the joy of playing together.

Suzuki students participate in three performances each year - fall and spring recitals in which perform their solos and group pieces with piano accompaniment and the DGSP's combined final concert as a great celebration of their achievements.

If a family has an unavoidable schedule conflict with their lesson time, please notify the teacher with at least a week's notice. If possible, the instructor will reschedule the lesson. The minimum notice should be twenty-four hours. If a student misses a lesson without a notice, there will be no refund of the lesson fee. In case of an emergency, please text or call the teacher as soon as possible to cancel your lesson.



Parent Involvement: Suzuki method is based on a parent-child-teacher triangle where all three are equally important and working together to nurture a child through music. The parent is a “home teacher” for the student and takes a major role of creating an enjoyable learning environment for the child to succeed. Encouragement and support from the parents’ love and family environment, contributes to deeper relationships and the child’s overall emotional well-being and happiness.

Early Beginning: The early years are crucial for developing mental processes and muscle coordination. Listening to music should begin at birth. Formal training may begin at age three or four, but we accept beginning students into the Suzuki program up to age 7.

Training: The parent is required to read the book “Nurtured by love” and to observe two private lessons and one group class to get better understanding of the method and expectations.

Listening: Children learn words by hearing them spoken hundreds of times by others. Listening is a crucial part of the method because students will be learning music by ear. Daily listening of the recordings is one of the most important parts of the learning process.

Learning: Parent will be taught how to play the instrument to be able to correct and guide the child’s practice to make it successful. Parents should have a notebook to take notes in each lesson.

Practicing: Dr.Suzuki said *“You should practice only the days you eat.”* Daily practice will help master good habits and improve faster. Practice includes playing the instrument, working on the teacher’s assignments, and listening the recordings.

Registration: Parent should register for Suzuki classes on the website.
great-lakes-center-for-the-arts.coursestorm.com.

Instrument: Parent should provide a student with an appropriate-sized instrument after meeting with their teacher.

Communication: To provide vital information about the program and specific details, it is strongly recommended that parents sign up for the REMIND system and provide a reliable and regularly checked email address.

Music: Parents should have a copy of the Suzuki book and audio recording for the instrument their child is studying. Parents should follow teacher recommendations for audio recordings. It is important for the student to be listening to quality performances so that they can strive to imitate the best sound. DGSP Suzuki Program recommends:
alfred.com/suzuki-method.

Hilary Hahn recordings for the violin. William Preucil recordings for the viola.
Tsuyoshi Tsutsumi recordings for cello. Gary Karr recordings for bass.

CALENDAR

November 8	Suzuki Performance with the Dorothy Gerber Youth Orchestra
November 20	Suzuki Recital
April 30	Suzuki Recital
May 21	Annual Collage Concert

DOROTHY GERBER YOUTH ORCHESTRA



The Dorothy Gerber Youth Orchestra is the most advanced ensemble in the program. The DGYO provides special opportunities to perform advanced music with other excellent students and to have extra opportunities to perform. It also requires a greater level of skill and commitment. Participating in the DGYO is an honor and a privilege that is earned by passing an audition, arranged through Dr. Reimer. Orchestra members are strongly encouraged

to also be taking private lessons, where they can develop more advanced skills and receive help with the music the DGYO is preparing. Students are also expected to practice their parts at home so that the weekly rehearsal can be focused on coordinating the parts into a more melodious whole.

As with all DGSP programs, a parent should register the student for the program, ensure that they have an appropriate instrument, help motivate them to practice and get them consistently to rehearsals and concerts.

Expectations of Students

- **Practice:** More difficult music requires more consistent preparation at home. Students should aim for at least 30 minutes a day, six days a week.
- **Attendance:** Since the DGYO only meets once a week, consistent attendance is especially important. If a student misses more than two rehearsals per concert cycle, they would need to speak with Dr. Reimer about options for assuring that they will be ready for the concert. [The DGYO meets on Mondays from 6:30PM-8:00PM at the Great Lakes Center for the Arts, beginning on September 13.](#)
- **Concerts:** The DGYO performs a variety of concerts each school year which are expected of all members.

CALENDAR

November 8	Fall Concert
December	Holiday Concert TBD
March 12-14	Tour to Grand Rapids
March 19	Winter Concert
May 21	Spring Collage Concert

SUMMER PROGRAMS

A break from playing the instrument can be a healthy thing, but two or three months away from an instrument will result in significant deterioration of skills. DGSP students are strongly encouraged to participate in at least one summer program so that they are better prepared for the start of a new school year.

Summer opportunities will be announced on the DGSP website before Spring Break and parents are encouraged to begin registering for their preferred options at that time.

Past camps have included a Suzuki Camp, a Fiddle Camp, and advanced Chamber Music camp with The Cummings Quartet, a Beaver Island Camp, and a Back-to-School Camp. The Summer School of Music provides opportunities for private lessons and other musical opportunities. All summer programs require tuition, but scholarship assistance is also available.

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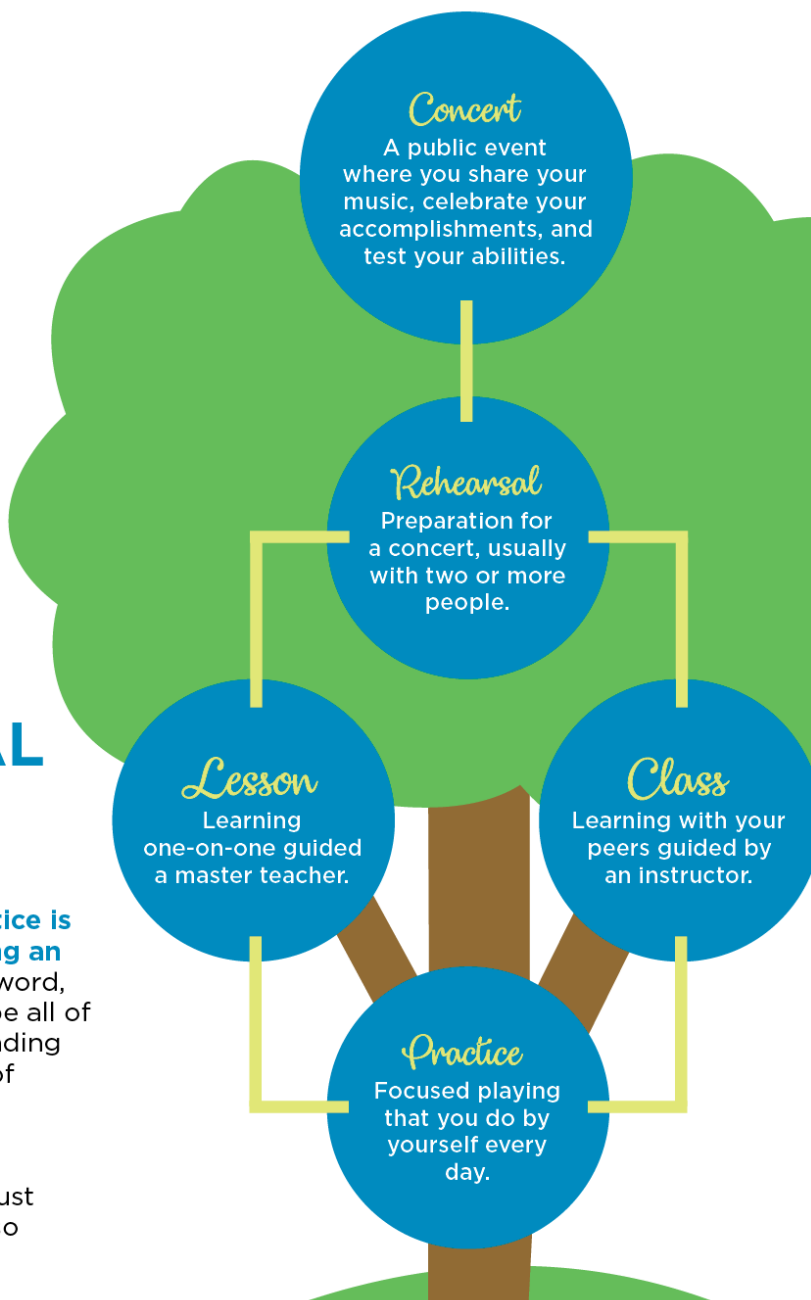
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THE TREE OF MUSICAL LIFE

Everyone knows that **practice is the foundation of mastering an instrument**. However, as a word, "practice" does not describe all of our activities. By understanding the different components of our program, your practice will always have purpose.

And remember, you don't just practice to prepare, you also do it after lessons, class, or rehearsals to "repair" too!



PRACTICE CHALLENGE

DOROTHY GERBER STRINGS PROGRAM



The practice challenge is an important annual event for the DGSP and is required for all students. The teachers use this time to train students how to practice effectively and assess how their students are progressing. We make this exercise fun by offering prizes and using a popular cultural theme.

DOROTHY GERBER STRINGS PROGRAM

PRACTICE CHALLENGE



SCORING SYSTEM

MINUTES PRACTICED: Students, you will be given a point for every minute logged below. Write down the time that you begin playing your instrument (i.e. 5:30) and then again when you finish playing (i.e. 6:05). You are encouraged to practice in reasonable and effective time increments, so multiple shorter practice sessions are better than one very long time.

DAYS PRACTICED: You will earn 20 points for each day you practice. (There is a five-minute practice minimum for the day). Fifteen minutes of practice for six days will score more points than three hours on a Saturday.

QUALITY PRACTICE: The best results come from using excellent methods of practice in addition to amount of time. The final round of the practice challenge will include a bonus for quality of practice.

FIRST WEEK PRACTICE GOALS:

DATE	START TIME	END TIME	START TIME	END TIME

SECOND WEEK PRACTICE GOALS:

DATE	START TIME	END TIME	START TIME	END TIME



Dorothy Gerber
Strings Program

2021-2022 Participation Agreement

I agree that my child/ren has my permission to participate in classes, lessons, camps, and events of the Dorothy Gerber Strings Program from September 1, 2021, through August 31, 2022. By signing below, I agree to the terms set forth in this Agreement.

The Dorothy Gerber Strings Program (DGSP) is an educational initiative of the Great Lakes Center for the Arts (GLCFA). I have received and reviewed the Parent Handbook and agree that I, my child/ren, and any accompanying adult (collectively the "Participant") will follow the rules of GLCFA including all posted and/or verbal directions and instructions of GLCFA staff, independent contractors, and volunteers while present on the GLCFA premises and while participating in DGSP activities which may be held elsewhere.

An inherent risk of exposure to COVID-19 exists in any public place where people are present. COVID-19 is an extremely contagious disease that can lead to severe illness and death. I agree that participation in the above noted activity is voluntary and I have knowledge of and assume all risks for the activity to include injuries as well as exposure to communicable diseases, including COVID-19.

I understand current COVID-19 risks and symptoms and current CDC guidelines. Prior to engaging in any of any activities in this program, I certify that my child/ren will not have had any symptoms of COVID-19/ Coronavirus nor been exposed to anyone who had such symptoms or diagnosis in the last 14 days. I agree to notify GLCFA of any changes and I will NOT send my child/ren to the GLCFA program activity if any symptoms develop or with notice of any exposure to COVID-19 until my child/ren has been medically cleared.

In consideration of being allowed to participate in GLCFA program activities, Participant hereby releases, discharges, and agrees to hold harmless Great Lakes Center for the Arts, and its directors, officers, volunteers, employees, agents, contractors, and representatives; other GLCFA program participants; GLCFA and program staff, sponsors, advertisers, and vendors; and the successor and assigns of each of them (each considered one of the "Releasees" herein), to the fullest extent permitted by law, from any and all liability, claims, demands, losses, and damages, which Participant has or may have for any claims or causes of action arising out of or relating in any manner to attendance at the GLCFA premises; attendance at, observation of and/or participation in any event or program at the GLCFA premises; or any related program activities which may be held elsewhere. In further exchange for participation in GLCFA program activities, Participant agree to indemnify, defend and hold harmless any and all Releasees from and against any and all demands, suits, claims, damages, losses, liabilities, costs, and expenses (including reasonable attorneys' fees and expenses), including but not limited to, any claims by or on behalf of Participant or any accompanying minor, arising out of or relating in any manner to (i) Participant's and/or an accompanying minor's attendance at the GLCFA premises; attendance at, observation of, and/or participation in any event at the GLCFA premises; or any related activities, or (ii) Participant's and/or an accompanying minor's acts or omissions. In exchange for participation in GLCFA program activities, Participant covenants not to sue (or assist any person in suing) any Releasee for any matter related to the above assumptions, releases, indemnifications, or agreements.

Name(s) of Child/ren:

Signature of Parent or Guardian on Behalf of Participant(s):

Date:
