



Suzuki Talent Education Program

Family Handbook

2019-2020 SEASON

suzukinl.ca
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	About STEP	pg 3
II.	Our Organization	
	A. Artistic Faculty	pg 4
	B. Board of Directors	pg 4
III.	How Our Program Operates	
	A. Registration	pg 5
	B. Payment	pg 6
	C. Refunds	pg 7
	D. Communications	pg 7
	E. Volunteering	pg 7
	F. Fundraising	pg 8
	G. Instrument Rentals	pg 8
IV.	Our Program	
	A. Group Classes	
	1. General Information	pg 8
	2. Location	pg 9
	3. Calendar	pg 9
	4. Syllabus	pg 11
	5. Policies	pg 14
	6. Parent Responsibilities	pg 15
	B. STEP Concerts	
	1. Group Class Concerts	pg 17
	2. Graduation Recitals	pg 17
	3. Solo Recitals	pg 18
	4. Performance Dress Code	pg 18
	5. Photography/Videography	pg 18
	6. Post-Concert Socials	pg 18
	C. Performing Ensembles	
	1. STEP Fiddlers	pg 18
	2. Young Virtuosi	pg 19
	D. Social Activities	pg 19
	E. NLSI	pg 20
	F. Private Lessons	
	1. General Information	pg 20
	2. Policies	pg 21
	3. Dr. Suzuki's Recommendations	pg 22

I. About STEP

The Suzuki Talent Education Program offers a complete string music education for children in violin and cello. Our mission is ***to teacher children music through Shinichi Suzuki's philosophies and principles of natural learning and inspire a deep appreciation for art, humanity, and traditional culture in Newfoundland and Labrador.***

*"I want to make good citizens. If a child hears fine music from the day of his birth and learns to play it himself, he develops sensitivity, discipline and endurance. He gets a beautiful heart."
— Shinichi Suzuki*

When Dr. Shinichi Suzuki founded his Suzuki Method after World War II, he did so believing that children could save the world from more wars. He believed that through teaching children to play beautiful music, you also teach them to have a beautiful heart. These children become good listeners, good communicators, team players, and sensitive human beings. In nurturing musical excellence, the Suzuki Method nurtures excellent citizens.

The Suzuki Method is an immersive experience in string music education for the whole family. It's a lifestyle - one where the commitment to learning the instrument and making beautiful music is demonstrated daily; one where family life and the bond between child and parent is enriched through music.

Dr. Suzuki believed that every child can. No one child is born with more natural talent than other, and that given a supportive, nurturing environment, all children can become wonderful musicians. The Suzuki curriculum creates this environment through private lessons and group classes taught by the highest trained teachers, a core repertoire for all Suzuki students to learn and therefore be able to play together, involving the parent on a daily basis, and holding frequent performances for each other.

STEP has been the foremost music education program for string players in Newfoundland & Labrador since its beginning in 1982. STEP has also trained young fiddlers since its founding as part of its mandate to preserve and continue an important aspect of intangible Newfoundland culture. Our fiddle group classes and STEP Fiddlers ensemble are the only continual programs for young people to learn traditional folk music in the province. For 37 years, STEP has been the foundation of string playing in our community. Many other arts organizations in the province have benefited from the fine professional and amateur players that STEP trains and nurtures.

STEP alumni include Mark Fewer, McGill professor of music and former concertmaster of the Vancouver Symphony; Heather Kao, concertmaster of the Newfoundland Symphony; Rafael Hoekman, principal cellist of the Calgary Philharmonic; Jennie Press, violinist with Vancouver Symphony; Christopher Anstey, first violin with the Winnipeg Symphony; Angela Pickett, freelance violist in New York City; Romesh Thavanathan, cellist with Hey Rosetta!; Emilia Bartellas, with The Dardanelles, among many others. STEP's most significant achievement, however, is having fostered a lifelong love of and appreciation for music in hundreds of Newfoundland families.

II. Our Organization

A. Artistic Faculty

All STEP Faculty members have received training in Suzuki Method from internationally accredited Suzuki Institutes. STEP teachers instruct private lessons and group classes, as well as direct performing ensembles. Please see our website, suzukinl.ca, for complete biographies of our faculty members.

Artistic Director

Valerie Hewson

Administrator

Heather Patey

Group Class Teachers

Carole Bestvater, *violin & fiddle*

Dave Buley, *music & movement*

Maggie Burton, *violin*

Nancy Case-Oates, *violin & orchestra*

Amy Collyer-Holmes, *cello & musicianship*

Valerie Hewson, *early childhood education & fiddle*

Ema Sharoma-Chao, *fiddle & musicianship*

Lauren Smee, *violin & musicianship*

Christina Smith, *cello & violin*

Performing Groups

Jennifer Johnson, *Young Virtuosi*

Christina Smith, *STEP Fiddlers*

Accompanist

Jenny Griffioen

Other Private Lesson Teachers

Dominic Greene, *violin*

Heather Kao, *violin*

Kate Read, *viola*

B. Board of Directors

STEP is governed by an elected volunteer Board of Directors comprised of parents and community members dedicated to the musical education of children through the Suzuki Method. STEP is a registered not-for-profit corporation and charitable organization. The 2019-2020 Board of Directors are:

Kristy Piercey, *chair*

Sabina Wilhelm, *vice-chair*

Laura Walsh-Martino, *secretary*

Boyd Chislett, *treasurer*

Katrina Moores, *past chair*

Valerie Hewson, *ex-officio*

Heather Patey, *ex-officio*

Robert Cass, *director at large*

Melissa Saunders, *director at large*

Jon Waterhouse, *director at large*

It is the responsibility of the Board to:

- Establish policy and develop strategic plans
- Direct and assist the Artistic Faculty in their work with STEP students and families
- Implement fundraising programs to sustain the program
- Promote the organization throughout the community

STEP is guided by the artistic vision and leadership of an Artistic Director and supported by a part-time Administrator. But like all Suzuki programs, STEP relies on the volunteer contributions of all of its parents to help run its programs and ensure an enjoyable experience for our students.

III. How Our Program Operates

A. Registration

Registration for the 2019-2020 STEP season will begin in June 2019.

1. Family Registration Fee

This is a non-refundable fee paid by all families, including core program, early childhood education, and non-Suzuki students. This fee acts as a deposit guaranteeing your child's place in appropriate core and enrichment programs.

1.1 For New Families:

Family Registration Fee – 1 Child – \$50.00

Family Registration Fee – 2 + Children – \$80.00

1.2 For Current Families: Take advantage of the New Family registration fee by registering early by June 30. The registration fee increases the later you wait.

	Received By June 30	Received July 1 - Aug 31	Received Sept 1 - 28
1 Child	\$50.00	\$75.00	\$100.00
2 + Children	\$80.00	\$130.00	\$180.00

Following September 28, participation in the program cannot be guaranteed and will be subject to any available vacancies.

2. Returning Families

Returning families adding an enrichment class can do so up to Week 3 (without fee penalty) and start immediately, with approval from the Artistic Director. Returning Families adding an enrichment class from Week 4 onward shall begin the class in the winter semester.

3. New families

New families will be accepted up to Week 3 to start classes immediately, with the approval of the Artistic Director. New families registering during Week 4 onward shall begin classes in the winter semester.

4. Winter Semester Registration

4.1 Returning families adding an enrichment class can do so up to January 31 and start immediately, with approval from the Artistic Director. Returning families will not be able to add classes from February 1 onward, and shall wait until the next season's start.

4.2 New families will be accepted up to January 31 to start classes immediately, with the approval of the Artistic Director. New families wanting to register from February 1 onward will have to wait until either NLSI's Starting with Suzuki program (if appropriate) or until the next season's start.

4.3 Registration for the spring semester offerings of STEP Fiddlers and Early Childhood Education classes will open from January 1 until April 1.

5. Pro-Rated Registration: Families joining the any aspect of the program part-way through the season will be prorated based on amount of time remaining.

B. Program Payment

Families will be emailed an invoice for 2019-2020 program fees following the conclusion of June 30 registration.

1. Payment Due Date: Program payment is due by the second group class of the season, September 28.

2. Payment Method: Payment can be made by:

- Cheque, made out to STEP
- Cash
- E-transfer, use the password “suzuki”
- PayPal, adding 3% for processing fees
- Credit cards, adding 3% for processing fees, can be accepted in person only at Group Class 1 & 2

IN FULL	1 whole payment by September 21.
SEMESTERIZED	2 equal payments. 50% of total fee by September 21, 50% to be paid by January 18.
MONTHLY	8 equal payments. First payment due by September 21 using any payment method. Remaining 7 payments by post-dated cheques dated the 1 st of the month, October through to April.

Please label all cheque memos, e-payments, or cash in envelopes, with the full names of children registering. Any non-sufficient funds charges incurred by STEP will be billed back to the family.

3. Late Payments

3.1 Families with unpaid balances beyond Week 3 of each semester will not be able to participate in any STEP performances until the balance is paid.

3.2 Outstanding registration fees from the previous season must be paid in full prior to registering for the next season.

4. Financial Assistance

Families requiring financial assistance or an alternate payment schedule can contact the STEP Administrator. We recognize that participating in a Suzuki program is a serious commitment for families, both in time and resources. Families experiencing financial difficulties may apply, in confidence, for assistance from our new Tuition Bursary Program **by September 1**. We're still working out the details, so interested families should still register in the spring, and contact the Administrator to stay informed.

C. Refunds

1. Full Refund Deadline

1.1 Families who choose to withdraw from the STEP program entirely by Week 3 shall receive a full refund.

1.2 Families who choose to withdraw from any individual class by Week 3 shall receive a full refund for that specific class.

2. Partial Refund Deadline

2.1 Families withdrawing from the STEP program after Week 3 up to December 31 will receive a refund of 50% of all fees paid.

2.2 Families withdrawing from any individual class after Week 3 up to December 31 will receive a refund of 50% of fees paid for that specific class.

2.3 No refunds for withdrawal of any kind will be used from January 1 onward. *Extenuating circumstances may be considered, in which case support documentation may be required.*

3. Issued Refunds: Refunds shall be issued by cheque within 4 weeks of notice of withdrawal.

D. Communications

STEP's primary method of communication with its families is via email. Regular e-mail updates go out to the membership goes with reminders and other important information. *Please ensure you are receiving STEP emails and that they are not directed to your spam filters.*

The STEP website, suzukinl.ca, is the primary location for information about the program, and hosts the regularly updated calendar, schedule, and season documents. Please visit the website if you misplace your copies.

Families shall normally communicate with the STEP Administrator for all program inquiries by email at step@suzukinl.ca. The STEP Administrator is a part-time position and therefore families should not expect immediate replies. Please allow 24-48 hours for a response.

Families may contact the Artistic Director for requests to be absent during any STEP group classes or performances or for teacher/group class reassignment at director@suzukinl.ca.

E. Volunteering

STEP relies on volunteer support and donations to supplement our operational costs and keeping our fees as low as possible. Parent volunteers are critical to the success of our programs. **All parents are expected to help make sure the classroom is set up properly for the start of group class and help return the classroom back to order at the end of the day. These are non-optional contributions.**

Please indicate on your registration form the area(s) where you would like to volunteer, or please suggest how you could best serve the program. You will be called upon to help throughout the season by our Volunteer Coordinator.

If you wish to opt-out of further volunteering, you may instead make a \$100 tax-deductible donation. Please include the Volunteer Opt-Out amount of \$100 when you pay your family program fees in September. You will be issued a charitable tax receipt before December 31.

F. Fundraising

STEP will provide families with the option of participating in 2-3 individual fundraising opportunities within the season. Amounts raised from these activities will be recorded in your family's own fundraising account and can be applied to regular STEP season fees (second semester only), NLSI registration, or STEP-related travel expenses. If you have a fundraising idea that you think STEP should offer, please contact step@suzukinl.ca. Families leaving the program may not withdraw the balance from their fundraising account.

G. Instrument Rentals

STEP has a collection of small cellos and violas available for families to rent at a reasonable monthly rate of \$25/month. If you are interested in renting a STEP instrument:

1. Discuss with your private lesson teacher the size of the instrument that your child requires.
2. Contact the Administrator with your instrument request. The Administrator will let you know whether one is available in that size & when/where to pick up, as well as provide you with a rental agreement form and payment information.

IV. Our Program

A. Group Classes

Group Classes are an essential component of the Suzuki method. They provide an opportunity to perform review pieces and are also the only regular opportunity most students have to learn to play with the piano accompaniment. Learning also happens much more quickly when children are allowed to watch others. In addition to group lessons reinforcing what transpires in the private lesson, they also provide a motivating social environment.

Purpose of Group Classes

- Motivation
- Review of pieces and techniques
- Ensemble skills
- Stamina
- Focus
- Musical sensitivity

- Performing
- Developing a peer group
- Playing with accompaniment

These skills can only be learned if the students are already very good at playing the pieces. Dr. Suzuki said, “Improve your ability with a piece that you know.” It is much more difficult for the group to achieve these goals if the students are still struggling with notes and bowings, so please don’t worry if the group does **not** play your/your child’s latest piece.

Not all the students in the class will know all the pieces that the class is doing – if they do not know a piece or a particular skill, they will be asked to sit down and watch and learn from the others. The teacher may give them an activity to do while the others are playing (help another student with posture or straight bows, play on an open string, count circle bows, listen or watch for a specific technique) which will help them when they get to that piece.

2. Group Class Location

All core, enrichment, and early childhood education classes take place at Memorial University’s School of Music on Saturdays mornings from 9 am – 1 pm. The M.O. Morgan building is located off Elizabeth Ave on Burton’s Pond Rd. Occasionally if there is a conflict at MUN, our program moves to Holy Heart of Mary High School, on 55 Bonaventure Ave. Advance notice will be provided.

3. Group Class Calendar

The 2019-2020 season is organized into 3 semesters: fall, winter & spring, each of them offering 9 weeks of classes.

- All core, enrichment, and early childhood education classes will run for 18 weeks during the fall & winter semesters
- No classes will take place on holiday weekends.
- The new spring semester will run STEP Fiddlers rehearsals, optional additional ECE classes & an Introduction to Viola class.
- Please visit the STEP website, suzukinl.ca, for updated schedule information.

Weather Cancellations

Group classes may be cancelled due to inclement when either Memorial University closes its facilities, or when conditions are deemed unsafe for travel by STEP. Notifications of weather cancellations will be made by email before 8 am on the affected morning, as well as on VOCM radio and on the STEP website. Group classes cancelled due to weather will not be rescheduled.

Calendar Conflicts

From time to time, the STEP schedule may have to be changed due to unforeseen conflicts. In these instances, STEP will make give as much notice to families as possible. From time to time, individual classes may be combined or cancelled due to unavoidable teacher absences. Any of these cancelled classes will be made up.

Fall Semester

Saturday	a.m.	September 21	Week 1
<i>Friday</i>	<i>p.m.</i>	<i>September 27</i>	<i>NSO Masterworks 1 Concert Fieldtrip*</i>
Saturday	a.m.	September 28	Week 2
Saturday	a.m.	October 5	Week 3
Saturday	a.m.	October 12	Thanksgiving Holiday – no classes
Saturday	a.m.	October 19	Week 4
<i>Saturday</i>	<i>p.m.</i>	<i>October 19</i>	<i>Dr. Suzuki's Birthday Party*</i> <i>Play-in, faculty performances & cake</i>
Saturday	a.m.	October 26	Week 5
Saturday	a.m.	November 2	Week 6
Saturday	a.m.	November 9	Remembrance Day Holiday – no classes
<i>Friday</i>	<i>p.m.</i>	<i>November 15</i>	<i>NSO Masterworks 2 Concert Fieldtrip*</i>
Saturday	a.m.	November 16	Week 7
Saturday	a.m.	November 23	Week 8
Saturday	a.m.	November 30	Week 9
Saturday	a.m.	December 7	Group Classes Concert
<i>Saturday</i>	<i>a.m.</i>	<i>December 14</i>	<i>Bowling & Pizza Party*</i>

Winter Semester

<i>Saturday</i>	<i>a.m.</i>	<i>January 11</i>	<i>Family Skating Party*</i>
Saturday	a.m.	January 18	Week 10
Saturday	a.m.	January 25	Week 11
Saturday	a.m.	February 1	Week 12
<i>Friday</i>	<i>p.m.</i>	<i>February 7</i>	<i>NSO Masterworks 3 Concert Fieldtrip*</i>
Saturday	a.m.	February 8	Week 13
Saturday	a.m.	February 15	Family Day Holiday – no classes
Saturday	a.m.	February 22	Week 14
Saturday	a.m.	February 29	Week 15
Saturday	a.m.	March 7	Week 16
Saturday	a.m.	March 14	St. Patrick's Day Holiday – no classes
Saturday	a.m.	March 21	Week 17
<i>Friday</i>	<i>p.m.</i>	<i>March 27</i>	<i>NSO Masterworks 4 Concert Fieldtrip*</i>
Saturday	a.m.	March 28	Week 18
Friday	p.m.	April 3	Group Classes Dress Rehearsal
Saturday	a.m.	April 4	Group Classes Concert
Sat/Sun	all day	May 2/3	Solo Recitals

* Indicates optional social activities for students

November Graduation Concert & February Solo Recital TBA

4. Group Class Syllabus

All Suzuki students will follow the core program, which includes a weekly private lesson (arranged outside of STEP with your lesson teacher), group classes, group class concerts, solo recitals, and graduation concerts. *Enrichment classes and performing groups can be taken in addition to the core program, but do not replace core classes.*

1. Core Suzuki Curriculum

1.1 Pre-Twinkle, Twinkle, & Early Book 1: includes a weekly 30-minute instrumental group class and 30-minute musicianship class, 2 group class performances, participation in solo recitals and graduation concerts, when appropriate.

\$400

All of these classes are taught with fun, games and play involved. Reviewing the repertoire that has already been learned is begun in these early group classes and becomes even more essential as the students progress through the books and add on more and more pieces. Students are given the opportunity to play solo, where they can gain confidence by performing in a safe, positive and encouraging environment.

Pre-Twinkle uses games and activities to reinforce the foundation of playing the instrument. The children learn to be comfortable in a group, to do things together and to take turns. The parts of the instrument, handling the instrument, rhythms, and correct posture are reinforced, as well as focusing and listening skills. Parents are initially active participants in the class, but will gradually withdraw to the audience, with the teacher's guidance, part-way through the year.

Once a student is able to play through the Twinkles with some measure of fluency, they are moved up to the Twinkle class. The Twinkle class concentrates on basic ensemble skills – the ability to play together, to listen to each other and to follow the teacher. Twinkle class continues to reinforce good postural playing habits, and identification of the notes on the A and E strings (fingerboard mapping).

In Early Book 1, bowing, posture, focus and ensemble skills are reinforced, as well as basic dynamics (*piano, forte*), and fingerboard mapping of the D and G strings. Further development of skills listed above, with the addition of basic musical phrasing.

1.2 Late Book 1 & Book 2: includes a weekly 45-minute instrumental group class and 30-minute musicianship class, 2 group class performances, participation in solo recitals and graduation concerts.

\$445

Technical points are discussed and demonstrated, and beautiful phrasing and musical sensitivity is emphasized. Students are given the opportunity to play solos for their peers.

1.3 Book 3 & Book 4: includes a weekly 45-minute instrumental group class and 30-minute musicianship class (up to the completion of level Green), 2 group class performances, participation in solo recitals and graduation concerts. *Recommended to take Orchestra after Musicianship Green.*

\$445 up to Musicianship Green/\$355 after completion of Musicianship Green

Once in Book 4, the teacher may occasionally introduce an 'extra' non-Suzuki piece as a class project.

1.4 Book 5 and up: includes a weekly 60-minute instrumental group class, 2 group class performances, participation in solo recitals and graduation concerts. *Recommended to take Orchestra or Young Virtuosi.*

\$400

In addition to reviewing the core Suzuki book repertoire, these advanced classes will incorporate some of the musicianship concepts formerly taught in the Blue and Advanced lessons. The teacher may occasionally use supplemental (non-Suzuki) repertoire from other sources including Royal Conservatory, orchestral excerpts and other genres.

1.6 Musicianship: 30-minute Musicianship classes are built into the core program for all STEP students up until the completion of Musicianship Green.

A group class in music reading, where rhythm and pitch-reading skills are developed through enjoyable games. For a musician, reading notes is as important as reading words – not being able to read (or reading poorly) is a major handicap. Think of the wonderful world that opened to your child when they began to read books! There is a similar world of music, just waiting for your child to unlock the mystery of musical notation.

Musicianship curriculum includes rhythm training, aural skills, mapping the instrument (knowing where the notes are on the fingerboard) and music symbols (the staff, clefs, pitches, rhythms). As students progress, they will learn about keys, scales, musical terms, and learn how to identify intervals by ear and on the page. Musicianship builds to reading music while playing your instrument, and is an excellent foundation to playing in orchestras and chamber groups.

As part of our Musicianship curriculum, our “Music & Movement” class provides a setting for young children (under 6) to learn various musical concepts and skills through body movement. Largely inspired by the Dalcroze method, activities will focus on developing singing, feeling rhythms with their bodies, and group participation. More specifically, they will learn concepts such as: high vs low pitch; fast vs slow tempo; ability to detect different emotion in music; rest and silence; identifying steps and leaps; and identifying down beats in different time signatures.

2. Enrichment Classes

2.1 Orchestra: includes a weekly 60-minute group class and 2 group class performances.

\$225 for Suzuki students

\$315 + family registration fee for non-Suzuki students

Students who have completed Musicianship Green are encouraged to join Orchestra! (All participation is by recommendation from your private teacher.) Orchestra applies what has been learned in Musicianship and also introduces following a conductor and part playing. Students will experience the complexities and fun of playing in an ensemble. Strongly suggested for any student aspiring to one day play in Young Virtuosi, our top performing ensemble! (*Replaces the former YES Orchestra program and YVi Sight Reading group class.*)

2.2 Beginner Fiddle: includes a 30-minute weekly group class and 2 group class performances

\$200 for Suzuki students

\$285 + family registration fee for non-Suzuki students

2.3 Intermediate Fiddle: includes a 30-minute weekly group class and 2 group class performances

\$200 for Suzuki students

\$285 + family registration fee for non-Suzuki students

2.4 Advanced Fiddle: includes a 45-minute weekly group class and 2 group class performances
\$225 for Suzuki students
\$315 + family registration fee for non-Suzuki students

The fiddle has been part of Newfoundland's own folk music for centuries. Continue the tradition by learning fiddle playing techniques and many of the tunes which have been passed through aural tradition from generation to generation. Fiddle classes are open to Suzuki students in Violin Book 2 and up. Class placement is decided by the Artistic Director.

2.5 Non-Suzuki students are students who are not members of STEP following the core program. Non-Suzuki student participation in enrichment classes is subject to a recommendation from a current STEP faculty private lesson teacher, and approval from the Artistic Director. Separate pricing applies.

3. Early Childhood Education Classes

3.1 Music With Your Baby: Infant/Toddler (ages 0 to about 2.5 years): includes a weekly 45-minute group class and 2 group class performances
\$300 + family registration fee
\$40 materials fee
\$160 for optional 9-week spring semester

The Music With Your Baby class for parents with babies and toddlers blends elements from several early childhood music education philosophies, including Kodaly, Dalcroze Eurhythmics, Orff and Suzuki Talent Education. Designed for children aged zero to about 2.5 months and their parents, classes involve the following musical experiences:

Singing; creative movement; rhythm; counting in different languages; basic musical concepts; story time; live violin viola or cello music every class (classical and traditional music); occasional concerts by young STEP students; taking turns; learning to sit with a teacher; learning traditional nursery repertoire of songs and games that can be incorporated into daily life; free time at the end for children to read books and interact with each other; performing in STEP group class concerts (fall & winter semester only).

3.2 Music With Your Baby: Transitions (ages 2.5 to 3.5 years): includes a weekly 45-minute group class and 2 group class performances
\$300 + family registration fee
\$40 materials fee

MWYB Transitions includes components and concepts from the MWYB Infant/Toddler class. It uses a similar structure and many of the same songs. This class is designed for young children who are interested in playing a string instrument but are not quite ready for structured private or group lessons. As the child is developing enough dexterity and maturity to handle the instrument, and instruction environment, this class will nurture the transition to more formalized Suzuki instrumental lessons. Children will continue to engage in music and movement exercises, listen to concerts by visiting Suzuki student performers, and advancing skills to their repertoire like more precise rhythm; musical terms; naming parts of the string instruments; dynamics; off-instrument skills needed to prepare for violin or cello (e.g. finger dexterity songs and games); early bow hold games with wooden bows; and learning concert manners while listening to mini concerts by STEP faculty and students.

The parent, too, begins to transition to a more structured Suzuki method experience, to through participating and observing in mock private lesson, observing group instrumental classes, and receiving ongoing parent training from guest lectures from other Suzuki teachers.

5. Group Class Policies

1. Attendance

Attending group class is just as important as attending your private lesson. Families must attend regularly. It's also a team activity. Your teacher and classmates depend on you to be there each week. Please do not intentionally register your child for other activities that conflict with their core group classes.

Occasionally an exception may be made when the parent and Artistic Director together feel that a child's age is prohibitive to him/her bring motivated in a group class where the general age of the enrolled students is much younger. In these cases, the student usually observes group classes until he/she has sufficiently reached a place in the repertoire to join his/her own age group.

1.1 It is expected families will submit a written request for any absence. It is respectful to give notice for the teacher's planning, for the other students' experience, and for the Suzuki philosophy.

1.2 For illness or family emergency: If a child has to be absent from group class for illness or a family emergency, please contact the STEP Administrator as early in advance as possible by email.

1.3 Any other reason: You must request in writing for permission to be excused from group class. Permission is only granted when you receive a written response. Requests have to be received by the Artistic Director via email at least 48 hours in advance of the class in order the request to be satisfactorily considered. Sometimes a compromise with a conflicting activity will be able to be arranged. *Requests made on the day before or on the day of a group class will not be considered.*

1.4 An unexcused absence will result in a written warning from the Artistic Director.

1.5 A second unexcused absence may result in suspension from that semester's group concert.

1.6 Students must attend a minimum of 7 of the 9 group classes per semester to be allowed to perform on the group concert. *Exceptions for extenuating circumstances may be made when requested in writing to the Artistic Director.*

1.7 Students must attend the last group class or dress rehearsal before each concert in order to take part in the group class performance. *Exceptions for extenuating circumstances may be made when requested in writing to the Artistic Director.*

1.8 Repeat absenteeism will be reported to the Artistic Director. Extra parent education and class observations may be required to continue. *Exceptions may be made for extenuating circumstances with approval from the Group Class Teacher and Artistic Director.*

1.9 A leave of absence from Group Class will only be granted for extenuating circumstances, and for one semester only. The absence must be approved by the student's private lesson teacher and the Artistic Director.

2. Punctuality

Families must make every effort to be on time for their classes, as late arrivals can disrupt the lesson and use up valuable group class time. Please arrive 5 minutes in advance of your first class of the morning. In the event of a late arrival:

2.1 Unpack the instrument in the hallway. The student must tune their own instrument before entering. If they cannot yet tune their instrument, they may enter with it untuned.

2.2 The student and parents must wait until the class finishes playing a piece, then enter quietly.

2.3 The teacher will not stop a lesson to accommodate a late arrival. They will help tune the instrument and include the student in the class when they have an appropriate pause in the lesson.

2.4 Repeated late arrivals will result in a written warning from the Administrator

3. Materials

- All instrumental group classes are taught from memory, and the students all play from memory. Bringing your Suzuki book is not necessary, unless requested by your group class teacher.
- Students taking **Musicianship** need to bring their **binder** and **two pencils** to every class. Homework may be assigned to complete during the week.
- Students taking **Orchestra** need to bring their **folder with sheet music** and **two pencils** to every class.
- **Parents** should bring a **notebook** and **pen or pencil** to each group class for note taking.
- Students should have their own **rosin**, and a set of **extra strings** in their cases for emergencies.

6. Group Class Parent Responsibilities

1. Attendance & Supervision

1.1 Please be advised that STEP does not have the authority or the capacity to screen visitors to MUN School of Music during our group class mornings. At all times you are responsible for the safety of your child. Please ensure that your child does not damage the school or instruments.

1.2 STEP requires that a parent accompanies/supervises any child 13 years and under to any group class, including core and enrichment classes.

1.3 If you must be at another group class at the same time with another child, please ask another parent to supervise your child.

1.4 If you must be absent from the building, you must designate another student's parent to be your child's contact during the class. Leave your cell phone number with the parent and notify the teacher of the parent assigned.

2. Participation

Although parents may opt-out of STEP's volunteering program, **all parents are expected to help on Saturday mornings so that classes can run smoothly.** All parents are expected to help by supporting the learning environment:

- Helping set up the classroom for the teacher
- Making sure your child's instrument is unpacked by the class start time
- Actively engaging in the class by taking notes for at-home practice, clapping during the bows, and participating as requested by the teacher
- Help return the classroom to order (if you're the last class of the morning session)

3. Behaviour

Parents are requested to ensure their children are not disruptive to the class. However, especially with the younger students, some amount of distraction, movement, or chatter is normal. The group class teacher will determine when it becomes a disruption.

3.1 The teacher will issue a first warning to a child causing a disturbance in the class.

3.2 On the second warning, the parent will be asked to either come sit alongside the child, or the child will be asked to go sit with the parent until invited back into the lesson.

3.3 If there is a third disturbance, the parent will be asked to remove the child from the room for the remainder of the class.

3.4 Repeated behavioral problems will be reported to the Artistic Director. In the case of a continually disruptive student in group class: after every effort has been made in collaboration with the student, parent, and group class teacher to adjust the behavior, the student will be removed from group class in consultation with the group class teacher, private teacher, parent, and Artistic Director.

4. Use of Technology

Parents shall refrain from using their cell phones and other technology during group class. Teachers will make an exception for parents to record a class concept.

5. Questions or Concerns

4.1 If you have a question or concern with respect to your child's group class, you should discuss this with your child's group class teacher. This is especially **important if you are concerned about your child's behavior, general group dynamics, or repertoire.** The group class teacher will want to know about any of these questions or concerns as soon as possible.

4.2 The Artistic Director spends a great deal of time placing students in the appropriate group class level. After the first 3 group classes, **if you are concerned your child has been misplaced,** please discuss the situation with your private lesson teacher. Your teacher will then address your child's placement with the group class teacher and the Artistic Director. You will be notified as soon as a resolution has been reached. *Under no circumstances are parents permitted to unilaterally make this decision.*

4.3 If you feel that you are unable to raise a specific concern directly with your child's group class teacher or private teacher, you may discuss the issue with the Artistic Director. Confidentiality will be respected.

4.4 If you still feel after discussing the issue with teachers and the Artistic Director that your issue has not yet been satisfactorily resolved, please contact Sabina Wilhelm, Vice-Chair at: step.vicechair@gmail.com.

B. STEP Concerts

1. Group Class Concerts

Group class concerts take place at the end of each of the fall and winter celebration. They are the opportunities to gather the entire STEP community to enjoy the music prepared by each class. Every instrumental group class and enrichment class will have a chance to perform.

It is expected that every student in core and enrichment classes will be present for these performances. Requests must be made in writing to the Artistic Director at least 2 weeks in advance of the performance date if you cannot attend.

Admission for all attending adults (including seniors) is \$10. Please have cash ready for the volunteers selling tickets at the door. All children can attend for free. Parents participating with Music With Your Baby and Transition class performances will not be charged admission.

2. Graduation Recitals

STEP holds a Graduation Recital for all students who have completed a book level during the year. This recital is typically held in November. Graduates perform the graduation piece (usually the last piece in the book) together with an accompanist. All STEP families are welcome to attend to celebrate this great accomplishment. The graduation recitals also feature a certificate ceremony to mark the occasion of graduating to a new higher book level.

No admission will be charged at the door. A donation box will be present if extended family members and friends wish to make a donation.

Graduation Requirements

In order to graduate from any level in the Suzuki repertoire (violin, viola, or cello), students must meet the following requirements:

- be recommended by his/her private teacher
- know all the material in the graduating level as well as all prior levels
- participate in a STEP core group class
- produce a recording of required pieces by the deadline set by STEP
- Any exceptions to the above rules must be presented to the teachers involved and the Artistic Director for approval.

Recordings must be uploaded to an Internet sharing site (can be private to invitees only) such as Dropbox, YouTube or Google Drive, and the links submitted to your private lesson teacher by **Week 6 of the fall semester**. The Graduation Committee then reviews the recordings, and encouraging comments are offered to each student.

Graduation levels and selections to be recorded for each level are available online at <http://suzukinl.ca/resources/graduation-requirements/>. Your private lesson teacher will guide you through the process.

3. Solo Recitals

These recitals feature polished solo performances by each student from the private lesson studios with an accompanist. All STEP students will be provided with 1 solo recital opportunity, with recommendation from the private teacher. All STEP families are welcome to attend these recitals, even if your child is not scheduled to perform.

No admission will be charged at the door. A donation box will be present if extended family members and friends wish to make a donation.

4. Performance Dress Code

Students expected to come to all STEP performances dressed in a neat and tidy fashion. No gym clothes, yoga clothes, leggings, cropped tops or pants, boots, sneakers, or sandals. All students are requested to wear **closed toe dress shoes** and:

Bottoms

Dress pants or khakis
Skirt (knee-length or longer with tights)
Dress (knee-length or longer with tights)

Tops

Long sleeve dress shirt or blouse
Sweater or cardigan
Vests, scarves & ties optional

5. Photography & Videography

We encourage parents to celebrate the students' performances. Please silence the sound on your camera or phones. No flash photography is permitted. Please refrain from using tablets, as they block the sightlines for other families. Parents are asked to stay seated while taking any photos or videos, unless you move to the back of the hall.

6. Post-Concert Social

Immediately following the performances, all performers and families are invited to the potluck social. Parents will be asked to contribute snacks or beverages as indicated on their volunteer forms. This is a wonderful time for students to enjoy their friends outside of group class, and build the STEP sense of community.

C. Performing Ensembles

1. STEP Fiddlers: 60 minutes

**NEW* - now on Saturday mornings in 9-week Spring Semester only*

\$120 for Suzuki students

\$145 for non-Suzuki students

\$15 uniform fee for first-time members

Saturday a.m.	April 25	Week 1	Saturday a.m.	May 30	Week 6
Saturday a.m.	May 2	Week 2	Saturday a.m.	June 6	Week 7

Saturday a.m.	May 9	Week 3	Saturday a.m.	June 13	Week 8
Saturday a.m.	May 16	Week 4	Saturday a.m.	June 20	Week 9
Saturday a.m.	May 23	Week 5			

Students who have taken fiddle classes during the fall and winter semesters can continue through to summer by joining the STEP Fiddlers. Becoming a STEP Fiddlers member is by approval of the STEP Fiddlers Director. New to this group, they now meet during the spring semester, May-June. Prepare for a summer of gigs and performances at fun Newfoundland festivals and events over the course of 9 weeks of rehearsals with founding director Christina Smith. The STEP Fiddlers is our longest running performance ensemble, since 1982! A uniform is required and will be communicated to all members in May.

2. Young Virtuosi: 1.5 hours

\$265 for Suzuki students

\$665 + family registration fee for non-Suzuki students

\$15 uniform fee for first-time members

Fall – Spring, Monday afternoons at the Anglican Cathedral
Schedule provided separately by the director in September.

The Young Virtuosi is STEP’s most advanced performing group, open to students in Book 6 Violin and Book 5 cello. (All participation is by recommendation from your private teacher.) Every student in the group will perform a solo concerto with their peers playing the orchestra parts for them. Each student takes a turn as soloist in the group and so Suzuki’s philosophy that “every child can” is maintained at this extremely high level of ability. In Young Virtuosi, students apply all of the skills they have ever learned in lessons, group classes, Musicianship, and Orchestra – since they first picked up a bow. The group presents public performances throughout the season around the St. John’s area, and occasionally travels outside the province. Young Virtuosi is directed by Jennifer Johnson and accompanied by a professional pianist. A formal dress code is required and will be communicated to all members in September.

***Non-Suzuki students** are students who are not members of STEP following the core program. Non-Suzuki student participation in STEP performing groups is subject to a recommendation from a current private lesson teacher, and will also require an audition for the director. Separate pricing applies.*

D. Social Activities

Concert Fieldtrips

As part of one of Dr. Suzuki’s central beliefs that all students learn from their environment, he encouraged saturation in the musical community, such as attending local live professional classical music concerts. STEP arranges concert fieldtrips to all 4 of the Newfoundland Symphony Orchestra’s Masterworks Series concerts at the Arts & Culture Centre. The cost to attend each concert is \$10, available to all STEP students. Details for sign-up, payment, and drop off/pick up times will be emailed in advance of each concert. STEP students will sit as a group with 1 chaperone for every 10 students.

Other Social Activities

This season STEP will organize 3 fun social activities for the students! Participation is not mandatory, but we encourage all to attend! These are great opportunities to socialize and make friends in the program outside of group class (parents, too!). Details about the time, location, and any associated cost will be emailed in advance of each activity.

E. Newfoundland & Labrador Suzuki Institute (NLSI) - 2021

The NLSI is a 5-day program (mornings and afternoon) held during the first week of July. This is commonly referred to around the program as “camp.” NLSI faculty include local STEP teachers and other performers, as well as visiting master teachers from across North America. NLSI is open to any violin, viola, and cello student studying the Suzuki Method in any Suzuki program, as well as to new students who wish to start a string instrument with STEP.

The core program for beginners up to Book 4 consists of daily lessons, group classes, theory classes, concerts, and Orff or orchestra classes. Students may also choose to sign up for daily fiddle classes, chamber groups, and other supplementary classes offered. NLSI also offers a program for Senior Students in Book 6 and up that can be customized to suit their goals and musical needs.

Parents will need to attend the morning sessions of NLSI for the core programming for students ages 12 and under. Students ages 12 and up who are interested in chamber music have the opportunity to participate in the new Iceberg Chamber Music Institute. NLSI fees and information will be provided in the early spring of a camp year. Fundraising opportunities will be provided throughout the STEP season to help families offset the cost to attend. **Please note: NLSI will next run in summer 2021.*

F. Private Lessons

1. Private Lesson Information

The Suzuki Method differs in several essential ways from traditional programs of music instruction. The key components of the method are that:

- The student listens daily to CDs of the Suzuki repertoire
- Suzuki students play and perform all pieces by memory
- In tandem with the private lessons, Suzuki students attend Group Classes
- Parents attend the lessons and assist in the daily practice session
- The lessons begin and end with a bow, which indicate mutual respect between the teacher and student, and contributes to the student’s stage presence

As part of STEP, each student receives one-on-one instruction with a Suzuki-trained teacher on a roughly weekly basis, from September to June. You will have approximately 30 lessons per year. Depending on availability of the student and teacher, lessons may continue through summer. The length of lesson time varies depending upon the age and ability of the student. Lessons are held at the studio of the teacher and are arranged for a mutually convenient time.

i. Teacher assignment: The Artistic Director will assign a Suzuki-trained teacher to a new student based on studio space available. Parents may request a particular teacher, but may be delaying the child's opportunity to start if that teacher's studio is full.

ii. Observation: Since children learn well from their peers, observing peers in individual lessons and group class is highly beneficial and strongly encouraged. Discuss appropriate times with your teacher when you and your child can observe. You can expect other students to attend your lesson as well.

iii. Individual Teacher Fees: STEP teachers are independent professionals and as such set their own rates and schedules. Fees vary according to the teacher. STEP Teachers Fees are paid in advance – usually with post-dated cheques, at the beginning of the year. Fees for group classes are not included in the individual teacher fee; Group Class fees will be paid directly to STEP.

iv. Questions or Concerns: Generally, any questions or concerns with respect to your child's private lesson should be addressed with your private teacher directly. This is particularly true if you are concerned about the lesson dynamics or your child's behaviour towards the teacher. The Suzuki triangle of Parent-Teacher-Student depends on open communication between all three sides. Your teacher will want to know about any questions or concerns as soon as possible.

If you feel that you are unable to raise a specific concern with your teacher directly, please contact our Artistic Director. Confidentiality will be respected. If you still feel after discussing the issue the Artistic Director that your issue has not yet been satisfactorily resolved, please contact Sabina Wilhelm, Vice-Chair at: step.vicechair@gmail.com.

2. Private Lesson Policies

i. Absences: If a STEP teacher cancels a lesson, it will be made up or refunded. Because STEP teachers all have fixed schedules and limited time, lessons missed by the student for any reason cannot be made up. STEP teachers do not object to students swapping lesson times: some teachers even provide their students with a master studio schedule to facilitate this. This allows students to call and switch lesson times with another student of the same lesson length if a conflict arises. **Please inform your teacher of any changes you have arranged.**

If your child is sick enough to stay home from school, and has a communicable illness, please refrain from attending the lesson. Sick students do not learn well, and as playing the violin/cello is a demanding physical activity; it may prolong their illness. They may also cause the teacher or other students to contract the illness which, in turn, may result in more missed lessons.

ii. Changing Teachers: Occasionally, circumstances demand a change of teacher. Please discuss this first with your studio teacher, and then contact the Artistic Director. He/she will help find a suitable replacement. One month's notice to the STEP teacher is required before changing teachers – if that notice is not given, then payment for one month's lessons will be expected.

iii. NSF Cheques: STEP requests that you reimburse the studio teacher for the full amount of the cheque as well any additional administrative fees incurred by the teacher.

iv. Outstanding Fees: Families must pay all outstanding fees for lessons given by a STEP teacher. If fees are not paid in full by the end of August, the student/parent cannot expect to enroll in the program in September with any STEP teacher.

v. Termination of Lessons

By the teacher

Students learn best when the Suzuki philosophy is maintained in both the lesson and home environments (regular practice with the Suzuki parent; regular listening; attendance at group classes). If the STEP teacher feels, after due discussion and instruction that Suzuki's method and philosophy are not being followed then they reserve the right to recommend the family try another method, and discontinue lessons.

By the student

One month's notice, or payment in lieu of notice, is required.

3. Dr. Shinichi Suzuki's Recommendations

- Start as early as possible to create a musical environment for the child by:
 - Playing music for them as much as possible
 - Teaching the parents to play
 - Playing recordings of the Suzuki repertoire every day
 - Attending lessons of other children
 - Exposing them as often as possible to good music and good musicians.
- Divide tasks into simple easy steps and repeat them until they are mastered. ("Step by step mastery.")
- A daily practice routine is of paramount importance. ("Practice only on the days that you eat.")
- Take pleasure in each achievement no matter how small.
- Praise the child's efforts.
- Provide performance opportunities.
- Provide musical social activities such as group class and the Suzuki Institute
- Allow the child to progress at his own pace. ("Don't hurry, but don't stop.") Some children speak later than others; but every child does it when he or she is ready. Learning is best done in a non-pressured, cooperative, non-competitive environment.
- Avoid comparing the child to others. If you follow the method, your child will learn to play beautifully. Does it really matter if someone else learns faster?
- Build a repertoire - a musical vocabulary. Never drop playing one piece when it is learned in order to learn the next one - review all the older pieces daily. ("Improve your ability with a piece that you know.")
- Introduce music reading when the child has developed a high ability to play the instrument.