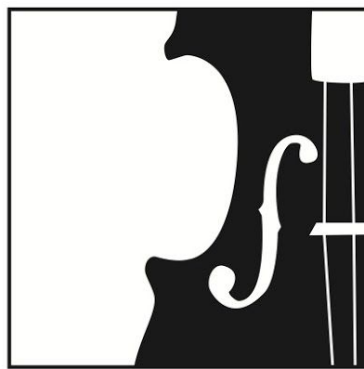


WESTERN SPRINGS
SCHOOL OF
TALENT
EDUCATION



NAPERVILLE
SUZUKI
SCHOOL

Parent Handbook
2018-2019

About our school

Whether you are new to the Western Springs School of Talent Education (WSSTE) and the Naperville Suzuki School (NSS) or are one of our long time families, we wish to welcome you to our school. Founded in 1980, our school has grown to become one of the country's leading Suzuki-based music institutions. We attribute our standard of excellence to the quality of our faculty.

We have assembled one of the finest groups of instructors in the country. Each of our teachers is highly skilled and experienced in teaching and performing their particular instrument. Every teacher in our school has agreed to a system of priority teaching that is addressed in the book *Teaching from the Balance Point: A Guide for Suzuki Parents, Teachers and Students*. All families in our program should own a copy of this essential guidebook for Suzuki Parents. If you do not yet own this useful book, please ask your private teacher how to obtain a copy.

General Information and School Policies

Enrollment

Students must enroll in order to participate in WSSTE and NSS programs. For current students, enrollment materials, tuition, and fees are due by the first day of the Fall Term. New students may enroll at any time during the school year.

Enrollment Form

WSSTE requires all students to turn in a completed Enrollment Form for each academic year. Parents or guardians must verify or provide correct student information and sign the form, indicating that they understand and agree to the policies in this handbook.

Annual Registration Fee

The annual registration fee of \$135.00 per family is due at the time of fall registration. This fee is used for our piano maintenance and tuning, hall rentals for recitals, and accompanist fees. The fee also helps cover our administrative and custodial staff as well as transportation costs for school buses when students perform outside of the local area. **The registration fee is nonrefundable.**

For new students joining mid-year or mid-term. The annual registration fee will be applied as follows:

- 100% of the annual registration fee is assessed for fall term registrations.
- 66% of the annual registration fee is assessed for winter term registrations.
- 33% of the annual registration fee is assessed for spring term registrations.
- No annual registration fee is assessed for summer term registrations.

Tuition

The school year is divided into four terms, primarily for the purpose of dividing up tuition payments. Each term contains 12 weeks. Tuition must be paid in full before the start of each term. Out of respect for teachers' time commitment, **tuition is nonrefundable**; families commit to their lessons for the duration of the complete term.

Tuition includes a weekly private lesson, as well as all group classes as scheduled by your teacher. *Group class is an integral part of the Suzuki method* and we do not offer the option to "opt out", even if schedule conflicts prevent your child from participating. In the rare circumstance that the appropriate group class is not available for your child's instrument or level (e.g. Viola Book 1) a discount will be applied to reflect the discrepancy.

2018-2019 Term Dates:

Fall Term	September 3 — November 25
Winter Term	November 26 — March 3
Spring Term	March 4 — June 2
Summer Term	June 3 — August 25

Payment Options

Mail

Make your check for the tuition and annual registration fee payable to WSSTE, Inc. Mail checks to: WSSTE, 1106 Chestnut Street, Western Springs, IL 60558. Please do not mail cash.

Online

Go to wsste.com. Under “For Parents” select “Pay Tuition”. **Credit Cards incur a 3% service charge.** If you choose this option, please add the additional 3% to your payment amount. ACH (eCheck) payments do not require an additional service charge.

In Person

You may drop off your check or cash payment at either school location. Please give your payment directly to the Administrative Director or insert it in the locked metal drop-box. At Western Springs, the drop-box is installed on the wall adjacent to the reception counter. At Naperville, the drop-box is located in suite 104 on the wall with the thermostat and fire extinguisher.

Delinquent Accounts

Families have a grace period of two weeks after the start of the term to make a tuition payment. WSSTE will **not** assess any late fees. **If tuition is not paid by the end of the second week of the term, lessons will be discontinued until a payment is received.**

Summer Term

Enrollment for summer term is mandatory, although scheduling is more flexible. Students are only required to register for a minimum of 9 weeks of summer lessons. Summer lessons are scheduled through our website and tuition is prorated according to the number of lessons scheduled. Students may take 2 lessons during a single week or schedule longer lessons to make sure that he or she has the equivalent of 9 lessons over the summer term.

There are no group classes scheduled during the summer term. Summer tuition rates are the same as the academic year. The portion of your tuition that goes towards the cost of group class is evenly divided across all 4 terms to simplify billing.

Absence/Attendance Policy

Due to the heavy teaching loads of our faculty, it is not possible to schedule make-up lessons when a **student** misses a lesson for any reason (including illness or prearranged vacation). Please do not ask for a make-up lesson. We also cannot give any credits or refunds when a **student** misses a lessons for any reason.

In the event that a **teacher** misses a lesson, it will either be rescheduled at a time that is mutually convenient for the student and teacher, or the school will credit your account for 75% of the tuition paid for that lesson. The remainder of the tuition will remain with the school to pay for the group class and school expenses. (When you pay tuition at the

school each semester, the tuition amount is divided into three categories. A portion of the tuition goes toward the private lesson, a portion goes toward the group class, and the remainder goes to the school to pay for rent, support staff, utilities, etc.)

Illness Policy

In order to protect faculty and other students from contagious diseases, we request that students who have a fever, or who have had a fever within 24 hours, do not attend private lessons or group classes. The same guidelines are suggested for students with nausea. Teachers reserve the right to not teach lessons for students who are ill, or appear to be suffering symptoms of the flu, colds, etc.

School Closings

When WSSTE or NSS closes, has late openings, or early dismissals for inclement weather, students and parents will be notified in the following manner:

- The announcement will be made on the homepage of wsste.com.
- An email will be sent to all enrolled students through our subscriber-based mailing list.
- School voicemail greetings will be updated with closure information.

Closure announcements will be posted by 1 p.m. on weekdays, 8 a.m. on Saturdays and Sundays for morning activities, and by 1 p.m. for weekend afternoon and evening activities. Additional notices will go out for special circumstances as needed.

Please use your best judgement in regards to traveling for lessons. If the school remains open but you consider it unsafe to drive during a storm, please inform your teacher that you will miss your lesson. No make-up lessons or credits apply when the school remains open and the teacher is present to teach.

Unfortunately, we have no control over inclement weather and all of us (students, teachers, and the school) are adversely affected when weather necessitates that we close the school. Our teachers are dedicated professionals for whom teaching is their chosen career. With this in mind, we have instituted a snow day policy which we hope will allow all to share the loss associated with snow days. There are 3 different procedures, one for each time we must close on *the same day* of the week (e.g. each time there is a snow day on a *Tuesday*).

First snow/cold day on a specific day of the week (e.g. first Tuesday snow day): Student receives a credit. Teacher is paid. (The school bears the cost.)

Second snow/cold day on the same day of the week (e.g. second Tuesday snow day) : Student does not receive a credit. Teacher is paid. (Student bears the cost.)

Third snow/cold day on the same day of the week (e.g. third Tuesday snow day): Student receives a credit. Teacher is not paid. (Teacher bears the cost.)

Withdrawals

If it is necessary to discontinue lessons, please contact your teacher and the Director of Admissions and Finance immediately. **Out of respect for the teachers' time commitment, tuition is nonrefundable.** Filling a lesson opening left by a departing student takes a considerable amount of time: two weeks at the minimum, but often much longer. We require that student tuition be paid *before* the term begins or that parents give notification that they will not return in the next term so that the new opening can be filled as soon as possible.

Please communicate if you have any concerns. We encourage parents to speak with their private teacher if there is ever a problem with lessons, practicing, group class, or any other aspect of the program. Communicating early and often about

your concerns will better equip teachers to respond to your child's needs and tailor lesson plans in order to help him or her succeed.

If you have already discussed your concerns with your teacher and you feel the need to speak with someone else, you may also contact the Director, Edward Kreitman, at edkreitman@wsste.com or admin@wsste.com.

Student Referral and Tuition Credit Program

If you know of anyone who is interested in music study at either school location, please help us to spread the word about the wonderful experience that your child is having at our school. We host Parent Information Sessions once per month at both the Naperville and Western Springs locations for new families who are interested in making music a part of their child's education.

Recommendations that come from the families in our Suzuki community are incredibly valuable so we have implemented a referral program for currently enrolled families:

- If you refer one new student to our school and he or she joins our program, your child will receive a credit towards 2 lessons!
- When the new student enrolls for a full, 12-week term, the lesson credits will be applied to the referring family during that same term. (i.e. If the new family joins in the middle of a term, 2 lesson credits will be applied for the referring family at the start of the following term pending the new student's continuation in the program.)
- This referral program went into effect starting with the 2015-2016 Fall Term. We cannot include past referrals from previous school years.

Photos and Videos

WSSTE and NSS reserve the right to photograph and videotape students for training and promotional purposes.

Indemnification

Student and parent/guardian will not hold the Western Springs School of Talent Education (WSSTE) and/or Naperville Suzuki School (NSS), including its teachers, staff, interns, and volunteers, responsible for any loss or damage of personal property while attending or participating in any WSSTE and/or NSS activity. Student and parent/guardian release, and will hold harmless and indemnify WSSTE and/or NSS from and against any claim, demand, action, or judgment that student and parent/guardian or any other person ever had or may have against WSSTE and/or NSS, for any loss, cost or expense (including attorney's fees) or damage or injury known or unknown, real or personal, sustained by student and parent/guardian while in attendance or participating in any WSSTE and/or NSS program. Student and parent/guardian willfully assume any physical injury risk to the student that is inherent to training. Student and parent/guardian grant consent for any WSSTE and/or NSS instructor to apply physical contact to the student for the purpose of making any technical correction that is appropriate for instruction according to accepted artistic practices. Student and parent/guardian authorize WSSTE and/or NSS to obtain any medical treatment that the student needs in connection with WSSTE and/or NSS training. Student and parent/guardian will pay all or whatever amount that treatment costs and will also hold harmless and indemnify the WSSTE and/or NSS from any claim, cause of action, damage, or liability arising out of or resulting from that medical treatment.

Notice of Nondiscriminatory Policy as to Students

West Suburban Suzuki Foundation, Inc and WSSTE, Inc admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and other school-administered programs.

Our School Policies and our Teachers

WSSTE and NSS faculty members are highly trained professionals committed to the education of every child in their studio. Our school policies are designed with the intent of minimizing fluctuations in teacher income for events that are not in their control (e.g. student cancellations, snow days, etc.). That being said, please understand that teachers are also committed to making sure your child receives every lesson in the term and will make up or credit those lessons which the *teacher* cancels according to the school credit policy. Please carefully review our policies so that you understand our procedures.

Conduct Guidelines for Students and Parents

Over the years, we have worked very hard to make our school environments inviting and comfortable places to learn. Please follow these guidelines whenever you are attending a WSSTE or NSS activity:

- **Make yourself comfortable in the waiting areas, but please clean up after yourself (and your children) and leave the space as you found it.** For example, throw away garbage in the waste bin, return chairs as you found them, and put away coloring books or crayons. We appreciate your taking the time to pick up after your child whenever you are at the school.
- **Parents, please monitor your children's behavior and supervise the use of the restrooms.** Younger children especially need help making sure that paper products and waste are placed in the proper receptacle and generally leaving the restroom in good condition for the next person's use. Children also need proper supervision to make sure they are staying quiet in the waiting areas and hallways so as not to disrupt other student's lessons.
- **Please do not run inside the buildings.** Many teachers and older students use instruments that are valued in the tens of thousands of dollars. Walking with care inside the building will help prevent costly collisions.
- **Siblings are welcome at the music school, provided they have some constructive, quiet activity to keep them occupied.** Ideally, siblings should remain with the parent in the lesson studio. Out of consideration for teachers and families having lessons in other studios, children are not allowed to wander the halls freely.

Special Request: Please do not bring any nuts or nut-products to the Western Springs Location. There are students in our program who have a severe allergy to nuts and even the odor of nuts or skin contact with nuts can cause a reaction. We thank you in advance for helping to keep our school safe for everyone in our community.

School Communications

Website URL: www.wsste.com

For information about school event dates, group class, times, coachings, and inclement weather closures, visit our website: wsste.com.

Email: admin@wsste.com

If you have specific questions about your student's account or need information that is not available on the website, may also contact us by email at admin@wsste.com.

School email list:

We send important school announcements out through our subscriber-based mailing list, including school closure notifications, schedule updates, and a monthly newsletter. Email is the primary form of communication for WSSTE and NSS and it is the parent's responsibility to read emails announcements to stay informed about school activities. You will be automatically signed up to our email subscription through our enrollment process. If you do not receive our school emails, please email admin@wsste.com

Phone: 708.246.9309 (Western Springs) or 630.420.9309 (Naperville)

Office hours for the Fall, Winter, and Spring Terms are typically between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m., Monday through Friday. During the Summer Term administrative office operates on reduced hours, please check with the office for exact times which will be posted closer toward the start of the Summer Term.

Contacting your teacher

If you need to contact your teacher, you can find their email address on the "Faculty" page at wsste.com. You may also call either school and leave a message.

Social Media

You can find us on Facebook (facebook.com/wsstents) and Twitter (twitter.com/wsste).

Piano Coaching and Rehearsals

Our school is extremely fortunate to have Melissa Zindel as our dedicated staff accompanist and music coach.

Parents may sign up for coachings and rehearsals online by going to wsste.com and selecting "For Parents" and "Piano Rehearsals" from the menu at the top of the page.

Children may benefit from a coaching session with Melissa from the middle of Book One and onward. It is extremely helpful for children to work through their pieces using the support of piano accompaniment.

All students who are in Book 4+ who are preparing for solo recitals should have a coaching with Melissa prior to their rehearsal time. **This coaching session must be scheduled at least 7 days before the recital to ensure there is time for the student to work on issues discussed in the coaching. We recommend Book 4+ students schedule coachings 2-3 weeks prior to the recital.** Coachings are offered at the rate of \$27.00 per half hour. Checks must be made payable to **Melissa Zindel** and should be delivered directly to Melissa at the time of the coaching. Students are responsible for paying for missed coaching sessions. Please be sure to make a note of when you have signed up. If you ever need to cancel, you must give Melissa 24 hours notice or you will be responsible for paying for the coaching session.

Performances

Fall Concert

Our annual Holiday Concert will take place at Hammerschmidt Chapel on the campus of Elmhurst College on **Sunday, November 18, 2pm**. All group classes from the school will participate in this program. The concert is free of charge and open to the public. We encourage you to invite family and friends to this event!

Spring Concert

TBA

Solo Recitals

The school offers solo performance opportunities to all students at the school. Recitals are scheduled in both Western Springs and Naperville. Please consult the calendar at wsste.com for the dates and times of these concerts. There are a few rules which apply to these and any other performances in which your child may be involved at WSSTE and NSS.

- Participation in solo recitals requires the recommendation of your private instructor. If you believe your child is ready, or if he or she would like to perform on a recital, please discuss the matter with your teacher as early as possible so there will be ample time to polish and refine a piece. We expect that each student in the school will perform on a solo recital once each year. New students should observe a solo recital before performing for the first time.
- The piece selected to perform should be a “polished” piece. Your teacher will help you choose a piece that represents the student’s best playing.
- All students **must** have a 15-minute rehearsal with Melissa Zindel prior to performing on a solo recital. It is the responsibility of the student and parent to sign up for a rehearsal with Melissa. It is unwise and unfair to expect to show up on the day of the recital, and “run through” the piece with the accompanist regardless of the simplicity of the piece. One 15-minute rehearsal is provided to performing students at no charge. Additional rehearsal time may be scheduled at a rate of \$27.00 per 30 minutes. Please review the *Piano Coachings and Rehearsals* section of this handbook for more information.
- It is part of good concert etiquette that all performers remain in the hall until the conclusion of the program. If you have a conflict which would require the performer to “play and leave”, then you should not perform on that day.
- We cannot accommodate requests for specific recital times. If you have a conflict with any recital times for a given recital day, please let your teacher know that your child cannot participate that day. You can wait for the next recital or participate at the other location. (i.e. If you usually go to Western Springs, your child may perform at the Naperville recital if the date works better for your schedule.)

Performance Classes

Advanced Performance Classes are offered throughout the year, one each month. Violin performance classes take place on Friday evenings at 6:30 p.m. at the Western Springs location. Cello performance classes will be noted on the website calendar. These are intended for participation by the advanced students who are preparing to take an audition or perform in a competition or recital. Participation is limited and should be arranged by consultation with Mr. Wermuth (for violin participants) or Sally Gross (for cello participants). The performance classes are open to the public and we encourage all students at the school to participate as audience members.