

Sarah and Ernest Butler

School of Music

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS STRING PROJECT

Student and Parent Handbook

Mission Statement

University of Texas String Project (UTSP)

UTSP will provide graduate and undergraduate music education students the opportunity to gain hands-on teaching and administrative experience through a guided, supervised program created to facilitate the growth and strength of string instrument programs. Our program supports the mission of the Butler School of Music and the University of Texas at Austin by extending the boundaries of knowledge and human experience in music.

The UTSP is a proud member of the National String Project Consortium (NSPC), a coalition of college and university string project programs across the United States. The NSPC is dedicated to increasing the number of school-aged children learning to play stringed instruments and addressing the education of string teachers across the country.

The University of Texas String Project faculty and staff are avid supporters of all school orchestra programs. If there is an orchestra program at your school, you must be enrolled and an active participant to be enrolled in our program.

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I. General Information

Program Membership

Students in the String Project are classified in one of the following categories. The structure and number of classes, tuition level, and other details of a student's participation will vary depending on the category to which that student is assigned.

Early Childhood: Children in Early Childhood Education (ECE) classes are aged 0 to 3. These classes focus on experiencing music and participating in music making through developmentally appropriate activities. Parent participation is important at all levels of the String Project, but in the ECE classes, activities will constantly involve parents and children together. Parent attendance and participation is absolutely vital. Students in ECE do not yet begin to study a particular string instrument and do not have private lessons.

Cadet Students: Our Cadet Program is a two-year program using the Suzuki Method and is open to four- and five-year-old beginners. All students who begin an instrument with the String Project while in this age range participate in the Cadet Program, regardless of their actual school experience. Cadet students all begin on violin and cello. Parents of students interested in viola or bass should not be dissuaded from joining the Cadet Program, as the early start to music instruction will only help build a thorough base of music skills, and transition to another instrument in a few years is very feasible.

Parents and students practice together and attend all classes, lessons, and other activities. Students and parents together attend one group class on Saturdays. During the week, Junior Cadets (first year) students attend one class with their "pod," a small group of students who regularly take a group lesson together. Senior Cadet families (second year students) have a half-hour private lesson during the week. In the initial stages of our Cadet Program, as is usual in Suzuki instruction, parents will learn the instrument along with their children in order to serve as the "home teacher." As the students grow older,

and as their attention spans lengthens, and repertoire of skills and tunes increase, the majority of lesson time will shift more towards directly working with the student, while training parents in the skills to be taught and monitored at home.

School Aged Program: The School Aged Program encompasses all of our students age 6 or above. Students can be *full-time*, taking part in both our Saturday classes and weekly private lessons with a member of our faculty, or they can be *Saturday only*, allowing students who already have a private teacher to participate in our Saturday class program. The String Project seeks to support music teachers in central Texas, and as such will not usually consider admitting students with a current teacher as a *full time* student without a referral from that teacher. If you have questions about this policy, you may contact the Director or Assistant Director. All School Aged Program students must take private lessons, whether through the String Project or an outside teacher.

Students' schedules for Saturday classes are dependent upon their level of experience. Beginning students attend one-hour heterogeneous classes in which students of all instruments learn together. Once students have mastered fundamental skills and repertoire on their instruments they can join our Beginning Ensembles, instrument-specific group classes. Once students are ready, they can move from our Beginning Ensembles into Elementary Orchestra and from there into other orchestras. Orchestra students participate additionally in Technique and Repertoire class as well as their orchestra. All students in the regular program also attend Music Skills Classes (MSC) that cover such topics as music reading, music theory, ear training, improvisation, and music history, among others. The MSC sequence includes Experiences in Music, Musicianship, and Elective classes for students who have completed the MSC sequence.

Private Lessons/Personal Instruction

Teachers: The String Project is a teacher training program, and the teaching faculty is comprised of graduate and undergraduate students from The University of Texas at Austin. Our teachers have a variety of backgrounds and experience levels, but share a commitment to strengthening all aspects of their teaching. The Director's primary responsibility is to supervise teachers' work and facilitate their progress. Because of this structure, you and your child may be assigned to a new teacher from time to time as faculty members graduate and new teachers join our program. Although students grow to know and trust a teacher over time, the mix of perspectives and different focus areas of each teacher are also beneficial. Changing teachers is just a feature of String Project participation. When your teacher leaves the program, we will consider both your requests and your teacher's recommendation, but the final choice regarding your next teacher rests with the Director and the Assistant Director.

When: Lessons for Full Time students are offered Monday through Friday and are scheduled directly with your private teacher. They are not offered on Saturday or Sunday. We will do our best to schedule adjacent lessons for siblings studying with different private teachers, but cannot guarantee such an arrangement. Please be prompt: a Private Teacher will not be obligated to extend the lesson past the arranged time. Lessons are taught throughout the semester beginning the week after Convocation. No lessons are taught during University of Texas holidays or during jury week.

Location: All private lessons are taught at the Butler School of Music at the University of Texas at Austin. They will generally be conducted in the student practice rooms located on the fifth floor. Private lessons are not to be taught at other locations under any circumstance.

Student Responsibilities: Required lesson materials include instrument (including bow), shoulder rest or rock stop, rosin, suggested books, notebook, pencil, and String Project music from Saturday ensembles. Please arrange a lesson time when the

student will be alert and ready to take instruction. This may mean bringing an after school snack for your child or scheduling a later lesson so they have a chance to rest before taking instruction.

Practice Expectations: The student should practice daily for at least the number of minutes equivalent to the time of their private lesson. Please refer to the notes taken during the lesson, as well as practice assignments from the Private Teacher. Try to make the practice sessions pleasant and goal related, so the student will feel positive about playing the instrument, and will be prepared for the next lesson. Consistent practice and listening is important for the student's success. Please do not expect them to practice by themselves; it is your responsibility to guide home practice sessions.

Parent Responsibilities: Parents will take notes at each lesson to facilitate effective home practice. Bring a dedicated notebook and pencil for this purpose. The String Project teacher will lead the lesson in a way that inspires and prepares parents to effectively apply the new techniques and concepts at home. It is the parent's responsibility to clearly understand the student's lesson assignment for the week. Remember, you are part of a team. Ask questions and clarify teaching points whenever necessary.

Lesson Fees/Payment: Lessons are included in the price of Full Time tuition. Weekly lessons that run concurrent with the university calendar plus Saturday group classes are part of the basic program. Additional lessons including summer study may be arranged with the private teacher independently, with payments made directly to the Private Teacher. The extra lesson fee will be determined by each individual teacher. Because the UTSP calendar follows the class schedule at the university, parents may want to arrange lessons over winter or spring breaks when possible.

Lesson Cancellations: If the student cancels a lesson, there is no obligation for the Private Teacher to make up the lesson. If possible, please call twenty-four (24) hours in advance when canceling a lesson. Any lesson canceled by the private teacher will be rescheduled at a mutually agreed date and time.

Videotaping of Lessons for Academic Purposes: Private teachers in the String Project often make video recordings of lessons for their own educational use. These tapes are *only* used for session evaluation by master teachers. If you have an objection to a student's lesson being video taped for Private Teacher evaluation purposes, it can be addressed with the private teacher.

Studio Recitals: The String Project requires students to participate in at least one recital organized by their private teachers every spring semester, typically in April. The student will play their most polished piece. Each private teacher will provide specific information regarding the recital date, location, program, dress, reception, and any other pertinent details early in the spring semester so that you may schedule this date accordingly.

Juries

What is a jury? A jury is a performance by the student in front of a panel of String Project teachers. This performance allows the teachers to assess the student's progress and make recommendations to the private teacher. Juries are scheduled at the end of each semester. Full Time students must play a jury every semester; Saturday Only students must take a jury only in the spring and when they wish to promote to a new ensemble (see below). School Aged Program students who fail to complete their jury requirements may be placed on probation (see Practices, Policies, and Procedures). Preschool Program students are not required to play juries, although the parent and the teacher may choose to have them participate. Early Childhood students do not take juries.

Students, parents, and teachers work together in advance to ensure that this is a positive experience for students. Students should leave the jury feeling very positive about their progress and performance. In cooperation with your teacher, you should plan from very early in the semester for which of the following jury types you should prepare.

Procedures for signing up for a jury appointment will be announced by the office via jury several weeks before jury week. The jury experience is a way to help us foster the highest potential for each student. A report on each student's progress will be sent to parents shortly following the jury.

Promotional Juries: All String Project students that are ready to join a more advanced ensemble are required to take a jury in order to demonstrate required ensemble skills. Minimum requirements for each ensemble are listed on the website. Most juries will include scales and arpeggios, a memorized solo piece, and sight-reading. Some levels will require additional demonstrations of technical requirements. The student's private teacher will be able to assist with any questions about these juries. All students, especially Saturday Only students, should feel free to contact a String Project faculty member or the office with questions regarding jury requirements. Prior to taking the promotional jury, your private teacher must sign an approval form stating that you have mastered the required skills and have permission to promote. Juries are offered at the end of each semester.

Promotional Jury Results: Jury panels will make one of the following three responses to a student's Promotional Jury. Regardless of the result, the jury panel will also provide feedback on specific areas of the student's musical performance and suggestions for continued musical growth.

- *Promote*—This student has successfully demonstrated all required skills. At the beginning of the new semester, this student will participate in the new ensemble.
- *Do Not Promote*—This performance indicated that the student has not mastered all of the requirements for the next ensemble and is not ready to join that group.

Students receiving this result should pay particular attention to the jury's comments and aim to further develop any areas mentioned by the jury as needing improvements before taking another promotional jury.

- *Conditional Promotion*—If a student plays an otherwise successful jury, but has only a few minor problems preventing their promotion, the jury may at their discretion ask the student to return again after a period of study. In this case, the panel will name specific skills or repertoire requirements to be demonstrated at this later date.

Note that results of *Do Not Promote* can be discouraging to students. Teachers, students, and parents should work ahead to be sure that any student taking a promotional jury is ready to perform successfully and to have a positive experience. The String Project does not recommend attempting a promotional jury unless all parties involved agree that the student is ready for one. Some newly acquired skills can appear fine until a student gets nervous. Therefore, practicing performing (in recitals, for family, at show and tell, etc.) is a good idea, and teachers may not recommend that a student who has just barely met the requirements for a given ensemble take a promotional jury immediately.

Non-Promotional Juries: If a student is required to take a jury (see What Is A Jury above) but is not seeking promotion, that student should take a non-promotional (regular) jury. The non-promotional jury should include the most polished piece the student has in his/her repertoire at the time. This piece should be memorized. The student may choose to perform a scale and arpeggio. Parents will receive in the mail performance feedback from the panel of String Project teachers present for the jury.

Student Evaluations/Progress Reports: At the end of each semester Private Teachers will fill out an evaluation form for each student, stating their progress throughout the semester. It is mailed to the parent and student along with their Jury Report.

Instrument Care/Maintenance

Handling and Maintenance: Stringed instruments are very delicate and cannot handle rough treatment or extreme temperatures. They should be handled as if they were infants – please do not leave the instrument in a vehicle, drop, or place in direct sunlight, even when in the case. The instrument should be cleaned with a soft, lint-free cloth at the end of every practice session, wiping down the strings and body of the instrument. The bow should be loosened to avoid warping and breakage and to prolong the life of the hair. The bow should never be tightened so much that it is completely straight – there should always be a concave curve in the stick.

Repairs: Instrument repair is a specialized skill and self-repair attempts are strongly discouraged. Private teachers will be able to offer assistance on how to handle each situation. In the event an instrument belonging to the University of Texas is damaged, please return it to the UT rental office for advice regarding repair.

String Project Instrument Usage: Supplying an instrument for the student (and in some cases the parent) is the responsibility of the family. There are, however, a limited number of instruments available for rental from the String Project. The current prices may be found on the current registration form as well as by contacting the String Project Office. Instruments are to be returned in the same condition received on designated date at the close of the Spring semester. Unless indicated by the teacher, **strings should be replaced and wooden bows rehaired before the instrument is returned.** The fee paid is a usage fee, and as such, care and maintenance of the instrument is your responsibility. It is recommended to insure the instrument as an addendum on insurance policies whenever possible; separate instrument insurance is also an option. **Loss or damage from neglect, accidents, fire, theft, or other damage is the responsibility of the family using the instrument.**

Music Shop Instrument Rentals and Purchase: While the University has a limited number of instruments for use each semester, there are many local instrument shops that rent instruments. Please call them to find out their policies and prices. A list of companies is available as in the appendix. As a state-funded, non-profit, educational organization, the String Project will not specifically endorse certain private businesses over others. This list is intended merely as a resource to help our parents find instruments for their children. If you would like to recommend that a shop be included in our list, or if you represent a business and would like to be added (or removed), please contact the String Project Office.

Your teacher can help you with all decisions regarding instrument choice and sizing. We recommend renting rather than purchasing child-sized instruments, since you will be changing frequently. Many shops will credit a portion of your rental towards an eventual purchase.

Saturday Classes

General Information

Arrival Times: The majority of String Project students will need to be present and in place ready to play by 9:00 a.m. Please arrive 10-15 minutes before classes and lessons are scheduled to begin. We pride ourselves on starting and ending classes on time. Some of the younger students may not need to be at the school until 10:00 a.m. A specific schedule is available on the website.

Parking

Most Saturdays: Free parking for the public may generally be found on weekends on many campus streets. Parking on Robert Dedman Drive and Trinity Street is the closest parking to the Butler School of Music. Please read the signs near where you have

left your car to be sure the your spot is not reserved. There are a few spaces reserved at all times for faculty or other vehicles, as well as those designated only for vehicles with handicap permits.

Game Day Saturdays and Other Events: UT home football games make parking extremely difficult due the heightened security requirements. Throughout the year, other large events create parking difficulties as well. From year to year, there will be changes in where we are allowed to park on these days. Most of the campus streets near the music school will be closed. Street parking on Dean Keeton and other smaller streets around campus is limited. Please carpool and arrive early for a longer than usual walk to campus. You may also consider riding the bus; visit CapMetro's website for routes and schedules.

Beyond parking, please also be aware of other problems with large crowds on game days. Darrell K. Royal Texas Memorial Stadium is located only a block away and seats over 100,000 people. More fans come to campus and watch the game from tents, the Alumni Center, and other nearby locations. Our building is not secured, and we share it with the Longhorn Band, others involved in the game, and fans passing through on the way to the Stadium. Please pay extra attention to your children's whereabouts and safety on game days.

Group Lessons, Orchestras and Enrichment Classes

Group Lessons and Ensembles: String Project Saturday classes utilize a Suzuki-based teaching method that includes group lessons as a major part of the curriculum for all students. For more advanced students, this group playing objective is met through orchestra rehearsals and Technique and Repertoire classes; less advanced school aged students participate in Beginning or Pre Ensembles. These classes are designed to give each student a chance to review pieces already learned, hear new pieces, and develop group playing skills. This is also a wonderful opportunity for a student to experience working with a different teacher(s) and to hear new ideas that will enhance

their playing further. The String Project's current pre-orchestral ensembles currently include:

- Junior Cadets (4-5 yr olds)
- Senior Cadets (5-6 year olds)
- Pre-Ensembles A and B (PEA and PEB)
- Beginning Violin Ensembles A and B (BVEA and BVEB)
- Beginning Viola Ensemble (BVlaE)
- Beginning Cello Ensembles A and B (BCEA and BCEB)
- Beginning Bass Ensemble (BBE)
- Guitar Ensembles A and B (GEA and GEB)
- Harp Ensemble BHEA and BHEB

Group Lesson Preparation: Each student should review all pieces from their Suzuki literature. New pieces may be taught to the group for presentation at a semester recital or festival concert. It is a good idea to include these pieces as part of the home practice so a student may feel very comfortable and confident playing them in concert.

Elementary Orchestra (EO): This ensemble is composed of players who have just graduated from a Beginning Ensemble group class; most students will not have experience in an ensemble with multiple parts when they first join EO. The objective is to teach these students ensemble etiquette and how to participate and play as a member of an ensemble. These are often young students, with ages generally ranging from eight (8) to twelve (12).

Intermediate Orchestra (IO): This ensemble is composed of students that have some ensemble experience. The students are generally a bit older and more mature. They will study somewhat more complicated music, with some tempo and meter changes. Musical selections will require the learning of some new bowing skills and musical concepts, as well as shifting into different positions. These students should be

developing their skills as independent players while incorporating these skills into the sound of the ensemble. Once Full Time students enter IO, they begin taking 45 minute lessons.

Advanced Orchestra (AO): This ensemble is composed of students that can play relatively advanced music. Many of these students are in middle or early high school. They are mature enough to have more serious rehearsals and should be working toward a very high level of playing. They can handle atypical rhythms, tempo and meter changes, along with different styles of music.

Chamber Orchestra (CO): This ensemble is composed of the most advanced students in the String Project. They are able to play advanced music and can handle very fast-paced rehearsals. Development towards truly professional tone and detailed attention to style will be a focus of activity. These students serve as role models for the younger students in the program. Full Time students in CO take hour-long lessons.

Orchestra Seating: Seating decisions in the University of Texas String Project orchestras are made with two primary considerations in mind. Firstly, we seek to balance sections and create the best overall ensemble sound. Secondly, we try to provide our students with educational experiences that will prepare them well for their musical futures, both as leaders and supporting players and playing both melody and harmony.

Concert seating, soloist, and stand partner decisions will be made by the String Project faculty members in consultation with the Director. A conductor may choose to designate “section leaders,” students who typically demonstrate consistency in intonation, tone, bowings, and level of preparation during sectional and orchestra rehearsals. All decisions regarding seating, including rotational seating, are final.

Violins and sometimes other instruments are divided into two or more parts. The

orchestra conductor, in consultation with the Director, may choose to keep students on the same part, rotate individuals between parts, or rotate entire sections between parts. These decisions, like all other seating decisions, will be made on the bases of the group's overall sound and of students' strengths and educational needs.

Seating decisions can be one of the most controversial choices a conductor makes during the year, partly because many students (and some parents and teachers) assume that their assigned proximity to the teacher represents that teacher's assessment of playing ability or personal value. Many competitive orchestra programs seat their students simply by order of performance quality on a particular audition day. String Project seating decisions are *simply not made that way*. If you have concerns regarding seating, please re-read this policy and philosophy, then feel to discuss your situation with your conductor, the Director, or the Assistant Director.

Ensemble Promotion: Specific ensemble promotional guidelines may be found on the website in addition to the information above relating to promotional juries.

Technique & Repertoire (T&R) Class: This class is assigned in conjunction with each of the four orchestras to increase the students' knowledge of good technique and to offer extra class help with difficult spots in the orchestra music. Typically, these classes are separated first by orchestra then by instrument. Instruments with lower enrollments at a particular level may be grouped together across multiple ensembles or placed with other instruments.

Music Skills Classes: All participants in String Project will be enrolled in a Musicianship, Experiences in Music, or Enrichment class as part of the Saturday class schedule. Together, these three types of classes are referred to as Music Skills Classes (MSC).

Experiences in Music Class: This class teaches the fundamentals of music for students up to approximately age eight (8). There are three levels that may be repeated until the student is ready to progress to the Musicianship Class level. Experiences in Music 1 includes all children in the Early Childhood Education program. Experiences in Music 2 includes beginning ideas leading toward music theory and advanced musicianship for our Preschool Program students. Experiences in Music 3 is the introductory level in our MSC sequence for School Aged students.

Musicianship Class: These classes are offered for all children ages eight (8) to eighteen (18). The curriculum is designed to teach the fundamentals of music through note and rhythm reading, ear training, improvisation, and other important musical skills. As the student matures, the difficulty of the class increases. The lower level classes are aimed at allowing the student to explore and discover the basic principles of music. These classes are designed to be repeated multiple times until the student has developed the musicianship required to understand higher levels of theory. Students taking the higher levels of theory will learn how to better comprehend the music they are playing both in lessons and in their group or ensemble class. These courses are designed to be repeated as necessary and desired.

Enrichment Classes: These classes are designed for students who have completed or demonstrated mastery of the curriculum of all offered musicianship classes. Students taking these classes are allowed to select their desired course of study from a variety of courses offered each semester. Topics will be based upon the specific strengths and specialties of our current faculty. Examples include Basic Conducting, Baroque Performance, Fiddling, or classes in Music History related topics.

II. Practices, Policies, and Procedures

School Music Program Participation: The UT String Project seeks to work with and support the school music programs in our Central Texas schools. To this end, we require that our students participate in their school music programs if their school offers orchestra. Students found to be in violation will immediately be placed on probation (see below).

Attendance

Absences—classes and lessons: Students must be present at all Saturday morning classes and scheduled lessons. If it is necessary for a student to miss a class or lesson, the parent should submit a notice including the reason for the absence *in writing* before the scheduled time. Teachers are not expected to make up lessons missed by students. If it is necessary for a teacher to cancel a lesson, s/he is required to notify the parent in advance and to make up the lesson, preferably in advance.

Valid Excuses: An absence will be considered excused for the following reasons:

1. Illness
2. Death in the immediate family
3. School orchestra performance
4. Religious holidays
5. Natural disaster

Students may also take one (1) excused absence per semester for a non-orchestra school event.

Tardiness: To be on time means to be ready to start productive work at the scheduled time. For rehearsals and lessons, this means being in your seat with your instrument, music, and pencil out with your bow rosined at the start of class. Teachers are allowed to consider excessively late students absent, which will generally be considered unexcused.

Absence Limit: If a student acquires more than two unexcused absences in a single semester, that student will be placed on probation.

Absences — Juries: Full Time students are required to take a jury at the end of both the fall and spring semesters. Saturday Only students are required to take a jury at the end of the spring semester only. Additionally, students must pass a promotional jury to move to the next most advanced ensemble. An absence for a required jury will result in the student's being placed on probation until that jury is made up. An absence for a non-required promotional jury will result in the student's remaining in their current ensemble.

Absences — Performances: All String Project performances are required, and missing a performance is very serious. Except in the case of **sudden** illness, all absences for performances must be approved ahead of time by the Director and may result in the student being placed on probation. Any absence for a performance not so approved may result in immediate removal from the program.

Behavior

Students are expected to:

Demonstrate respect for teachers and colleagues: Students will use respectful language with both their teachers and classmates, and will behave in such a manner that neither puts them or their property in danger nor disrupts from their learning and teaching.

Be prepared: Students will practice their music for lessons and classes so that they and their ensembles can make progress. Students will complete other assignments made by teachers, will bring proper equipment and materials, and will have such assignments, equipment, and materials ready for the beginning of the class or lesson. Students will not

bring inappropriate materials, equipment, toys, etc. to class.

Demonstrate respect for the Butler School of Music and the University of Texas: These institutions are our sponsors and hosts. Students will talk and behave in a manner that does not damage or interfere with the people, property, or facilities of the Butler School of Music. This includes being quiet and orderly in the halls at all times, and particularly when waiting for private lessons on weekdays.

Students with continuing behavioral problems may be referred to the Director or the Assistant Director and may be placed on probation.

Probation

Students may be placed on probation for attendance violations, consistently poor practice habits, continued behavioral problems, missed juries, or other extreme circumstances. Students placed on probation will remain on probation until the problem is resolved (in the case of missed juries or school orchestra non-participation) or until the end of the semester, whichever comes first. At the end of a student's probation period, his or her situation will be reviewed, and that student will either be reinstated as a student in good standing or dismissed from the String Project. In rare situations, the Director may extend a student's probation on a semester-by-semester basis. All decisions of the Director regarding probation, reinstatement, and dismissal from the program are final.

Leaves of Absence

Occasionally circumstances arise in which a student or a family is unable to participate in the String Project for an extended period of time but does not wish to leave permanently. In such cases, parents may request a leave of absence for up to the end of the current school year (or the upcoming school year if the request is made during the summer). Requests must be submitted in writing or via email to the String Project office. If a Leave

of Absence is granted, that student may return the following school year without reapplying or auditioning, although an informal jury may be necessary to place the student at an appropriate level upon their return. Leaves of Absence will only be extended beyond one year in extreme circumstances and with the approval of the Director.

Other Policies

Dress Code: Attire for private lessons and Saturday classes should be in compliance with each student's school dress code. For all concerts, students should be attired in nice clothes. All students in the orchestral ensembles should wear white tops and black skirts or slacks for performances unless otherwise specified by the conductor. Please, no jeans, T-shirts, or sneakers for concerts. Any concert/performance specific attire requirements will be given to individual groups or ensembles based upon the type of event. (e.g. white shirt/dark bottom or jeans and String Project T-shirt for run-out concerts).

T-Shirts: Program and Festival T-Shirts are made available annually. Previous years' T-Shirts designs are occasionally available for reduced price purchase. Festival T-Shirts are included in the cost of Alternative Styles tuition, so annually every student will have at least one new String Project T-Shirt.

Parent Volunteers: The University of Texas String Project is basically self-sustaining. Most of the part-time staff positions are filled by University enrolled music students, however, parent assistance in the program is vital. We have many opportunities and time increments for you to help us continue to make this a quality program. Parents may volunteer for annual routine events by completing the Parent Volunteer Form at the beginning of a school year or simply on an as-available-basis each Saturday. Please let us know if we may call on you for volunteer assistance; a volunteer form is available in the Forms Appendix of this handbook.

Contact Information: The Student Registration Form includes family contact information. This information may be more important than you realize. Related program updates including but not limited to football season parking instructions, street closures, health concerns, Saturday class schedule changes/updates, and Concert reminder notices are sent to this e-mail address. Receiving this information could save you time and frustration. If you are not receiving e-mail notices, please let us know by e-mailing the String Project Office (string_project@mail.music.utexas.edu). Any inquiries via e-mail will be answered by staff members as quickly as possible. Please check your email or the SP website weekly for updates to the schedule.

Questions/Conflict Resolution: A student's private lesson teacher is the first place any program questions/problems should be addressed. Only if the matter is confidential or financial should the Business Manager or Assistant Director be directly asked first. The Program Director, a University faculty member, should be asked only when your first contact has not been able to offer assistance or resolve the matter.

III. Concerts and Special Events

Fall/Spring Convocation Recitals: Each semester of study will begin with a Convocation Recital. The SP faculty will perform for students and parents at the beginning of the fall semester. The Spring Convocation Recital will include students selected through audition from the Honor Recital applicants (see Honor Recital).

Fall/Spring (End of Semester) Student Concerts

Fall: Traditionally, the last day of Saturday classes is set aside for two separate concerts: an ensembles concert and orchestra concert.

Spring: . The orchestra concert will be held in the same manner as the fall.

The ensemble concert however will begin with an advanced selection and progresses to successively less advanced pieces. When a student is able to play the current work, that student may join the performers on stage. As the concert progresses, more and more students play until every student is on stage participating

Honors Recital: Approx. ten students are chosen to perform at the beginning of the spring semester during the convocation ceremony. Any String Project student is eligible to submit a DVD audition for consideration. The audition music may be from the current repertoire either for solo or duo performance. The audition performance must be memorized, have nearly perfect intonation, and be of very high quality. Repertoire may be of any level; high-quality performances of Twinkle and a Bach concerto may be scheduled back to back. The audition DVD is typically due on the fall concert date and performers announced mid December. Performers will be assessed a \$20 fee for compensation of the piano accompanist.

Concerto Festival: This is an opportunity for students in Advanced and Chamber Orchestras to perform a concerto with an orchestra comprised of String Project teachers. A list of approved concerti may be obtained from your Private Teacher. If you do not see the concerto you are working on included, please ask about it – perhaps we will be able to add your concerto to the list of festival repertoire. As with the honors recital, chosen repertoire must be memorized and of the highest quality. Correct intonation and posture are fundamental requirements for Honors Recital or Concerto Festival participation.

Alternative Styles Festival/Concert: A newer tradition of the String Project Program is a fall festival weekend offering an opportunity for students to experience string music not typically taught in a classical setting or in a Suzuki Program. One of our Fall Saturday classes will be dedicated to this study and concert presentation

Appendix 1: Suzuki Parent's Reference

Suzuki Philosophy

The Suzuki Philosophy...

Parent Resources- I THINK THIS SHOULD GO LATER IN A
SUZUKI SECTION ALONG WITH THE SUZUKI
PHILOSOPHY

Suzuki, Shinichi. Nurtured by Love. New York: Exposition Press, 1969.

Starr, William and Constance. To Learn With Love, A Companion for Suzuki Parents.

Knoxville, Tennessee: Kingston Ellis Press, 1983.

Appendix 2: Recommended Listening

Forms appendix to follow

Appendix 3: String Project Forms