

Welcome to CMS!

Parents' and students' most frequently asked questions deal with absences, makeup lessons and early discontinuation. Policies relating to these items are in bold type. Please do read all the Policies and Procedures before signing the Registration Form.

Parents, grandparents or other authorized adults who bring children to *Music, My Grownup and Me* classes **must** remain in the classroom with that child at all times. A parent, grandparent or other authorized adult **must** be in the building to meet any child between the ages of 3 and 12 at the end of his/her class or lesson. CMS is not responsible for children left alone and will discontinue instruction immediately should this situation arise.

1. INDIVIDUAL LESSONS

- A. Each student **must** possess his/her instrument, either by ownership or rental, before registering at the School.
- B. A student is responsible for purchasing his/her own books or sheet music as requested by the instructor. Please note: photocopying published music is illegal.
- C. Each student whose first lesson occurs before January 31 is entitled to 2 **excused** student absences for the school year; 1 for students whose first lesson is between February 1 and April 1; 0 for students whose first lesson is after April 1 or during the summer. For an absence to be excused, CMS must be notified by telephone only (not email) at least **4 hours** before the scheduled lesson (or by 9:15 a.m. for morning lessons).

Makeups will be scheduled for excused absences, lessons missed because of the teacher's absence or for the closing of the School due to snow or any emergency.

Makeup lessons will be scheduled at a time mutually agreeable to the student and teacher. (The office does not keep a master schedule of makeup lessons.) **If the student is absent from the makeup lesson, with or without notification to the teacher/School, the makeup is forfeited. Makeup lessons must be completed by the end of June.**

Refunds or credits will NOT be given in place of makeup lessons.

- D. All regular and makeup lessons must be given at the CMS main location or satellites unless special written approval is obtained from the Executive Director in advance.
- E. Lessons will be discontinued after 2 consecutive absences without notification to the School. A notice of this will be sent to the student or parent. **Any outstanding makeups will be forfeited.**
- F. A student may receive credit for a lesson which falls on a religious holiday by contacting the office at least 1 business day in advance.
- G. A **leave of absence (LOA)** should be arranged with the Office Manager (not the teacher) for a student expecting to be absent for 2-3 consecutive weeks due to a prolonged illness or extenuating circumstances. The student will not be charged for these weeks. **A one business day advance notice to the Office Manager of the return date is required.**

A lesson time cannot be held or guaranteed for more than 3 weeks. After 3 weeks, that time slot will be considered open and may be filled with another student. For billing purposes, a student will automatically be discontinued after 3 weeks and sent a final adjusted bill. If the student returns at a later time, he/she may select from any times that are available.

No makeup lessons may be given during a LOA. Only 1 LOA will be granted each year.

- H. Early Discontinuation - Should it be necessary for a student to discontinue study prior to the end of the year, the CMS office must be notified by phone or in writing. **If the office does not receive this official notification 1 business day before the next scheduled lesson, the student must pay for that lesson.** A student is responsible for the payment of lessons scheduled between the start date and discontinuation date. **Makeup lessons not completed before early discontinuation will be forfeited.** (*Notice to the teacher is not sufficient for discontinuation.*)
- I. **Should CMS discontinue a student for any reason, any outstanding makeups will be forfeited.**
- J. Should a CMS teacher find it necessary to leave before the end of the year, another teacher will be provided as soon as possible. Lessons missed in the interim will be credited or made up.
- K. A CMS student may not approach a CMS teacher for private study outside the School within a year of being a CMS student without obtaining approval from the Executive Director.
- L. Any public performance or contest appearance of a CMS student must be approved in advance by his/her teacher. Music study outside of CMS (other than in a child's school music program) must be approved by the Executive Director and teacher.
- M. Students are expected to participate in recitals and year-end performance exams. Exceptions are made upon recommendation of the teacher to the Executive Director.
- N. Parents are invited to consult with their child's teacher at any time or to request a meeting that includes the Department Chair and/or the Executive Director.
- O. A student may request a change of teacher by speaking to the Office Manager or Executive Director.

2. CLASSES

- A. CMS reserves the right to discontinue any class for insufficient enrollment. In this case, the tuition already paid for the remaining/future classes will be refunded.
- B. Mini-courses are offered for a specified number of weeks (e.g., 9 weeks in the fall). Each student enrolls for the **entire session** (e.g., the fall session) and is responsible for the total class tuition whether or not he/she attends every meeting. **No credit or refund will be made to a student who withdraws before the end of the session.**
- C. An ongoing class is a class which is continuous and is billed in monthly installments. Should it be necessary for a student to discontinue prior to the end of the year, the CMS office must be notified by phone or in writing. **If the office does not receive this official notification 1 business day before the next scheduled class, the student must pay for that class.**
- D. A student will be discontinued from an ongoing class after 2 consecutive absences without notification to the School. A notice of discontinuation will be sent to the student or parent.
- E. Any class missed because of the teacher's absence or School closing because of snow or emergency will be rescheduled/made up.
- F. **No refunds are given for student absences from any regularly scheduled or make up class.**

3. DISMISSAL

The School reserves the right to dismiss a student for: lack of interest or progress; frequent absences; noisy, disruptive or disrespectful behavior; delinquent payments; non-payment; possession of guns or other weapons or evidence of alcohol or drug use.

4. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Financial assistance is available to those who qualify, if funding is available. To be considered, applicants must complete a request form detailing all sources of income for the family and provide proof of this income - federal tax forms, social service budget sheets, social security/disability benefits statements, child support or any other official proof. **Frequent absences or lack of participation in recitals and exams may jeopardize the continuation of financial aid.**

5. TUITION AND FEES

- A. A non-refundable annual registration fee is charged to each individual lesson student. This extends from July (or at the time of enrollment) through the following June. It is non-refundable except as provided in Section 7 (Refunds).
- B. Tuition payments may be made in cash (**exact amount is required**), by check, money order, MasterCard or Visa. Automatic credit card payments will be processed on the first business day of each month after submission of completed auto-deduct form.
- C. A charge of \$15.00 will be applied to the student's account for a check returned from the bank or a charge back from a credit card payment for any reason. The check will not be redeposited but must be replaced with good funds which include the \$15.00 charge.
- D. The registration fee and first tuition payment (for Summer, the total tuition) **must be received 1 business day in advance** of first scheduled lesson or class.
- E. Total lesson or ongoing class tuition for the year is divided into equal installments which are due in advance on the first of each month from September (or the beginning of lessons) through May. **Students are not charged for lessons or classes that fall on CMS holidays.** Mini-course tuition for the entire session is due in advance.
- F. A \$5.00 late charge will be automatically added to the account if payment is not received by the 15th of the month. The student will be discontinued and all makeup lessons forfeited if payment is not made by the beginning of the next month. In extenuating circumstances, special arrangements for payments can be made by contacting the Office Manager or Executive Director.
- G. Account balances that have been overdue for more than 90 days will be placed with a collection agency. Written notice of any such action will be provided. The collection agency now reports delinquent accounts to the national credit bureaus TRW, TransUnion and CBI. **The collection agency fee (33.3 %) and any additional attorney's fees charged to CMS will be added to the outstanding account balance when the account is turned over to the collection agency.**
- H. A student/family member who returns to study after an outstanding balance is discharged due to bankruptcy will be required to pay a deposit of one month's installment in addition to the first installment in advance of the first lesson. When the student leaves, money paid in excess of lessons received (according to CMS policies) will be refunded.

6. SNOW OR OTHER EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

CMS **may** close some or all locations for severe weather. Please call the School at **884-4887**, check the website at **www.communitymusicbuffalo.org**, listen to WBEN 930 or watch channels 2, 4 or 7 for information. Students will have the opportunity to make up lessons/classes missed when the School is closed. Unless a disruption in power

prevents it, a notice regarding closings will also be posted on the website and the voicemail.

7. REFUNDS

Refunds of tuition and/or the registration fee are available upon request in accordance with the following guidelines:

A. Private Lessons

1. The registration fee and all tuition paid will be refunded if CMS cannot provide the student with a teacher and/or lesson time. The registration fee (if paid) will also be refunded if a student requires financial aid to study and we are unable to provide it.
2. If a teacher leaves the School or takes a leave of absence, the student's account will be credited for any lessons missed while a replacement is being found. If the original teacher does not return, the student's account will be credited for any outstanding makeup lessons. If a replacement teacher is not hired, the student will be given a refund for lessons paid for but not received.
3. **No credits or refunds will be given in place of makeup lessons (for excused student absences, teacher absences or snow days) except as provided in # 2.**
4. A student who discontinues lessons before the end of the year or who does not return from a leave of absence forfeits makeup lessons not completed before the discontinuation or leave. He/she will be given a refund for remaining regular lessons paid for but not received unless the office did not receive the required 1 business day advance notice (see 1. H.).

B. Classes

1. If CMS cancels any class for insufficient enrollment, the tuition already paid toward future/remaining classes will be refunded
2. No credits or refunds will be given for any classes missed by the student. Classes cancelled because of the teacher's absence or a snow day will be rescheduled.
3. A student must enroll for the entire mini-course session. **No credit or refund will be made to a student who withdraws before the end of the session.**

C. Procedure for Refunds

1. After the account has been adjusted, the student or parent will be sent a statement along with a request for refund form.
2. Payment of refunds will be made within thirty days of our receipt of the request.
3. Refunds of \$5.00 or more will be sent to the student or parent. Refunds under \$5.00 must be claimed in person at 415 Elmwood Avenue *with advance notice* to the Bookkeeper.
4. **Any refunds not requested within the academic/fiscal year in which the credit balance arose will be written off on June 30 of that year.**

NONDISCRIMINATORY POLICY

Community Music School of Buffalo admits students of any race, color, gender, national or ethnic origin and religious belief 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, gender, national or ethnic origin and religious belief in the administration of its policies, admissions policies, scholarship programs and other School-administered programs.