

**SMS MUSIC HANDBOOK
2015-2016**

SPECIAL MUSIC SCHOOL

**PARENT & STUDENT
HANDBOOK
2015-16**

SMS MUSIC HANDBOOK

2015-2016

Welcome to the Special Music School! This handbook will provide you with much of what you need to know about SMS and its music program.

I. Music Program Overview

The music program of the Special Music School is designed to provide students with high proficiency in both the practical and theoretical aspects of music. The curriculum consists of private instrumental lessons, music theory, history, chorus, and performance class. After-school activities, which have a fee, include chamber music and ensemble classes, and secondary instrument lessons.

Every student at SMS takes two lessons a week on an instrument. In Kindergarten, the lessons are 30 minutes long, and from 1st grade onwards, the lessons are 45 minutes long. Extensive information on the private lessons is included later in the handbook.

The SMS music curriculum is performance based. In-house performing opportunities such as performance classes (and dress rehearsals called “previews”) are available to all students, but sign-up is done by the instrumental teacher. Depending on the grade, the Performance Classes are on Monday or Tuesday at 2:15 PM in Ann Goodman Recital Hall. There are also many additional performing opportunities throughout the year.

Music theory classes at SMS start out with a heavy emphasis on the Dalcroze approach to music education. The Dalcroze method teaches an understanding of music -- its fundamental concepts, its expressive meaning, and its deep connections to other arts and human activities -- through an approach incorporating rhythmic movement, aural training, and improvisation. As students progress, the classes include more traditional written work. Theory becomes increasingly crucial to the students’ ability to learn instrumental music independently, and to craft interpretations that show a deep understanding of musical style. At all levels, students create music (both improvised and composed).

In middle school, music history meets once a week. An intensive survey of music, the goal is to give students perspective on the broad sweep of classical music writing during the past five or six hundred years, with careful attention paid to inspiring works of the present day.

Beginning in 1st Grade, all SMS students participate in Chorus. Singing is the basis of all music making, and at SMS we believe that all students should develop a healthy relationship with their singing voice. Also, as the practice of their instrument can be a solitary one, chorus provides everyone with a social and musical component to the curriculum. Grades 1-5 meet as a grade once a week and Middle School students meet in a class of boys and a separate class of girls once a week.

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II. Private Instrumental Lessons – Policies & Procedures

1. Instrument/Teacher Selection

In the final stages of the K-2 admissions process, but prior to acceptance, the Dean of Music, in consultation with the parents, confirms an instrument selection for the child. Because the Dean of Music is responsible for maintaining the overall balance of instruments in each grade, this may mean that a student does not get to study his or her “first choice” instrument. In grades 3 and higher, it is expected that a student will continue to study the instrument upon which he/she auditioned. In rare circumstances, a student might be accepted expressly to study an instrument that the school needs to fill ensembles.

In all grades, following acceptance, the Dean of Music pairs the student with a teacher from the SMS faculty, based on musical and personal compatibility, as well as schedule availability on the part of the teacher. Except in extremely rare instances, teachers at the Special Music School can teach a maximum of two students in each grade, because of the academic schedule.

Lessons are currently offered on piano, orchestral instruments and composition.

If students fail two consecutive juries, the Dean of Music reserves the right to change the instrument or teacher assignment for that student.

2. Instruments

Families are responsible for providing a musical instrument. If the instrument needs to be purchased or rented, the child’s private teacher can help in making the selection. The Kaufman Center has some instruments available for loan if the family demonstrates financial need. Parents who have difficulty getting an instrument should talk to the Dean of Music.

3. Music Books

Families are responsible for providing music that is requested by the music teachers. Suggestions of where to purchase music will be made by the teacher or the school, if necessary. Students should also plan on purchasing a music notebook that the teacher can use for assignments and examples. Whenever possible, it is always better to purchase music. Excessive copier use is a cost that we are trying to minimize. Furthermore, if you purchase the music, as your child grows as a musician, so will his/her library. If you do make copies at the Kaufman Center, please be aware that *a teacher must always be present* when copies are made.

4. Lesson Scheduling

Each student takes two private 45-minute lessons (30 minutes for Kindergarten) on his/her instrument per week, as part of the normal school day. The lesson times are established for each grade when they enter in Kindergarten. Half the grade goes during one period and the other half goes during another.

On rare occasions, because of a music teacher’s schedule, it becomes necessary to put a student lesson during lunchtime, or after school. This is only done as a last resort and only with approval from the Dean of Music, the Academic Principal, and the student’s parents.

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5. Attendance

Music teachers are scheduled to give 62 lessons per year. Students are expected to attend all lessons except in the event of illness. If the student knows in advance that he/she will miss a lesson, the teacher must be notified as early as possible, and no less than 24 hours in advance. In the event of unexpected illness on a lesson day, parents **must call (not e-mail) the private teacher first thing in the morning, and then leave a message in the Music Office, (212) 501-3393.** *Please be aware that if a student is absent from school, he or she may not come into the building for music lessons or activities.*

Teachers are not obliged to make up any lessons missed by the student. If a student is absent for an extended period of time due to illness/injury, a reasonable attempt will be made to reschedule up to five lessons.

Teachers are not responsible for missed lessons due to unexpected Department of Education (DOE) schedule changes. Also, “warm up” sessions for Juries and Grade Concerts are considered lessons. However, teachers *are* responsible for rescheduling/making up lessons that they themselves cancel or miss.

Occasionally, teachers will be late to a lesson because of unavoidable circumstances (subway traffic, weather, etc.). If a student arrives in a studio to find that the teacher is not there, he/she should immediately check with the music staff on the 5th floor. *Students are not allowed to remain in studios by themselves, without adult supervision.*

6. Teachers and Parents

Because progress on a musical instrument requires considerable work at home, it is important to establish a close collaboration between the teacher, parent(s) and student. Better communication will mean a more enjoyable experience for the child. The parent(s) should meet with the teacher early in the year to discuss strategies and goals.

There are no pre-established “parent-teacher music conferences” that happen separate from the instrumental lessons. A good idea is to devote one lesson at the beginning of the year, and one lesson at the end, to the discussion of the student’s work. Parents and teachers should also establish a mutually convenient way to monitor the child’s work during the school year. Parents should ask teachers very specifically about whether they prefer email or phone, and what days and hours are acceptable. Teachers are very busy human beings, and while they are always generous of spirit, most of them are cranky if called several times a day, late at night, before the sun rises, or other odd times.

Some teachers welcome parents at the lessons but others feel that the presence of a third person is distracting to the child. Teachers will tell parents what they prefer at the beginning of the year, but may revise this choice during the school year. In some instances, parents who work during the child’s lesson time may make arrangements with the teacher to record certain lessons (audio or video).

Parents are welcome to attend children’s lessons in elementary school. In middle school, it is generally better for students to attend lessons by themselves, unless the private teacher specifically requests a parent be present. Throughout elementary school, the emphasis should

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be on increasing the independence of the student, and starting in the 3rd grade it is not recommended that parents attend every single lesson.

Students are escorted to/from the lesson room by the instrumental teacher or an SMS staff person, in grades K-2, and are expected to travel to/from the lesson room independently after that. Parents who wish to attend lessons should meet children at the lesson room.

SMS students may not study their primary instrument with anyone other than their SMS teacher. **Studying with an outside teacher is confusing to the child and disrespectful to the primary teacher.**

The limited exceptions to this rule (stated below) must be approved by both the private teacher and the Dean of Music. They are:

- summer study
- master classes
- practice tutoring, **only when the tutor has been explicitly approved by the private teacher and maintains a close contact with him/her via phone or email.**

7. Practice

Regular home practice is a necessary aspect of progress on an instrument. At Special Music School, **daily practice is required**. The amount of daily practice will differ, depending on the student's age, level and the kind of work he or she is doing at a given time. General guidelines, though, are that Kindergarten students should practice at least half an hour a day, and the amount of practice time should increase with each grade.

In consultation with the teacher, parents assist the child in establishing a regular practice routine that coordinates with the academic homework routine. Families should experiment to determine the time of day that works best, and children should get used to the idea that practice is a normal part of daily life.

Students should bring a practice book to each lesson; this can be a regular notebook, or a book of music staff paper. Teachers make notes in the students' practice books of the work to be done following each lesson; if parents attend the lessons, they can make the notes.

It is often helpful for parents to sit beside younger children and supervise them as they practice at home. Young children generally need help with the repetitious nature of certain kinds of practicing. Older children eventually need less support, but an outside pair of ears and eyes continues to be beneficial in practice. A background in music is not necessary!

Regular home practice in middle school is more intense and with greater expectations in terms of time. In general, every middle school student should expect to spend 2 to 3 hours a day practicing. (Exceptions would be wind and brass students, who need to build up stamina more gradually).

Balancing regular home practice with academic homework may require a period of adjustment during which the student learns how to plan his/her time to best advantage. Large academic "projects" with extended due dates require particular attention so that all the work is not left until the last minute, when it will crowd out practicing entirely.

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Practicing is permitted for SMS students at the Kaufman Music Center. During the school day, DOE policies state that a certified or fingerprinted teacher must be in the room at all times with the student. After the school day ends, SMS students are permitted to practice without fee for up to an hour, space permitting. After an hour, families must rent practice space as it is available. All practice room enquiries should go through the Front Desk.

Frontdesk@kaufmanmusiccenter.org or call: (212) 501-3308.

8. 100 Days of Practice

“100 Days of Practice” is a motivational opportunity for students. The music program provides students a special page to track their practice sessions for the fall semester. The music teacher signs page at the end of the project, and the students receive a reward. Participation is optional, and is managed by the music teachers.

9. Extra lessons

Sometimes teachers and families will agree that additional private lessons are in the best interest of the student. Additional lessons are not mandatory, nor are they necessarily encouraged. Extra lessons occur after school at the Center. Students must register and pay for the lesson(s) through the Lucy Moses School **before they take them.**

10. Summer Study

During the summer, all students are expected to continue to practice. The School encourages private lessons in order to maintain skills and progress. Families register and pay for these lessons through the Lucy Moses School. Like after school lessons, summer lessons must be registered and paid for ahead of time. If the student’s teacher is not available for summer study, he or she may recommend a substitute. If the student is going to be away for the summer, and the teacher does not recommend a teacher in the new location, then the student will be given an assignment to learn independently.

11. Teacher Conflicts/Changes

Every working relationship goes through rough patches, and many problems encountered in lessons can be solved through open communication. Problems in the teacher/student relationship should first be addressed in a conversation between the parents and the teacher. If this does not resolve the problem(s), the situation should be brought to the attention of the Dean of Music, who may speak directly to the teacher, or set up a three-way conversation that includes both the parents and the teacher.

If there appear to be issues that cannot reasonably be resolved, parents may request a teacher change in writing. This letter should be addressed to the Dean of Music and does not need to detail the reason for the request. The Dean of Music will notify the old teacher and administer the assignment of a new teacher; it is considered courteous for the parents to say thank you and goodbye to the old teacher.

It is inappropriate for parents to approach a new instrument teacher about taking their child as a student, especially before the former teacher has been notified of the change. Except in special circumstances, teacher changes are made between years.

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12. Instrument Changes

On occasion, students switch instruments at the Special Music School. This happens for one of two reasons: students find that they would greatly prefer to study a different instrument; or the teacher and/or the Dean of Music recommends a change.

Because the focus of the School is pre-professional, students are discouraged from switching to/from piano and violin or cello until beyond first or second grade. Later, students may switch from violin to viola or from cello to bass, which can happen at a more advanced age because the instruments are similar. Students may also switch to a wind or brass instrument, as well as percussion, in a later grade. Students in Middle School may switch to a composition track, with the permission of the Dean of Music.

If students fail two consecutive juries, the Dean of Music reserves the right to change the instrument or teacher assignment for that student.

III. Instrumental Performances

Music is about sharing, and sharing means performing! From the earliest grades, Special Music School students become comfortable with performing situations through a variety of different experiences. Some of these performance opportunities for students are listed below:

1. Performance classes

Performance classes are held almost every week, on Mondays and Tuesdays at 2:15, in the Ann Goodman Recital Hall. Students, teachers, parents and families form an audience for the performers. For middle school students, this means staying past dismissal on the days they play or attend performance class. Performance classes are open to the public.

Teachers sign a student up for performance class when they feel that he/she is ready to play; the frequency of performances varies from teacher to teacher, and from student to student. During "high demand" periods, students who have not yet performed are given priority over students who have already performed twice during the semester.

Students signed up for performance class may play a "preview," at 2:15 on the previous lesson day, in the Recital Hall, in front of their teacher and the other performers. This is a closed dress rehearsal, and parents and the general public are not invited to attend. Previews are not mandatory.

Previews and Performance Classes are scheduled in grade order, from youngest to oldest, in variations of alphabetical order that allow kids to experience playing at the beginning, middle, and end of concerts.

2. Grade Concerts, "Extended Play" Concerts, and Lecture Recitals

Held at the end of each semester, Grade Concerts present all the children in each grade playing memorized pieces for a public audience. Students on Grade Concerts are generally restricted to short pieces so that the overall length of the program does not exceed 90 minutes.

Each year in March, middle school students can participate in a series of "Extended Play Concerts". These concerts give students the opportunity to play longer musical selections (up to

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15 minutes). These concerts are for performances of longer pieces or suites. **Unrelated collections of short pieces are unacceptable.** Participation in these concerts is not mandatory, but most students participate. Students in grade 6 prepare spoken introductions to their pieces in their Music History classes. Students in grade 7 prepare program notes and spoken introductions to their pieces in their Music History classes.

As part of these March longer concerts, grade 8 students will perform Lecture Recitals. These are mini “lecture recitals” in which students present a 5-10 minute musical work and then deliver a 5-minute lecture (or vice-versa). Students are graded on the lecture (as part of their music history grade) and given constructive feedback on their playing and presentation.

3. Other Performing Opportunities

Other performing opportunities are available both inside and outside of school. There are four Performance Classes, two each in January and June, specifically for chamber music. Chamber groups can also participate in the Chamber and Contemporary Music Festivals in Merkin Hall, and also at Winter’s Eve at TD Bank. All students are welcome and encouraged to perform at play-a-thons and outreach concerts organized and run by the Parents Association.

Students from the Special Music School are periodically invited to perform for guests, both those visiting the Kaufman Center, and also at outside functions. The Dean of Music makes decisions about who performs at these events. Excellence in performance is certainly a consideration in selecting students, but it is not the only factor. In all cases, the students chosen are expected to represent the School well and parental support of these events is crucial and expected.

4. SMS Performance Dress Code

Unless otherwise indicated, dress code for performances at SMS and outside venues should be solid colored shirts and dark pants or skirts, with dark shoes and socks. This is required for all choral performances, and for community service concerts. For other instrumental performances (i.e. not community service concerts), there is more freedom in the dress code, but shorts and sneakers are not allowed.

5. Accompanying

Each teacher of strings, winds and brass has an allotment of accompanying hours, distributed by grades. These hours are monitored by the SMS Music Staff.

Every non-piano teacher at Special Music School has the use of an accompanist for required performances (Evaluations, Grade Concerts) plus three lessons during the year. In addition, each teacher has an allotment of “discretionary” hours that he or she can distribute among the students in his/her studio for other lessons and events.

If the teacher runs out of studio hours, parents may have to pay directly for accompanist services, at the School rate of \$28 per hour. If a student needs additional accompanying and cannot afford it, please bring this to the attention of the SMS Music Staff; all requests must be approved by the Dean of Music.

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SMS does not subsidize accompanying for chamber music groups. Because this is an after-school activity, groups either need to use a student pianist, a volunteer pianist, or parents of the involved students will need to pay an accompanist directly.

IV. Merkin Performance Opportunities

Support and attendance at Merkin concerts by SMS families is crucial, if we are to continue to offer them. Participating families should commit to attending the full recital and providing audience support for all other participants.

1. Contemporary Music Festival

This is an annual concert held in Merkin Hall that is shared with students from the Lucy Moses School; this year the concert will be held on March 6, 2016. Teachers sign students up for this event. There is a “preview” for the concert, which may be used as an aid in selecting the most appropriate pieces/performers. The concert is dedicated to repertoire written since 1965.

2. Composer Festival

This is an annual event that centers on a specific composer, group of composers, or theme. The Sunday concert in Merkin Hall is shared with students from the Lucy Moses School; this year the concert will be held on April 10, 2016. Teachers sign students up for the Composer Festival concert. There is a “preview” for this concert, which may be used as an aid in selecting the most appropriate pieces/performers. The theme of this year’s Composer Festival is Eastern Block Composers of the past 200 years. This concert is for solo works only. ****Students who are selected to perform in the Contemporary Festival are ineligible to perform in the Composer Festival.*

3. Chamber Fest

This annual event features Young Artist Program, Lucy Moses School and Special Music School after school chamber ensembles that have been studying throughout the year. The 2015-16 concert will be held on May 15, 2016. There is a “preview” for this concert that may be used as an aid in selecting the most appropriate pieces/performers, depending on the number of groups that sign up.

V. Assessing Student Instrumental Progress

1. Juries

“Juries” are instrumental performance assessments for the students. They are a planned opportunity for children to play their best and show what they have learned. The audition experience is part of being a musician and the evaluation process gives students considerable “in-house” practice. However, the Jury grade, while of value in helping identify a trend in a student’s progress, is also basically a “snapshot” of a particular day.

There are two Juries each year, the first in December and the second in May. Each student performs set repertoire and technical work for a jury panel comprised of members of the faculty and outside musicians. December juries will also test sight reading. Evaluations for strings, winds and brass are usually in Room 520, 521 or 402, and for pianists, in Ann Goodman Recital Hall.

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Summary of Evaluation Information

Event	When	Grade	Duration
Fall Jury	Dec.	1-8	15 minutes
Exit Projects	March	8	15-20 minutes
Spring Jury	May	K-8	K-1 10 min., 2-8 -15 min.
Readmission Jury	May	5	15 minutes
Quick Learn Juries	May	5	5 minutes

After the Jury, the panel awards each student a grade. Then the mark and accompanying comments are shared with the teachers, parents and students via a printed sheet that is sent home. Students are graded using the “100 point system”. Grades are decided upon unanimously by the panel, and are final. Jury grades do not go on students’ report cards.

The Fall Jury, for grades 1-8, focuses on technical repertoire (etudes and scales) and sight reading. Kindergarten students are exempt from this Jury. The jury is 10-15 minutes in length, for grades 1-8.

The Spring Jury (May) is a repertoire jury. Students in grades K-8 are expected to play this jury. Kindergarten and grade 1 juries are 10 minutes long, and grades 2-8 are 15 minutes long.

For those students applying to the SMS High School, an audition time will be given in mid to late November. All grade 8 students are welcome to take the audition.

For students in grade 5, the spring jury will also serve as a Readmission Jury to the Middle School. The repertoire jury is a chance for students to demonstrate not only their technical prowess, but also their musicality and understanding of musical structure. In addition, 5th graders will participate in a Quick Learn test. Readmission to SMS Middle School requires a grade of 80” or higher on both the performance jury and the Quick Learn test. *Families that have chosen to attend another Middle School may select to receive jury feedback with no reported jury grade.*

Fall High School Auditions in Grade 8 and Spring Juries in grade 5 are considered “Readmission Juries.” You can find more information on this in the “Middle School Readmission” and “High School Admission”.

2. Scales Tests

In the spring semester, during a regular lesson time, all students in grades 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, and 8, play scales and arpeggios in front of the Music Education Manager for a “pass/fail” grade. All grades, including failing ones, are kept as part of the students’ internal record.

3. Quick Learn Juries (5th Grade only)

The 5th grade will participate in two Quick Learn Juries. The first, a mock event in October, will acquaint students with the process. The actual Quick Learn Jury will be in May. Students will be given original, short compositions to learn on their own in a practice room. They will then play this in front of the evaluation panel.

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4. Lesson Grade/Progress Report – Goes on Report Card

The most important way in which students are formally evaluated on their instrumental progress is the lesson grade. Each private teacher reports on the student's lesson preparation by filling out a Progress Report form, which goes to the parents at the end of each marking period. This report includes a grade for their report card and details different aspects of the child's skill development, attitude, and progress; it also makes constructive recommendations for improvement. Lesson grades are reported on the Department of Ed report card, using the "1 through 4" system for grades K through 5, and the "100 point system" for grades 6 through 8.

VI. Music Classes

1. Theory

Theory classes are essential to the development of the young musician. Music theory is to music performance what grammar and language study is to acting. The well-informed musician is always one who is "fluent" in music theory.

The Special Music School uses its own music theory curriculum that is tailored to the needs of the age groups it serves. The curriculum brings together "traditional" music theory study with elements drawn from the methodology of Emile-Jacques Dalcroze, a Swiss composer, piano teacher and music theorist. Dalcroze, in response to what he found to be a lack of musicality in his piano students, developed a complete method that emphasized the use of the body in learning musical, but especially, rhythmic concepts; solfege skills; and improvisation. Our teachers blend traditional methods with Dalcroze activities in the in-depth study of works by classical composers.

In the elementary grades, students work on pitch, rhythm, melody and pre-harmony using a variety of techniques, including written exercises, aural identification, singing, improvisation, and movement. In the middle school, students study four-part writing, chromatic harmony, formal analysis and composition, in addition to more advanced sight-singing and dictation.

Students receive grades in Music Theory using a system that corresponds with their other academic classes. In grades K through 5, grades are given on the "1 through 4" scale, and in middle school, they are given on the "100 point scale." These grades go on their regular Department of Ed report cards. (For more on what is graded, see below).

2. Music History

Students in middle school receive one class a week devoted to Music History. In this class, students survey music from many styles (symphonies, chamber music, keyboard works, opera, Minimalism, choral music etc.) as well as study, in depth, the work of specific composers. Over the course of three years, students develop an awareness of the timeline of musical development and the key traits of each stylistic era. Each student receives a packet of written materials and CDs or online links to required listening samples.

3. Books and Materials

Families are charged a \$35/student fee at the beginning of the school year that helps to cover the overall cost of books, CDs, folders, pencils, and other supplies necessary for the theory and history classes. Students who lose their materials are responsible for their replacement.

Payment can be made in the form of checks made out to "Kaufman Music Center" or in cash.

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The Music Office has *replacement* copies of the following available for purchase. Students should request replacements from the music staff at the beginning of the day, and parents are responsible for payment in cash.

- music history dictionaries - \$10 each
- manuscript notebooks - \$3 each.
- music history packets - \$10 each

4. Chorus

Beginning in Grade 1, students have one period of chorus per week. In chorus class, students learn healthy vocal techniques, and the basics of ensemble singing. In the 1st through 4th grades, students explore a wide range of repertoire, with a special emphasis on musical theater, as it allows the children to move and engage their imaginations. Third grade students prepare a special music play for the spring concert. In middle school, all students have one double period of chorus per week (90 minutes). Students are split into an “all girl” group and an “all boy” group, though they come together for some combined repertoire. The emphasis in the middle school is on the continued development of healthy vocal techniques, while exploring more complex classical choral literature, in multiple parts, and different languages.

All choruses perform at concerts in mid-December and mid-June. In addition, the middle school may perform in additional concerts throughout the year, both in-house and at outside venues. **Attendance is mandatory at all performances; SMS families should carefully prioritize SMS ensemble concerts over outside commitments.** Performance dates will be given out well in advance.

Unless otherwise indicated, dress code for performances at SMS and outside venues should be solid colored shirts and dark pants or skirts, with dark shoes and socks.

5. Extra-Curricular Music Activities

While extracurricular music activities can provide a wonderful opportunity to broaden and deepen your child’s education, please be aware of the following:

- You need to explore any extracurricular music activities with your child’s instrument teacher, and possibly with the Dean of Music. Some things are great, and some things aren’t, and this totally depends on the child and the situation. In extreme situations, there may be an “institutional” conflict – for instance, we have had issues with Met Opera Chorus in the past, in terms of scheduling – and it is better to discuss these issues before starting an activity.
- Please limit your child’s non-musical extra-curricular activities. We tell you this in the admissions interview, but experience has demonstrated that “Soccer on Mondays, Dance on Tuesdays, Chinese on Wednesdays, Cooking on Thursdays, and Mbira Chorus on Fridays” does not make for a well-rested, focused SMS student.

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a) Second Instrument Lessons

Some students at the Special Music School take lessons on a second instrument through the Lucy Moses School. Students should register and pay for these lessons through Lucy Moses. These lessons happen after school. SMS cannot give any additional scholarship for these lessons.

b) Chamber Music

With private teacher approval, students are encouraged to participate in the SMS after school chamber music programs. Chamber ensembles are organized either over the summer or in the early fall, and include cello and violin ensembles, mixed chamber groups, and Face the Music. Most groups meet after school on weekdays or on Sundays. Some ensembles will meet at the SMS High School, due to space limitations at Kaufman Music Center.

Middle School students should participate in at least one SMS ensemble, as part of their SMS curriculum. Concert and rehearsal schedules for that or those ensemble(s) should be prioritized over outside ensemble commitments.

Students wishing to participate in chamber music need to register through Lucy Moses and pay a fee. A small amount of financial aid is available for SMS students participating in chamber music; questions about this should be addressed to the Dean of Music. Financial aid requests must be complete before the start of classes. There are 30 coaching sessions for ensembles, which follows the Lucy Moses School calendar.

c) Face the Music

Praised for “stunning performances” by *The New York Times*, Face the Music is an “alt-classical” ensemble of more than 100 astonishingly talented teenagers from in and around New York City. Face the Music was started as a Special Music School chamber group in 2005, and has since grown to become a nationally recognized ensemble with players who come from all over the NYC metro area.

Recipient of the ASCAP’s 2011 Aaron Copland Award, Face the Music has played across New York City at venues such as Le Poisson Rouge, El Museo del Barrio, the Look and Listen Festival, the River to River Festival, and the Bang On A Can Marathon. The group has been featured on WQXR’s “Young Artist Showcase,” NPR’s “All Things Considered,” and played on a live broadcast marking the opening of WNYC’s Jerome L. Greene Performance Space.

Students can participate in Face the Music at any age, provided they are able to handle the repertoire and can commit to the rehearsal and performance schedule. High School students are heavily involved with Face The Music; students in Middle and Elementary school should speak to Jenny Undercofler, who will try to provide appropriate levels of involvement for the skill level and commitment level of the student.

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VII. Report Card Grades

1. Summary of Report Card Grades

Students at the Special Music School receive the following music grades on their regular DOE report cards: instrumental lessons, music theory, chorus, and music history (middle school only).

Example, Grades K-5

Student Name:	Subject	Teacher	Grade
Johnny X	Instrumental Lessons	J. Bach	4
	Music Theory	W. Mozart	3
	Chorus	L. Beethoven	4

2. Mid-term progress reports in Grades 6-8

Middle school students receive mid-term progress reports in Music Theory, History and Chorus in addition to their academic subjects. As with academic subjects, music grades are entered into Engrade so that parents and students can monitor their progress. Project and test dates will also be entered in Engrade.

3. Music Teachers at P/T Conferences

Music theory teachers are available if possible at specific times on the DOE parent/teacher conference days. Sign-up information for these conferences will be sent out nearer to the date. Music History and Chorus teachers can be approached via email for a meeting or phone discussion as the need arises.

VIII. Further Admissions Policies

1. Admissions and Sibling Policy

Admission to Grades K through 2 is based on a child's level of musical giftedness, as determined by the three-step assessment process. Admission to Grades 3 and up is based on an audition on a musical instrument and a theory placement test. Because the results of the assessment/audition processes are the only basis for acceptance, no preference in admission is offered to siblings of children who already attend the school. Please be aware that no class is typically larger than 16 students and that the Kaufman Music Center has limited music scholarships available, to be spread over the grades at the Director's discretion.

If you have another child who shows musical ability and you are interested in applying for a place, please do so. However, be sure to actively pursue other options. As you know, only 14-16 children are admitted in each grade, and there is an overall limit to how many children the Kaufman Music Center can support. Discuss honestly with your child both the admissions process and the possibility that he or she may attend a different school than the sibling. Focus on the process of looking at many schools as a way to find the right school for the child.

If the child is not admitted, please feel free to discuss alternate routes for musical training with the staff.

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2. Middle School Readmission

All students who wish to continue in the SMS middle school must re-audition for the Middle School in the spring of 5th grade. Students take two tests: a Readmission Jury and a Quick Learn Test.

Transition from elementary school to middle school is a good time for families to reflect on their commitment to a particular kind of education for their children. To aid in this process, during the second semester of fourth grade, parents have a conference with the Dean of Music and the Principal. These meetings are **mandatory** for any family interested in middle school for their child. The purpose of the meeting is to help parents decide whether continuation in the SMS middle school is advisable for their child, and to help the school determine the number of possible openings anticipated in the middle school. During the conference, parents and staff discuss the child's musical progress, interest and commitment and then develop a work plan for the coming year.

Our fifth grade students are typically evaluated according to a school-wide standard and with the objective input of jury members from outside our program. Provided they pass Readmission and Quick Learn juries with a grade of 80 or higher, they have first priority for spots in the sixth grade. Students who have taken the Readmission exam and received a passing grade will receive a letter with a contract to sign and return to the Music Office within two school days.

Middle school readmission timeline:

- Spring of 4th grade – conferences with families, and academic/music administration
- Fall of 5th grade – Dept. of Ed middle school open houses and fairs
- Likely, December of 5th grade – Dept. of Ed middle school choice forms due back to the academic office.
- Late spring of 5th grade (early May) – Readmission audition, including Quick Learn Jury; results published within 48 hours
- Likely, early to mid- May – DOE gives out middle school choice results

3. SMS High School Admissions All 8th grade students will automatically be admitted to the new SMS High School. Students are, however, required to play one piece at the audition in November. This piece may be repeated at the December Grade Concert

Procedure for current SMS 8th Grade Students to apply to SMS High School

- During the Fall semester of 8th grade, students and their parents may meet with the Dean of Music to discuss their high school options, and their continuing path in music.
- All 8th Grade students are automatically accepted to the 9th Grade Class of the SMS High School, as long as they apply and audition, and then select SMS on their choice selection sheet. They are required to play one piece at the audition in November.
- The HS application form must be filled out in order to audition, but the teacher recommendation form is not required.
- SMS students are encouraged to audition in November at SMS High School (MLK Educational Complex). They will play one piece, and participate in a theory test and improvisation workshop. Their piece can also be performed at their December Grade Concert.
- 8th Grade SMS students will play a repertoire jury in May or a strong jury recital in the late Spring. This is a requirement of SMS 8th grade graduation.

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IX. Special Music School High School/Young Artist Program

In the fall of 2013, Kaufman Center's Special Music School (P.S. 859) expanded into the high school grades at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Educational Complex on New York City's Upper West Side, with a music curriculum that emphasizes the development of the student as a musician for the 21st century. With the establishment of the high school extension, Special Music School (SMS) will be the city's only K-12 school that teaches music as a core subject.

The school is unique even among New York's highly regarded arts high schools in providing talented young musicians the opportunity to pursue serious, pre-professional music studies along with a rigorous Regents-based academic curriculum. Open to SMS eighth grade graduates as well as students from all five boroughs of New York City, the high school admits 50 students per grade beginning with ninth grade in the fall of 2013.

Special Music School High School embraces an innovative and forward-looking view of educating classical musicians, building on the rigorous classical training that has, traditionally, prepared students for positions as orchestra or band members. In addition to helping students build extremely strong core skills as music makers, SMS High School prepares them to improvise and compose as well as perform, to understand and use music technology, and to collaborate with other musicians both in small and large groups while providing meaningful experience working with living composers.

In conjunction with the opening of the high school, some version of the **Young Artist Program**, (see description below) now runs completely out of the Lucy Moses School. It offers an alternative to those students who choose to go to either academic or other specialized high schools but still want to participate in a challenging extra-curricular music program.

The Kaufman Center's Young Artist Program offers highly motivated music students a comprehensive course of after-school study. For grades 9-12, the extra-curricular program is an exciting and challenging course with a competitive admissions process. SMS students apply to the Young Artist Program at the end of 8th grade (see below). The Young Artist Program meets on Sundays and Mondays after school.

New in 2012-2013 is the establishment of two levels of YAP. Students are categorized as Honors Level or Diploma Level. Honors students take lessons and participate in two other YAP activities (chamber music and/or theory). Diploma Level students take lessons and participate in one other activity. Students who want to participate in the YAP Program and have heavy academic or other music commitments choose the Diploma Level.

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X. Communication with the Music Department

1. Roles within the Music Office

The Dean of Music at SMS oversees the complete musical education for each child, and also establishes the larger vision for the Music Program. (212) 501-3316

The Music Education Manager is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the program. He communicates with the music teachers, academic teacher and students on a daily basis. The Music Education Manager is also responsible for organizing Performance Classes and Grade Concerts, as well as the upkeep of the official SMS Google Calendar. (212) 501-3393

The Admissions Associate is responsible solely for the admissions and audition process for all grades.

2. Google Calendar

The Music Office utilizes a Google Calendar to maintain scheduling information. The calendar will be the source for all music information and updated by the music office. Important changes and updates will be put on the calendar. The SMS Google Calendar is the default calendar for SMS. Anyone is welcome to view the calendar: music and academic faculty, parents and friends. The calendar is also listed on the SMS PTA website. Any changes made to the Google Calendar will automatically be updated to all that have access, and on the PTA website.

The goal is to have the entire community check the calendar daily, but especially during peak periods of evaluations, grade concerts and testing, when changes happen very quickly.

If you wish to be added to the calendar, email the Music Education Manager, Nick Tucker, at (212) 501-3393.