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Private lessons, Public Success

By Stacey DaBaldo, Public Relations Intern

Private music lessons might seem easy to overlook, but private lessons set your student and the Carlmont Instrumental Music program up for astronomical success.

With a weekly lesson your student can grow not only as a soloist, but as an ensemble member. Private lessons are tailored to your student's individual needs as a musician and are suited for their pace of learning. Lessons reinforce good habits (while fixing the bad) and teach students advanced techniques and concepts they might not learn in the classroom setting (concepts such as vibrato, alternate clefs, and methods of tonguing).

When students get the individualized attention they receive in private lessons, the entire Carlmont ensemble benefits and can progress at a faster rate. Students often get frustrated during individual practice. Practicing an instrument for progress is a learned skill. Having a private teacher will help your student find the best ways to make progress on their own, and will teach them how to apply these new skills to their band, jazz, or orchestra music.

"Private lessons helped me not only improve my skills because of the individualized attention, but I also learned how to effectively practice and play under pressure (sometimes lessons are intimidating!) It gave me the necessary skill set to play well in the classroom, and help me develop my skills as a leader."
– **Sean Ang, violin, Class of 2012**

Private lessons show your student's determination and drive towards being successful. Lessons teach students to be accountable for themselves and show an enormous amount of responsibility on their behalf.

"Lessons are entirely focused on the particular student and their personal strengths, weaknesses, and goals. Lessons act as 'weekly accountability sessions' that teach discipline and respect in addition to all the musical skills gained. A student who knows he or she must play for a teacher also knows that if they fail to practice, the only person truly hurt by this lack of practicing is the student him/herself." – **Sarah Lloyd, cello, Class of 2012**

Even if your student isn't interested in becoming a concertmaster in a professional orchestra, or a famous jazz musician, you should still consider the benefits private lessons will offer your student. Lessons provide your student with opportunities to be a soloist with music that suits and challenges their skills outside of the band room. They also provide plenty of theory practice that students can apply to their theory tests in their IM class.

If your student is interested in playing in the top ensembles in the Carlmont IM program consider this:

- 81% of Carlmont Jazz Ensemble members take private lessons
- 62% of Carlmont Symphony Orchestra members take private lessons
- 50% of Carlmont Symphonic Band members take private lessons
- 60% of students in the (above) Carlmont top ensembles take private lessons

“For me, private instruction gave me a leg up on musical opportunities at Carlmont. A lot of the ensembles are exclusive and competitive so the knowledge and skills I gained with a good [private] teacher allowed me to play in the orchestra, jazz ensemble, drum line, pit orchestra and on chamber night.” – **Jake Nilson, percussion, Class of 2010**

The cost of private lessons varies from teacher to teacher, and most teachers are willing to work a schedule that's affordable for you. Lessons are typically taught in time blocks of 30 minutes, 45 minutes, or an hour. Prices typically range from \$30 to \$75 per lesson, and can, of course, be more expensive depending on the teacher.

While the price of private lessons may seem steep, Bob Farrington, music director at DeAnza College and a local private music instructor, suggests:

- Taking lessons every other week
- Taking group lessons
- Taking lessons from a college student

Don't be afraid to ask questions! For private teacher recommendations, contact Mr. DaBaldo, Mr. Smart, or fellow classmates. You can also call your local music stores who keep lists of private teachers in the area. Happy practicing!