

## 2016-2017 Student Handbook

### Harp Studios of Sarah Ladd and Carly Nelson

#### EXPECTATIONS

Come to lessons with an open mind and a desire to learn.

Have access to a teacher-approved harp for regular practice.

Purchase required music and materials as required by Mrs. Ladd/Ms. Nelson.

Devote an appropriate amount of time to practicing each week and make progress on solo both solo and ensemble music.

Make lessons a priority and to adhere to the attendance policy.

Listen to recordings of current repertoire and attend all performances.

Perform in orchestra concerts, public recitals, competitions, studio classes, and master classes.

Notify harp teacher of specific learning differences in order for lessons to fit your needs and for progress to be made.

## Lesson Policies

### LESSONS & LOCATIONS

**Weekly Lessons** - Weekly lessons in time periods of 45 minutes and one hour are offered. All students are required to take weekly lessons.

**Music Theory and Ear Training** – Study of music theory and development of aural skills are important parts of developing oneself as a whole musician. Lesson time will be devoted to strengthening these skills. Group classes will also reinforce these skills with games and other fun activities.

**Group Studio classes** – These classes will be offered to all harp students on select Thursdays during the fall semester: Sept 8 and 29, October 20, November 3, and December 1.

Classes will promote community as students work together on music theory. Students will have an opportunity to perform for each other and to discuss important harp topics. Please plan to attend as many of these classes as possible. Attendance will be taken and those students who attend 3 or more classes will be given extra credit in their orchestra class.

**Lesson Location** - Lessons take place at RRISD harp teachers' home studios or at select RRISD campuses. Students are welcome to bring their harp for lessons or may chose to play on the harp provided by the teacher during their lesson.

Should the need arise, teachers are open to traveling to students' homes to teach an occasional lesson, provided that gas cost is covered. Travel to a student's home is based on availability.

### Tuition

- Payment must be in the form of personal checks or cash and must be submitted to Mrs. Ladd/Ms. Nelson on or before the first lesson of every month/semester.
- Checks returned by the bank will be subject to a \$25 fee,

in addition to the original amount of the check.

- All payments are non-refundable.

All tuition payment plans are based on the following fee schedule:

45 minutes - \$43, 1 hour - \$55.

- The Fall semester includes 14 lessons, and the Spring semester includes 17 lessons.

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### Monthly Tuition Payment Plan

Monthly tuition is calculated by dividing the cost of the total number of lessons per semester (14 Fall & 17 Spring lessons) by the number of months and rounded to the nearest even number creating equal monthly payments.

LESSON LENGTH	2016-2017 MONTHLY TUITION (SEPT-MAY)
45 minute or MS Orch. Class	\$150
1 hour	\$190

1. The monthly payment is due on or before the 1st lesson of each month. If payment is not received on or before the first lesson of the month, a \$20 late fee will be added for each week payment is not received.
2. If payment is not received by the second lesson of the month, the student will not receive that lesson or any further lessons until payment is made.
3. If payment is not received within thirty (30) days of the first lesson of the month, the regularly scheduled lesson time will be forfeited and possibly assigned to another student.

### Semester Tuition Payment Plan

Semester Tuition is based on a set number of lessons each semester: 14 Fall and 17 Spring lessons.

1. Students choosing to pay for the entire semester must do so on or before the first lesson of the semester and will receive a 5% discount as indicated below.

LESSON LENGTH	2016 FALL SEMESTER	2017 SPRING SEMESTER
5 minute or MS Orch. class	\$571.90	\$694.45
hour	\$731.50	\$888.25

## Summer Lessons

Students are highly encouraged to continue taking lessons during the summer. Specific information about pricing and dates will be given out in the Spring.

## Practicing & Tuning

Consistent and disciplined practice is essential to making progress toward semester goals. Allotted time and practice planning go a long way toward achieving this. Students should make every effort to observe the following guidelines:

A **minimum** of 5 days of practicing per week is expected for all students. This can be divided into multiple sessions per day and may include listening, flashcards, and other theory homework.

Students preparing for college auditions and/or competitions at the state or national level can expect to devote more time to practicing outside of school.

All students are expected to tune their harp every day. Tuning is important for the stability of the instrument and for the aural skills of the student. Parents may tune or supervise tuning for elementary students.

## Attendance

Consistent attendance at lessons is required. Just as the teacher has set aside lesson time to teach, so must students be respectful of that time and make every effort to be at their lessons.

If a student misses a lesson for any reason, he/she must contact Mrs. Ladd/Ms. Nelson directly via phone or text. It is not the school's responsibility to do this.

### Excused Absences

1. To obtain an excused absence the student (or parent) must contact the teacher more than 24 hours in advance about missing a lesson.
2. Each student can reschedule or make-up ONE excused absence per semester. After one excused absence in a semester, missed lessons may not be rescheduled and payment must be made regardless of attendance for all scheduled lessons.
3. In cases of sudden illness or dire emergency, a student may obtain an excused absence at the teacher's discretion, with less than 24 hours notice by contacting the teacher as soon as possible and prior to the original lesson time. In this case, a make-up lesson will be only be available to schedule during one of the allotted make-up lesson days in the calendar.

### Unexcused Absences & Habitual Absences

1. Canceling a lesson with less than 24 hours notice will result in an unexcused absence and the student (or parents) will be charged for the lesson in question – except in cases of sudden illness or emergency determined at the discretion of the teacher.
2. Scheduling doctor appointments for well visits (dentist, orthodontist, etc.) during your harp lesson will result in an

- unexcused absence with no make-up and no refund.
3. Unexcused absences will not be rescheduled, made-up, or refunded.
  4. A failure to give notice about an absence - i.e. no call, no show - will result in the student paying a \$25 fee in addition to the usual cost of the lesson in question.
  5. Habitual absences, regardless of being excused or unexcused absences, or a repeated failure to follow the attendance policy will result in the permanent termination of lessons. Habitual absences are defined for all students as: a student who does not attend a minimum of 3 lessons per month on average during the fall and spring semesters.
  6. All students must attend lessons regularly.

## Scheduling, Cancellations, & Make-up Lessons

Mrs. Ladd's students: please refer to the online studio calendar at <http://www.austinharplessons.com/austin-harp-lessons/harp-student-calendar> for the most current information about the lesson schedule.

Ms. Nelson's students: please refer to the online studio calendar at <http://carlynelsonharp.com/teachingschedule/> for the most current information about the lesson schedule

## EMERGENCIES

In extreme weather or local emergency situations, lessons will be held or canceled based on the decisions of the student's local school district, and a lesson will be available during the make-up lesson weeks at the end of the semester.

## RE-SCHEDULING & MAKE-UP LESSONS

If a conflict should arise in your teacher's schedule with the student's lesson day and time, she will give the student notice

about the conflict as soon as possible. Your teacher will do one of the following:

1. Reschedule the lesson in advance at everyone's earliest convenience or during the allotted make-up lesson days scheduled in the calendar.
2. Refund the lesson, if necessary.

Should your teachers need to cancel a lesson due to illness or emergency, your teacher will call and/or email you to cancel with as much notice as possible. A make-up lesson will be available during one of the make-up lesson weeks during the semester, or the lesson will be refunded.

**Students** are allowed to reschedule or make-up ONE of their Excused Absence lessons per semester, provided the student (and parent) adheres to the attendance policy. After one excused absence in a semester, missed lessons may not be rescheduled and payment must be made regardless of attendance for all scheduled lessons.

1. Cancel within 24 hours of your lesson, and obtain an Excused Absence due to sudden illness or emergency, a make-up lesson will only be available during one of the allotted make-up lesson days during the semester.
2. If a scheduled make-up lesson is missed or cancelled by the student, a second make-up lesson will not be offered.

## SHORTENING OR TERMINATION OF LESSONS

### Shortening of Lessons

Should a student arrive for their lesson unprepared (i.e., without their music or lacking sufficient practice), your teacher reserves the right to shorten or cancel the lesson at the student's expense. Your teacher has set aside her time to teach. Please be prepared to work.

## Grounds for Termination of Lessons by the Teacher

- ❖ If a student is not following the above studio policies.
- ❖ If a student has a routinely poor attitude.
- ❖ If a student is perpetually tardy.
- ❖ If a student has habitual absences or consistently fails to adhere to the absence policy. All students must attend an average of 3 lessons per month.
- ❖ If a student is repeatedly unprepared.
- ❖ If the student has an unpaid balance due for more than 30 days, lessons will be terminated immediately and the balance will still be required in addition to any late fees and court costs. Lessons will be terminated for the reasons listed above or at the discretion of the teacher. In most cases students will be given one written warning (usually an email) and the chance to change their behavior or resolve the problem. When the decision is made to terminate lessons, the student's regularly scheduled lesson time will be forfeited and possibly assigned to other current students or the next student on the waiting list. If lessons are terminated by the student or teacher before the end of a tuition payment period, payment will not be reimbursed.

## Performances

All students are expected to participate in studio recitals. Advanced high school students are encouraged to perform a Senior solo recital or a combined recital with another harp student. Outreach performances at retirement homes and non-profits are also given by students on a regular basis.

## COMPETITIONS

All middle school and high school students are strongly encouraged to participate in various competitions such as



Middle School Solo & Ensemble, High School UIL Solo & Ensemble, and Texas State Solo & Ensemble (high school only). Intermediate to advanced students of all ages may want to consider participating in The Austin Harp Solo Auditions and the American Harp Society's National competitions.

## TMEA ALL REGION ORCHESTRA & HARP ENSEMBLE (REGION 26)

RRISD middle school and high school harp students are eligible to audition for the TMEA Region 26 Middle School Orchestra, High School Orchestra, and Harp Ensemble. The auditions are held in October and the clinics and performances are held in November. High school students who qualify by placing in the top 4 at Region may also audition for the TMEA All State Orchestra. Any harp student who has completed one year of lessons is encouraged to audition, and we begin preparing the audition music in the summer.

## SUMMER CAMPS & FESTIVALS

We encourage all of our students to participate in summer harp activities. Information can be discussed in lessons, based on the student's age and level of playing.

## Communication

Students must keep their teacher updated with their working mobile phone number for contact in case of emergencies on lesson days.

Email is the primary way students and parents will receive updates, so please provide us with the address you check frequently. We do not share email addresses without consent.

Email is typically the fastest way to reach a teacher in non-emergency situations:

austinharplessons@gmail.com (Mrs. Ladd) or  
nelson.carly@gmail.com (Ms. Nelson)

Please use only these addresses and be sure you have them saved in your address book to receive important emails.

Text messages on cell phone :

713-309-0531 (Mrs. Ladd) or 214-287-5754 (Ms. Nelson)

Texts are welcome between the hours of 7 am and 9 pm from students/parents in emergency situations or when teachers need to pass on last minute information quickly.

Teachers will make every effort to answer correspondence as soon as possible. All non-emergency correspondence will be answered within 24 hours. The only exception to this is on Sundays or when teachers are out of town.

# Harp Student Supply List

## REQUIRED SUPPLIES

**Metronome** – Must have a loud ticking sound that can be heard while playing. (Can be an app on the student's smart phone.)

**Tuning Key** – RRISD students who do not own a harp must still purchase their own personal tuning key in accordance with RRISD harp procedures and policies.

**Electronic Chromatic Tuner** – Students must tune the harps they use a minimum of three days per week, tuning everyday is best for the harp. A separate electronic device is recommended, or an approved app on the student's smart phone.

**Tuning Pick-up Microphone** – This device plugs into your tuner and clips onto the harp; it helps tune in noisy situations such as ensemble rehearsal, or in orchestra class.

**Assignment Book** – A spiral notebook or a practice planner.

**One Three Ring Binder** – Student need to store handouts, orchestra music, and the occasional copies for their solo and theory work.

**Music** – Students are responsible for purchasing and owning original sheet music and recordings of all solo music they perform, as well as promptly purchasing all music as assigned.

## FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL & BEGINNING HARPISTS

**First Harp Book - Betty Paret**

## FOR PRACTICE AT HOME

**Music Stand** – Must have a sturdy desk (where the music sits) that swivels and the height should adjust. **Folding wire stands are NOT acceptable** because they are flimsy, easily collapse, and often damage the wood and finish of harps.

**Adjustable Bench** – It is best to buy one sturdy adjustable bench, this way as the student grows or switches to a different sized harp (as many students do) they can always sit at the proper height.

Supplies can be purchased from me, and I offer shipping discounts on music orders at the beginning of each semester.

Or you may purchase supplies online at the following retailers:

[www.VanderbiltMusic.com](http://www.VanderbiltMusic.com)

[www.Harp.com](http://www.Harp.com)