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lawlor voice studio

built, not born



Studio Policy

Lesson Description

Lessons will be held weekly. Students are expected to come to each lesson prepared (sheet music in hand, practice completed, etc.). Each lesson will begin with standard vocal exercises and move into preparing assigned repertoire. Techniques rehearsed will include posture, breathing, efficient tone production, pronunciation of foreign languages and English, appropriate stylistic and musical expression. Private lessons require focus and listening ability; there is a high volume of information all specifically tailored to the student's needs. My teaching style can be challenging, scientific, and fairly rigorous, though the work is definitely executed in a positive environment.

Practice

Vocal instruction returns only as much as the student deposits. Regular practice is simply a must for a voice student whose goal is to improve technique and musicality. The instructive time spent during the weekly lesson will only prove successful if the methods discussed are then applied at home. A commitment to *daily* practice will ensure improvement of control over vocal function. Additional preparation is required, such as memorization tasks, foreign language study and translations, character work when a performance is coming up, and online research and listening assignments. The *minimum* recommended practice for the Lawlor studio is three 25-minute sessions per week. More practice is recommended, and sessions over the minimum should be encouraged. Neglecting practice would warrant a conversation about the seriousness and commitment students are bringing to voice study. The financial investment in lessons must be matched with time investment.

Cost

Lessons will be given once a week, at a regular, scheduled time. Lesson lengths are offered at two levels: a half-hour weekly session or an hour session weekly. (In my opinion, an hour is typically appropriate only for a more serious young singer with training experience. It is common for my students to start at half-hour and move up if their progress warrants it.) Even if you are unable to attend a lesson in any given month for any reason, the monthly rate stays the same (see Attendance & Absence for more). **Lesson times are reserved and paid for ahead of time at the beginning of the month.**

Monthly cost: \$160 for half-hour lessons \$280 for 60-minute lessons (value savings of 12.5%)

(Please note that some months may have 5 weeks;
a reminder will be provided, and the cost will reflect the extra time.)

**Included for free in the monthly cost: piano accompaniment at all recital performances & most competitions/events, practice tracks to facilitate daily home practice sessions, pronunciation guide tracks as needed.

Payment Methods

Payment methods may vary depending on where and how you study. Checks made payable to Joshua Lawlor are appropriate for students at Shining Light in Lee's Summit. Those who study with me at William Jewell will arrange payment to the Lydia Lovan Community School of Music; details are provided by Nicole Murray when your contract with the school is signed. If you study remotely with FaceTime lessons, I arrange for alternate payment methods online.

Shining Light and the Lydia Lovan school both request student registration fees; these are handled by those organizations.

Attendance & Absence

Your monthly payment should be viewed as a reservation – an agreement that I will reserve Thursdays from 5:30-6:00 (for example) for your weekly lesson time. Even just one free half-hour in a musician's week is an opportunity to schedule a rehearsal or lesson, so a "no-show" student would be lost income. Therefore if you do not attend that reserved time, you are still responsible for the payment.

If I must miss a lesson for any reason, I will let the student or primary contact know ahead of time and then schedule a makeup lesson with the student. Every effort is made to contact you in cases of emergency or my illness. If for some reason, my schedule does not allow for a makeup lesson, the value of that lesson may be refunded to the student.

If the student must miss a lesson, notification must be given at least 48 hours in advance, and a timely makeup lesson will be scheduled if possible. If 48 hours' notice is not provided, the lesson will not be rescheduled. In case of extreme emergency, a parent must provide the notice, not the student (in case of high school students). This notice should be provided more than one hour before the scheduled lesson time or the lesson must be paid for. Excessive absences may be cause for the cessation of lessons.

Lessons are held year-round, however a certain amount of flexibility is expected and granted for the summer months. Keeping very open lines of communication will help all parties know what to expect concerning summer vacations/camps and makeup lessons. No lessons will be held during school-time weeks when high school is out of session (such as Thanksgiving, winter & spring breaks). Cost for that month will be lowered accordingly. A reminder will also be provided in these cases.

(*For those taking remote lessons, occasional tech and WiFi issues will be considered excused and a makeup session will be scheduled if possible. If WiFi issues are chronic, that may warrant a problem-solving brainstorm about the tech requirements of voice lessons in this unusual time.*)

Extended Absence & Holding Lesson Times

Students participating in after-school activities such as a sport or a musical should make every attempt to be released from practice or rehearsal for their weekly lesson time slot. If this is not possible and if a student will miss 2 or more consecutive voice lessons for a sports season or a musical, students have a choice to make. Either they may withdraw from voice lessons, making the spot available to a year-round student, or **the student may pay an extended-absence fee at a rate of 50% of regular payment.** Students must submit the dates they will miss and pay for the reservation of these time slots ahead of time (probably at the final lesson before their sports season or before musical rehearsals commence). If they do not submit dates and pay the 50% fee, the time slot will be considered open, and I will accept other students.

My expectation is that this extended absence fee will motivate students to continue lessons year-round. Typically musical rehearsals do not revolve around one student, however a voice lesson does. Therefore, I hope students will work with stage directors to arrange a weekly release to attend their voice lesson.

*Exceptions to this policy:

- Dress/tech rehearsal week and performance week for musicals; I understand that this will often involve exactly 2 consecutive weeks.
- Conference/district tournaments or other post-season play.

Makeups

Makeup lessons must be scheduled at the convenience of both student and teacher. Again, no makeup lessons are given for “no-show” absences.

Contact/Communication

Most students and primary contacts will receive monthly emails through the academic year that contain studio information and detail calendar items for the upcoming month. Regarding smaller necessary contact, I am most often in a lesson or rehearsal – picking up a phone call or checking email is sometimes a less efficient way to communicate with me when a student is running late or is ill. A text message is typically the most functional form of contact. I also often use text messaging as a way to arrange schedule changes, to send rehearsal recordings of piano parts or foreign language pronunciation, or answer brief questions a student may have. If a parent would prefer their student not text me directly, please let me know and provide only a parent/guardian cell number on the contact form (last page of this document). In such a case, it will often be important for the parent to pass on messages to and from their student in a very timely fashion.

Accompanying

Since I am able to accompany on piano adequately, no paid pianist is needed during our weekly lessons or studio recitals! For high school students, every effort is made for my schedule to accommodate district and state Solo & Ensemble Contest dates, but occasionally it is impossible for me to attend. If necessary, I can always provide suggestions for a suitable accompanist in those cases, and I typically arrange for rehearsals as well. (A small number of competition opportunities have specific rules that the voice teacher may not serve as a pianist.)

Lawlor Voice Studio

Joshua Lawlor, Voice Teacher

Acknowledgement of Studio Policy

Once the student and primary contact (if applicable) have read the studio policy, please read the statements below, sign, and **submit these acknowledgement and contact info pages**. (Remote forms of submitting these documents are always acceptable.)

- I have read and understand the policies in this document.
- I understand that this document and continued enrollment in voice lessons constitutes a financial agreement.
- I agree to abide by the policies listed above and have planned for the financial undertaking.
- I understand that failure to follow the studio policies, including payment issues and lack of practice, may result in removal from the Lawlor studio.
- I understand that there may be a balance due in the case of removal from the studio, including the accrued cost of any “no show” lessons. I agree to pay this balance even if I am no longer in voice lessons.
- I have provided an up-to-date email address which I check regularly, so any correspondence regarding these policies will be received.

Student

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Email Address: _____

Primary Contact (if student is not financially independent)

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Email Address: _____

Student Contact Form

Student Information

Name: _____

Email: _____

Circle one: I check this address often I rarely check this address

Phone Number: _____

(omit if a parent or guardian will always act as intermediary for messages regarding scheduling, rehearsal tracks, or brief questions)

Phone type: Cell Home Work

Primary Contact (Emergency Contact, Parent, Guardian, etc.)

Name: _____

Email: _____

Circle one: I check this address often I rarely check this address

Phone Number: _____

Phone type: Cell Home Work

Address: _____

Secondary Contact (Parent, Guardian, etc.)

Name: _____

Email: _____

Circle one: I check this address often I rarely check this address

Phone Number: _____

Phone type: Cell Home Work