

# Music Ensemble Information and Enrollment

Covenant Christian Academy Music Department  
Mrs. Lisa Coleman, Director of Fine Arts

## INSTRUMENTAL LESSONS & ENSEMBLES

All students in Grades 4-12 are invited to participate in *Covenant's Instrumental Music* program. Students who participate in this program will be able to take lessons from our instrumental instructors on one of the following instruments: flute, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, trombone, euphonium/baritone horn, and drums/percussion. Band students will participate in one of the ensembles depending on proficiency and Grade level. Piano, voice, guitar/bass and strings lessons will be available during our after-school program and are separate from the band program. *See the FAQ section for more info on the after-school lesson program.*

**Grade 4 Beginning Band / Grade 5-6 Band & Lessons:** These bands are open to students in Grades 4-6 wishing to pursue a band instrument. Instruments include flute, clarinet, alto sax, trumpet, trombone, euphonium, and percussion. There is also space for one electric bass player and two keyboard players in each band. All students are required to take lessons in order to participate, either at Covenant or with a private instructor outside of school. Each band meets once per week during school hours. Private or semi-private lessons (no more than 2 students at a time) are also given once per week during or after school hours. Lessons are given for 28 weeks during the school year at a cost of \$750. *See the FAQ section for more info about fees.*

Please note: Grade 4 Band students will need to purchase a copy of the ***Tradition of Excellence: Comprehensive Band Method BOOK 1*** (the “red” book) for their lessons and band rehearsals. This book can be ordered through the school or purchased from another source. If you would like a book to be ordered for you, please email Mrs. Coleman. Instruments are not provided for the student, but instrument rental options are available.

**USLR Concert Band & Lessons:** A combined Logic School and Rhetoric School Concert Band is open to all instrumental students in Grades 7-12 who have completed at least 2 years of instrumental lessons. Instruments include all winds, brass and percussion. There is also space for one electric bass player and three keyboard players in each band. If more than three students want to play keyboard, auditions will be required. Students in Grades 7-8 are required to take lessons at Covenant or with a private instructor outside of school in order to participate. Private lessons are not required for RS students, although it is highly encouraged. Private or semi-private lessons (no more than 2 students at a time) are given during or after school hours. Lessons are given for 28 weeks during the school year at a cost of \$750. There is no fee for band-only participation, provided that a student is in 9th grade or above or they are taking lessons with an outside provider. *See the FAQ section for more info about fees.*

**USLR Jazz Band:** The Jazz Band is open to Logic School and Rhetoric School students. Students who participated in this ensemble last year are not automatically accepted, but should plan to audition if multiple students are interested in a specific instrument. New incoming students should speak to Mrs. Coleman about joining to be sure it is a good fit and to audition. This ensemble will be challenged to play more difficult and complex music in a variety of contemporary idioms with an emphasis on Jazz. Wind and Brass students must also participate in Concert Band in order to qualify for participation. Rhythm section students (piano, bass, guitar, drums) must also participate in either Worship Band or Concert Band in order to qualify for participation. There is no fee for Jazz Band. Please note that USLR Jazz Band does meet before school.

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## VOCAL ENSEMBLES

*"Make a joyful noise to the Lord, serve the Lord with gladness. Come before His presence with singing!" – Psalm 100*

**4th Grade and 5/6 Junior Choir:** Students in Grades 4 and 5-6 who *do not* participate in band will be required to participate in their respective Junior Choirs. *Students may elect to participate in both Junior Choir and band.* A variety of Unison and 2-part choral literature is studied, including Sacred, Folk, Classical, and contemporary styles. This variety will provide students with a wealth of knowledge based in choral singing and strengthen their voices while working together as a group. Both Junior Choirs meet once per week and there is no fee.

**Logic School Choir:** This group is open to all students in Grades 7-8 and emphasis is on 2- and 3-part choral works. A variety of musical styles will be developed including a continuation from Junior Choir plus Musical Theatre, Gospel, Pop and other contemporary genres. Combined performances with the Logic School Worship Band may be included. Logic School Choir meets once per week during the school day and there is no fee.

**Rhetoric School Choir:** This group is open to all Rhetoric School students. More challenging choral literature will be explored with an emphasis on 3-part and 4-part singing as well as some *a cappella* music. A variety of musical styles will be further developed from Logic School Choir. The Rhetoric School Choir meets twice a week and travels to performances off-campus to add to the challenge of the Ensemble. Students earn .25 in Fine Arts credits for each semester they are in RS Choir and there is no fee to join.

**Rhetoric School Select Choir:** This group is open to all students who are enrolled in Rhetoric School Choir who complete an audition and are accepted by the director. Students have the opportunity to grow more precise skills and musicianship through more rigorous repertoire choices, tighter ensemble awareness, and independent voice leading. Select Choir meets once a week for 45 minutes after school. A variety of repertoire is used, with more focus on *a cappella* singing from all eras of history. RS Select Choir students must also participate in RS Choir in order to qualify for participation. Students earn .25 in Fine Arts credits for each semester they are in RS Select Choir and there is no fee to join. This ensemble will meet outside of the normal school day.

## EXPECTATIONS

In order to *strive for excellence* all students in band and/or chorale are expected to:

- Attend every scheduled rehearsal, arriving on time and fully prepared (bringing a note if late)
- Practice regularly each week (see FAQs below for specifics)
- For instrumental students - attend weekly lessons, arriving on time and fully prepared
- Maintain proper grades in all academic classes (low grades will result in suspension from the ensemble)
- Participate in all scheduled concerts and outside music events
- Dress in the appropriate attire for concerts/festivals (see FAQs below for specifics)
- *Do your best, honor God, and have fun!*

## MUSIC DEPARTMENT FAQ

### **How can I rent an instrument? Which instruments can I rent?**

Band instrument rentals are handled through the school directly. Instruments available include flute, clarinet, alto sax, trumpet, trombone, euphonium, and snare/bell kit. Most instruments are pre-owned, but in excellent condition and of quality craftsmanship. This allows us to keep rates at almost *half* the cost of commercial rental companies. The cost of rentals are \$175 for the first year and \$150 for following years. The first year includes all of the necessary accessories that go along with playing an instrument for the first time. PLEASE NOTE - We

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do not rent any string instruments - no violins, cellos, guitars, ukuleles. If you are in need of a string instrument, please contact Mrs. Coleman for other options. Contact Mrs. Coleman for more details.

### **What are the music participation fees and what do they pay for?**

The participation fee for the CCA Lesson program this year is \$750. This includes 28 weekly private or semi-private lessons, sheet music for band, and other band expenses. This does not include instrument rental or lesson book costs. If you were to take lessons from a private instructor at the going rate of \$30 per half-hour, you'd spend \$840 just for the lessons! At CCA, band students receive the invaluable experience of playing with an ensemble in various settings PLUS 28 weeks of lessons. *A terrific deal!* This fee can be paid all at once or in 10 monthly payments. Payment is made directly to Covenant via auto debit using the FACTs payment plan. (Students in Grades 4-8 are required to take lessons and it is highly recommended that RS band students participate in some form of private instrumental lessons whether at Covenant or off site.)

### **Why is it required for students in Grades 4-8 to take lessons in order to be in band?**

It is vital to the individual student as well as the entire group to maintain steady progress from week to week while working in an instrumental ensemble. If one student falls behind, then it slows down the learning process for the entire group. Private lessons not only provide a process of accountability for the student, but it allows students to work on individual performance issues that may not be able to be addressed during the group rehearsal. It is particularly important for those students who are taking lessons outside of school since the Covenant music faculty has no way of judging student progress other than the rehearsal itself. Students who play keyboard, bass, or another instrument and take lessons outside of school must maintain progress equal to those students taking lessons at Covenant. If progress is not maintained, students will be removed from band. High School students are not required to take lessons to be in a band, but highly encouraged to continue if able.

### **What about after-school lessons?**

Our after-school lesson program includes instruction for drums, piano, voice, guitar, bass, ukulele and strings. Students receive 28 lessons during the school year and the cost of after-school lessons are \$800 (not including strings). This fee can be paid all at once or in 8 monthly payments. Payment is made directly to Covenant via auto debit using the FACTs payment plan.

**A Music Lesson Handbook will be emailed to all parents of students who register for lessons at CCA for this coming year. The handbook includes all lesson obligations, teacher bios, and lesson calendar.**

### **Why is the CCA Strings Program higher in cost?**

The CCA Strings Program offers more than just private lessons. Included is a weekly 30-minute group ensemble class. This rehearsal is used to teach skills that all students can learn simultaneously, plus benefit from group practice and performance as well as the camaraderie and social skills that naturally develop out of these experiences. A private commercial program like this outside of Covenant could easily run upwards of \$2,000 per year, with private lessons averaging \$40-50 per half hour and ensemble rehearsals at an additional \$500 per year. *We have made every effort to offer this program at a more affordable rate!*

### **How much should students be expected to practice?**

An article was published by a musician from the Chicago Symphony Orchestra where he stated that his parents required him to practice every day for the same amount of time that he spent in his weekly lesson. His lessons were 30 minutes long, so he practiced 30 minutes a day! While that's the ideal for the more advanced student, it may not be possible for everyone. Each student should practice at least 75-100 minutes per week. This works out to 15-20 minutes per day from Monday-Friday (taking the weekends off if necessary). *Do not practice for 75-100 minutes all in one sitting.* This is not helpful. It is best to establish a regular and consistent routine.

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## **What should my child wear for concert and recital performances?**

For concerts, the following dress code is required:

### **CHRISTMAS CONCERT (December 2024)**

ALL Bands, Chorales and Grade 7/8 General Music Classes have the following dress code:

**GIRLS:** Black dress pants (no leggings, jeans or fitted pants) or ankle length black skirt, solid Christmas red blouse or sweater with sleeves (short,  $\frac{3}{4}$  or full length), and black dress shoes. Simple earrings and/or a necklace are allowed. Students not in dress code will lose points towards their semester grade.

**BOYS:** Black pants, solid white Oxford shirt with long sleeves and collar, black socks and black shoes (preferably no sneakers unless this is all you have, but must be black), and a tie. Grammar School boys may choose a tie of their choice (red would be great, but not required) as long as there are no cartoons or writing on the tie. Upper School boys will be provided with a red tie if they do not have their own. Students not in dress code will lose points towards their semester grade.

Students in Pre-K through Grade 3 General Music Classes may dress as indicated above *or* come dressed in “Sunday Best” (please no jeans or t-shirts).

### **SPRING CONCERT (May 2025)**

ALL Bands and Chorales:

**GIRLS:** Black dress pants (no leggings, jeans or fitted pants) or ankle length black skirt, white blouse or shirt with sleeves (short,  $\frac{3}{4}$  or full length), and black dress shoes. Simple earrings and/or a necklace allowed. Students not in dress code will lose points towards their semester grade.

**BOYS:** Black pants, solid white Oxford shirt with long or short sleeves and collar, black socks, black shoes, and a tie (your choice as long as there are no cartoons or writing on the tie). Students not in dress code will lose points towards their semester grade.

Students in Pre-K through Grade 3 General Music Classes may dress as indicated above *or* come dressed in “Sunday Best” (please no jeans or t-shirts).

### **If I have any questions, whom should I contact?**

Lisa Coleman, our Director of Fine Arts, will be happy to answer any questions you may have regarding the music program at Covenant. You can reach her by email at [lisa.coleman@ccamail.org](mailto:lisa.coleman@ccamail.org) or by phone at 978-535-7100 x 510. Students are also encouraged to contact Mrs. Coleman if they have any questions about their lessons, ensembles and/or music.

# CCA Strings Program

## Who Can Play The Violin, Viola, or Cello?

Anyone with fingers and a desire to learn! Because both the violin and viola are lightweight and comes in many different sizes, even young children can learn to play. We are delighted to offer lessons to all students: from children in Kindergarten up through High School.

## How Do I Choose A Violin, Viola or Cello?

When you are just beginning to play, there are two primary attributes needed in a string instrument: (1) it must have a good sound, and (2) it must fit the player. The violin, viola or cello with the fullest, sweetest sound is what you are looking for. We are happy to chat with you and personally walk you through the process of selecting an instrument that will guarantee the most success!

## Where Can I Rent A Violin or Cello?

- John A. Rowen Stringed Instruments, 46 Hillside Rd, Boxford, MA (*highly recommended*)  
978-887-9279, [www.rowenstrings.com](http://www.rowenstrings.com)
- Johnson String Instruments, 11 John St, Newton Centre  
800-359-9351, [www.johnsonstring.com](http://www.johnsonstring.com)  
Size instruments a little smaller than others
- Music & Arts Center, 300 Andover St (Route 114), Peabody  
978-532-3380, [www.musicarts.com](http://www.musicarts.com)
- Haverhill Music Centre, 2 Washington St, Haverhill  
978-372-9552, [www.haverhillmusic.com](http://www.haverhillmusic.com)

## How Much Does It Cost To Rent A Violin or Cello?

Different vendors have different rates, but you can expect to pay somewhere around \$25-35 per month. Some stores include insurance with this rate, but if not it is highly recommended that you pay the extra few dollars each month for insurance since replacing even a beginner's violin can cost up to \$800.

## How Much Will Lessons Cost?

Students will receive 28 private lessons throughout the school year and will also include string ensemble which will meet after school. The total package cost is \$1250 for the year, which includes 28 thirty minute lessons, string ensemble, and a one-time nonrefundable registration fee of \$25. This fee can be paid all at once or in 10 monthly payments. Payment is made directly to Covenant via auto debit using the FACTs payment plan. Lesson books are not included in this price, but all music for string ensemble is included.

## How much should students be expected to practice?

An article was published by a musician from the Chicago Symphony Orchestra where he stated that his parents required him to practice every day for the same amount of time that he spent in his weekly lesson. His lessons were 30 minutes long, so he practiced 30 minutes a day. While this is often the norm for committed, advancing students, it may not be possible for all students all of the time. When you consider practice time, please bear in mind that people enjoy what they do well. Because learning to play the violin is a fairly complex process, the more dedicated a student is to the endeavor, the more they will enjoy playing! Many string instructors consider a 6-day practice week a perfect week and a 5-day week is an adequate week. If a student practices 3 or 4 days a week they will make some progress, but understand it will be a bit slower and can be a bit more difficult. In the beginning, 15 minute practice sessions will be adequate. As ability grows and complexity increases, practice time will increase accordingly. By the end of the year, most students will be comfortable practicing 30-45 minutes per session. It is best to establish a regular and consistent practice routine as soon as possible—feel free to ask any questions which you may

have regarding practicing. Students will keep track of their practice time in their lesson books. These will then be initialed by the parents each week. Students are of course welcome (and encouraged) to practice more than the expected time if they like!

**If I have any other questions, whom should I contact?**

Lisa Coleman, our Director of Fine Arts, will be happy to answer any questions you may have regarding the Strings Program at Covenant. You can reach her by email at [lisa.coleman@ccamail.org](mailto:lisa.coleman@ccamail.org) or phone at 978-535-7100 x510.

**Please fill out the digital Lesson Registration Form  
(found on the CCA Back-To-School website) as soon as possible.**

Lessons are filled on a “first come, first served” basis.