

# *North Shore Suzuki School*

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Ronkonkoma, NY 11779  
631-737-8357

[NSSuzukiSchool@optonline.net](mailto:NSSuzukiSchool@optonline.net)

Dear Suzuki Families,

Welcome back! We are pleased that you will be with us for the 2023-2024 school year. The schedule will be created once all registrations have been received. **LESSONS START MID-SEPTEMBER.**

**Locations** – We are at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship at Stony Brook on Nichols Rd., just south of University Hospital. We are now teaching virtually as well.

**Schedule** –Your individual and group lesson times will be included in a future email. However, please note that we will build it off of last year’s schedule. We will try very hard to meet every family’s particular schedule requirements and create a good, workable plan.

**Billing** – If you have opted for the 10-month payment plan, payment #1 is due by August 11th and payment #2 will be due September 15th. Please remember that our tuition is based on a full year of instruction and that the monthly plan is offered for your budgeting convenience. The individual payments are not necessarily related to the number of lessons you take in any given month. Families withdrawing before the close of the school calendar year are subject to a \$150 fee to cover contractual expenses, etc.

**Make-up Lessons** – **In the case of teacher absences, it is our intent to first try to provide qualified substitutes (most likely from our own staff) so that students continue to receive regular and appropriate instruction on a practical and expected timetable. If a qualified substitute is not available, make-up lessons will be offered as soon as possible. All lessons cancelled due to weather will be made up.**

If you must cancel your lesson, please let your teacher know directly before 12:00 pm on the day of your lesson. **A make-up lesson will only be offered if and when your teacher has an opening in his/her regular teaching schedule.** We encourage you to arrange in advance to switch lessons with another family when you know a conflict is coming. **Teachers will help you find students with whom you may switch lesson times.**

**Cancelling a Lesson** – Please call your teacher:

Dorothy Shorter 516-317-9061  
Catherine McCallen 631-682-2939  
Alison Johnson 516-551-7522  
Jon Preddice 631-697-8198  
Debbie Schaarschmidt 631-335-4698

**School Closings** – In the event of inclement weather, check the website ([www.northshoresuzukischool.com](http://www.northshoresuzukischool.com)) or call either your teacher or David Johnson (631-258-5928) for information about closings. Please do not call the church.

**North Shore Suzuki School does not automatically close when the public schools do.** We may delay our decision until later in the day, while school districts must decide very early in the morning. We usually update the website with the latest information ([www.northshoresuzukischool.com](http://www.northshoresuzukischool.com))

Speaking of websites, please check out our home on the internet! There is a lot to explore, with more being added as the years progress. It's a great place to find information about the school and it contains lots of interesting links.

### **THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND:**

- ***Reviewing old repertoire is very important.*** *It is only through the mastery of pieces already learned that students develop newer, more advanced techniques.* Think of your child's repertoire as an ever-expanding pool of ready knowledge and ability rather than movement along a straight line (where you are only familiar with recent and current songs)
- ***Helping you to be the best "Home Teacher" you can be.*** Parents are, in many ways, the most important factor in the success of our students. Grab yourself a notebook while you're at CVS buying school supplies so that from your first lesson later this month you are ready to observe, record, interpret and re-create your child's lesson each day at your home. In over twenty years of experience as teachers we have yet to meet a single child who is capable of "remembering" enough details from the weekly lesson to make home practice as effective as when mom or dad sets the agenda.
- ***Group class matters.*** Look for renewed emphasis on the critical role that Group plays in both acquiring new skills AND in constantly improving old repertoire. This is an absolutely integral part of the Suzuki Method and we know you will make the same commitment to group as to your individual lessons. If your group assignment is correct, your child will spend some time playing review songs, some time on current or "new" songs and some time listening to others play repertoire that is just around the corner. It's all good and it's all important to your child's growth.
- ***EVERY child is precious.*** Every year there are performances scheduled. One of our goals this year is that EVERY child performs at least once. Watching a four-year-old perform Twinkle for the first time is no less of a miracle than hearing one of the delightful graduation or 10-year solo performances we have all enjoyed over the years. We want to celebrate every child's abilities!
- ***Quality counts.*** Remember that HOW you play is more important than WHAT you play. You will find that your progress will constantly vary. Take the time to learn the new skills found in every piece. You'll need them later on in more advanced works.
- ***"Where Love Is Great, Much Can Be Accomplished"***. The most precious gifts you will ever give your child are your time and attention. Dr. Suzuki understood that consistent doses of patience and love make many grand things possible. Savor the time you are spending with your kids and the rewards will be great.

Once again, welcome to the new year! We look forward to seeing and hearing from all of you.

Best,

David and Alison Johnson