

## Smetana Piano Studio Fall 2023 Studio Policies

### Communication:

- Email is my primary method of communication. It is good to get in the habit of checking your email several times a week and just before you leave for your lesson. My email address is [Smetana.Cathy@MacPhail.org](mailto:Smetana.Cathy@MacPhail.org); please be sure I have your preferred email address as well.
- When you have a question or concern you'd like to discuss in person, please **bring it up at the beginning of your lesson**. This will ensure we have time to thoroughly address the issue without taking time away from my next student.
- If a situation arises during the week that cannot wait until your next lesson, please email me to request a phone call; I'll be happy to set up a time to talk.
- In case of an unexpected last-minute conflict, I may text you from my home phone number. Once I've done this, please respect my out-of-the-office time and continue to use email for routine communication. Texting should be an emergency-only option.

### Studio Website:

- Our studio website is [www.SmetanaPianoStudio.com](http://www.SmetanaPianoStudio.com).
- This site functions as a bulletin board, FAQ, handbook, and resource list. It is meant to be the first place you look when you have a question. You are always welcome to email me, but the website is definitely an underused resource. Please take time to browse the website so you know what it has to offer.

### Studio Calendar:

- The studio calendar is posted on [www.SmetanaPianoStudio.com](http://www.SmetanaPianoStudio.com). Please study this calendar carefully, as it contains all of the dates for your lessons and breaks for the school year.
- Fall semester begins Wednesday, September 6, 2023. No lessons will be taught October 19-22, November 21-26, December 23-January 4, January 15, and January 17. The last day of lessons for the semester will be Saturday, January 27, 2024.
- The fall studio recital is **Wednesday, January 17, 2024 in Antonello Hall**. The exact time of the recital(s) will be announced closer to the recital date.
- Spring Semester begins Monday, January 29, 2024. No lessons will be taught March 29-April 3, May 15, May 23-28, and May 30-31. The last day of lessons for spring semester will be June 8, 2024.
- The spring studio recital is **Wednesday, May 15, 2024 in Antonello Hall**. The exact time of the recital(s) will be announced closer to the recital date.
- Summer semester begins Monday, June 10. Summer lessons are more flexible than school year lessons. You are free to choose the days and times you prefer from my electronic calendar via a link which will be posted on [www.SmetanaPianoStudio.com](http://www.SmetanaPianoStudio.com) in April or May.

### Health Guidelines:

- I am fully vaccinated for covid-19 and plan to stay up-to-date on all flue and covid vaccinations moving forward.
- Out of respect to me and my other students, please monitor your health. **No one should enter a MacPhail facility if they are not feeling well for any reason.** Symptoms include: fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, and diarrhea. *Please take this symptom list seriously and do not ask me to make exceptions.*
- **If I get sick, everyone misses their lesson. Students or family members who come to the studio exhibiting cold, flu, or covid-like symptoms will be asked to wear a KN95, N96, or KF94 mask or to go home, depending on the severity of symptoms.**
- When in doubt, online or asynchronous lessons are excellent alternatives to in-person lessons. Please read below or see [www.SmetanaPianoStudio.com](http://www.SmetanaPianoStudio.com) for details.

### Online Lessons

- Online instruction remains an option for students who wish to continue lessons online, either occasionally or exclusively. **Online lessons will be done via Forte, a platform specifically designed for music lessons.** Forte is free to use if I invite you, and each family/student will need to create their own account once invited. A link to Forte's student user guide is posted at [www.SmetanaPianoStudio.com](http://www.SmetanaPianoStudio.com).
- Please see [www.SmetanaPianoStudio.com](http://www.SmetanaPianoStudio.com) for suggestions to maximize online lesson sound quality.
- **In cases of incimate weather, illness, or family emergency, I reserve the right to teach online.** If you refuse the offer of an online lesson at your usual lesson time, and do not wish to do an asynchronous lesson, no refund or further make-up option will be offered.

### Additional Studio Policies:

- Your registration reserves your scheduled lesson time with me each week. **I do not give make-up lessons for student absences.** However, if you know that you will not be able to make it to a lesson, please notify me in advance, if possible. Prior notification does not exempt students from payment. Students are charged for all lessons for which they register, including those missed through student absence. This is MacPhail's official policy as well as my studio policy.
- If I am unable to keep the scheduled lesson time, I will work with you to try to find an alternate time. If we are unable, you will receive a refund.
- **If you must miss a lesson, please consider doing an asynchronous lesson.** *Prior to the lesson you will miss, send me audio or video of your child playing the week's assignment. Send pictures or scans of any assigned workbook/theory pages, as well as any questions about the assignment. During your regularly scheduled lesson time, I will provide written feedback and a new assignment as needed. Video files are often too large for email; you may need to upload the video to Google Drive, YouTube, or another sharing platform — just be sure to send me the link!*

- Piano playing is a highly complex physical activity. **Touch is used to identify tension, correct alignment, and help students develop their own kinesthetic awareness.** This work is crucial for beginners, and essential where players have developed physical habits which require movement retraining. Touch is limited to hands, wrists, the arms, shoulders, and back. The purpose of touch is always explained when physical contact is necessary, so that students are able to engage positively and effectively in learning. Whenever possible, I prefer a parent to participate in any use of touch, so they can support their child while practicing during the week, ensuring that harmful habits don't develop. I always check before using touch in my teaching, obtaining on-the-spot permission. Physical contact is never used unnecessarily, inappropriately, or without consent.
- **Students are expected to have clean hands and short fingernails.** Please wash hands with soap and water for at least 30 seconds immediately before your lesson.
- **Cell phones should be silenced and put away during the lesson,** unless we are specifically recording a video to assist home practice. If you must make or take a call, please step out of the studio to do so.

**Instruments, Equipment, and Supplies:**

- **Students must have a full 88-key acoustic or digital piano with touch-sensitive, weighted keys and functioning *una corda* and damper pedals.** Please consider buying the best instrument you can afford. See [www.SmetanaPianoStudio.com](http://www.SmetanaPianoStudio.com) for links to videos which will help you make educated decisions about which instrument to purchase.
- For online lessons, please always have a sharpened pencil with a good eraser and a set of colored pencils, highlighters, or highlighter tape available.
- Students must have a **metronome**, either mechanical, digital, or an app on a mobile device. See [www.SmetanaPianoStudio.com](http://www.SmetanaPianoStudio.com) for recommendations.
- I recommend purchasing a pocket **music dictionary** for home use. See [www.SmetanaPianoStudio.com](http://www.SmetanaPianoStudio.com) for recommendations.
- Students are expected to have all necessary music and materials at their lesson.
- To purchase your music, I suggest using Groth Music in Bloomington, Schmitt Music in Edina, or [www.SheetMusicPlus.com](http://www.SheetMusicPlus.com). I do not recommend Amazon, because they may sell out-of-date or international editions, which cause unnecessary confusion and hassle.

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 Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Preferred Pronouns: \_\_\_\_\_

Adult Contact Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Piano Goals for this school year: \_\_\_\_\_

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Concerns: \_\_\_\_\_