Prodigy Program
Westwood Performing Arts

Winter 2026 Newsletter

Welcome and Introduction

The 2026-2027 has been off to an amazing start and I hope you have been having a great year of music so far! We started off the year with seeing many of you for a beautiful Westwood Day, and are weeks away from the first concerts of the year.

This newsletter contains few updates, notifications, and reminders about the Prodigy Program as we settle into the 2026-2027 school year. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me via email with any questions or concerns. I am here to help with anything Prodigy Program related.

Wishing you and your families a safe and happy holiday season and thank you for all being an important part of the Prodigy Program.

Brianna Creamer
Prodigy Program Director

Prodigy Student Spotlight

The MMEA Eastern District Auditions were held on November 7th.
Congratulations to the following Prodigy Program students for acceptance into Senior Districts. Students with All State Recommendations will audition in late January for the All-State Festival, to be held in March. Bravo students and instructors!

Lily Champion	**Orchestra, French Horn, *All State Recommendation***
Jacob Cicerchia	**Band, Trombone**
Jason Cirillo	**Band, Bass Trombone**
Ian Lawrence	**Band, Trumpet, *All State Recommendation***
Manjula Viswalingam	**Chorus, Soprano, *All State Recommendation***

Website, Policy Information, and FAQs

The website is updated frequently and many questions regarding attendance, payments, missed lessons etc. can be found on our website.

Please make sure you bookmark or look to the following pages if you have questions. If your questions are not answered on the website, please do not hesitate to reach out to the Director.

Just a reminder that any changes to billing or lesson status (length/teacher etc.) need to be communicated first to the Director.

Prodigy Program Website https://www.theprodigyprogram.org/
Tuition and Fees https://www.theprodigyprogram.org/tuition-and-fees
Policies https://www.theprodigyprogram.org/policies
FAQs https://www.theprodigyprogram.org/faqs
JackRabbit Parent Portal https://app.jackrabbitclass.com/jr3.0/ParentPortal/Login?orgId=506099

Registration Statements/Tuition Payments

In early January, I plan to send out invoices to families to confirm their account balances. My intention in doing so is to provide families with important account information and to identify and resolve any account discrepancies that may exist.

- **If you have already paid your family's tuition in full** you will not receive a statement. Thank you for your payment!
- **If you have already issued a partial payment** for the current school year, this should be reflected on the statement you receive. All remaining tuition balances will be due on February 1, 2024.
- **Families participating in the Monthly Payment** will continue to have payments applied through the remainder of the school year. No additional payments are necessary at this time and you do not need to take any further actions with respect to payment.
- **If you have a past-due balance on your account**, please contact me immediately to make payment. If you believe your past-due balance is an error, kindly let me know.

To make a payment or change your family's billing/account information, please click this link: https://app.jackrabbitclass.com/jr3.0/ParentPortal/Login?orgId=506099

Prodigy Faculty Updates

This Fall, we welcomed four new faculty members to the Prodigy Program: Yibran Aponte Cotto (Trumpet), Brandy Blakely (Flute), Joe Boulos (Percussion/Drum Kit), and Alana Calhoun (Voice).

Yibran is a Puerto Rican musician and educator dedicated to inspiring students through creativity, collaboration, and performance. He holds a Master of Music in Music Education (K–12) from the Longy School of Music of Bard College and dual degrees in Contemporary Writing & Production and Performance from Berklee College of Music. As an educator, Yibran is committed to creating welcoming, engaging environments where students can grow as musicians, take creative risks, and develop their own artistic voice.





Brandy has played the flute for 35 years. She has been freelancing in the Greater Boston area on flute, piccolo, and alto flute for the last 15 years. She has taught flute since 2004. Brandy's goal is to help flutists develop strong technical foundations, expressive playing, and to build confidence and a lasting love for music. When not performing (or practicing) or teaching, Brandy can be found swimming, traveling, and spending time with her husband and two daughters.

Joe is a multifaceted educator, ethnomusicologist, and percussionist whose work bridges the rich musical traditions of West Africa, the Arab World, and the Americas. He holds a Bachelor of Music in Performance with a concentration in Drumset and World Music from the UMass: Dartmouth, as well as two master's degrees—an M.M. in Jazz Pedagogy and an M.A. in Musicology—from West Virginia University. Known for his cultural fluency and stylistic versatility, he brings a dynamic and informed presence to every performance.





Alana is currently in her 6th semester at Berklee College of Music, and will be graduating in the spring. She is a Music Education Major, with specific focuses in vocal pedagogy and choral rehearsal techniques. In 2026, she received the Barnes and Noble award from the Music Education program at Berklee. In her free time, Alana enjoys learning/playing guitar and piano!

A Friendly Reminder About Attendance Policies

In the interest of student progress, and with an effort to maintain a degree of fairness for both families and lesson instructors, the Prodigy Program previously established policies regarding lesson attendance, cancellations, and make-up lessons.

Established weekly lesson times are bound to flex at various points throughout the year due to illness, school holidays, weather cancellations, etc. Since both students/families and instructors have a mutual investment in their music lessons and classes together, the Prodigy Program has asked families and instructors to agree to certain guidelines in the event of a missed lesson or class.

Our **current Absence and Makeup Policy** is set forth below. Please click here to read all of the Program's policies.

1. **Private Lessons:** Students are entitled to make up lessons for **two excused** absences. Excused absences are those in which (i) the student has provided at least 24 hours advance notice to the instructor (not the Prodigy Program Director), or (ii) the student is ill and cannot attend the lesson (whether or not 24 hours notice is provided). Absences for **any other reason** are not excused and are forfeited.

   More than two absences of any kind are forfeited.

2. **Semi-Private Lessons:** Because semi-private lessons involve other students, lessons are **not** made up when a student is absent.
3. **Classes:** Because classes involve other students, lessons are **not** made up when a student is absent.
4. **Teacher Absence:** A teacher's absence from a lesson or class will be made up by the end of the school year.
5. **School Closings and Holidays:** All lessons missed because of school closings for religious holidays or inclement weather will be made up.
6. **Credits and Refunds:** Tuition credits or refunds will be provided for long-term illness or injury. There are no credits or refunds for class lessons or semi-private lessons.

© PRODIGY PROGRAM
Westwood Public Schools
200 Nahatan Street
Westwood, MA 02090

Brianna Creamer
Prodigy Program Director
prodigyprogram@westwood.k12.ma.us
http://theprodigyprogram.org