



Prodigy Program

Westwood Performing Arts

PRODIGY PROGRAM SPRING 2023 NEWSLETTER

Dear Prodigy Families,

We hope this newsletter finds everyone well and engaged in year-end celebrations! Thank you for another wonderful year of music-learning and music-making. As the school year draws to a close, I wanted to take this opportunity to highlight some of our accomplishments, thank our instructors for their creative teaching, provide some important updates about the Prodigy Program, and encourage you to register for the 2023-24 session.

A Note from the Prodigy Program Director

I would like to take this opportunity to tell you that I will be stepping down as the Prodigy Program Director as of June 30, 2023. It has been an honor to serve in this role, and to get to know so many of our students and families through the process. The decision to leave the role was a difficult one, but it will allow me to focus more on my teaching and my family's needs. I will continue to be involved in the Prodigy Program as a piano instructor, and I look forward to working with and developing my Prodigy piano students for years to come. The search for a new Director is currently underway.

Congratulations to Our Graduating Seniors!



Congratulations to Eastern District and All-State Festival Winners!

Congratulations to all of the students who auditioned and were accepted into the Eastern District and All-State Festivals!

<u>All-State Festival</u>	<u>Senior District Festival</u>	<u>Junior District Festival</u>
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Anna McCusker Jude Vamenta Deepak Viswalingam	Keira Dent Jason Guo Jefferson Ji Alex Mansour Anna McCusker Braedan Murphy Ali Tariq Conor Tsang Jude Vamenta Deepak Viswalingam	Nico Castro Hannah Lassen Michael Mansour Melissa Yang Meyer Kaminski Lilith Brooks Jacob Cicerchia
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Spring 2023 Recitals and Concerts

Prodigy Recitals:

- Tuesday, May 16: Students of John Clark (Auditorium)
Students of Xue Liu (Chorus Room)
- Thursday, May 18: Students of Melissa Laurencio (Auditorium)
- Monday, May 22: Students of David Dyson (Chorus Room)
- Wednesday, May 3: Students of Dave Rufino (Chorus Room)
- Thursday, June 1: Students of Joe Casano (Chorus Room)
Students of Bob D'Ambrosio (Band Room)
- Monday, June 5: Students of Michelle Passmore (Chorus Room)
Students of Doug LaRosa (Auditorium)
- Tuesday, June 6: Students of Andrew Bedrossian (Little Theater)
Students of Johann Soult (Chorus Room)
- Thursday, June 8: Students of Marlene Markard (Chorus Room)
- Friday, June 9: Students of Gabrielle Rodriguez and Nigel Yancey (Chorus Room)
- Monday, June 12: Students of Alicia Winslow

School Concerts:

- Thursday, May 4: Jazz Night

Friday, May 5: A Capella Jam
Tuesday, May 23 : Strings Concert
Wednesday, May 24: TMS Band Concert
Thursday, May 25: TMS Chorus Concert
Tuesday, May 30: WHS Spring Showcase
Wednesday, June 7: 5th Grade Band Concert

Departing Prodigy Faculty

Several members of the Prodigy Program faculty are leaving the program in order to pursue other professional opportunities. We wish to thank Dave Rufino (French horn and trumpet), Nigel Yancey (flute and saxophone), Xue Liu (piano), and Gabrielle (Abby) Rodriguez (piano) for their dedication and contributions to the Prodigy Program. They will be missed!



Xue Liu



Gabrielle Rodriguez



Nigel Yancey



Dave Rufino

Westwood's Community Band, *Westwood Winds*, is back!

The Westwood Winds Community Band is back again this summer. Any interested student between the grades 8–12 is invited to join, and encouraged to attend an open rehearsal on June 5. Summer rehearsals will take place in the Westwood High School Band Room from 6:30 - 8:30 on Mondays in June and July (except July 3). Concerts will take place on August 7 and September 23 in locations to be determined at a later date. The band provides the opportunity for students to meet and perform with other student and adult music enthusiasts. It also provides a way for them to maintain and build their musical skills over the summer.

Westwood Winds' long-time director, Jim Giurleo, is retiring this year. Westwood Prodigy Program faculty member, Melissa Laurencio, has been named as the new Director of Westwood Winds. For more information, go to: <http://www.westwoodwinds.org>, or contact the band's director, Melissa Laurencio, at westwoodwinds1@verizon.net

Time to Register for the Prodigy Program for 2023-24!

Registration for the 2023-24 Prodigy Program session will open on June 5!

Returning students: If you are a returning Prodigy Program student, you will be automatically enrolled in lessons for the 2023-24 school year on your current instrument and with your current instructor. Students of Dave Rufino, Nigel Yancey, Xue Liu, and Abby Rodriguez will be enrolled as “TBA” students and assigned to new teachers in the Fall. If you are an existing student who wishes to change their registration (*e.g.*, different instrument, different teacher, new address or payment method), or if you wish to withdraw from the Prodigy Program, [please click here](#) to access the parent portal.

New students: If you are a new Prodigy Program student, please go to the Prodigy Program website to [create an account](#). If you are unsure as to which instrument or teacher to choose, please contact the Prodigy Program Director at prodigyprogram@westwood.k12.ma.us.

Please do not attempt to register or make changes to 2023-24 registration before June 5, because JackRabbit will not be able to accept 2023-24 registrations or changes to 2023-24 registration before that time. We currently have a waiting list for several instruments, so I strongly encourage you to register now. We require your payment information upon registration, but no payment is due or processed upon registration. Please also note that registration will close on October 31. We will not be able to register any students after that time.

The Prodigy Program’s phased-in tuition increases for the next two years are as follows:

Lesson type	Current tuition	2023-24 tuition	2024-25 tuition
Semi-private	\$600	\$660	\$750
30 minutes	\$900	\$960	\$1,050
45 minutes	\$1,350	\$1,410	\$1,500
60 minutes	\$1,740	\$1,800	\$1,890

Payment options:

- Pay in full upon registration; or
- Pay 50% in September and the balance by February 1, 2024; or
- Sign up for a [Monthly Payment plan](#) when you register. Please note that this will incur an additional one-time \$25 convenience fee; or
- Apply for [Tuition Assistance](#), which may be available to families who demonstrate need. Tuition assistance depends on availability of funds.

Please do not mail checks, applications or correspondence to the Prodigy Program office as our administrative staff remains virtual and is not on-site to receive mail at this time. If you require assistance with any part of your registration or have any other concerns or questions, please contact the Prodigy Program Director at prodigyprogram@westwood.k12.ma.us.

In-Person and Remote Lesson Options Continue

Due to demand for virtual lessons, this Fall, the Prodigy Program will continue to offer lessons in both in-person and remote formats. Upon registration, students will be able to choose remote or in-person lessons for the 2023-24 school year. Once students have chosen a format, students will be committed to that format for the entire school year. Remote lessons will be available for every instrument as well as voice, but may not be offered by every Prodigy instructor. That information will be available during the registration process.

A Friendly Reminder About Our 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.

Upon registration, families are asked to make a substantial time and financial commitment to student's music lessons and classes. Prodigy Program instructors have also committed to teach a total of 30 lessons per year (this number may vary with individual registrations). Lesson teachers rely on the teaching income they receive from the Prodigy Program as part of their livelihood.

Established weekly lesson times are bound to flex at various points throughout the year due to illness, school holidays, weather cancellations, etc. Because 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.

Thanks to each of you for being an important part of the Prodigy Program. Best wishes for a safe and relaxing summer. We are looking forward to seeing you in the Fall!

Musically yours,

Marlene M. Markard
Outgoing Prodigy Program Director